

**LIT2000: INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE
SPRING 2026**

Instructor: Abiola Emmanuel

Office: TUR 4359

Office Hours: Wednesday & Friday 4:00—5 :00 PM (by appointment)

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Course Time: T Period (1:55 -2: 45 pm), R Periods 7-8 (1: 55- 3:50 pm)

Course Location: TBD

Course Pre-requisite: ENC 1101

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In this course, students will be assigned readings representative of a broad range of literary genres and cultures. These readings will cover a variety of literary movements and historical eras. The readings will include selections from the Western canon. Written analysis of literary works may be required. Students will be provided with opportunities to practice critical interpretation.

A minimum grade of C is required for General Education credit.

Attributes: General Education – Humanities

SECTION SPECIFIC DESCRIPTION:

This course examines the unique and changing role literature has played in individuals' lives and in society. It is centered on three deceptively simple questions: What is literature? Why do we write literature? And why do we read literature? It introduces students to a range of literary genres, from different countries and historical periods.

Among the primary aims of this course is to help students develop the critical skill of analysis and interpretation. Students will also learn how formal and stylistic elements as well as historical context shape the meaning and significance of literature. By becoming more skillful readers of literature and its contexts, students become better readers of the worlds that literature addresses, develop their ability to decipher meaning from language, and better understand their own interactions with science, technology, media, commerce, and politics.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

In addition to gaining a deeper appreciation of the expressive potential of language and the varieties of literature, students will develop a broader cultural literacy and an understanding of the changing definition and role of literature in society.

Therefore, by the conclusion of the course it is expected that students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the content of specific literary works and the structures and conventions of different literary genres.
2. Produce original, critical readings of literary texts, using different methods of interpretation and analysis, while identifying and interpreting formal and genre-

related elements in the texts.

3. Critically assess the variety of roles that literature has played historically and continues to play in human experience.
4. Draw connections between literary texts and their biographical, historical, and cultural contexts of authorship and reading.

GENERAL EDUCATION DESIGNATION AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

This course fulfills three credit hours of [Humanities \(H\) requirements](#). Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or the humanities in general. Students will learn to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives. A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit.

General Education SLO:

- Students will identify a variety of literary movements, historical eras, and/or cultural contexts. The following assignments will be assessed for this SLO: Class Participation, Course Wiki/Discussion Board/Quick Writes, and Critical Analysis Paper.
- Students will demonstrate critical thinking and analytical skills. The following assignments will be assessed for this SLO: Close Reading Assignment and Critical Analysis Paper.

Humanities Designation SLO:

- Content: Identify, describe, and explain the history of underlying theory and methodologies used. Content will be assessed through the following assignments: Close Reading Assignment and Critical Analysis Paper.
- Critical Thinking: Identify and analyze the relevant factors that shape thought within the subject area. Approach issues and problems within the discipline from multiple perspectives. Critical Thinking will be assessed through the following assignments: Close Reading Assignment and Critical Analysis Paper.
- Communication: Communicate knowledge, thoughts, and reasoning clearly and effectively. Communication will be assessed through the following assignments: Close Reading Assignment, Course Wiki/Discussion Board/Quick Writes, and Critical Analysis Paper.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Beloved by Toni Morrison

American Born Chinese by Gene Luen Yang

Note: While you may purchase any edition of these texts, please be sure that they are not abridged.

PDFs of all other readings will be provided through Canvas.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

Summary of grading

- Attendance & participation/in-class discussion (10%)
- Participation in Course Wiki, discussion board, or quick writes (20%)
- 1 Close Reading of a literary text or passage (30%)
- 1 Critical Analysis paper (40%)

1. Attendance & Participation (10%)

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory and will be assessed by class roll or sign-up sheet. Students will lose 1% from their final grade for every unexcused absence. Absences will be excused in accordance with UF policy. Acceptable reasons include illness, religious holidays, military obligation, and the twelve-day rule (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>). Should you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for informing yourself as to what was covered in class.

Participation: Each week will begin with a series of basic questions on the contents of the assigned readings. Students are expected to review the assigned readings before class and will be responsible for one presentation on an important figure, event, or concept in a text. We will sign up for these presentations in the first week of class. The presentation will be a completion grade and account for 50% of the participation grade. Consistent participation in class discussions, demonstrated knowledge of the assigned readings will contribute to the other 50% of the final grade.

2. Participation in Course Wiki, blog, or discussion board (20%)

Before each discussion session, students are required to contribute a question or an answer to on an online discussion forum.

Description of assignment: *Interpretive* (or *Critical*) questions are open-ended and are concerned with textual meaning. They ask for opinions on themes, figurative language and symbolism within the narrative. They also ask for judgments regarding the period, history, politics and ethical questions that are relevant to the text. The open-endedness of Interpretive and Critical questions—which often use phrases such as "do you think" or "why do you suppose"—indicates that there may well be neither simply "right" nor simply "wrong" answers; the success of a response is based on the evidence and reasoning students employ to support their analysis and judgment.

3. Close Reading Assignment: 750 words, 30%

This assignment will test student skills in close reading, especially as that skill pertains to works of poetry and short fiction. Students will be expected to analyze a text carefully and develop an argument regarding the whole of the text through close reading. No outside sources may be used for this assignment.

The Close Reading assignment is due during the 6th week of the semester

4. Critical Analysis Paper: 1,500 words, 40%

This assignment asks students to combine close reading skills with critical concepts or

historical information introduced in one of the supplemental readings. The goal is for students to produce a strong conceptual argument supported by textual and contextual evidence.

The Critical Analysis assignment is due during the 16th week of the semester.

GRADING SCALE

For more information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points please visit the following link: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Letter Grade	Percent of Total Points Associated with Each Letter Grade	GPA Impact of Each Letter Grade
A	93.00-100%	4.0
A-	90.00-92.99%	3.67
B+	87.00-89.99%	3.33
B	83.00-86.99%	3.0
B-	80.00-82.99%	2.67
C+	77.00-79.99%	2.33
C	73.00-76.99%	2.0
C-	70.00-72.99%	1.67
D+	67.00-69.99%	1.33
D	63.00-66.99%	1.0
D-	60.00-62.99%	0.67
E	0-59.99%	0

Note: A minimum grade of C is required for a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College Basic distribution credit. A grade of C- and below will not qualify for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College Basic distribution credit. For further information on UF's Grading Policy ([Link](#)).

GRADING RUBRICS

Close Reading Assignment Rubric

SATISFACTORY (Y)	UNSATISFACTORY (N)
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CONTENT 50%	Reflects a basic understanding of the sources; begins to critically evaluate and synthesize the chosen text.	Omitted key ideas; strayed off topic; minimally or inadequately discussed ideas. Lacks sufficient or appropriate sources.
Critical Thinking 30%	Makes claims that draw substantially upon the text; clearly and accurately articulates their own arguments based on the text.	Makes weak generalizations; provides little or no support.
Communication 20%	Academic quality prose, clearly organized discussion of close reading, and effectively written descriptions of the text.	Discussion is not organized, the prose has mechanical errors, and the descriptions of the text or not clear.
Total	If the student satisfies the requirement of the category they will receive full credit. Students are welcome submit drafts ahead of time to receive feedback to ensure they are satisfying the rubric. Because this assignment is a close reading of specific texts without outside sources students are either satisfactory or not for each category.	

Critical Analysis Rubric

	Excellent: A	Good: B	Average: C	Insufficient: D	Unsatisfactory: E
Content: Students will identify a variety of literary movements, historical eras, and/or cultural contexts. Students demonstrate that they have carefully read the texts they are writing about through a short summary and specific examples. 40%	40-36 points Demonstrates expert knowledge of the texts, their context, their place in literary and historical eras, and efficiently but thoroughly discusses examples	35-30 points Demonstrates solid knowledge of the texts, their context, their place in literary and historical eras, and discusses examples from the texts.	29-20 points Demonstrates some knowledge of the texts, their context, their place in literary and historical eras, and makes reference to examples	19-10 points Limited knowledge of the texts, their context, their place in literary and historical eras, and underdeveloped references to examples from the texts.	10-0 points Students fail to mention any context or references to literary movements or historical eras. Missing examples from the texts they are analyzing.

	from the texts.		from the texts.		
Critical Thinking: Identify and analyze the relevant factors that shape thought within the subject area. Approach issues and problems within the discipline from multiple perspectives. 40%	40-36 points Clearly articulated and argued thesis. Examples used to make argument are thoughtful and well developed.	35-30 points The thesis is presented as a cohesive thought. Examples from the text being analyzed are present. Ideas maybe from conversations already covered in class.	29-20 points The thesis is present but somewhat presented. The argument is difficult to discern. Ideas are not that creative.	19-10 points The thesis is lacking articulation. Little to no discussion of examples. No clear argument.	10-0 points No thesis, examples, and/or arguments being.
Communication: Communicate knowledge, thoughts, and reasoning clearly and effectively. 20%	20-16 points Prose is close to flawless with no mechanical errors. Ideas are clearly defined and presented with intention. The paper is well organized with a thoughtful conclusion.	16-10 points Organized paper that clearly establishes what is being discussed and argued. Minor mechanical errors.	10-6 points The organization of the paper is lacking but there is a discernable thesis.	5-1 points The prose is somewhat readable and makes sense but the ideas are not connected.	0 points Prose is mostly unreadable and doesn't make sense.

Total: Students grades will be the cumulative total of the three categories. Grades will be determined based on the grade scale above.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

University policies are summarized here. This [link](https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/) will direct students to a separate webpage that will provide all required academic policies, such as attendance, grading, personal conduct, DRC and evaluation verbiage, as well as campus academic, health, and wellness resources. Full URL here: (<https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>).

CLASSROOM POLICIES:

- **Makeup Policy:** Except in the case of certified illness or other UF accepted excuse (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>), there will be no make-up option for missed exams or late assignments. Where possible, make-ups should be arranged by email or in person prior to the expected absence. In case of illness, student should contact instructor on his or her return to classes.
- **Late Policy:** A class roll will be passed around at the beginning of class. If a student is late, he or she will have to sign the roll after class. Such lateness distracts other students and the instructor and will affect the student's final participation grade. Students will lose 0.5% from their final grade each time they arrive late.
- **Cell phone policy:** Students must turn cell phones to "silent" before coming to class. Each time a student's cell phone rings or each time that a student texts during class, 1% will be deducted from that student's final grade.

Academic Honesty: Students are required to be honest in their coursework, may not use notes during quizzes or exams, and must properly cite all sources that they have consulted for their projects. Any act of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Students, and may result in failure of the assignment in question and/or the course. For University of Florida's honor code, see <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. Contact the Disability Resources Center (<https://disability.ufl.edu/>) for information about available resources for students with disabilities.

Counseling and Mental Health Resources: Students facing difficulties completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help should call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center (352 392-1575; <https://counseling.ufl.edu>).

Online Course Evaluation: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing end-of-semester course evaluations via GatorEvals (<https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu>). You will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email received from GatorEvals or in the Canvas course menu under GatorEvals.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Students should note that the schedule is a guideline and may change.

UNIT 1 – WHAT IS LITERATURE?: In this unit we will look at the different types of texts we explore in literature from the Epic poems of the classical era to contemporary short stories that have shaped our understanding of literature.

WEEK 1 (1/12—1/16): INTRODUCTION: The Borders of Literature?

Reading: King, “I have a dream” speech Text and audio (16min):
<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkihadream.htm>

“Introduction: What is literature?” Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (1983), pp. 1-15

Stephen Greenblatt, “Culture” (8 pages)

Elements of Literature

WEEK 2 (1/19-1/23): **Drama**

Reading: Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice* (32 pages)

WEEK 3 (1/26-1/30): **Epic**

Reading: Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book I (24 pages)

WEEK 4 (2/2-2/6): **Poetry**

Readings: Seamus Heaney, “Punishment”, “Death of a Naturalist” (2 pages)

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/seamus-heaney>

Emily Dickinson, “Essential oils are wrung”, “Because I could not stop for Death,” “My life had stood - a Loaded Gun” (4 pages)

James Shirley, “Death the Leveller” (1 page)

WEEK 5 (2/9-2/13): **Short Story:**

Readings: Flannery O’Connor, “A Good Man is Hard to Find” (13 pages)

Alice Munro, “The Moons of Jupiter” (30 pages)

Kate Chopin, “Desiree’s Baby”, (5 pages)

WEEK 6 (2/16-2/20): **WRITING & PEER -REVIEW**

CLOSE READING EXERCISE DUE ON SUNDAY

UNIT II – WHY WRITE LITERATURE?: For unit two, we will read across a range of authors who used literature to explore our concepts of self, communities, the world, and what it means to be a citizen.

WEEK 7 (2/23-2/27): Shaping Citizens: Moral Instruction

Reading: Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (321 pages)

WEEK 8 (3/2-3/6): Shaping Citizens: Moral Instruction

Reading: Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (321 pages)

WEEK 9 (3/9-3/13): World Making (Cosmopoiesis)

Reading: V.S. Naipaul, *Miguel Street* (224 pages)

WEEK 10 (3/16-3/20): SPRING BREAK

Self-Expression/ Finding New Selves

WEEK 11(3/23-3/27) Reading: Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz* (187 pages)

WEEK 12 (3/30-4/3) Reading: Ama Ata Aidoo, *Our Sister Killjoy* (134 pages)

UNIT III WHY DO WE READ Literature?: In the final unit of the semester, we will explore the important questions of “Why read literature?” In answering this question through the texts in this unit, we might also ask: What does literature do for us? What do authors use literature for?

WEEK 13 (4/6- 4/10): Moving Beyond the Self

Readings: D. H. Lawrence, “Fish”

Elizabeth Bishop, “The Fish,” “Roosters,” and “Pink Dog” (Each poem is between 1-3 pages)

(Individual Conferences)

WEEK 14 (4/13-4/17): New Ways of Seeing

Reading: Gene Luen Yang, *American Born Chinese* (240 pages)

WEEK 15 (4/20-4/22): Conclusion: Where to Now?

Reading: Does Great Literature Make Us Better? Gregory Currie. (6 pages) http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/06/01/does-great-literature-make-us-better/?_r=0

L. D. Burnett, "Holding On to What Makes Us Human" (4 pages);
Gregory Currie's "Does Great Literature Make Us Better?" (4 pages);
Helen Vendler, "How to Welcome and Nurture the Poets and Painters of
the Future" (7 pages);
Mark Edmundson, "The Ideal English Major" (3 pages)

WEEK 16 (4/25-4/29): **Finals Week**

CRITICAL ANALYSIS PAPER DUE ON SUNDAY