

LIT 2000: Introduction to Literature (Class #14019) Spring 2022

Instructor: Corinne Matthews

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Class Meeting Time: MWF Period 3 (9:35-10:25)

Course website: Canvas

Course Pre-Requisite: ENC 1101

Office: Turlington 4413

Office Hours: MW 10:45-11:45

Location: Matherly 0118

Course 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 the human experience.
4. Draw connections between literary texts and their biographical, historical, and cultural contexts of authorship and reading.

Required Materials:

Octavia Butler, *The Parable of the Sower*
Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*
N.K. Jemisin, *The Fifth Season*
Jamaica Kincaid, *A Small Place*
Joy Kogawa, *Obasan*
Toni Morrison, *Sula*
Trung Le Nguyen, *The Magic Fish*
Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis*
William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*

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

Grade Distribution:

- Attendance & participation/in-class discussion (15%)
- 4 Brief Responses (20%)
- 1 Close Reading of a literary text or passage (20%)
- 1 Critical Analysis paper (25%)
- 1 Midterm Exam (20%)

Assignment Descriptions:

1. Participation and 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. You should come to class each day with one typed or written question or observation to raise during class discussion and hand in at the end of class for credit. Also 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. Participation in writing lessons and peer review workshops is also included in this grade.

2. Brief Responses

Four times over the course of the semester students are required to write a brief (about 300 word) response to the day's reading. These responses must be uploaded to our course Discussion Board BEFORE class the day on which they are due. Please consult the Brief Responses assignment prompt for further instructions and check the Canvas Discussion Boards for the due date for Brief Responses to each text.

These responses should 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. Students are also expected to comment on their peer's responses at least 4 times across the semester. These comments should also be submitted before class.

3. Close Reading Assignment: 2-3 pages

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. Please consult the assignment prompt for a more detailed description of this essay.

4. Critical Analysis Paper: 3-4 pages

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. Please consult the assignment prompt for a more detailed description of this essay.

5. Midterm Exam

This take-home exam will be distributed on-line (via Canvas). The exam will be comprised of matching, multiple choice, 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>

Course Policies:

1. You must complete all *assignments* to receive credit for this course.
2. *Attendance*: Attendance is mandatory and will be taken daily. You may miss up to three classes without penalty. After three unexcused absences, you will lose 3% off your final grade for each additional unexcused absence. **If you miss two full weeks of class (6 unexcused absences), you will automatically fail the course.** Arriving late to class three times will count as one absence. 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*: Latecomers receive partial absences and must see me after class so I know you attended.
4. *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/about/title-ix-rights/>
5. *Paper Format & Submission*: All papers should be formatted per MLA standards (Times New Roman 12, double-spaced, one-inch margins, MLA header, and MLA citations) and submitted to the assignment on Canvas as a .doc or .docx file. Please note that failure of technology is not an excuse, so plan your time accordingly.
Note: You must complete all assignments to receive credit for this course.
6. *Late Papers/Assignments*: Papers that are submitted late will lose ten percent off their final grade for each day that they are late. After three days, I will not accept late papers.
7. *Paper Maintenance Responsibilities*. Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.
8. *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 (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>) 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.
9. Students with *disabilities* who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>), which will provide appropriate documentation to give your instructor early in the semester.
 10. *Students who are in distress* or who are in need of counseling or urgent help: please contact 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/>
 11. For information on UF Grading policies, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>
 12. *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). Please contact Ms. Blount at cblount@ufl.edu. Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.
 13. *Course Evaluations*. Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations. Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages requesting that you do this online: <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>
 14. *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. 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.)

CLASS SCHEDULE

Please note that the schedule is a guideline and may change. Always check Canvas!

Unit 1: What is Literature?

Week 1: Introduction—What is Literature?

- W (1/5) Syllabus and Course Overview
F (1/7) Eagleton, Terry—"What is Literature?" (On Canvas)

Week 2: Epic

- M (1/10) Dante—*Inferno*, Cantos I and III
W (1/12) Dante—*Inferno*, Canto XXVI
F (1/14) Shakespeare—*The Merchant of Venice*, Acts 1-2

Week 3: Drama

- M (1/17) **No Class—MLK Day**
W (1/19) Shakespeare—*The Merchant of Venice*, Acts 3-4
F (1/21) Shakespeare—*The Merchant of Venice*, Act 5
Response 1 Due

Week 4: Poetry

- M (1/24) Shakespeare—Sonnet 130 ("My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun")
Browning—"My Last Duchess"
W (1/26) Emily Dickinson—"Because I could not stop for death"
Elizabeth Bishop—"One Art"
F (1/28) Maya Angelou—"Still I Rise"
Gwendolyn Brooks—"We Real Cool"
Ada Limón—"The Leash"

Week 5: Short Story

- M (1/31) Ursula K. Le Guin—"The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas"

W (2/2) Kristen Roupenian—"Cat Person"
Alexis Nowicki—"Cat Person' and Me" (<https://slate.com/human-interest/2021/07/cat-person-kristen-roupenian-viral-story-about-me.html>)

F (2/4) **Close Reading Rough Draft Due** for Peer Review Workshop

Unit 2: Why Write Literature?

Week 6: Self Expression/Construction

M (2/7) Neil Gaiman — "Why our future depends on libraries, reading and daydreaming." *The Guardian*.
(<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/oct/15/neil-gaiman-future-libraries-reading-daydreaming>)
Close Reading Final Draft Due

W (2/9) Kogawa—*Obasan*, Ch. 1 - 13

F (2/11) Kogawa—*Obasan*, Ch. 14 - 24

Week 7: Shaping Citizens

M (2/14) Kogawa—*Obasan*, Ch. 25 - end
Response 2 Due

W (2/16) Morrison—*Sula*, Beginning - 1922

F (2/18) Morrison—*Sula*, 1923 - 1937

Week 8: Shaping Citizens, cont.

M (2/21) Morrison—*Sula*, 1939 - 1965

W (2/23) **Midterm (On Canvas)**

F (2/25) Butler—*Parable of the Sower*, Ch. 1 - 7

Week 9: World Making

M (2/28) Butler—*Parable of the Sower*, Ch. 8 - 14

W (3/2) Butler—*Parable of the Sower*, Ch. 15 - 19

F (3/4) Butler—*Parable of the Sower*, Ch. 20 - end

Week 10: No Class—Spring Break

Unit 3—Why Read Literature?

Week 11: Exploration and Discovery

M (3/14) Calvino—*Invisible Cities*, Ch. 1-3

W (3/16) Calvino—*Invisible Cities*, Ch. 4-6

F (3/18) Calvino—*Invisible Cities*, Ch. 7-9
Response 3 Due

Week 12: Exploration and Discovery, cont.

M (3/21) Kincaid—*A Small Place*, pg. 1 - 41 (first half)

W (3/23) Kincaid—*A Small Place*, pg. 42 - end (second half)

F (3/25) Newgarden and Karasik—“How to Read Nancy”
Satrapi—*Persepolis*, pg. 1 - 110 (Beginning - “The Wine”)

Week 13: Finding New Selves

M (3/28) Satrapi—*Persepolis*, pg. 111 - 222 (“The Cigarette” - “Hide and Seek”)

W (3/30) Satrapi—*Persepolis*, pg. 223 - end (“The Croissant - end)

F (4/1) Jemisin—*The Fifth Season*, Ch. 1-7

Week 14: Moving Beyond the Self

M (4/4) Jemisin—*The Fifth Season*, Ch. 8-12

W (4/6) Jemisin—*The Fifth Season*, Ch. 13-18

F (4/8) Jemisin—*The Fifth Season*, Ch. 19-end
Response 4 Due

Week 15: New Ways of Seeing

M (4/11) Nguyen—*The Magic Fish*, pg. 1-79 (“What do you think?”/“Ma...”)

W (4/13) Nguyen—*The Magic Fish*, pg. 80-147 (“Probably. They’re only stories. They’ll change when they need to.”)

F (4/15) Nguyen—*The Magic Fish*, pg. 148-end
Catherine Butler — “Why It’s Time to Take Children’s Literature Seriously.”
(<https://theconversation.com/why-its-time-to-take-childrens-books-seriously-58079>)

Week 16: Course Conclusion

M (4/18) **Rough Draft of Critical Analysis Due** for Peer Review Workshop

W (4/20) Judith Hertog—“Why We Need the Humanities”
(<https://dartmouthalumnimagazine.com/articles/why-we-need-humanities>)
Critical Analysis Final Draft Due

F (4/22) **No Class—Reading Day**