

LIT 2000: Introduction to Literature

Instructor Name: Rachel Hartnett

Course meeting times & locations: MWF 6 (12:50-1:40 PM)

Office Location and Hours: Turlington 4336, TBA

Course website: Canvas

Instructor Email: rhartnett@ufl.edu

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

Students should purchase the following texts:

Shakespeare, *Macbeth*

Camara Laye, *The Dark Child*

Toni Morrison, *Beloved*

Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*

Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis*

Salman Rushdie, *East, West: Stories*
Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*

The following texts will be available on Canvas:

Terry Eagleton, "What is Literature"

Dante, *The Inferno*

Emily Dickinson, "Wild Nights! - Wild Nights!," "I heard a Fly buzz - when I died," "Because I Could not Stop for Death," & "My life had stood - a Loaded Gun"

Langston Hughes, "Theme for English B," "Harlem" (What happens to a dream deferred)

Flannery O'Connor, "A Good Man is Hard to Find"

Jorge Luis Borges, "The Aleph"

Alice Munro, "The Moons of Jupiter"

James Joyce, "The Dead"

Gregory Currie's "Does Great Literature Make Us Better?"

GRADE DISTRIBUTION (see below for Grading Scale)

- 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%)

COURSE POLICIES:

1. You must complete all *assignments* to receive credit for this course.
2. *Attendance:* Because of the participatory nature of this course, attendance is crucial. Students who miss more than 4 classes will have a 10% deduction on their final course grade. Students who miss 6 or more classes will automatically fail the class. For the official University policy on absences, please refer to <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx> for more detail.
3. *Paper Format:* All essays must be formatted in MLA style. This means that your paper must meet the following guidelines:
 - Double-spaced
 - 12 point, Times New Roman font
 - 1 inch margins, on all sides
 - MLA style headers with page numbers
 - MLA (8th edition) style citations
4. *Paper Submission:* Papers and written assignments are must be submitted to Canvas, in .doc or .docx format, before class on the date indicated on the syllabus. (Not having Word is not an excuse since all UF students have access to free copies of Office 365 ProPlus. This can be downloaded at [http://www.it.ufl.edu/gatorcloud/free-software-downloads-office-365-proplus/get-o365-proplus/.](http://www.it.ufl.edu/gatorcloud/free-software-downloads-office-365-proplus/get-o365-proplus/))
5. *Late Papers/Assignments:* Papers submitted late will receive a deduction of one full letter grade per day. Papers submitted more than 3 days late will earn an E. I will consider exceptions in exceptional circumstances with appropriate documentation.

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.* 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/>.
8. 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.
9. For information on UF Grading policies, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>
10. *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.
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. 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>
13. Students who are struggling academically for any reason should speak with me during office hours. Additional resources are also available through the Writing Studio, located in 302 Tigert Hall: <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>
14. Always bring the assigned reading to class with you, along with materials for taking notes and any assignments that may be due during that class meeting. Be prepared for active discussions. To help with this, I highly recommend that you take careful reading notes and write down potential comments for class ahead of time.
15. You should use computers, laptops, and e-readers for course-related activities only. Checking Facebook, web surfing unrelated to class, and doing work for other classes are examples of behavior that may result in deductions from your participation grade or you being asked to leave class for the day. You can, however, use an approved device to take notes or view course readings (if you prefer not to print electronic readings).
16. *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/>
17. *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.)

COURSE SCHEDULE:

This is only a guide to the expected course of the semester. Changes can be made at any time, so it is up to you to check Canvas often and attend all classes.

Unit 1: What is Literature?

Week One

1/8 – Course Overview and Orientation

1/10 – Read: Terry Eagleton - “What is Literature”

1/12 – Read: Dante - *Inferno* (Canto I)

Week Two

1/15 – No class - Martin Luther King, Jr Day

1/17 – Read: Dante - *Inferno* (Canto XXVI)

1/19 – Read: Shakespeare - *Macbeth* (Act 1)

Week Three

1/22 – Read: Shakespeare - *Macbeth* (Acts 2-3)

1/24 – Read: Shakespeare - *Macbeth* (Acts 4-5)

1/26 – Read: Emily Dickinson - “I heard a Fly buzz - when I died’ & “Because I Could not Stop for Death”

Week Four

1/29 – Read: Emily Dickinson - “Wild Nights! - Wild Nights!” & “My life had stood - a Loaded Gun”

1/31 – Read: Langston Hughes - “Theme for English B” & “Harlem” (What happens to a dream deferred)

Short Response Due

2/2 – Read: Flannery O’Connor - “A Good Man is Hard to Find”

Week Five

2/5 – Read: Jorge Luis Borges - “The Aleph”

2/7 – Read: Alice Munro - “The Moons of Jupiter”

2/9 – Close Reading Workshop/**Draft Due**

Unit Two: Why Write Literature?

Week Six

2/12 – Read: Camara Laye - *The Dark Child* (Sections 1-4)

Close Reading Due

2/14 – Read: Camara Laye - *The Dark Child* (Sections 5-8)

2/16 – Read: Camara Laye - *The Dark Child* (Sections 9-12)

Week Seven

2/19 – Read: Galileo Galilei - “Letter to Madama Cristina”

Short Response Due

2/21 – Read: Toni Morrison - *Beloved* (Foreword-p124)

2/23 – Read: Toni Morrison - *Beloved* (p125-195)

Week Eight

2/26 – Read: Toni Morrison - *Beloved* (p199-end)

2/28 – Continue discussion of *Beloved*

3/2 – **Midterm Exam**

Week Nine

No class - Spring Break

Week Ten

3/12 – Read: Swift - *Gulliver's Travels*, “A Voyage to Lilliput”

3/14 – Continue discussion of *Gulliver's Travels*

Short Response Due

3/16 – No class - Instructor at conference

Library Research Day

Week Eleven

3/19 – Read: Swift - *Gulliver's Travels*, “A Voyage to Brobdingnag”

3/21 – Read: Swift – *Gulliver's Travels*, “A Voyage to the Country of the Houyhnhnms”

3/23 – Finish discussion of *Gulliver's Travels*

UNIT THREE: Why Read Literature?

Week Twelve

3/26 – Read: Salman Rushdie - “Good Advice Is Rarer Than Rubies,” “At The Auction of the Ruby Slippers,” & “The Courter”

3/28 – Continue discussion of Rushdie

3/30 – Read: Italo Calvino - *Invisible Cities* (Chapters 1-5)

Short Response Due

Week Thirteen

4/2 – Read: Italo Calvino - *Invisible Cities* (Chapters 6-End)

4/4 – Read: James Joyce “The Dead”

4/6 – Continue discussion of “The Dead” / Watch part of film in class

Week Fourteen

4/9 – **Critical Analysis Draft Due** / Peer Review

4/11 – Read McCloud - *Understanding Comics* (Chapter One)

4/13 – Read: Marjane Satrapi - *Persepolis* (p1-93)

Week Fifteen

4/16 – Read: Marjane Satrapi - *Persepolis* (p222-341)

4/18 – Read: Marjane Satrapi - *Persepolis* (p222-341)

4/20 – Continue discussion of *Persepolis*

Week Sixteen

4/23 – **Critical Analysis Due** / Revision Day

4/25 – Read: Gregory Currie’s “Does Great Literature Make Us Better?”

DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS:

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 also contribute to this portion of the final grade. There will be periodic questions posted on a discussion board on Canvas that you will be

expected to answer as part of this grade. 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.

2. *Brief responses*

Four times over the course of the semester students are required to write a brief (300 word) response to the day's reading. These responses must be uploaded to our Canvas BEFORE class the day on which they are due.

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: 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.

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.

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>