

# **LIT 2120: World Literature 1700 - Present Alienation and Ourselves**

**Section 2504, Class (15307)  
Fall 2022 Syllabus**

## **Instructor Contact Information**

**Instructor Name:** Yvonne Medina  
(Pronounced EEve – on MID - eena)

**Class Meeting Times:** Monday, Wednesday, Friday Period 8 (3-3:50 PM)

**Class Location:** Anderson Hall 0013

**Office Hours:** Monday, Wednesday 4-5 PM. Available at other times and locations by appointment in person or over Zoom.

**Office Location:** Turlington 4113 (4th floor)

**Instructor Email:** [yvonnedmedina@ufl.edu](mailto:yvonnedmedina@ufl.edu) (also available via Canvas' messaging system)

## **Course Description**

Is it possible to define “world literature” without evidence of literature from other planets? This is not just a facetious question but an invitation for us to think critically about canon formation and the qualities that unite various national and ethnic literatures into what we consider “world literature.” With these questions in mind, the primary texts in this course cluster around three main themes which intersect with one another: translation, embodiment, and transculturation or translocation. We will explore the ways “trans,” meaning across in Latin, defines the literature we read on both a textual level in translated texts as well as the migrations—both voluntary and forced—of characters and authors from their homelands. These texts include immigrants, enslaved people, rural migrants, residential boarding school survivors, and political refugees. We will discuss the ways these intersectional identities (race, sexual orientation, disability, class, religion, and gender identity) overlap and inform each text.

This course surveys a wide array of examples of national literature that resonate with local and global audiences from Eastern, Western, Northern, and Southern hemispheres. Primary texts include poetry, films, graphic novels, essays, short stories, novels, vignettes, theoretical texts, and folk tales. First, we will draw on theorists such as Walter Benjamin to discuss the formal and cultural challenges of translation and what it means to read a text in translation. Can we trust a translation? Can a translation ever remain completely faithful to the source text? The next major thematic cluster centers on embodiment, or how the body and ability emerge as a central concern

of world literature. The final thematic cluster focuses on transculturation, the effects of migration and colonialism on literature. Over the course of the semester students will write a series of short and long form papers. They will also give a brief oral presentation on a piece of scholarship. Students will visit the Harn Art Museum's Speechless exhibit on art with textual components to inspire us to think about the connections between art and text throughout the world.

Content warnings for the primary materials include but are not limited to sexual violence, homophobia, transphobia, misgendering, genocide, homicide, mutilation, racism, ableism, sanism, trauma, human trafficking, sexism, abortion, psychosis, and xenophobia. Please see course policy on trigger warnings.

### **Required Texts**

*Like Water for Chocolate*, Laura Esquivel, translated by Carol and Thomas Christensen  
*The Namesake*, Jhumpa Lahiri  
*Our Sister Killjoy*, Ama Ata Aidoo  
*The Arrival*, Shaun Tan

There is a free pdf of *The Stranger* translated by Matthew Ward online. Currently, *Rabbit-Proof Fence* is available for free on Tubi. *Eat, Drink, Man, Woman* is available to rent for \$2.99. I may host optional screenings of these films if there is student demand. If you are an Amazon Prime member, a digital copy of *The Namesake* is free through Prime Reading.

All other texts will be available on the course Canvas site under "Files."

### **Breakdown of Required 6,000 Word Count**

Close Reading (1,000 words)  
Reflection on the field trip to the Harn Museum (1,000 words)  
4 Reading responses (500 words each, 2,000 words total)  
Proposal for final paper/project (300 words)  
Final paper, critical analysis (1,700 words)

### **Final Grade**

Participation = 20% (15% daily participation, 5% discussion question and scholarly analysis presentation)  
Close Reading = 20%  
Reflection on the field trip to the Harn Museum = 15%  
4 Reading Responses = 20%  
Final Paper/Project = 25%

## Schedule of Readings

The calendar contains the reading and writing assignments for the semester. Readings will be discussed on the day they appear, and assignments will be due at midnight on the date they appear. For example, on Monday, August 29th we will discuss “The Library of Babel.” Assignments are due at midnight on the due date. For instance, the first reading response is due at midnight on Friday, September 9th.

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

<b>Date</b>	<b>Discussion Topic</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
	<b>Translation</b>	
W 8/24	Introduction to the Course	
F 8/26	“The Task of the Translator” Walter Benjamin (Germany) Translated by Suhrkamp Verlag	
M 8/29	Selections of Taras Shevchenko’s poems (Ukraine) Comparative translations	
W 8/31	“The Library of Babel” Jorge Luis Borges (Argentina) Translated by Andrew Hurley	
F 9/2	Selections of Matsuo Bashō’s haikus (Japan) Comparative Translations	
M 9/5	<i>No Class, Labor Day</i>	
	<b>Embodiment</b>	
W 9/7	Hans Christian Andersen’s “The Little Mermaid” (Denmark) Translated by M.R. James	
F 9/9	Discussion of Close Reading Assignment	Reading Response #1 Due

Date	Discussion Topic	Assignment Due
M 9/12	Selections from Charles Baudelaire's <i>Flowers of Evil</i> (France) Comparative Translations	
W 9/14	<i>Like Water for Chocolate</i> , Laura Esquivel (Mexico) Translated by Carol and Thomas Christensen Chapters: "January" – "March"	
F 9/16	<i>Like Water for Chocolate</i> , Laura Esquivel (Mexico) Translated by Carol and Thomas Christensen Chapters: "April" – "June"	
M 9/19	<i>Like Water for Chocolate</i> , Laura Esquivel (Mexico) Translated by Carol and Thomas Christensen Chapters: "July" – "September"	
W 9/21	<i>Like Water for Chocolate</i> , Laura Esquivel (Mexico) Translated by Carol and Thomas Christensen Chapters: "October" – "December"	
F 9/23	<i>No Class</i>	Close Reading Due
M 9/26	First chapter of <i>Swann's Way</i> , Marcel Proust (France) Translated by Scott Moncrieff	
W 9/28	Selections from Alan Marshall's <i>I Can Jump Puddles</i> and <i>This is the Grass</i> (Australia)	
F 9/30	Excerpt from Tahar Ben Jelloun's <i>The Sand Child</i> Translated by Alan Sheridan (Morocco)	
M 10/3	<i>Eat, Drink, Man, Woman</i> , Ang Lee (Taiwan)	
	<b>Transculturation</b>	
W 10/5	Introduction to <i>Orientalism</i> , Edward Said (Palestine, U.S.)	
F 10/7	<i>No Class, Homecoming</i>	Reading Response #2 Due

<b>Date</b>	<b>Discussion Topic</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
M 10/10	<i>The Stranger</i> , Albert Camus (France, Algeria) Translated by Matthew Ward Translator's Note, Part 1 Chapters 1-4	
W 10/12	<i>The Stranger</i> , Albert Camus (France, Algeria) Translated by Matthew Ward Part 1 Chapters 5-6, Part 2 Chapters 1-2	
F 10/14	<i>The Stranger</i> , Albert Camus (France, Algeria) Translated by Matthew Ward Part 2 Chapters 3-5	
M 10/17	<i>The Namesake</i> , Jhumpa Lahiri (U.S., India) Chapters 1-2	
W 10/19	<i>The Namesake</i> , Jhumpa Lahiri (U.S., India) Chapters 3-4	
F 10/21	Field Trip to the Harn Museum	Reading Response #3 Due
M 10/24	<i>The Namesake</i> , Jhumpa Lahiri (U.S., India) Chapters 5-6	
W 10/26	<i>The Namesake</i> , Jhumpa Lahiri (U.S., India) Chapter 7	
F 10/28	<i>The Namesake</i> , Jhumpa Lahiri (U.S., India) Chapter 8	
M 10/31	<i>The Namesake</i> , Jhumpa Lahiri (U.S., India) Chapters 9-10	
W 11/2	<i>The Namesake</i> , Jhumpa Lahiri (U.S., India) Chapters 11-12	
F 11/4	<i>Oroonoko</i> , Aphra Behn (England) P. 1-14	Museum Reflection Due
M 11/7	<i>Oroonoko</i> , Aphra Behn (England) P. 15-28	
W 11/9	<i>Oroonoko</i> , Aphra Behn (England) P. 29-41	
F 11/11	<i>No Class, Veterans Day</i>	

<b>Date</b>	<b>Discussion Topic</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
M 11/14	“The Ugly Tourist” and “On Seeing England for the First Time,” Jamaica Kincaid (Antigua)	
W 11/16	Workshop Day, Peer Review Project Proposals	
F 11/18	<i>Our Sister Killjoy</i> , Ama Ata Aidoo (Ghana) P. 1-46	Final Paper/Project Proposals due over the weekend
M 11/21	<i>Our Sister Killjoy</i> , Ama Ata Aidoo (Ghana) p. 47-82	
W 11/23	<i>No Class, Thanksgiving Break</i>	
F 11/25	<i>No Class, Thanksgiving Break</i>	
M 11/28	<i>Our Sister Killjoy</i> , Ama Ata Aidoo (Ghana) P. 83-134	
W 11/30	<i>Rabbit-Proof Fence</i> , Phillip Noyce (Australia)	
F 12/2	<i>The Arrival</i> , Shaun Tan (Australia, Malaysia)	Reading Response #4 Due
M 12/5	<i>We Should All Be Feminists</i> , Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (Nigeria)	
W 12/7	Last Day of Class	
Sat 12/10		Final Paper Due

**The final paper is due on Saturday, December 10th.**

### 1. *Participation and In-Class Discussion*

Students are expected to read the assigned readings before class. Consistent participation in class discussions and demonstrated knowledge of the assigned readings will contribute to this portion of the final grade. Be certain to bring your texts to class every day—either electronic copies, print-outs, or books – and paper and pen or pencil with which to write.

Each student will also select a day to compose 3-5 discussion questions for the class. They will post these questions to the class DisCord thread the day before class and weave them into the class discussion the following day. They will also briefly synopsise a scholarly article (2-5 minute informal presentation) on the text for the class, sharing if they agree or disagree with the author’s claims.

## 2. ***Reading Responses (2,000 words)***

Students are required to write four 500 word responses to four texts we have covered in the course. Students may structure their responses like a close reading or raise and develop an interpretive or critical question surrounding the text. They may make judgments regarding the period, history, politics and ethical questions that are relevant to the text. Each response should engage with evidence from the source text.

## 3. ***Close Reading (1,000 words)***

This assignment will test students' skills in close reading. Students will be expected to analyze a text's content, form, and literary qualities carefully. They will develop an argument regarding the whole of the text through their close reading. No outside sources may be used for this assignment.

## 3) ***Reflection on the field trip to the Harn Museum (1,000 words)***

In this assignment students will reflect on our class visit to the Harn Museum in the form of a personal essay. This essay should describe an object in the museum through ekphrasis (the textual description of a piece of visual art.) John Keats' "Ode on a Grecian Urn" inspires us to interact with the materials in the collection. Students will draw on information provided by the museum to situate the work of art in its historical context, drawing connections to the present. Students can select an object on display in the Speechless exhibit to discuss the ways textual and visual media interact or a visual object from the museum's permanent collection/other exhibits.

## 4) ***Prospectus and Final Paper/Project (2,000 words total)***

Students will develop an argument about a particular text or compare two texts we have read over the course of the semester. This assignment asks students to combine close reading skills with critical concepts or historical information introduced in class or supplemental readings. The goal is for students to produce a strong conceptual argument supported by textual and contextual evidence. Students should also position their argument within the current scholarly conversation surrounding their chosen text(s).

Students will write a 300 word prospectus on their final paper/project to be approved by the instructor. This prospectus will give an overview of the project and a list of at least 3 secondary sources they will draw on in their argument. The final paper can take the form of a traditional analytical paper as described above or it can take the form of a digital project. For example, students can create a video essay or TikTok about a text assigned in class or global literature in general. If a student chooses this final project form they still have to adhere to the word requirement to obtain credit for the course. They can provide a transcript of the audio or otherwise describe in their prospectus how they plan to fulfill the word requirement for the course.

Note for all writing assignments:

Students can expand on ideas they previously submitted in the form of asynchronous discussion posts, short papers etc. in subsequent assignments. However, the operative word is “expand;” they should produce original content for each assignment and avoid self-plagiarism.

**GRADING SCALE**

A 4.0 93-100 930-1000 C 2.0 73-76 730-769

A- 3.67 90-92 900-929 C- 1.67 70-72 700-729

B+ 3.33 87-89 870-899 D+ 1.33 67-69 670-699

B 3.0 83-86 830-869 D 1.0 63-66 630-669

B- 2.67 80-82 800-829 D- 0.67 60-62 600-629

C+ 2.33 77-79 770-799 E 0.00 0-59 0-599

**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>

“A” range papers	“A” papers demonstrate originality of thought, a convincing argument based on rigorous research, a thoughtful organizational structure, adept use of academic language, and a smooth writing style. There are almost no mechanical errors. These papers go above and beyond the basic requirements of the assignment.
“B” range papers	“B” papers satisfy the requirements of the assignment and show some originality of thought. The argument is convincing but not as original or well supported with evidence as an “A” paper. There is room for improvement in style and organization.
“C” range papers	“C” papers need more development and tend to resemble early drafts in the writing process. The paper meets the minimum requirements of the assignment but lacks adequate critical engagement and a sophisticated argument. Mechanical errors distract the reader.
“D” range papers	“D” papers barely meet the minimum requirements of the assignment. They demonstrate a weak understanding of the texts being analyzed, inadequate evidential support, lack of organization, and inattention to style.
“E” range papers	“E” papers do not satisfy the basic requirements of the assignment and therefore receive a failing grade. These papers may not meet the page requirement or the subject of the paper does not respond appropriately to the prompt.

**COURSE POLICIES**

1. *Assignments:* You must complete all major assignments to receive credit for this course. Every assignment counts towards the mandatory word count.



2. *Attendance:* Attendance is mandatory and will be taken daily. You may miss up to three 50 minute class periods without penalty. After three unexcused absences, you will receive a lowered course grade. If you miss two full weeks of class (six 50 minute unexcused absences), you will automatically fail the course. Absences will be excused only in accordance with UF policy. Acceptable reasons include illness, religious holidays, military obligation, and those absences covered by UF's 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 and for making up all assignments. Students are responsible for all work covered in class, all announcements, and all changes to the syllabus made in class.

3. *Tardiness:* Arriving late to class three times will count as one absence. If you are more than a few minutes late you must notify me so I can give you partial credit for attendance. You can do this by sending me a private message on Zoom or explaining the situation after class has ended.

4. *Covid-19 Information:* In response to COVID-19, the following recommendations are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

- If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit [one.ufl.edu](http://one.ufl.edu) for screening / testing and vaccination opportunities.
- If you are sick, stay home. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 to be evaluated.
- Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work.

4. *Paper Format & Submission:* Papers will be submitted in an accepted electronic file format (.doc, .docx, .rtf) on Canvas; no other formats are permitted. Do not submit pdfs as they are not easily compatible with Canvas. Your papers must be formatted according to MLA style and should be in 12-point Times New Roman font and double spaced with 1-inch margins and pages numbered. If you encounter a technological glitch on Canvas then you may email me the paper.

5. *Late Papers/Assignments:* All papers are due by midnight on the due date. Papers received late will be docked by a third of a letter grade for every day it is late i.e. an A- paper turned in one day late will receive a B+. No late papers will be accepted after three days unless

there are extenuating circumstances. If you would like to request an extension, then you must contact me at least 24 hours before the due date.

6. *Paper Maintenance Responsibilities.* Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.

7. *Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism:* UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge: “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: ‘On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.’” The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honorcode/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. A Student must not represent as the Student’s own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

- a. Stealing, misquoting, insufficiently paraphrasing, or patch-writing.
- b. Self-plagiarism, which is the reuse of the Student’s own submitted work, or the simultaneous submission of the Student’s own work, without the full and clear acknowledgment and permission of the Faculty to whom it is submitted.
- c. Submitting materials from any source without proper attribution.
- d. Submitting a document, assignment, or material that, in whole or in part, is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment the Student did not author.

7. *Accommodations for Disabilities:* Students with disabilities who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)), which will provide appropriate documentation to give your instructor early in the semester.

8. *Mental Health:* Students who are in distress or who are in need of counseling or urgent help: please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or 352-392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to you. UF’s Counseling and Wellness Center offers additional support: 352-392-1575, or contact them online: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>

9. *Grading Policies:* For information on UF Grading policies, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

10. *Grade Appeals.* Students may appeal a final grade upon consultation with Dr. Kenneth Kidd. Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

11. *Course Evaluations.* Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages asking you to go online and evaluate this course: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/Default.aspx>

12. *Classroom Behavior and Netiquette:* Please keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, ability, and ethnic backgrounds. Some of the texts we will discuss and write about engage controversial topics and opinions. Diversified student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own. Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal, and accordingly absence, from the class. You are also expected to be courteous in email messages and threaded discussions.

13. *Trigger Warnings:* Some of the literary works we discuss in this course contain disturbing and potentially traumatic material. These discussions may trigger unwanted thoughts. You may leave the classroom if you need to excuse yourself from the discussion. I will not count it as an absence if you contact me later to explain why you left the classroom. You will be responsible for any material that you miss or any related assignments. Contact the instructor or another student for notes and information about what you missed.

14. *Laptop Policy:* Laptops and other tablets should only be open to conduct relevant research or read an online version of the text. Cell phones should be in silent mode and out of sight. Internet surfing will result in a lowered participation grade. If it appears to me that a device is distracting, then I will inform you in person or via email that the behavior is decreasing your participation grade. I understand it is sometimes difficult to maintain focus during classes, so I will take this into account.

15. *UF's Policy on 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/policystatement/>

16. *Policy on Environmental Sustainability.* Whenever possible, I will use paper-sparing electronic media to distribute our course materials. Consider purchasing electronic editions of assigned texts when they are available, or used copies of print texts. You can also purchase used copies of books through BetterWorldBooks at great prices. Some of the proceeds fund literacy programs. (The instructor does not receive any remuneration for promoting this business. I only suggest it as an alternative to Amazon.) If you do not elect to keep your print books, consider sharing them with others after the semester ends. (For example, you could donate them to the Alachua County [Friends of the Library](#) annual book sale.)

17. *Writing Studio:* The writing studio is located on the second floor of Turlington and its services are available for free to all UF students. You may set up an appointment online and meet

one on one with a writing tutor who will help you refine your work at any stage of the writing process from selecting a topic to outlining and final editing. I strongly encourage you to use this service.

<https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/for-students/schedule-an-appointment/>

18. *Food Insecurity*: If you, or anyone you know, are experiencing food insecurity, the Pantry is a resource to visit. There is no proof of need required in order to shop at the Pantry; you must only bring in your valid UFID card. For more information visit

<https://pantry.fieldandfork.ufl.edu/>

19. *Student Nighttime Auxiliary Patrol (SNAP)*: SNAP is a free, nightly, campus safety and transportation service for students sponsored by UF Student Government, Student Traffic Court and UF Transportation and Parking Services.