



Introduction to World Literature

(1750 - Today)

Welcome to

LIT2120

**Introduction to
World Literature**

(1750 - Today)

This syllabus is produced in order to provide you with an overview of your Introduction to World Literature (1750 - Today) course. We will address the syllabus together in our first session in case of lack of clarity. Besides that, whenever you feel that you have a question that the syllabus does not answer, you are welcome to get in touch with me: armin.niknam@ufl.edu

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Welcome to Introduction to World Literature from 1750 to today. I am thrilled to have you in this course and I know this will be really fun!

Course Description

Much of what we know today about the world in terms of “mobility” started to form in the 15th century when Europeans started to explore, and subsequently conquer, settle in, and colonize the rest of the globe. Although by 1750, when this course starts, the Age of Exploration had almost come to an end, and there were very few places that were absolved from having to deal with the immediate consequences of these expeditions. Various shores of the Atlantic Ocean, also known as *the Atlantic World*, are some of the most affected areas by these European ventures.

This course examines some of the literary works from various locations across the Atlantic World. In doing so, it reviews how different coasts of the Atlantic have been affected by what is generally known as “modernity,” and the “mobility” caused by it. This course seeks to understand

how movement across the Atlantic Ocean created and destroyed lives, communities, worldviews, languages, politics, and geography.

Please be advised, some of what we will be reading will not be very pleasant. Some of it may be explicit. Some of it might be upsetting and gruesome. However, that is part of our shared history.

Through reviewing works of literature across genres, periods, and styles, this course helps you gain insight into how and why people moved across the Atlantic, and how they dealt with moving. A lot of our readings have to do with traveling, migration, settling, and returning and we will conduct our reading in specific historical and social contexts.

This course helps you develop the critical skills of analysis and textual interpretation. You will also learn how formal and stylistic elements, as well as historical context, shape the meaning and significance of literary works. By gaining a deeper insight into what you read, you become better readers of the worlds (YES! WORLDS!) that literature addresses. That is, it develops your ability to decipher meanings behind language, and better understand your own interactions with science, technology, media, commerce, and politics.

Course Objectives

What are we planning to do?

You will develop a broader cultural literacy and better understand the changing definition and role of literature in society.

Therefore, by the end of the course you will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the content of specific literary works as well as the structures and conventions of literary genres.
2. Produce original, critical readings of literary texts, using different methods of interpretation and analyses, while identifying formal and genre-related elements in the texts.

3. Critically assess the roles literature has played historically and continues to play in our experience.
4. Connect literary texts to their biographical, historical, and cultural contexts.

I am also looking forward to hearing from you in our first session what you want to learn throughout this semester and incorporate ways to reach those goals in our course.

General Education Objectives

- This course confers General Education credit for Composition (C), and also fulfills 6,000 of the university's 24,000-word writing requirement (WR).
- Composition courses provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation, usage), as well as the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition courses are writing intensive. They require multiple drafts submitted to your instructor for feedback before final submission.
- Course content should include multiple forms of effective writing, different writing styles, approaches and formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes and contexts. Students should learn to

organize complex arguments in writing using thesis statements, claims and evidence, and to analyze writing for errors in logic.

- The University Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. To receive Writing Requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course. This means that written assignments must meet minimum word requirements totaling 6000 words.

Furthermore, at the end of this course, you should have achieved the following learning outcomes:

1. Content: demonstrating competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used relevant to English studies.

2. Communication: communicating knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms.

3. Critical Thinking: Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

What will you need for this course (besides positive vibes)?

In order to follow the course readings, you are required to purchase the following complete texts in advance. I understand that some of you might already own some of these books in different editions. However, in case you don't, please use the ISBN to purchase the correct version of them:

- *Voyage in the Dark* by Jean Rhys, Penguin Modern Classics, ISBN: 0141183954
- *The Wondrous and Tragic Life of Ivan and Ivana* by Maryse Condé, World Editions, ISBN: 1642860697
- *Louisiana* by Erna Brodber, University of Mississippi Press, ISBN: 1578060311

The course includes other readings too which you will have access to through Canvas:

- Selections from *The Complete Poems* by Phillis Wheatley
- *The History of Mary Prince, a West Indian Slave* by Mary Prince

We will also watch three movies together:

- *Atlantique* by Mati Diop
- *Daughters of the Dust* by Julie Dash
- *Belle* by Amma Asante

There will be some other very brief material that will sometimes be used as secondary sources. Those materials will be made available by me through Canvas.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

How will you be graded in this course?

There are a number of key elements that impact your grade. Here is a list of each and every one of the things that you have to worry about (*This is a joke!*):

- Attendance (50 points)
- Class Participation (100 points)
- Discussion Board (100 points)
- Five Close Reading and Annotation (200 words each, 200 points)
- Five Response Papers (600 words each, 300 points)
- Two Reflection Papers (250 words each, 50 points)
- Final Paper (1500 words, 200 points)

- **Attendance (50 points)**

Attendance is mandatory and will be assessed by class roll or sign-up sheet.

You will lose 1% from your 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 (100 points)**

It is essential to keep in mind that your presence in the class is not enough. You need to make your presence meaningful by participating in our discussions. Those who contribute to the conversations get a better share of this element of the grade.

Each session will begin with a series of basic questions on the assigned readings. If you keep up with those readings, you can easily answer these questions and usher us into the actual discussion.

- **Discussion Posts (100 points)**

Based on the readings that we have for each session, you are given a number of prompts. Your job is to pick one of them and write a short response to it on the Discussion Board on Canvas. This is a weekly assignment and I understand that you also have other courses to attend;

therefore, I am not setting a word limit or textual rubric for it. You are not being asked to write a well-organized and authoritative essay. There is no right or wrong either! However, it must be relevant to what we are reading and must include clear textual references to it. Feel free to share whatever comes to your mind with everyone else. What you post on our discussion board will be the departure point for our conversations in the class. It would be a good idea for you to take a quick look at what other people have said about the readings and come to the sessions anticipating what we will be discussing.

- **Five Close Reading and Annotations: 200 words each (200 points)**

Perusall is a tool which allows you to annotate short excerpts of our texts and do a close reading analysis. You can access Perusall through Canvas. During the semester, there will be five excerpts from our readings available for you to annotate and write your reflection on them.

The purpose of this assignment is to help you focus on the form of literary texts and rely on them in your analysis of them.

P.S.: In our first Writing Clinic, together we will go through how Perusall works.

- **Five Response Papers: 600 words each, (300 points)**

As a part of this course, you are required to write a number of essays, each of them a minimum of 600 words. As we go ahead with our readings, movies, and the relevant discussions, you get to choose the item that you want from the syllabus and pick a theme, a character, a scene, or a particular connection with another text to write your analysis on it. We will discuss the mechanics of these response papers in our sessions together.

For these writings, you will also be getting feedback. These assignments should also help you with building your final paper (item number five on this list)

- **Two Reflection Papers: 250 words each (50 points)**

Once in the middle of the semester and once towards the end, you are expected to write your thoughts about your performance, how the course is going, and what your expectations are.

- **Final Paper: 1500 words, (200 points)**

For your critical analysis paper, you will need to write a professional critical analysis paper. This is where you to combine close reading skills with critical concepts, historical information, and the theoretical frameworks that we have covered through the semester. You are expected to produce a strong conceptual argument that is supported by your secondary sources.

These papers will be graded on a percentage scale: 90-100, excellent; 80-89, good to very good; 70-79 average to good; 60-69, below average; below 60 is not a passing

grade. All students, whatever your grade be, will have the option to rewrite the essay.

Writing Rubric

What to focus on when writing

There are a number of criteria that your writings should meet in order to obtain a satisfactory grade. Here are the important items in your writing:

Coherence (25%):

Your writings should be coherent. Every time you write an essay, you have a main argument that you decide to write about and you have some supporting ideas for it. When you are writing, you should move through your ideas smoothly and logically. Your supporting ideas should not

contradict with one another, and they should be at the service of your main argument.

Language and Tone (25%):

When writing your comprehensive assignments, final paper prospectus, and critical analysis essay, you should use a language that fits the academic discussions. These assignments are very different from discussion posts on Canvas, or from when you are talking about your ideas in class. Therefore, the language that you use in them has to be compatible with their nature.

For your discussions and reflections, you can write your essay without the need for a specific language.

Vocabulary and Structure (25%):

Your writings in this class are considered as professional essays in literature. Therefore, you're required to use the appropriate terms that you will learn during our discussions in your writing. Moreover, your writings should follow the appropriate structure in English language. Make sure you read, and re-read, your assignments before submitting.

Textual References (25%):

Your writings should demonstrate your familiarity with the text about which you are writing. You need to prove that you have read the text thoroughly and are able to make references to it while you write in order to make your point.

CLASSROOM POLICIES:

Classroom Cordiality:

As mentioned previously, some of our readings include accounts of unpleasant experiences, provocative ideas, and coarse language. This requires extra attention on our behalf. It is crucial for all of us to maintain respect towards one another as each of us comes from a different background. Through respect and mutual understanding our engagement with controversial topics can be facilitated.

Makeup Policy:

Except in the case of certified illness or other UF accepted excuse (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>), 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 the instructor on his or her return to classes.

Cell phone policy:

You are expected to turn off your cell phones or to set them to “Do Not Disturb” mode as nobody wants to be disturbed or have their speech interrupted by someone else’s cell phone.

Late Policy:

Arriving late to the class disrupts the flow of conversations and also prevents you from being a part of it. Each time you are late, you lose 0.5% of your final participation grade.

Another point that matters when it comes to punctuality is when you submit your assignments in terms of deadlines. I understand how other courses that you are taking also affect your working schedule so I strongly recommend that if you are not making it to our assignment deadlines, you should write to me so we can figure out how to make things work for you with minimum damage to your final grade. If I do not get anything from you - neither your work nor an explanation - by the submission deadline, you will lose the grade for that assignment.

Sexual Harassment:

The University of Florida is committed to providing a safe educational, working, and residential environment

that is free from sexual harassment or misconduct directed towards any and all members of the community: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/about/title-ix-rights/>

Academic Honesty:

Everyone is 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; <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/>).

Online Course Evaluation:

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu>.

Grading Scale (& GPA equivalent):

Here is the university grading scale:

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	S
4.00	3.67	3.33	3.00	2.67	2.33	2.00	1.67	1.33	1.00	0.67	0

Note: A grade of C- is not a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College Basic distribution credit. For further information on UF's Grading Policy, and how letter grades are considered in your GPA calculation see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

<https://student.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html>

SCHEDULE

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

1) Introduction, foundations

Weeks 1-2:

A historical timeline of the Atlantic World

Questions Posed by My Cat by Tsitsi Dangarembga

2) Coercion

Weeks 3-4:

Poetry of Phillis Wheatley

The History of Mary Prince

Belle by Amma Asante

3) In the New World

Weeks 5-7:

Louisiana by Erna Brodber

Daughters of the Dust by Julie Dash

4) From the New World to Africa

Weeks 8-12:

The Wondrous and Tragic Life of Ivan and Ivana by Maryse Condé

Atlantique by Mati Diop

5) **Back to Europe**

Weeks 13-14:

Voyage in the Dark by Jean Rhys

Introduction, Foundations	Week 1	01/13	Introducing the syllabus and discussing the course objectives
		01/15	Writing Clinic Going over various types of writing assignments
		01/17	<i>Questions Posed by My Cat</i> , a Ted Talk by Tsitsi Dangarembga
	Week 2	01/20	Happy Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Day
		01/22	The Atlantic World in perspective (part 1)
		01/24	The Atlantic World in perspective (part 2)
Coercion	Week 3	01/27	<i>Poetry of Phillis Wheatley</i>
		01/29	<i>Poetry of Phillis Wheatley</i>
		01/31	<i>History of Mary Prince</i> Perusall Annotation (1)
	Week 4	02/03	<i>History of Mary Prince</i>
		02/05	<i>Belle</i> by Amma Asante
		02/07	<i>Belle</i> by Amma Asante Response Paper (1)
In the New World	Week 5	02/10	<i>Louisiana</i> by Erna Brodber (1-28)
		02/12	<i>Louisiana</i> by Erna Brodber (31-53)
		02/14	<i>Louisiana</i> by Erna Brodber (57-74)
	Week 6	02/17	<i>Louisiana</i> by Erna Brodber (77-93)
		02/19	<i>Louisiana</i> by Erna Brodber (97-125)
		02/21	<i>Louisiana</i> by Erna Brodber (129-166) Perusall Annotation (2)

	Week 7	02/24	<i>Daughters of Dust</i> by Julie Dash
		02/26	<i>Daughters of Dust</i> by Julie Dash
		02/28	Reflection Day (1) Response Paper (2)
From New World to Africa	Week 8	03/03	<i>The Wondrous and Tragic Life of Ivan and Ivana</i> by Maryse Condé (15- 37)
		03/05	<i>The Wondrous and Tragic Life of Ivan and Ivana</i> by Maryse Condé (15- 58)
		03/07	<i>The Wondrous and Tragic Life of Ivan and Ivana</i> by Maryse Condé (58- 85) Perusall Annotation (3)
	Week 9	03/10	<i>The Wondrous and Tragic Life of Ivan and Ivana</i> by Maryse Condé (86- 110)
		03/12	<i>The Wondrous and Tragic Life of Ivan and Ivana</i> by Maryse Condé (110- 137)
		03/14	<i>The Wondrous and Tragic Life of Ivan and Ivana</i> by Maryse Condé (137- 166)
	Week 10		Spring Break Perusall Annotation (4) Response Paper (3)
	Week 11	03/24	<i>The Wondrous and Tragic Life of Ivan and Ivana</i> by Maryse Condé (167- 196)
		03/26	<i>The Wondrous and Tragic Life of Ivan and Ivana</i> by Maryse Condé (196- 226)
		03/28	<i>The Wondrous and Tragic Life of Ivan and Ivana</i> by Maryse Condé (226- 266)
	Week 12	03/31	Writing Clinic
		04/02	<i>Atlantique</i> by Mati Diop
04/04		<i>Atlantique</i> by Mati Diop Response Paper (4)	
Back to Europe	Week 13	04/07	<i>Voyage in the Dark</i> by Jean Rhys (3-36)

		04/09	<i>Voyage in the Dark</i> by Jean Rhys (37-71)
		04/11	<i>Voyage in the Dark</i> by Jean Rhys (72-100) Perusal Annotation (5)
	Week 14	04/14	<i>Voyage in the Dark</i> by Jean Rhys (103-138)
		04/16	<i>Voyage in the Dark</i> by Jean Rhys (141-173)
		04/18	<i>Voyage in the Dark</i> by Jean Rhys (174-192) Response Paper (5)
	Week 15	04/21	Writing Clinic
		04/23	Reflection Day (2)

Final Paper Due on May 1st

