

## LIT 2000: INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE

Fall 2023

Section: 1A42

### INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:

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### COURSE INFORMATION:

Days/Times	MWF3
Location	BEN 0328

**COURSE PRE-REQUISITE:** ENC 1101

### 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:**

Students will require the following complete texts:

- *Twelve Years a Slave* by Solomon Northup, Penguin Books, ISBN: 9780143125419
- *The Farming of Bones* by Edwidge Danticat, Soho Press, ISBN: 9781616953492
- *Season of Migration to the North* by Tayeb Salih, Penguin Classics, ISBN: 9780141187204
- *Othello* by William Shakespeare, Simon and Schuster, ISBN: 9780743477550

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Please use the ISBN to purchase the correct edition. Further material will be provided through Canvas.

**GRADE DISTRIBUTION:**

**Summary of grading**

- Attendance & participation/in-class discussion (10%)
- Participation in Course Wiki, blog, or discussion board (20%)
- 1 Close Reading of a literary text or passage (15%)
- 1 Critical Analysis paper (25%)
- 2 take-home exams (15% each—30%)

**1. Attendance & Participation (10%)**

**Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory and will be assessed by class roll or sign-up sheet. Students will lose 1% from their final grade for every unexcused absence. 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 review the assigned readings before 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 prepared the homework and will lose 1%. Consistent participation in class discussions, demonstrated knowledge of the assigned readings will also contribute to this portion of the final grade.

## **2. Participation in Course Wiki, blog, or discussion board (20%)**

Before each discussion section, students are required to contribute a question or an answer to an online discussion forum.

**Description of assignment:** *Interpretive* (or *Critical*) questions are open-ended and are concerned with textual meaning. They ask for opinions on themes, figurative language and symbolism within the narrative. They also ask for judgments regarding the period, history, politics and ethical questions that are relevant to the text. The open-endedness of Interpretive and Critical questions—which often use phrases such as "do you think" or "why do you suppose"—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: 750 words, 15%**

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.

**The Close Reading assignment is due during the 6<sup>th</sup> week of the semester**

## **4. Critical Analysis Paper: 1,500 words, 25%**

This assignment asks students to combine close reading skills with critical concepts or historical information introduced in one of the 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 8<sup>th</sup> week of the semester.**

These papers will be graded on a point scale of 1 to 10: 9-10, excellent; 8-8.9, good to very good; 7-7.9 average to good; 6-6.9, below average; below 6 is not a passing grade. All students, whatever their grade, will have the option to rewrite the essay.

## **5. 2 take-home exams (15% each—30%)**

Method of assessment will be 2 on-line take-home exams (each exam is worth 15%, or together, 30% of the total grade). Take-home exams will be distributed on-line (via Canvas) and will be two hours in length. The exams will be comprised of short answer *and short essay* questions based on readings, lectures and discussion sections.

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 or late assignments. Where possible, make-ups should be arranged by email or in person prior to the expected absence. In case

**Comment [1]:** <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

of illness, student should contact the instructor on his or her return to classes.

- **Late Policy:** A class roll will be passed around at the beginning of class. If a student is late, he or she will have to sign the roll after class. Such lateness distracts other students and the instructor and will affect the student's final participation grade. Students will lose 0.5% from their final grade each time they arrive late.
- **Cell phone policy:** Students must turn cell phones to silent before coming to class. Each time a student's cell phone rings or each time that a student texts during class, 1% will be deducted from that student's final 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	63-66	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>

**Comment [2]:** <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

**Comment [3]:** <https://student.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html>

**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 <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>

**Comment [4]:** <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>

**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 (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>) for information about available resources for students with disabilities.

**Comment [5]:** <https://disability.ufl.edu/>

**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/>).

**Comment [6]:** <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>

**Online Course Evaluation:** Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

**Comment [7]:** <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/>

**Comment [8]:** <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/>

### CLASS SCHEDULE

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

#### Class Schedule

<b>Introduction</b>	Week 1	08/23	Introducing the syllabus and presenting the course objectives
		08/25	<i>Why Read Multicultural Literature? An Arnoldian Perspective</i> Author: Reed Way Dasenbrock (available through Canvas)
<b>Epic</b>	Week 2	08/28	<i>Aeneid (Book I: pages 3-13)</i> Author: Virgil (available through Canvas)
		08/30	<i>Aeneid (Book I: pages 14- 27)</i>
		09/01	<i>Echoes of Virgil's Aeneid</i> Author: Peter E. Knox (available through Canvas)
	Week 3	09/04	HAPPY LABOR DAY! <b>NO CLASS!</b>
		09/06	<i>Othello (Act I)</i> Author: William Shakespeare
<b>Drama</b>	Week 3	09/08	<i>Othello (Act II)</i>
		Week 4	09/11
	09/13		<i>Othello (Act IV and V)</i>
	09/15		Town Hall A space for students to raise the points and issues that they have faced in the readings so far and believe were not addressed adequately during the sessions
	<b>Poetry</b>	Week 5	09/18
09/20			<i>Eastern War Time</i> Author: Adrienne Rich (available through Canvas)
09/22			<i>Everyone is an Immigrant</i> Author: Eliza Griswold (available through Canvas)

<b>Short story</b>	Week 6	09/25	<i>Black-Eyed Woman</i> Author: Viet Thanh Nguyen (available through Canvas)
		09/27	<i>In the Penal Colony</i> Author: Franz Kafka (available through Canvas)
		09/29	Close Reading Assignment Due on Friday
<b>Novel</b>	Week 7	10/02	<i>Season of Migration to the North (pages: 1-60)</i> Author: Tayeb Salih
		10/04	<i>Season of Migration to the North (pages: 61-115)</i>
		10/06	HOME COMING! <b>NO CLASS!</b>
	Week 8	10/09	<i>Season of Migration to the North (pages: 116-169)</i>
		10/11	Town Hall
		10/13	Critical Analysis Assignment Due Friday
<b>Autobiography</b>	Week 9	10/16	<i>'I was born': Slave Narratives, Their Status as Autobiography and as Literature</i> Author: James Olney (available through Canvas)
		10/18	<i>Twelve Years a Slave (Chapters I - IV)</i> Author: Solomon Northup
		10/20	<i>Twelve Years a Slave (Chapters V - VIII)</i>
	Week 10	10/23	<i>Twelve Years a Slave (Chapters IX - XI)</i>
		10/25	<i>Twelve Years a Slave (Chapters XII - XVI)</i>
		10/27	<i>Twelve Years a Slave (Chapters XVII- XX)</i>
	Week 11	10/30	<i>Twelve Years a Slave (Chapters XXI- end)</i>
		11/01	Continued Discussion on <i>Twelve Years a Slave</i>
		11/03	Movie Screening Revisiting some segments of <i>Twelve Years a Slave</i> by Steve McQueen

<b>Beyond Literature</b>	Week 12	11/06	<i>Independence and Dependence of Self-Consciousness: Lordship and Bondage</i> Author: G. W. F. Hegel (available through Canvas)
		11/08	<i>Culture and Imperialism, Introduction</i> Author: Edward W. Said (available through Canvas)
		11/10	HAPPY VETERANS DAY! <b>NO CLASS!</b>
<b>Homecoming</b>	Week 13	11/13	<i>Selections of history of Hispaniola</i> Various authors (available through Canvas)
		11/15	The Farming of Bones (1-56) Author: Edwidge Danticat
	Week 14	11/17	The Farming of Bones (56-115)
		11/20	The Farming of Bones (116-176)
		11/22	HAPPY THANKSGIVING! <b>NO CLASS!</b>
	Week 15	11/24	
		11/27	The Farming of Bones (177-223)
		11/29	The Farming of Bones (224-264)
	Week 16	12/01	The Farming of Bones (265-end)
12/04		<i>Does Great Literature Make Us Better?</i> Author: Gregory Currie (available through Canvas)	
		Plus: Town Hall	
<b>Conclusion</b>	Week 16	12/06	Final Exam Due on Wednesday