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Course LIT2120-03A6
Class# 17617
Days M W F
Period 2
Bldg. MAT
Room 0012
Office Hours:
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Course Description

Shared Environments, World Literatures



Source: Grandmother Africa, “Mawu is Not Yahweh,”
<http://grandmotherafrica.com/mawu-is-not-yahweh/>

What are we really studying when we say we’re studying “English?” If we’re native English speakers, certainly we don’t mean we’re *learning* that language. But then again, we *are* studying the way that language is wielded, wired, and wound around to make meaning, right? Literary writing, however, happens in more languages than English, and is influenced by customs and cultures beyond the English-speaking, Western world.

More often than not, literary studies within the Western world has been a study of written texts produced within the Western world. To that imbalance, this course says “let’s think outside the box for a second.” The texts we look at, then, come from a more inclusive array of traditions, including Japanese, Austrian, Nigerian, and Iranian literature. The selection of texts presented does not provide an exhaustive account of world literature, of course. This would be an impossible task. It aims, instead, to dive into less commonly featured literature from across the world, and to spark productive insight and analysis on those culturally diverse projects. While this course generally follows the chronological trajectory of the publications of these texts where possible, beginning mid-way through the 18th century, it also weaves through time to emphasize thematic connections and topical overlaps between different readings.

The topical overlap most common throughout this course—both by design and by natural occurrence—is a shared concern with the environment. The texts we will read, in their own ways, are all

concerned with issues of climate. Environmental issues not only bind these texts together through traditional humanistic concerns with finding meaning within one's environment (as in the classic questions about humanity and its relationship to nature), but also through the globally interconnected consequences of overconsumption and climate change. The current world economy sees developed countries exploiting the labor and resources of countries in the global periphery for industrial purposes, making our CO2 emissions problem exponentially worse. Consequently, due to rising sea levels and abnormal weather patterns caused by climate change, underdeveloped countries are at much greater risk for suffering resource scarcity, forced migration, and death. Inevitably, this immense disparity has influenced literary output across the world. Given the contemporary conversations around environmentalism, responsible resource use, and the human responsibility for climate crisis and its global consequences, it is only natural that climate-related concerns will underlie any study of an increasingly interconnected world literature.

General Education Objectives

- This course confers Gen Ed credit for either Composition (C) or Humanities (H). This course also fulfills 6,000 of the university's 24,000-word writing requirement (WR).
- Composition courses provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation, usage), as well as the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition courses are writing intensive. They require multiple drafts submitted to your instructor for feedback before final submission.
- Course content should include multiple forms of effective writing, different writing styles, approaches and formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes and contexts. Students should learn to organize complex arguments in writing using thesis statements, claims and evidence, and to analyze writing for errors in logic.
- The University Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. To receive Writing Requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course. This means that written assignments must meet minimum word requirements totaling 6000 words.

General Education Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes in content, communication and critical thinking:

- **Content:** Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the academic discipline.
- **Communication:** Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline. Students will participate in class discussions throughout the semester to reflect on assigned readings.
- **Critical Thinking:** Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

Required Course Texts

Texts to Acquire

- Phillis Wheatley, *Complete Writings* (West Africa/America, 1773)
- H. Rider Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines* (England, 1885) [[Available online as public domain](#)]
- Marlen Haushofer, *The Wall* (Austria, 1963)
- Haruki Murakami, *A Wild Sheep Chase* (Japan, 1982)
- Marjane Satrapi, *The Complete Persepolis* (Iran, 2000)
- Nnedi Okorafor, *Who Fears Death* (Nigeria/America, 2010)
- Emmi Itäranta, *Memory of Water* (Finland, 2014)

Provided Course Texts (offered either via hyperlink or under the “Files” tab on Canvas):

- [“The Disappointment,”](#) by Aphra Behn (1680)
- “The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano,” Chapter 1 (1789)
- “The Earthquake in Chile,” by Heinrich Von Kleist (1807)
- [“An ABC for Baby Patriots,”](#) by Mary Ernest Ames (1899)
- “First Night” through “Sixth Night” from *Ten Nights of Dreaming*, by Natsume Sōseki, (1905)
- [“Araby,”](#) by James Joyce (1914)
- [“Tender Buttons \[Objects\],”](#) from *Tender Buttons*, by Gertrude Stein (1914)
- [“The Metamorphosis,”](#) by Franz Kafka (1915)

Assignments:

All written assignments will be turned in via Canvas unless explicitly stated otherwise. Paper copies will not be accepted; there are no exceptions to this rule. **You can use this section calculate your grade so far in the course, i.e. (accumulated points / total possible points = grade point average).**

Major Grading Category	Potential Points	Word Count
Participation	100 points	--
Discussion Questions	100 points	1000
Fanfiction	175 points	[500]* + 500
Short Research Essay	175 points	1100
African Studies Archive Reflection	25 points	500
Personal Analysis Essay	175 points	1200
Analytical Research Paper	250 points	1700
TOTAL	1000 points	6000

*These 1000 words, as a creative assignment, do not count toward 6000-word Gordon Rule requirements.

Weekly Discussion Questions:

In 100 words or slightly more, offer a substantial, conversation-provoking question that will be posted to the class during discussion. The question (or questions) should engage with the readings covered on the day of the class, and it should engage with the text's cultural, social, and political interventions (i.e. not asking about plot for its own sake). Some questions to consider as you compose your own question(s):

- Did anything occur in the reading—on the levels of both writing style and narrative—that differs from expectations we might have about Western media? If so, how? Why is this important?
- Does the reading connect to any political group/ideology/party/worldview, or to another reading or way of thinking about the world? If so, how?
- Did anything trouble or bother you from this reading? In what ways did it trouble you, and what might we gain from talking over why this content might be troubling?
- What kind of political, cultural, or social intervention might the text might be making?
- Are *we* the audience for this text? Are *you* the audience for this text? Who might the audience of this text be, and how should that change the way we read it? Are there any aspects of the text that might be inaccessible to us due to our backgrounds in life?

Context for the question (such as relevant information, thing you found interesting, and lead-in points to your question) can be included here as well.

African Studies Archive Reflection:

Write 500 words reflecting on your experience with the African Studies archive. What items stuck out to you, and why? How did your encounter with these items change the way you think about texts and communication in Africa, and in the non-Western world at large?

Fanfiction:

A “flash” fiction is a work of fiction that offer a punchy, snappy, and brief window into a narrative that feels as if it is over as soon as it starts. A “fan” fiction is a work of fiction written by a fan of a media

series, franchise, or pre-existing story originally created by somebody else. We'll be doing a little of both here.

Write a 500-word (or slightly more) flash fanfiction 1). based on a Western narrative text whose values and beliefs you will attempt to invert, or 2). based on one of the texts in this course whose world you will expand on in some way. Include a 500-word reflection on the politics of your fanfiction, explaining the argument or intervention you see it making.

You may choose to work within the author's given style, or you may choose to reimagine their characters/setting/style/medium in light of your fanfiction's political goals. The important criteria here is that *your submission must make some kind of intervention or argument—either implicitly or explicitly—on the topic of geographical politics, ethnicity, and power.*

Be very mindful of your position if you choose the second option: how can people born under Western norms (which will likely, in some way, include most of the participants in our classroom) work within texts created outside of them without compromising their position, their politics, and their identity? How can one think through such narrative worlds without compromising what makes them radical? Keep these questions in mind as you write.

Research Essay:

Write a 1100-word analytical essay (roughly 5 pages) that articulates the political work a text from this course *or* a text composed by a creator/creators from outside the United States and England (see me if you have doubts about what does/does not qualify). Your essay will include three scholarly sources that you will put into conversation with one another. If you wish, you may make use of as many “non-scholarly” sources as you see fit to build the argument that you want to build, but these sources will not count toward the three scholarly source obligation. “Quote quilting,” or, jamming in as many quotes as you can to reach a word count without subsequent analysis, will not bode well for your grade.

Personal Analysis Essay:

In this 1200-word assignment, you will reflect on your own experience in life as it relates to at least two of our class readings (and the weekly discussions you've composed about them). Make an argument about your own life experiences based on our class readings. What qualifies as “your” life experiences is open to interpretation—you may incorporate materials as specific from anecdotes from your life, or you may analyze yourself as part of a larger network of socioeconomic status, class, race, gender, sexual orientation, bodily ability, and other positions of identity and power. Though there are many directions this project can take, it may be helpful to ask yourself these kinds of questions to get started:

- In what ways are your experiences different from those represented by voices from across world literature? In what ways can you identify commonalities even within those differences?
- How have some of the concentrations of power in these texts (from colonialism, to the sense of the otherworldly embodied by magical realism, to culturally specific notions of gender) affected you, and people like you? How does that experience compare to characters from these texts living outside of the West?
- What argumentative or political purpose does reading these texts serve within your life? If you feel compelled to any kind of action by reading them, what might that action look like?

Final Research Paper:

Write a 1700-word research paper (roughly 7 pages) that explains the political work a given text performs. The primary text(s) you analyze *must* be created, in some capacity, outside of the English-speaking West.

Some good candidates for primary texts to analyze would be fiction, poetry, or prose, film or television shows, podcasts, videogames, animation, toys. The important qualifying factor is not the medium of the texts itself, but your ability to analyze texts beyond Western norms through these texts.

Your research paper will include at least five scholarly sources that you will put into conversation with one another. You may make use of as many “non-scholarly” sources as you see fit to build the argument that you want to build, but these sources will not count toward the five-source obligation.

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*: Absences beyond three unexcused absences will result in the loss of one third of a letter grade per absence. Six absences or more will result in an E grade. Three tardies will amount to one absence. <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>
3. *Paper Format & Submission*: All papers will be submitted electronically, via Canvas. No exceptions. Submissions in a file format other than .doc or .docx will not be accepted. If this is not compatible with your personal computer, submit via a UF Library computer, or use free online file conversion software, like this: <http://www.zamzar.com/>
4. *Late/Incomplete Assignments*: There are *absolutely no* late or incomplete paper submissions. Technology failures and “honest mistakes” are not acceptable excuses for failure to submit. The receipt of a zero grade on a late or incomplete paper is not a punishment—it is the natural outcome of not meeting the assignment’s demands.
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*. 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 (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honorcode/>) 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.
7. *Participation*: Students are expected to voluntarily contribute to classroom discussions, to be prepared to discuss all readings by their syllabus-appointed due dates, and to engage with the material at hand whenever called upon. Being an introvert is cool; being disengaged is not. Attendance will be considered when calculating participation grades.
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 your instructor early in the semester.

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. There is such a thing as responsible use of technology in the classroom. However, if I catch you using electronic devices irresponsibly in my classroom, I reserve the right to dock your participation grade with no notice whatsoever. I will not waste time with individual discipline that we could be using for group work and group learning.
14. *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/policy-statement/>
15. *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

Date of Classes	Class Topic	Readings Due	Assignments Due
UNIT 1: Imagining Other Lives			
WEEK 1			
W, Aug 21	<i>Introduction</i>		
F, Aug 23	<i>Transition</i>	“The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano,” Chapter 1, available via Canvas under “Files” tab.	
WEEK 2			
M, Aug 26		“First Night” through “Sixth Night,” Ten Nights of Dreaming, by Natsume Sōseki, (1905)	Discussion Question #1
W, Aug 28		“ The Disappointment ,” by Aphra Behn, and “ Tender Buttons [Objects] ,” from <i>Tender Buttons</i> , by Gertrude Stein (1914)	
F, Aug 30		“The Earthquake in Chile,” by Heinrich Von Kleist (1807)	Discussion Question #2
UNIT 2: Imperialisms			
WEEK 3			
M, Sep 2, <i>Holiday, No Class</i>		--	--
W, Sep 4		<i>Class Cancelled for Hurricane Dorian</i>	
F, Sep 6		Phillis Wheatley, “ Phillis Wheatley’s Biography ,” pg. 3 - 36.	Discussion Question #3
WEEK 4			
M, Sep 9		Phillis Wheatley poems, pg. 37 - 70, 88, 133-135, 160.	
W, Sep 11		<i>King Solomon’s Mines</i> , Chap. 1 – 10	Discussion Question #4
F, Sep 13		1). “ Scramble for Africa: How the African Continent Became Divided ” by Ronald Horton	

		2). “An ABC for Baby Patriots” by Mary Ernest Ames	
WEEK 5			
M, Sep 16		Chap. 11 – 15	Short Research Essay Rough Draft
W, Sep 18	<i>Writing Workshop</i>	Chapters 15 – 20	
F, Sep 20		Visit to the African Studies Archive at UF	Short Research Essay, Final Draft
UNIT 3: Magical Realisms			
WEEK 6			
M, Sep 23		<i>A Wild Sheep Chase</i> , Chap. 1 - 7	
W, Sep 25		Chap. 7 - 14	Discussion Question #5
F, Sep 27		Chap. 14 - 21	
WEEK 7			
M, Sep 30		Chap. 21 - 28	
W, Oct 2		Chap. 28 - 35	Archive Reflection Due
F, Oct 4, <i>No Class, Homecoming</i>		--	--
WEEK 8			
M, Oct 7		1). “Magical Realism and the Search for Identity in the Fiction of Murakami Haruki,” by Matthew C. Stretcher (Available through UF Library West) 2). Chap 35. – finish.	
W, Oct 9		“In the Penal Colony.” by Franz Kafka	
F, Oct 11		“The Metamorphosis,” by Franz Kafka	Fanfiction Assignment
WEEK 9			
M, Oct 14		<i>Who Fears Death</i> , Chap. 1 - 12	Discussion Question #6
W, Oct 16		Chap. 13 - 25	
F, Oct 18		Chap. 25 - 38	
WEEK 10			
M, Oct 21		Chap. 39 – 50	Discussion Question #7
W, Oct 23		Chap 51 – finish.	
F, Oct 25		“Game of Thrones’ Complex Relationship to Racism and Colonialism,” by Tyler Dean	Personal Analysis Assignment
UNIT 4: Gendered Elsewheres			
WEEK 11			
M, Oct 28		<i>The Wall</i> , p. 1 – 55	Discussion Question #8

W, Oct 30		p. 55 - 110	
F, Nov 1		p. 110 - 170	
WEEK 12			
M, Nov 4		p. 170 – finish.	
W, Nov 6		<i>Memory of Water</i> , Prologue – Chapter 6.	
F, Nov 8		Chapter 7- 12.	Discussion Question #9
WEEK 13			
M, Nov 11, <i>No Class, Holiday</i>		--	--
W, Nov 13		Chapter 12 - 16	
F, Nov 15		Chapter 17 – Epilogue	
WEEK 14			
M, Nov 18		<i>Persepolis 1</i> , pgs. TBA	
W, Nov 20,		<i>Persepolis 1-2</i> , pgs. TBA	Discussion Question #10
F, Nov 22	<i>Writing Workshop with Persepolis</i>	<i>Persepolis 2</i> , pgs. TBA	
WEEK 15			
M, Nov 25		“ Araby ,” by James Joyce	Analytical Research Essay, Rough Draft
W, Nov 27, <i>No Class, Thanksgiving</i>		--	--
F, Nov 29, <i>No Class, Thanksgiving</i>		--	--
WEEK 16			
M, Dec 2	<i>Editing Workshop</i>	<i>They Say/I Say</i> Reading, TBA	
W, Dec 4	<i>Wrapping Things Up</i>	<i>Moomintroll</i> guest lecture & conclusion.	Analytical Research Essay, Final Draft