

LIT 2000: Introduction to Literature (section 1A31), Fall 2017

Milt Moise

MWF Period 4: 10:40-11:30

Classroom: Turlington 2305

Office Hours: M & W, Per. 7-8, or by appointment, TUR 4216

Course Website: CANVAS

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the role literature has played in individuals' lives and in society. It is centered on three questions: *What is literature? Why do we write literature? And why do we read literature?* LIT 2000 introduces students to a diverse range of literary genres, from different national traditions and historical periods.

Among the primary aims of this course is to help students develop critical skills of literary analysis and interpretation. Students will also learn how formal and stylistic elements as well as historical contexts 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 relationship to 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 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 the human experience.
4. Draw connections between literary texts and their biographical, historical, and cultural contexts of authorship and reading.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Bring texts to class every day—electronic copies, print-outs, or print books. If you are reading a digital copy, you need to bring your laptop/tablet/e-reader to class (No cell-phones, please).

Novels, Drama, Epics, Graphic Novels:

- William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice* (online text at <http://www.shakespeare-online.com/plays/merchantscenes.html>)
- Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (bookstore)
- Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (bookstore)
- Ama Ata Aidoo, *Our Sister Killjoy* (bookstore)
- Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis* (bookstore)
- V.S. Naipaul, *Miguel Street* (bookstore)

Short Stories (Online/CANVAS):

- Jorge Luis Borges, "The Aleph," "The Library of Babel"
- Alice Munro, "The Moons of Jupiter"
- Ted Chiang, "The Story of Your Life"
- Ryunosuke Akutagawa "Dragon: The Old Potter's Tale"

Short Story Cycle:

- V. S. Naipaul, *Miguel Street*

Memoir:

- Rigoberta Menchú, *I Rigoberta Menchú*, (bookstore)

Poetry (Online/CANVAS):

- Emily Dickinson, "Wild Nights! – Wild Nights!," "Some Keep the Sabbath Going to Church," "Much Madness is Divinest Sense"
- W. B. Yeats, "The Second Coming," "Sailing to Byzantium,"
- Langston Hughes, "Ballad of the Landlord," "Harlem" (What happens to a dream deferred)

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of texts. I may add materials (usually shorter texts such as poems, short stories, essays, etc.) as the semester progresses. These will be available on CANVAS.

Optional viewing: The Michael Radford/Al Pacino film version of *The Merchant of Venice* is on reserve in the library.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

- Attendance & participation/in-class discussion (15%)
- 4 short response papers, one of which can be a creative response (poem, short story, one act play or a form of artistic expression approved by the instructor)
- 1 Close Reading of a literary text or passage (20%)
- 1 Critical Analysis paper (25%)
- 1 Midterm Exam (20%)

COURSE POLICIES:

1. You must complete all *assignments* to receive credit for this course.
2. *Attendance:* Daily and engaged participation is a priority in this course. All students should participate every class period by offering points of view, asking for clarification, and or writing when necessary. Attendance is mandatory. Missing three classes will result in a lowered grade, and missing 6 meetings will also result in automatic failure. Showing up late for class on more than two occasions will be considered as an absence. Please be guided by the university attendance policies:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>
3. *Paper Format & Submission:* Your assignments should be written in Times New Roman font, size 12, and follow standard MLA format. The majority of them will be submitted through CANVAS, except when indicated otherwise. In those cases, you will submit them at the start of class in hard copy.
4. *Late Papers/Assignments:* I will not accept late assignments. If you are experiencing challenges submitting your paper on time due to valid reasons, please email me in advance and explain so we can come up with an alternative arrangement.
5. *Paper Maintenance Responsibilities.* Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.
6. *Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism.* Plagiarism violates the Student Honor Code and requires reporting to the Dean of Students. All students must abide by the Student Honor Code:
<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.
7. Students with *disabilities* who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/), which will provide appropriate documentation to give the instructor.
8. For information on UF Grading policies, see:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>
9. *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, in the Department office (4008 TUR). Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

10. *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>
11. Students who face difficulties completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help may call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center (352) 392-1575, or contact them online:
<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>
12. *Classroom behavior and netiquette*: The classroom is a collegial and respectful environment, and will be treated thusly by all in attendance. You are expected to treat each other with respect, and show the appropriate level of deference to each other's opinions. Texting and other non class-related internet interactions are not acceptable.
13. *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-equity-diversity/resources/harassment/>

Schedule of Classes and Assignments

(Subject to Change)

Complete readings/assignments before class on the day they are listed

Unit One: What is Literature?

Week One: Introductions

Mon. Aug. 21 – Course Introduction and Syllabus Overview

Wed. Aug. 23 – “What is Literature?” Terry Eagleton

Fri. Aug 25 – “Dragon: The Old Potter’s Tale” Ryunosuke Akutagawa

Week Two: Poetry

Mon. Aug. 28 – “Wild Nights! Wild Nights!” “Some Keep the Sabbath Going to Church,” “Much Madness is Divinest Sense” Emily Dickinson **Drop/Add ends**

Wed. Aug 30 – “The Second Coming,” “Sailing to Byzantium” William Butler Yeats

Fri. Sept 1 – “Ballad of the Landlord,” “Harlem” (What happens to a dream deferred); **First Short Paper Response Due**

Week Three: Drama

Mon. Sept. 4 – **No class**

Wed. Sept. 6 – *The Merchant of Venice*, William Shakespeare

Fri. Sept. 8 – *The Merchant of Venice*, William Shakespeare

Week Four: Epic

Mon. Sept. 11 – *Omeros* Chapter 1 Derek Walcott

Wed. Sept. 13 – *Omeros*, Chapter 2 Derek Walcott

Fri. Sept. 15 – *Omeros* Book 3 Derek Walcott

Week Five: Short Story

Mon. Sept. 18 – “Moons of Jupiter,” Alice Munro

Wed. Sept. 20 – “Aleph” and “The Library of Babel,” Jorge Luis Borges

Fri. Sept. 22 – What is Close Reading?

Unit Two: Why Write Literature?

Week Six: Satire

Mon. Sept. 25 – *Gulliver’s Travels*, Jonathan Swift; **Close-Reading Due**

Wed. Sept. 27 – *Gulliver’s Travels*, Jonathan Swift

Fri. Sept. 29 – *Gulliver’s Travels*, Jonathan Swift

Week Seven: Memoir

Mon. Oct. 2 – *I Rigoberta Menchú*, Rigoberta Menchú

Wed. Oct. 4 – *I Rigoberta Menchú*, Rigoberta Menchú

Fri. Oct. 6 – **No class: Homecoming**

Week Eight: Novel

Mon. Oct. 9 – *Beloved*, Toni Morrison; **Second Short Paper Response Due**

Wed. Oct. 11 – *Beloved*, Toni Morrison

Fri. Oct. 13 – *Beloved*, Toni Morrison

Week Nine: Novel

Mon. Oct. 16 – *Beloved*, Toni Morrison; **Midterm Due**

Wed. Oct. 18 – *Beloved*, Toni Morrison

Fri. Oct. 20 – *Beloved*, Toni Morrison

Week Ten: Short Story Cycle

Mon. Oct. 23 – *Miguel Street*, V. S. Naipaul

Wed. Oct. 25 – *Miguel Street*, V. S. Naipaul

Fri. Oct. 27 – *Miguel Street*, V. S. Naipaul

Unit Three: Why Read (and Write) Literature?

Week Eleven: The Essay

Mon. Oct. 30 – “Culture” Stephen Greenblatt

Wed. Nov. 1 – “Holding On to What Makes Us Human,” L. D. Burnett

Fri. Nov. 3 – “Why I Write,” George Orwell **Third Short Paper Response Due**

Week Twelve: Novel

Mon. Nov. 6 – *Our Sister Killjoy*, Ama Ata Aidoo

Wed. Nov. 9 – *Our Sister Killjoy*, Ama Ata Aidoo

Fri. Nov. 11 – **No Class: Veteran’s Day**

Week Thirteen: Graphic Novel

Mon. Nov. 13 – *Persepolis*, Marjane Satrapi **Fourth Short Paper Response Due**

Wed. Nov. 15 – *Persepolis*, Marjane Satrapi

Fri. Nov. 17 – *Persepolis*, Marjane Satrapi

Week Fourteen: Graphic Novel

Mon. Nov. 20 – *Persepolis*, Marjane Satrapi

Wed. Nov. 22 – **No Class: Thanksgiving**

Fri. Nov. 24 – **No Class: Thanksgiving**

Week Sixteen: Literary Adaptation

Mon. Nov. 27 – “The Story of Your Life,” Ted Chiang

Wed. Nov. 29 – *Arrival*, Denis Villeneuve

Fri. Dec. 1 – Conferencing

Week Seventeen: Wrap Up

Mon. Dec. 4 – Conferencing

Wed. Dec. 6 – **Last Day of Class**; “Does Great Literature Make Us Better?”
Gregory Currie

Wed. Dec. 13 – **Critical Analysis Due**

1. Participation and In-Class Discussion

Students are expected to read the assigned readings before class. Consistent participation in class discussions, demonstrated knowledge of the assigned readings will also contribute to this portion of the final grade. Bring your texts to class every day—either electronic copies, print-outs, or books.

2. Short Response Papers

Four times over the course of the semester students are required to write a brief (500 word) response to the day's reading. These responses should be submitted in hard copy on the stipulated day of class.

These responses raise either *interpretive* or *critical* questions concerned with textual meaning. They comment on themes, figurative language and symbolism within the narrative. They also may make judgments regarding the period, history, politics and ethical questions that are relevant to the text. The open-endedness of interpretive and critical responses 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: 4-5 pages (1000 words)

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 a close reading. No outside sources may be used for this assignment.

4. Critical Analysis Paper: 4-5 pages (1000 words)

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.

5. Midterm Exam

This take-home exam will be distributed on-line (via Canvas). The exam will be comprised of matching and short essay questions based on readings, lectures and discussion. Submitted exams will be assessed for evidence of collusion.

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>

