

LIT 2000: INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE

Fall 2023

Section: 1A31

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:

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COURSE INFORMATION:

Days/Times	MWF: 10:40-11:30 AM
Location	TUR B310

COURSE PREREQUISITE: ENC 1101

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course examines the unique and changing roles 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 you to a range of literary genres, from different countries and historical periods.

This course helps you develop the critical skill 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 literature. By becoming more skillful readers of literature and its contexts, you become better readers of the worlds that literature addresses, developing your ability to decipher meaning from language, and better understanding your own interactions with science, technology, media, commerce, and politics.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

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

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

1. Demonstrate knowledge of specific literary works and the structures and conventions of literary genres.
2. Produce original, critical readings of literary texts, using different methods of interpretation, while identifying formal and genre-related elements in the texts.
3. Critically assess the roles that literature has played historically and continues to play in human experience.

4. Connect literary texts and their biographical, historical, and cultural contexts.

GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes:

1. Content: Demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the academic discipline.
2. Communication: Communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms. Students will participate in class discussions throughout the semester to reflect on assigned readings.
3. Critical Thinking: Analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods.

PERSONAL COURSE NOTE

The aims of this course are, in a way, radical. In our era of STEM dominance and discursive implosion in the realms of culture, religion, and politics, our daily lives have largely eschewed meaningful engagement with most forms of literature. Traditional literature especially eludes the grasp of many, our attention and consciousness being dominated by destructively surface level modes of viewing and reading. Our goal in this course is to attempt to begin a fight against this—to intentionally and discerningly interact both with the important, and hopefully inspiring and illuminating, texts of this course, and with each other through our daily class discourses. Reading and writing about literature, and habitually exposing ourselves to it and immersing ourselves in it can be seen as a way to develop a vocational path that incorporates not only a particular field of study or a career, but one's entire life and the lives of others. Vocation and literature are both often ignored or obscured by the world and its fashions, and by encountering one we hope to begin to hear the voice of the other.

REQUIRED BOOKS FOR PURCHASE:

(NOTE: I recommend, if possible, purchasing from AbeBooks or a similar used book website. Pay attention to increased delivery times, however. You need to have each book before we begin reading them!)

- Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy: Inferno*, Translated by John D. Sinclair (ISBN: 9780195004120)
- William Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*, Pelican Shakespeare Edition (ISBN: 9780143131748)
- Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Barnes and Noble Classics Edition (ISBN: 9781593080259)
- Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (ISBN: 9780385667838)
- Bo Burnham, *Egghead* (ISBN: 9781455519132)
- James Joyce, *Dubliners*, Barnes and Noble Classics Edition (ISBN: 9781593080310)
- Svetlana Alexievich, *Voices from Chernobyl*

(ISBN: 9780312425845)

Other Course Texts (Provided on Canvas):

- Flannery O'Connor, "A Temple of the Holy Ghost," "A Good Man is Hard to Find"
- H.P. Lovecraft, "The Shadow over Innsmouth," "The Call of Cthulhu"
- Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The American Scholar," "Letter to Martin Van Buren"
- G. K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy*, Chapter 4
- T. S. Eliot, "The Hollow Men," "Tradition and the Individual Talent," "*Hamlet*," "What is a Classic?," "Four Quartets"
- Ezra Pound, "Religio," "Provincialism the Enemy," "An Introduction to the Economic Nature of the United States"
- Selections from Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*
- Chinua Achebe, "An Image of Africa"
- "What Language is That?" from Uwem Akpan's *Say You're One of Them*
- Ise Katsura, *Onani Master Kurosawa*

GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

Summary of grading

- Attendance & participation/in-class discussion (25%)
- 1 Close Reading of a literary text or passage (25%)
- 1 Critical Analysis paper (30%)
- 2 online exams (10% each—20%)

1. Attendance & Participation (25%)

Attendance: Attendance/Roll will be noted at the beginning of class. Up to 3 unexcused absences are permitted, beyond that absences will harm the participation grade barring extraordinary circumstances. Repeated tardiness will also harm the participation score. 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: Students are expected to complete the assigned readings before each class. Each week will begin with a series of basic questions on the contents of the assigned readings. If students are unable to answer these questions, it will be assumed that they have not done the reading and penalties will be appropriately applied. Consistent participation in class discussions, demonstrated knowledge of the assigned readings will also contribute to this portion of the final grade.

Notice that I have not included any daily or weekly "check-ups" or minor assignments such as Canvas discussion/response posts, course wikis or discussion boards, etc. I think this type of assignment distracts from the pure goal of reading and thinking about literature. The experimental aspect of this class will be giving you a baseline of trust that you will do the readings in order to contribute to our ongoing group discourse. I believe/hope this has the most potential for success. Please take this

course and readings seriously. It will be obvious if you attempt to “phone-in” discussions based on not having read, and I will have to make adjustments that will be much less enjoyable for all of us.

Since we’re not doing minor participation assignments or exercises like online posts or quizzes, that means ***it’s essential that we all regularly participate in group discussion***. I know talking in class in front of others can be intimidating, but try not to fear sharing your ideas and see how we respond to them and how they might be challenged or improved. At the same time also note that ***participation for the sake of participation is not the goal***. If you are contributing regularly and putting forth interesting or sincere thoughts, that is far more desirable than speaking in every class but being “that kid” that everyone dreads monopolizing the discourse. It’s a balance.

Here are a few qualities by which participation can be evaluated: **Individuality**, such that comments are not merely recapitulating events or ideas in the readings and reflect something of the student speaker. **Usefulness**, such that comments are relevant to texts being discussed, and might direct use to ideas we might not otherwise have considered. **Openness**, such that you can stand by your convictions but also be interested in hearing opposing ideas and developing or changing your views accordingly. **Discursivity**, such that thoughts contribute to ongoing discussion and don’t try to overbear or oversimplify topics. I’m aware that this type of exercise might be new for a lot of you. So I don’t expect perfection, especially early in the semester. We’ll develop together.

2. Close Reading Paper: 1000 words, 25%

This assignment will test student skills in close reading, especially as that skill pertains to passages or scenes from epic poetry, drama, and novels. Students will be expected to analyze a text carefully and develop an argument regarding the whole of the text through a close reading. No outside sources may be used for this assignment. **The Close Reading assignment is due during the 8th week of the semester**. It is recommended that students consult their ideas and early writing drafts with me in the lead up to this due date. Office hours are a great opportunity to brainstorm and bounce ideas off the instructional “sounding-board” as we hone your writing and thinking processes.

3. Critical Analysis Paper: 1,500 words, 30%

This assignment asks students to combine close reading skills with critical concepts or historical information introduced through 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 15th week of the semester. Though we won’t be reading much supplementary scholarly literature directly in the class, throughout the semester discussions and lectures will touch on relevant scholarly considerations and methodologies for finding and considering such literature.

4. Two Online Exams (10% each—20%)

Method of assessment will be 2 on-line, in class exams (each exam is worth 10%, or together, 20% of the total grade). Exams will be given on-line (via Canvas) and will consist entirely of short answer questions meant to gauge if/confirm that students are completing the assigned readings. That is, these will not be the sort of exams you can “study for” the week of or night before. If you consistently complete your readings, the exams will be quite easy. If you neglect your readings, the exams will be more or less impossible. Submitted exams will be assessed for evidence of collusion.

CLASSROOM POLICIES:

- **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. Where possible, make-ups should be arranged by email or in person prior to the expected absence. In case of illness, students should contact the course instructor.
- **Late Work.** Papers will be penalized by applying this multiplier to your grade:

$$t/(7*24*60)$$

where t is the number of minutes the work is late. For example, if an assignment is submitted exactly 2 days late (2880 minutes) and receives a pre-penalty grade of 90, your final grade for the assignment would be 89.4. The late policy is quite generous, basically giving you a 2-day grace period for assignments but with accelerating penalties as the deadline continues past. You need not ask to submit an assignment late; you can, but with the appropriate late penalty. Unpenalized extensions for illness, emergencies, etc., will be handled on a case-by-case basis. (Credit to Hoss Craft for providing the late formula.)

- **Electronics Policy:** Please do not use phones or laptops unnecessarily during class. Laptops will be necessary when we are discussing texts provided in online PDFs, but on other days we shouldn't need these devices out. It is advised that you take physical, written notes during lecture and discussion. This electronics policy is so our communication with each other is more intentional and productive.
- **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 [Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code | SCCR \(ufl.edu\)](#)

Plagiarism and other forms of cheating and dishonesty on papers will not be tolerated in this class. This includes use of AI such as ChatGPT as well as copying text from previous generations of students or students from other universities. **There is a zero-tolerance policy for all forms of academic dishonesty.** Any assignment that violates this rule will be given a grade of zero and a case will be filed with the appropriate academic and administrative authorities. If you are concerned about proper citation style please feel free to visit during office hours and we can review all of this (and fear not—it is easy for an instructor to distinguish between unintentional and malicious practices.)

- **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 ([Disability Resource Center - 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 professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

OTHER CLASS POLICIES/RULES

1. You must complete all assignments to receive credit for this course.
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>
2. Paper Format & Submission: Papers should be submitted with standard, 1-inch margins, double spacing, and 12-point Times New Roman font. All papers will be submitted electronically, via Canvas.
3. Paper Maintenance Responsibilities. Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course (save things on a cloud server in case of severe computer issues). Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.
4. For information on UF Grading policies, see:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>
5. Grade Appeals. In 1000- and 2000-level courses, students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant by email (cblount@ufl.edu). Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.
6. UF's policy on Harassment: UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty:
<http://hr.ufl.edu/manager-resources/recruitment-staffing/institutional-equitydiversity/resources/harassment/>
7. There will be several opportunities for extra credit throughout the semester. These might include attending certain lectures or other events in the English Department or on campus related to the interests and themes of this class. Each completed extra credit opportunity will award one bonus point to a paper or exam grade.

Grading Scale (& GPA equivalent):

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
100-93	92-90	89-87	86-83	82-80	79-77	76-73	72-70	69-67	63-60	62-60	59
(4.0)	(3.67)	(3.33)	(3.0)	(2.67)	(2.33)	(2.0)	(1.67)	(1.33)	(1.0)	(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, see:

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

<http://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html>

Example Essay Rubric (Credit to Christopher Smith for general format and style)					
Length	10 points: within 10% of Length	6 points: 11% to 15% off of length	3 points: 15% to 20% off of length	0 points: more than 20% off of Length	10 Points
Thesis Statement	15 to >12 pts Thesis is clearly stated and is a provable point	12 to >0.0 pts Thesis unclear or unprovable There is a statement of organization, but perhaps it is a bit fuzzy about what the paper will actually argue. Or it is a statement that the paper will “discuss” or “examine” something, without stating what the paper’s argument will be.		0 pts No thesis or not submitted	15 points
Secondary Sources	20 to >10.0 pts Two academic sources, properly cited	10 to >5.0 pts One source, or improper sources Paper only has one secondary source, or it has one academic source and another source that is not academic (e.g., an encyclopedia, a newspaper or magazine article, a personal or organizational website, etc.). One source may be used for information rather than analysis. Citations may also have some issues.		5 to >0 pts No sources or improper sources, not submitted The paper has no secondary sources, or all sources are non-academic . Sources only used for information. Sources are uncited or citations have major issues.	20 points
Organization/Flow	20 to >15.0 pts Well organized paragraphs Each body paragraph has a clear point that contributes to proving the thesis, and includes primary source textual evidence and analysis.	15 to >5.0 pts Some organizational problems Some body paragraphs may go off on tangents that do not contribute to the thesis. Some paragraphs may lack a clearly articulated point, or discuss the text in a broad way without citing specific evidence.		5 to >0 pts Serious organizational problems or not submitted Organization is so problematic it is hard to follow the argument at all. No primary source evidence, or no analysis.	20 points

Argumentation	20 to >15.0 pts Convincing The paper's argument follows logically from point to point and ultimately succeeds in convincing the reader of its argument (even if the reader might have some minor reservations)	15 to >10.0 pts Mostly convincing The argument is mostly convincing, but there might be one or two paragraphs that are not convincing, or where the argument has obvious flaws that a well-informed reader can easily see. Despite these flaws, however, the paper succeeds overall in convincing the reader of the thesis statement.	10 to >5.0 pts Partially convincing There are several paragraphs that are not convincing, or where the argument has obvious flaws that a well-informed reader can easily see. While the reader can see some merit in the overall thesis and might be partially convinced, they remain dubious	5 to >0 pts Not convincing, or not submitted The argument has no logical flow, and is so flawed that the reader remains totally unconvinced.	20 points
Mechanics	15 to > 12 pts Grammatical and correctly spelled, good sentence structure	12 to >5.0 pts Some mechanical errors Some misspellings or grammatical errors, but overall very readable	5 to >0 pts Many mechanical errors Misspellings or grammatical errors are so severe they make the paper hard to read or understand.	15 points	
Total Points: 100					

Note: It is a recurring pattern that papers with severe deficiency in one of these categories will often have problems that “spill over” into other categories. For example, a paper with noticeably poor mechanics will often hinder the comprehensibility of the paper’s argument and flow. So make sure to take each of these categories of a paper’s content seriously!

CLASS SCHEDULE

(Students should note that this schedule is a guideline and may change)

- WEEK 1 Introduction to class and ourselves, expectations, previews.
Inferno, Cantos 1-11
- WEEK 2 *Inferno*, Cantos 12-22
- WEEK 3 *Inferno*, Cantos 23-33
- WEEK 4 *The Winter's Tale*
- WEEK 5 *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Part 1
- WEEK 6 *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Part 2
- WEEK 7 *Things Fall Apart*, Part 1
- WEEK 8 *Things Fall Apart*, Part 2
"An Image of Africa"
Selections from *Heart of Darkness*
"What Language is That?" from *Say You're One of Them*
CLOSE READING PAPER DUE ON WEDNESDAY
- WEEK 9 *Egghead*
"A Temple of the Holy Ghost"
"A Good Man is Hard to Find"
"The Call of Cthulhu"
MIDTERM EXAM
- WEEK 10 "The Shadow Over Innsmouth"
"The American Scholar"
"Letter to Martin Van Buren"
- WEEK 11 *Orthodoxy*, Chapter 4
"Religio"
"Provincialism the Enemy"
"Introduction to the Economic Nature of the United States"
- WEEK 12 "The Hollow Men"
"Tradition and the Individual Talent"
"*Hamlet*"
"What is a Classic?"
"Four Quartets"

WEEK 13 *Dubliners*, Part 1

WEEK 14 *Dubliners*, Part 2

WEEK 15 *Voices from Chernobyl*, Part 1
Chernobyl HBO Miniseries
CRITICAL ANALYSIS PAPER DUE ON WEDNESDAY

WEEK 16 *Voices from Chernobyl*, Part 2
Onani Master Kurosawa
FINAL EXAM