

LIT 2000: Introduction to Literature

Section 1A28
Class 14555
MWF 7
MAT 0012

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Course Description

Introduction to Literature is a course designed to immerse students in the diverse and dynamic world of literary studies. Through an exploration of various genres and forms, students will develop essential skills in literary analysis, critical thinking, and written communication. This course emphasizes the appreciation of literary works from different cultures and time periods, fostering an understanding of the historical and social contexts that shape literary creation and interpretation.

Our driving question for the semester will be “what *is* literature?” To attempt to answer this question, we will explore what types of media and storytelling forms qualify as literature, different genres and their relationship to the idea of “literature,” and stories that push narrative boundaries. Through these explorations, students will develop skills of analysis and interpretation.

General education objectives

- 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. A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit.

Course 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:

- **Literary Analysis:** Students will learn to read, interpret, and analyze texts with a focus on understanding themes, symbols, and narrative techniques.
- **Critical Thinking:** Students will engage in discussions and written assignments that challenge them to think deeply and critically about the readings.

- **Cultural Awareness:** Through exposure to a wide range of literary voices and traditions, students will gain insights into the cultural and historical contexts that influence literature.

Required Texts

(AKA texts that I will not provide for you)

Please get hard copies rather than Ebooks or audio books if possible

Texts

The Arrival by Shaun Tan, ISBN: 978-0439895293

The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkein, ISBN: 978-0547928227

Beowulf: A New Verse Translation, translated by Seamus Heaney, ISBN: 978-0393320978

Persuasion by Jane Austen, ISBN: 979-8449256768

An Unkindness of Ghosts by Rivers Solomon, ISBN: 978-1617755880

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley, ISBN: 978-0143131847

Films/television/visual albums

Over the Garden Wall (2014)

Howl's Moving Castle (2004)

Grave of the Fireflies (1988)

Lemonade (2016)

Dirty Computer [Emotion Picture] (2018)

Challengers (2024)

Get Out (2017)

The Truman Show (1998)

Everything Everywhere All at Once (2022)

Midsommar (2019)

All other readings will be made available on Canvas

Grading & Course Credit Policies

Grading Scale

A	4.0	94-100	940-1000	C	2.0	74-76	740-769
A-	3.67	90-93	900-939	C-	1.67	70-73	700-739
B+	3.33	87-89	870-899	D+	1.33	67-69	670-699
B	3.0	84-86	840-869	D	1.0	64-66	640-669
B-	2.67	80-83	800-839	D-	0.67	60-63	600-639
C+	2.33	77-79	770-799	E	0.00	0-59	0-599

"A"- Excellent. A paper that demonstrates a clear understanding of critical concepts, addresses the subject matter, and exceeds expectations of critical analysis. A paper with this grade will also be free of grammatical errors.

"B"- Good. A paper that has met the standards of the assignment at a high level. It may need revision after receiving feedback but is a logical and solid piece of work. It may have a few grammatical errors but still readable.

"C"- Satisfactory/passing. A paper that has done the absolute minimum required. It likely needs revision in terms of critical analysis, conceptual engagement, etc.

"D"- Weak. This paper does not adequately fulfill the assignment to a satisfactory degree. One portion of an assignment may be missing or there may be a misused critical element. Papers with this grade tend to be disorganized and contain many grammatical errors.

"E"- Failing. This paper does not address the assignment prompt or is unreadable/incomplete.

Assignment Descriptions (Total Points Possible: 1000)

Critical Thesis Proposals (800 words each; 3 total; 300 points)

Students will have 3 thesis proposals this semester. You will pick one text and form an argument. Rather than write a traditional paper, a thesis proposal is essentially the bare bones of a paper. It will have a thesis statement, topic sentences, passages used for evidence, and a conclusion. This process will help you recognize the key elements of a paper and learn how to write step by step. An assignment sheet and examples will be available on Canvas.

Close Readings (250 words each; 3 total; 150 points)

In preparation for the critical thesis proposals, students will be expected to complete a close reading 1 week before the thesis proposal itself. For this assignment, you will pick a specific passage/line/scene from one of the texts that they would like to write about. You will make an argument based on that passage and should be hyper-specific in terms of what you are looking at. More details will be available on Canvas.

Blogpost (800 words; 100 points)

To practice more public-facing writing, students will write a blogpost pertaining to any text/topic of their choosing that relates to literary studies and course themes. They will write in the style of a typical blogpost—using hyperlinks, headers, and images. This will be a more casual writing exercise than other assignments. Rather than being argumentative, it is explorative.

Personal Response Essay (800 words, 100 points)

Students will craft a reflective essay discussing their personal connection to a specific work or theme studied in the course. You will share how what we have read/watched over the course of the semester has influenced your understanding of literature is, or your own identity and experiences. This assignment encourages students to connect academic study with personal reflection.

Final Literary Analysis Paper (1500 words, 200 points)

This assignment will ask students to combine close reading skills with critical concepts and academic research introduced in class or from the students' own research. The goal is for students to produce a strong conceptual argument supported by textual and contextual evidence. In

addition to using the primary text as evidence, you will also use secondary, scholarly sources to help support their argument. Two scholarly sources are required. More details will be provided later in the semester.

Participation (100 points)

Participation is crucial to this course. Students are expected to complete the readings, show up to class, and contribute to conversation. Our class will be primarily discussion based, so please participate!

Discussion Leading (50 points)

For this assignment, students will take on the role of discussion leader, guiding their peers through a thoughtful exploration of a selected literary work. The goal is to foster a dynamic and engaging discussion that encourages participants to delve deeper into the text and collectively unravel the complexities of the chosen work. Students will prepare no less than 2 discussion questions on the readings for their assigned day.

Schedule of Classes and Assignments

This schedule is only a guide and is subject to change.

Week 1	Syllabus Day	Assignments
8/23	Syllabus and course overview	
Week 2	Unit 1: What is a "text"?	
8/26	Commercial viewings in class	
8/28	Art viewings in class	
8/30	Read before class: The Arrival by Shaun Tan	
Week 3		
9/2	NO CLASS	
9/4	Watch before class: <i>Over the Garden Wall</i>	
9/6	Watch before class: <i>Howl's Moving Castle</i>	
Week 4		
9/9	Watch before class: <i>Grave of the Fireflies</i>	
9/11	Watch before class: Beyoncé's <i>Lemonade</i>	
9/13	Watch before class: Janelle Monáe's <i>Dirty Computer</i>	Close reading 1 due at 11:59PM
Week 5	Unit 2: Is "literature" a genre?	
9/16	Read before class: <i>The Hobbit</i> by J.R. Tolkein	
9/18	Read before class: <i>The Hobbit</i> by J.R. Tolkein	
9/20	Read before class: <i>The Hobbit</i> by J.R. Tolkein	Critical Thesis Proposal 1 due at 11:59PM
Week 6		

9/23	Read before class: <i>The Hobbit</i> by J.R. Tolkein	
9/25	Read before class: <i>The Hobbit</i> by J.R. Tolkein	
9/27	Read before class: <i>The Hobbit</i> by J.R. Tolkein	
Week 7		
9/30	Read before class: <i>Beowulf</i>	
10/2	Read before class: <i>Beowulf</i>	
10/4	Watch before class: <i>Challengers</i>	
Week 8		
10/7	Read before class: <i>Persuasion</i>	
10/9	Read before class: <i>Persuasion</i>	
10/11	Read before class: <i>An Unkindness of Ghosts</i>	Close reading 2 due at 11:59PM
Week 9		
10/14	Read before class: <i>An Unkindness of Ghosts</i>	
10/16	Read before class: <i>An Unkindness of Ghosts</i>	
10/18	Read before class: <i>An Unkindness of Ghosts</i>	Critical Thesis Proposal 2 due at 11:59PM
Week 10		
10/21	Read before class: <i>An Unkindness of Ghosts</i>	
10/23	Read before class: <i>An Unkindness of Ghosts</i>	
10/25	Read before class: <i>An Unkindness of Ghosts</i>	
Week 11		
10/28	Read before class: <i>Frankenstein</i>	
10/30	Read before class: <i>Frankenstein</i>	
11/1	Watch before class: <i>Get Out</i>	
Week 12		
11/4	Read before class: "The Tell-Tale Heart" and "The Masque of the Red Death"	
	Unit 3: Playing with Form	
11/6	Read before class: "the semplica girl diaries"	Close reading 3 due at 11:59PM
11/8	Read before class: "All That" by David Foster Wallace	
Week 13		
11/11	NO CLASS	
11/13	Read before class: <i>Preservation News</i> by Allan Gurganus	Critical Thesis Proposal 3 due at 11:59PM
11/15	Read before class: "The Husband Stitch" by Carmen Maria Machado	
Week 14		

11/18	Watch before class: <i>The Truman Show</i>	
11/20	Watch before class: <i>Everything Everywhere All at Once</i>	
11/22	Watch before class: <i>Midsommar</i>	Blogpost due 11/24 at 11:59PM
Week 15	THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS	
Week 16		
12/2	Last day of class, in-class activities	Personal Response Essay due 12/4 11:59PM
	FINAL PAPER DUE 12/13 AT 11:59PM	

Course Policies

Attendance

Like all lecture-discussion courses, this one needs you! Use your allotted absences wisely (for emergencies, major illnesses) as you would for any job. You will fail the course if you accrue **six** 50-minute absences. You will earn a lowered course grade if you accrue **four** absences. Note that missing a double session counts as 2 absences.

Find a list of UF-approved excuses, and certified illnesses here for which alone a make-up option will be applicable (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>)

Please note: If students are absent, it is their responsibility to make themselves aware of all due dates. If absent due to a scheduled event, students are still responsible for turning assignments in on time.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits plagiarism and defines it as follows:

Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

1. Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
2. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code, which can be found at <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/students/student-conduct-code/>.

Important Tip: You should never copy and paste something from the Internet without providing the exact location from which it came.

Classroom Behavior

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

We will be tackling some tough topics—please treat them with sensitivity.

In-Class Work

Active participation is a crucial part of success in this class. Students will be expected to work in small groups and participate in group discussions, writing workshops, peer reviews, and other in-class activities. Be prepared for unannounced quizzes or activities on the readings or classroom discussion. Students must be present for all in-class activities to receive credit for them. In-class work cannot be made up. Writing workshops require that students provide constructive feedback about their peers' writing. In general, students are expected to contribute constructively to each class session.

Paper Maintenance Responsibilities

Students are responsible for maintaining duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course and retaining all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a resubmission of papers or a review of graded papers, it is the student's responsibility to have and to make available this material.

Mode of Submission

Papers and drafts are due at the beginning of class or online at the assigned deadline. Late papers will not be accepted. Failure of technology is not an excuse.

All papers will be submitted as MS Word (.doc, .docx) documents to Canvas. Final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner. All papers must be in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins and pages numbered.

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Writing Studio

The University Writing Studio is located in Turlington 2215 and is available to all UF students. Free appointments can be made up to twice a week. They are currently offering online appointments. See <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> to learn more.

Recording Policy

Class lectures may only be recorded for purposes defined by House Bill 233/Section 1004.097. A class lecture does not include academic exercises involving student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

A recording of a class lecture may not be published without the consent of the lecturer. Publish is defined as sharing, transmitting, circulating, distributing, or providing access to a Recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. A recording, or transcript of the recording, is considered to be published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper or leaflet. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Students in Distress

For guidance during distressing situations, please contact U Matter We Care or the Dean of Students Office. They can help students navigate resources and academic procedures for personal, medical, and academic issues.

U Matter We Care: <http://umatter.ufl.edu>, umatter@ufl.edu, 352-294-2273 (CARE)

Dean of Students: <https://dso.ufl.edu/>, 202 Peabody Hall, (352) 392-1261

Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 3190 Radio Road, (352) 392-1575

Field and Fork Pantry: <https://fieldandfork.ufl.edu/>, located near McCarty B, 352-294-2208

Student Health Care Center: <http://shcc.ufl.edu/>, multiple locations, (352) 392-1161