



LIT2000: Introduction to Literature

Fall 2023

Instructor: Maryam Khorasani

Class No.: B310

Section No.: 1A24

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

am)

Office Hours:

Office Location:

Course Website: Canvas

Instructor Email: ma.khorasani@ufl.edu

Course Description

This course examines the unique and changing roles literature has played in individuals' lives and 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 you to a range of literary genres, from different countries and historical periods.

This course helps you develop the critical skill of textual interpretation. You will also learn how formal and stylistic elements as well as historical context shape the meaning and significance of literature. By becoming better readers of literature and its contexts, you become better readers of the worlds that literature addresses. That is, you develop your ability to decipher meaning from language, and better understand your own interactions with science, technology, media, commerce, and politics.

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Comment [RS1]: Here and elsewhere, you might consider writing in the second person (e.g., "you" instead of "students") to make the document slightly more personal and less bureaucratic. This is one of the stylistic changes I had intended to make to the template syllabus.

Comment [RS2R1]: Also, here and in other passages that your syllabus shares with Taylor's, you might look to the comments I made on his syllabus.

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Course Objectives

In addition to gaining a deeper appreciation of the expressive potential of language, you will better understand the changing roles and uses of literature in society.

Therefore, by the end of the course, you will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of specific literary works as well as the structures and conventions of literary genres.

2. Produce original, critical analyses of literary texts, using different methods of interpretation, while identifying formal and genre-related elements in the texts.

3. Critically assess the roles literature has played historically and continues to play in the human experience.

4. Connect literary texts to their biographical, historical, and cultural contexts.

General Education Designation

This course fulfills three credit hours of Humanities (H) requirements. Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or the humanities in general. You will learn to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases, and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives.

Assignments

- Attendance and Participation (20%)
- One Brief Response Posted on Canvas (10%)
- Close Reading Assignment (20%)
- Baldwin Visit Project (25%)
- Critical Analysis Paper (25%)

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Attendance and Participation

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory and will be assessed by class roll or sign-up sheet. Should you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for informing yourself as to what was covered in class. Acceptable reasons include illness, religious holidays, military obligations, and the twelve-day rule. Reasons for excused absences must be communicated with me, ahead of time, or within three days afterward in case of unexpected events. After three unexcused absences, each subsequent unexcused absence will result in a letter-grade deduction from your final grade (4 absences: 5% off final course grade, 5 absences: 10% off final course grade). Six unexcused absences will result in the automatic failure of the overall course. For the official University policy on absences, please refer to:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Participation: You 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 you are unable to answer these questions, it will be assumed that you have not prepared the homework and will lose 1% of the final grade. Consistent participation in class discussions, and demonstrated knowledge of the assigned readings will also contribute to this portion of the final grade.

One Brief Response Posted on Canvas (300-500 words)

Starting from week five, each student is required to write a brief (300-500 words) response to one of the readings. These responses are due by 11:59 PM on the night before class. I will assign each student their reading on week three and will provide more instructions about expectations for the format and the content of those responses. I also highly encourage you to read your peers' responses before each class as you are expected to draw on textual evidence to support or challenge the response's main argument as part of your class participation.

Close Reading Assignment (600-750 words)

During week six I am going to introduce you to a method for literary text analysis known as close reading. After learning about close-reading strategies, we are going to work together to apply those methods to short fiction and poetry in the form of a brief close-reading workshop. You should then

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Comment [RS3]: This language might go over students' heads, in part because the purpose of the course is (in part) to teach them precisely such things. So, is there a way to simplify what you're saying here without over-simplifying it?

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start working on your assignments individually and turn them in by October 4th. I will go through the assignments and provide general and personalized feedback, which you should take into account as you start working on your critical analysis paper.

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The Close Reading Assignment is due by 11:59 PM on October 4th.

Baldwin Visit Project

Comment [RS4]: This is a great assignment.

During the week we will be studying the historical and moral significance of fables and fairy tales, we will visit [The Baldwin Library of Historical Children's Literature](#) to learn more about different editions of *Aesop's Fables* and *Grimms' Fairy Tales*. I encourage you to write down your observations and take pictures of the book pages you find engaging as you will be expected to submit a report in the form of a paper or creative project after the visit. When putting together your projects, I encourage you to think of them as educational tools for people who have never visited the Baldwin. Your reports should be centered on these main questions:

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- What are the main differences between the earlier and the more recent editions of the two collections?
- What has remained constant?
- Have the illustrations undergone any significant changes throughout history?
- What do the formats and the illustrations of the books tell us about the differences between fables and fairy tales?
- Are the illustrations in accord with the "spirit" of the fable/fairy tale?

Your reports should be submitted in one of the following formats:

- Paper (700-1000 words)
- Video Essay
- Podcast Episode
- Picture Book
- Comic
- Zine

Please note that making a podcast episode is more than simply recording your voice as it should also contain a proper introduction and conclusion, sound effects, background music, etc. I will provide more detailed instructions about the projects before our visit. All projects should have a Works Cited section. For creative projects, this will be submitted as a separate Word document.

The Baldwin Visit Project is due by 11:59 PM on November 3rd.

Critical Analysis Paper (1,250-1,500 words)

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 by 11: 59 PM on December 1st.

Required Texts

Students should purchase the following texts:

- Viktor Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*. Translated by Ilse Lasch, Beacon Press, 2006.
ISBN: 978-0807014271
- Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *The Little Prince*. Translated by Irene Testot-Ferry, Wordsworth Editions, 1995.
ISBN: 978-1853261589
- Marjane Satrapi, *The Complete Persepolis: Volumes 1 and 2*. Translated by Anjali Singh, Pantheon, 2007.
ISBN: 978-0375714832

For the sake of affordability, you are allowed to use a different edition of the texts in case you already have one. But if you intend to buy a new copy, then please buy the editions listed above. The rest of the sources will be made available through Canvas or have links provided in the syllabus schedule below.

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Week	Date	Readings/Videos	Assignments Due
1	W Aug 23	Introduction to the course and syllabus	
<u>Unit 1: What is Literature?</u>	F Aug 25	“Introduction: What is Literature?” by Terry Eagleton	

Introduction: The Borders of Literature?			
2 Drama	M Aug 28	1. <i>Oedipus Rex</i> by Sophocles pp. 1216-1231 2. Video: “An Introduction to Greek Tragedy”	
	W Aug 30	<i>Oedipus Rex</i> pp. 1232-1247	
	F Sep 1	<i>Oedipus Rex</i> pp. 1248-1261	
3 Epic	M Sep 4	No Class	
	W Sep 6	1. <i>Inferno</i> by Dante, Canto I 2. Video: “Why Should You Read Dante’s Divine Comedy?”	
	F Sep 8	<i>Inferno</i> , Canto XXVI	
4 Poetry	M Sep 11	Sonnet 18 by Shakespeare	
	W Sep 13	1. “My Last Duchess” by Robert Browning 2. Video: “What Makes a Poem... a Poem?”	
	F Sep 15	1. “Mad Girl’s Love Song” by Sylvia Plath 2. Song on YouTube: “Mad Girl’s Love Song” by Carol Anne McGowan	
5	M Sep 18	“Introduction to Short Fiction” by Karen Palmer	

Short Story		“The Yellow Wallpaper” by Charlotte Perkins Gilman pp. 647-551	
	W Sep 20	“The Yellow Wallpaper” pp. 652-656	
	F Sep 22	“The Mark on the Wall” by Virginia Woolf	
6 Unit II: Why Do We Write? Writing about Literature Self-Expression/Self Construction	M Sep 25	Writing about Literature: Close Reading Strategies	
	W Sep 27	Close Reading Workshop	
	F Sep 29	<i>Man’s Search for Meaning</i> by Viktor Frankl pp. TBA	
7 Self-Expression/Self-Construction (cnt’d)	M Oct 2	1. <i>Man’s Search for Meaning</i> pp. TBA 2. Interview with Frankl: “Self-Actualization is not the goal”	
	W Oct 4	<i>Man’s Search for Meaning</i> pp. TBA	Close Reading Assignment due
	F Oct 6	No Class	
8 Writing about Literature World Making (Cosmopoiesis)	M Oct 9	General Feedback on Close Reading Assignments	
	W Oct 11	1. “The Dead” by James Joyce pp. 2282-2296 2. Video: James Joyce	
	F Oct 13	“The Dead” pp. 2297-2311	
9	M Oct 16	Selected pieces from <i>Aesop’s Fables</i>	

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Shaping Citizens: Moral Instruction (cnt'd)	W Oct 18	“Cinderella” from <i>Grimms’ Fairy Tales</i>	
	F Oct 20	Visit to the Baldwin Collection	
10 Shaping Citizens: Moral Instruction (cnt'd)	M Oct 23	<i>The Little Prince</i> Ch. I-IX	
	W Oct 25	<i>The Little Prince</i> Ch. X-XX	
	F Oct 27	1. <i>The Little Prince</i> Ch. XXI-XXVII 2. Optional: Selected piece from <i>The Tale of the Rose</i> by Consuelo de Saint-Exupéry	
11 Shaping Citizens: Moral Instruction (cnt'd.)	M Oct 30	1. <i>The Little Prince</i> (2015 film) 2. Video: “Linda Hutcheon on Adaptation and Remakes”	
	Writing about Literature	W Nov 1	Writing about Literature: Structuring a Critical Essay
	F Nov 3	Writing about Literature: Research Strategies	Baldwin Visit Project due
12 <u>Unit III: Why Do We Read?</u> Exploration and Discovery	M Nov 6	Selected pieces from Montesquieu’s <i>Persian Letters</i>	
	W Nov 8	Selected letters by Lady Mary Montague	
	F Nov 10	No Class	
13 Moving Beyond the Self	M Nov 13	“To a Skylark” by Percy Bysshe Shelley	
	W Nov 15	“Ode to a Nightingale” by John Keats	

	F Nov 17	“Roosters” by Elizabeth Bishop	
14 Finding New Selves	M Nov 20	“The Pomegranate Lady and Her Sons” by Goli Taraghi	
	W Nov 22	No Class	
	F Nov 24	No Class	
15 New Ways of Seeing	M Nov 27	<i>Persepolis</i> Ch. “The Veil” – “The F-14s”	
	W Nov 29	<i>Persepolis</i> Ch. “The Jewels – “Tyrol”	
	F. Dec 1	<i>Persepolis</i> Ch. “Pasta” – “The Return”	Critical Analysis Paper due
16 New Ways of Seeing (ctn’d.) Conclusion: Where to now?	M. Dec. 4	<i>Persepolis</i> Ch. “The Joke” – “The End” Video: Interview with Marjane Satrapi	
	W. Dec. 6	Article: “Does Great Literature Make Us Better People?” by Gregory Currie	

Important: I reserve the right to adjust the schedule/assignments as needed to accommodate course goals and to better meet student needs.

Classroom Policies

Late Policy: Class roll will be called at the beginning of class. Frequent lateness distracts other students and the instructor and will affect the student’s final participation grade. Three lates constitute one absence.

Classroom Behavior: Please keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Many of the texts we discuss and write about engage controversial topics and opinions. Diversified student backgrounds combined with controversial texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own. Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal, and accordingly, being marked “absent” from the class.

UF’s Policy on Harassment: The University of Florida is committed to providing a safe

Deleted: Makeup Policy: Except in the case of certified illness or other [UF-accepted excuses](#), 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 of illness, students should contact the instructor on his or her return to classes. .

Deleted: Discussion Expectations: People learn best when they are encouraged to ask questions and express their diverse opinions on course content, which may include images, texts, data, and theories from across disciplines. In response to challenging material, students and instructors are encouraged to ask honest questions and thoughtfully engage one another’s ideas. However, disruptive and disrespectful behavior has no place in a classroom. Students are expected to demonstrate respect during classroom discussions. .

educational, working, and residential environment that is free from sexual harassment or misconduct directed toward all members of the community:

<https://titleix.ufl.edu/about/title-ix-rights/>

Paper Format and Submission: 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
- MLA (8th edition) style citations

All papers must be submitted on Canvas as .doc or .docx files. All UF students have access to free copies of Office 365 ProPlus. This can be downloaded at:

<https://it.ufl.edu/services/gatorcloud-microsoft-office-online>

Late Papers/Assignments: I will not accept papers after the day an assignment is due. If you need an extension for an appropriate reason, please talk to me at least two days in advance of the due date.

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 the University of Florida's honor code, see <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 (<https://disability.ufl.edu/>) for information about available resources for students with disabilities.

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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/>).

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://gatorevals.aa.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://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/>.

UF COVID-19 Response: In response to COVID-19, the following recommendations are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones:

- If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit [one.ufl.edu](http://one.ufl.edu/screening-testing-and-vaccination-opportunities) for screening/testing and vaccination opportunities.
- If you are sick, stay home. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 to be evaluated.
- As with any excused absence, you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up missed work.

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Comment [RSS]: You may include this section, but UF no longer requires it.

Grading Policies

Grading Scale and GPA Equivalent

A (4.0) 100-93	C (2.0) 76-73
A- (3.67) 92-90	C- (1.67) 72-70
B+ (3.33) 89-87	D+ (1.33) 69-67
B (3.0) 86-83	D (1.0) 63-66

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>

B- (2.67) 82-80	D- (0.67) 62-60
C+ (2.33) 79-77	E (0) 59-

Grading Method: The writing assignments in this course will be graded holistically, and I will provide feedback for each paper. You must complete all assignments to receive credit for this course. A general rubric for course assessments is included below.

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Letter Grade	Assessment
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • course content and skills applied in the essay are well-developed • the argument is persuasive with detailed reasoning and thorough evidence • organization includes an identifiable thesis statement, topic and concluding sentences, and easy-to-follow paragraphs • writing style is coherent, clear, and appropriate for the assignment • little to no mechanical errors
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • course content or skills applied in the essay need development • argument is persuasive, but further reasoning or evidence is needed • organization is missing an identifiable thesis statement, topic and concluding sentences, or easy-to-follow paragraphs • writing style is coherent overall but unclear or inappropriate at times • few mechanical errors
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • course content or skills applied in the essay need significant development • additional reasoning and evidence are needed to improve persuasiveness • organization is missing an identifiable thesis statement or topic and concluding sentences and easy-to-follow paragraphs • writing style is coherent overall but unclear and inappropriate at times • some mechanical errors
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • course content and skills applied in the essay need significant development • argument is not persuasive; reasoning and evidence are lacking • organization is missing an identifiable thesis statement, topic and concluding sentences, and easy-to-follow paragraphs • writing style struggles with logic, clarity, and appropriateness • frequent mechanical errors

E	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• course content and skills are not applied in the paper• reasoning for argument is unclear and evidence is missing• lack of organization causes difficulty following the argument• writing style is incoherent and inappropriate for the assignment• mechanical errors limit the ability to read the paper
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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.