

## LIT 2000: Introduction to Literature

**Instructor:** Judy Colindres

**Office:** TUR 4405

**Office Hours:** Wednesdays 2-3 pm &  
Thursdays 4-5pm

**E-mail:** j.colindres@ufl.edu

**Course Time:** MWF Period 6 (12:50-1:40)

**Course Location:** MAT 0005

**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.

The primary aim of this course is to help students develop the critical skills 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 developing skills for reading literature and identifying literary contexts, students will 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 content knowledge 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.

### 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. Students 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.

## Required Texts

Students will need the following complete texts:

*A Raisin in the Sun* (1959) by Lorraine Hansberry

*Beloved* (1987) by Toni Morrison

*Persepolis* (2000) by Marjane Satrapi

Shorter texts and excerpts will be provided to students via Canvas.

## Grade Distribution

### Summary of Grades

- Attendance & Participation (10%)
- Discussion Board (20%)
- Close Reading Assignment (20%)
- Critical Analysis Paper (30%)
- Final Exam (20%)

### Attendance & Participation (100 points)

*Attendance:* Attendance is mandatory and will be assessed by class roll or sign-up sheet. After two unexcused absences, students will lose 1% from their final grade for every additional unexcused absence. Absences will be excused in accordance with UF policy. Acceptable reasons include illness, religious holidays, military obligation, and the twelve-day rule. Should you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for informing yourself as to what was covered in class. For University of Florida's attendance policy code, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>.

*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.

### Discussion Board (200 points)

Before each discussion section, students are required to contribute a question or an answer to on an online discussion forum. Discussion boards will be posted via Canvas.

*Description:* Interpretive questions are open-ended and are concerned with textual meaning. They ask for your analysis of themes, figurative language, and symbolism within the narrative. They also call for discussion regarding the period, history, politics, and ethical questions that are relevant to the text. The open-endedness of interpretive questions—

which often use phrases such as "why do you think" or "how did you interpret"— 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.*

### **Close Reading Assignment (750 words; 200 points)**

This assignment will test students' 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.

### **Critical Analysis Paper (1,250 words; 300 points)**

This assignment asks students to combine close reading skills with critical concepts and historical information introduced in class discussion and supplemental research. The goal is for students to produce a strong analytic argument supported by textual and contextual evidence.

### **Final Exam (200 points)**

The final assessment for the course will be designed by the student to demonstrate their engagement with course themes and critical analysis skills. Students will have the option to write a reflection paper, complete an oral exam, or submit a creative project. All three options will require students to practice interpretation and analysis as they have done throughout the semester. Students will be assessed for thorough projects that clearly analyze textual evidence and make contextual connections.

## **Grading Policies**

### **Grading Scale & GPA Equivalent**

<b>A</b> (4.0) 100-93	<b>C</b> (2.0) 76-73
<b>A-</b> (3.67) 92-90	<b>C-</b> (1.67) 72-70
<b>B+</b> (3.33) 89-87	<b>D+</b> (1.33) 69-67
<b>B</b> (3.0) 86-83	<b>D</b> (1.0) 63-66
<b>B-</b> (2.67) 82-80	<b>D-</b> (0.67) 62-60
<b>C+</b> (2.33) 79-77	<b>E</b> (0) 59-

**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>

**Grading Method:** The writing assignments in this course will be graded holistically, and the instructor will provide written feedback for each paper. A general rubric for course

assessments is included below. More specific guidelines may be included in Canvas.

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

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

**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. Grade deductions are determined by the instructor at the end of the semester.

**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 the 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.

**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 <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.

**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) 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.

## Class Schedule

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

### Unit I: *What is Literature?*

Week	Reading(s)
Week 1 (1/9 – 1/13): Introduction	“ <a href="#">The Danger of a Single Story</a> ” by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
Week 2 (1/16 – 1/20): Epic <b>*No Class 1/16 – Holiday</b>	<i>Inferno</i> (Cantos I & XXVI) by Dante
Week 3 (1/23 – 1/27): Poetry	“Essential oils are wrung” AND “Wild Nights – Wild Nights!” by Emily Dickinson
Week 4 (1/30 – 2/4): Short Story	“A Good Man is Hard to Find” (1953) by Flannery O’Connor AND “Everyday Use” (1973) by Alice Walker
Week 5 (2/6 – 2/10): Drama	<i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> (1959) by Lorraine Hansberry
Week 6 (2/13 – 2/17): Drama <b>*No Class 2/17 – Judy presents at a conference!</b>	<i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> (1959) by Lorraine Hansberry

### Unit II: *Why do we write?*

Week 7 (2/20 – 2/24): World Making <b>Close Reading Assignment due 2/20</b>	Selections from <i>Miguel Street</i> (1959) by V.S. Naipaul
Week 8 (2/27 – 3/3): Shaping Citizens	<i>Beloved</i> (1987) by Toni Morrison
Week 9 (3/6 – 3/10): Shaping Citizens	<i>Beloved</i> (1987) by Toni Morrison
Week 10 (3/13-17): <b>Spring Break</b>	N/A
Week 11 (3/20 – 3/24): Cultural Identity	Excerpt from <i>Playing in the Dark</i> (1992) by Toni Morrison
Week 12 (3/27 – 3/31): Self-Construction <b>Critical Analysis Paper due 3/31</b>	Excerpt from <i>I, Rigoberta Menchú</i> (1983) by Rigoberta Menchú

**Unit III: Why do we read?**

Week 13 (4/3 – 4/7): Finding New Selves	Selections from <i>How to Leave Hialeah</i> (2009) by Jennine Capó Crucet
Week 14 (4/10 – 4/14): New Ways of Seeing	<i>Persepolis</i> (2000) by Marjane Satrapi
Week 15 (4/17 – 4/21): New Ways of Seeing	<i>Persepolis</i> (2000) by Marjane Satrapi
Week 16 (4/24 – 4/26): Conclusion <b>Final Exam due 4/26</b>	“What reading slowly taught me about writing” by Jacqueline Woodson