

WORLD LITERATURE

Instructor Name: Prof. Katrina Millan

Office Location: School of English Studies

Office Hours: I am always glad to meet with students outside of class. If you would like to schedule a meeting, please send me an email and I will make myself available.

Course Description: In this course we will foster a deeper understanding of literature across cultures by exploring the ways in which these texts influence one another, as well as the philosophical and stylistic differences between them. Our goal is to seek out these connections, alterations, and differences, and in so doing examine various cultural concepts of humanity over time. We will be reading several texts written by individuals who have emigrated from the areas of the world in which their stories take place – these will give us insight into the concept of cultural identity and its close connection with the formation of the self. Our objective is to approach literature written by individuals of varying cultural backgrounds, ideologies, genders, sexualities, and philosophies with open and inquisitive minds.

Instructional Methods

The methods of this course include, but are not limited to, reading assignments, writing assignments, short quizzes, class discussion, small group work, audio-visual presentations, demonstrations and lecture.

Required Texts

These texts are available at the University bookstore. It is very important to purchase these specific editions for two reasons: 1) our discussions will be rooted in the texts and we will often look at specific passages together, and 2) if you purchase an alternate translation, you may as well be reading a different book.

- Excerpt from “The Tale of Zal and Rudabeh” by Abolqasem Ferdowsi – PDF provided
- “Tereus, Procne and Philomela” by Ovid – PDF provided
- William Shakespeare, ed. Russ McDonald. *Titus Andronicus*. The Pelican Shakespeare, 2000.
- Voltaire. *Candide*. Translated by Francois-Marie Arouet, Dover Publications, 1991.
- Dickinson, Emily, ed. Brenda Hillman. *The Pocket Dickinson*, Shambhala; Poc edition, 2009
- Kafka, Franz. *The Metamorphosis*. Translated by Susan Bernofsky, W. W. Norton & Company, 2014.
- Puig, Manuel. *Kiss of the Spider Woman*. Vintage, 1991.
- “Big-Bellied Cow” and “Brief Flower” by Nélida Piñon – PDF provided
- Kincaid, Jamaica. *At the Bottom of the River*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000.
- Rushdie, Salman. *East, West*. Vintage, 1995.
- “Akueke” and “The Voter” by Chinua Achebe – PDF provided
- Satrapi, Marjane. *The Complete Persepolis*. Pantheon, 2007.

Course Schedule

The schedule is subject to change with notification

9/5: Welcome: Literature and Multiculturalism

9/8: Excerpt from *Shahnameh* (PDF), excerpt from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (PDF), In-class reading of Rapunzel

9/12: *Titus Andronicus*, Acts 1 and 2

9/15: *Titus Andronicus*, Acts 3 and 4

9/19: *Titus Andronicus*, Act 5

9/22: *Candide*, 1-23

9/26: *Candide*, 24-51

9/29: *Candide*, 52-end - **First response due**

10/3: Selected poems from Dickinson and Melville's "The Paradise of Bachelors and the Tartarus of Maids" (PDF)

10/6: *The Metamorphosis*, Part 1

10/10: *The Metamorphosis*, Part 2

10/13: *The Metamorphosis*, Part 3

10/17: Nélida Piñon (PDF), Jamaica Kincaid's "Girl," "Wingless," and two stories of your choosing from *At the Bottom of the River*

10/20: **Midterm – Second response due**

10/24: *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, Chapters 1 and 2

10/27: *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, Chapters 3, 4, and 5

10/31: *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, Chapters 6 and 7

11/3: *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, Chapters 8, 9 and 10

11/7: Election Day, No class

11/10: *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, Chapters 12 and 13

11/14: *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, Chapter 14, 15 and 16

11/17: "Akueke" and "The Voter" from *Girls at War and Other Stories* – **Third response due**

11/21: "The Harmony of the Spheres" from *East, West*

11/24: Thanksgiving Recess, no class

11/28: *Persepolis*, 1-61

12/1: *Persepolis*, 62-117

12/5: *Persepolis*, 118-172

12/8: *Persepolis*, 173-232

12/12: *Persepolis*, 233-291

12/15: *Persepolis*, 292-end

12/19: Review – **Final response due**

12/22: **Final Exam**

Assessment:

- Much of this class will center around discussion, and it is expected that you attend each class prepared and having completed the reading. There will be short quizzes administered to test your knowledge of the material.
 - There will be a midterm exam and a final exam. The final exam will not be cumulative.
 - There will be four 2-3page analytical responses due throughout the semester. These must be written in MLA format.
- Participation is very important in this class, and will be factored into your final grade. You are expected to join in discussion; I will be taking note of those who do.

Grades

Responses – 40%

- Each 2-3page paper will be worth 10% of your final grade
Quizzes – 10%

Midterm – 20%

Final – 20%

Participation – 10%

Policies

Attendance:

You are expected to attend every class, except in cases of illness and emergency. The foundation of this class will be the discussions we have together. The more voices we have participating, the more interesting and fun the class will be.

- If you miss 3 classes, you will lose 1/2 letter grade.
- If you miss 4 classes, you will lose 1 letter grade.
- If you miss 5 classes, you will lose 1 1/2 letter grades.
- If you miss 6 classes, you will lose 2 letter grades
- If you miss any more than 6, you will automatically fail the course.

If you are late three times, I will count it as an absence.

You are responsible for the completion of the work assigned whether you are in class or not. Please refer to the syllabus, and consider reaching out to a peer for notes on class discussion.

Assignments:

Papers must be handed in when they are due. I will subtract half a letter grade for each day a paper is late, including days on which we do not have class, regardless of circumstance.

Revision is the key to becoming a better writer. Pending my approval, you will have the opportunity to revise each paper during the week after I have given you a grade. I do not allow revisions on late papers.

It is critical that you complete each reading assignment in its entirety before you come to class. **Be sure to bring the text we are reading to each class session.** We will often refer to certain passages and you must be able to read along.

Technology

Cell phones, laptops, and tablets will not be permitted. If you are warned about using your phone/laptop/tablet more than once, your participation grade for the day will be a failing one.