

World Literature I
COLI 110-06, Fall 2009
Library North 1402
MWF 10:50 - 11:50

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Course Description

This course is intended to provide a general introduction to world literature from ancient writings to the sixteenth century. As such, our class will explore some of the seminal works from various cultures and historical periods within this general framework, but we will also look beyond to some of the more modern texts. In doing so, we will attempt to trace connections from the beginnings of civilization and writing to the formations of our modern thought and experience in addition to locating individual works within their specific historical and cultural contexts. We will always be questioning how these works of literature uphold or contradict the different ideologies and institutions of a particular society and how they create meaning for us as individual readers. Reading selections are organized chronologically, for the most part, as well as thematically beginning with the heroic epic and following the hero's (that is, the individual's) journey to find meaning within the self, in relationships with others, and within society.

Required Text

Lawall, Sarah, et al., eds. The Norton Anthology of World Literature (Shorter Second Edition). 2 vols. New York: Norton, 2009.

Course Policies

- **Attendance**: Students are expected to attend all classes and to arrive on time. I will allow **four** absences per student. **I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences; an absence is an absence. For every absence after your fourth, I will deduct half a letter grade from your final grade (e.g. B becomes B-, B- becomes C+)**. Being late to class (or leaving early) will also negatively affect your grade. Two late arrivals and/or early departures will count as one absence.
- **Participation**: A significant part of your grade in this course depends on your participation in class discussions and activities. This is not meant to be only a lecture course, and you are expected to come to class prepared to share your ideas and questions about the readings. To this end, it is crucial that you keep up with the reading and written assignments. We should also strive to maintain an atmosphere of tolerance and open-mindedness so that students feel encouraged to voice opinions and questions. **Participation is 15% of your grade.**
- **Due Dates**: Assignments are due on the dates listed. Late papers will be docked one letter grade per day. If you encounter dire circumstances concerning the due dates, please see me, and if you know you are going to miss a day that a written assignment is due, please make arrangements to get your paper to me. In-class work such as quizzes cannot

be made up.

- **Academic Integrity:** Plagiarism is appropriating the words or ideas of another to use as your own. It is a gross violation of the ethical standards of the university and of this class and will not be tolerated. **Students who plagiarize any part of a paper risk failing the assignment and the course.**

Assignments

1. **Quizzes:** There will be unannounced quizzes throughout the semester pertaining to the materials we are reading.

Quizzes are 15% of your grade.

2. **Responses/Questions:** For several reading assignments, you will be responsible for developing an issue question about the text and writing a brief but formal (1-2 pages typed, 12 pt. font, double-spaced) response to your own question. Your questions and responses help you to think critically about the texts we are reading and will serve as discussion topics in class. They may also prove very helpful in developing ideas for your essays. **Questions/Responses are 20% of your grade.**

3. **Essays:** You will write three essays during the course of the semester. The first two essays will be 3-4 pages in length, on a text and topic of your choice while the third essay will be 4-6 pages. The exact requirements for each essay will be discussed during the course of the semester. All essays must adhere to MLA format.

Combined, the essays are worth 50% of your grade.

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

Participation: 15%

Quizzes: 15%

Reading responses/questions: 20%

Essay 1: 15%

Essay 2: 15%

Essay 3: 20%

Tentative Course Schedule*

Week 1

M 8/31 Introduction to the course
W 9/2 Introduction to ancient writing and the heroic epic
F 9/4 *Gilgamesh*: Tablets I-III

Week 2

M 9/7 Labor Day – no class
W 9/9 *Gilgamesh*: Tablets IV-IX
F 9/11 *Gilgamesh*: Tablets X-XI

Week 3

M 9/14 Homer: *The Odyssey*: Books I-III
W 9/16 Homer: *The Odyssey*: Books IV-VI
F 9/18 Homer: *The Odyssey*: Books VIII-X

Week 4

M 9/21 Homer: *The Odyssey*: Books X-XIII
W 9/23 *The Ramayana of Valmiki*
F 9/25 *The Ramayana of Valmiki*

Week 5

M 9/28 Yom Kippur- no class
W 9/30 Peer review for first essay
F 10/2 Poetry: Egyptian love songs, China's Classic of Poetry

Week 6

M 10/5 **Essay 1 due**; Lyrics: Sappho and Catullus
W 10/7 Ovid: *Metamorphoses*
F 10/9 Ovid: *Metamorphoses*

Week 7

M 10/12 Amarusataka
W 10/14 Somadeva: "The Red Lotus of Chastity"
F 10/16 Yuan Chen: "The Story of Ying-ying"

Week 8

M 10/19 Murasaki Shikibu: *The Tale of Genji*
W 10/21 Murasaki Shikibu: *The Tale of Genji*
F 10/23 Murasaki Shikibu: *The Tale of Genji*

Week 9

M 10/26 *The Thousand and One Nights*
W 10/28 *The Thousand and One Nights*
F 10/30 Peer review for second essay

Week 10

M 11/2 **Essay 2 due**; Miguel de Cervantes: *Don Quixote*
W 11/4 Miguel de Cervantes: *Don Quixote*
F 11/6 Miguel de Cervantes: *Don Quixote*

Week 11

M 11/9 William Shakespeare: *Hamlet*
W 11/11 William Shakespeare: *Hamlet*
F 11/13 William Shakespeare: *Hamlet*

Week 12

M 11/16 William Shakespeare: *Hamlet*
W 11/18 William Shakespeare: *Hamlet*
F 11/20 William Shakespeare: *Hamlet*

Week 13

M 11/23 Fyodor Dostoevsky: *Notes from Underground*
W 11/25 Fyodor Dostoevsky: *Notes from Underground*
F 11/27 T.S. Eliot: "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"

Week 14

M 11/30 Franz Kafka: *The Metamorphosis*
W 12/2 Franz Kafka: *The Metamorphosis*
F 12/4 Peer review for third essay

Week 15

M 12/7 **Essay 3 due;** Film
W 12/9 Film
F 12/11 Film

***Instructor reserves the right to make changes to the schedule at any time. Absent students are responsible for finding out from fellow classmates any syllabus changes that were discussed during the class.**