COURSE OUTLINE
Spring 2019

Course Number
English 203

Course Title
World Literature I

Credits
3

Hours:
3 Lecture

Co- or Pre-requisite:
Minimum C grade in English 102

Implementation
sem/year

Catalog description (2018-2019 Catalog):
A survey of important literary works from cultures around the world dating from ancient times through the 17th century.

Is course New, Revised, or Modified? Modified

Required texts/other materials:
Care should be taken in this writing-intensive course to find literature from the six populated continents rather than focusing strictly on Western civilization. The three anthologies listed below, although extensive, should be supplemented by indigenous literatures from the oral traditions and other .pdf materials from the web. Critical approaches to literary study are also available on the Internet and listed below. A variety of voices and genres spanning the Archaic, Classical, Medieval, and Early Modern periods should be studied. If possible, assign the play put on by Mercer’s theatre department in the fall semester if it falls within the range of the course and bring the class to the play, so that they experience live theatre.

Sample Anthologies for World Literature:

OR


Revision date: Spring 2019 Course coordinator: Barbara Hamilton, x3354, hamiltob@mccc.edu
Information resources:

Other instructor reference texts:


General literary studies resource websites:

Purdue OWL: Writing About Literature: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/618/1/
Dr. Kristi Siegel’s Introduction to Modern Literary Theory: http://www.kristisiegel.com/theory.htm
The Voice of the Shuttle: http://vos.ucsb.edu
Literary Research Tools on the Web: http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Lit
American Comparative Literature Association General Research Portal: http://www.acla.org/resources/general-research
Georgetown Medieval Studies Scholarly Resources: http://labyrinth.georgetown.edu

Specialized sites:

Diotima: Materials for the Study of Women and Gender in the Ancient World: http://www.stoa.org/diotima/
Perseus Digital Library: http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/
Institute for World Literature: http://iwl.fas.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do
Eclat! U.Penn’s “Essential” Comparative Literature and Theory Sites: http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/Complit/Eclat

Supplemental Web Texts:

The Kĕbra Nagast (Ethiopian): http://www.yorku.ca/inpar/kebra_budge.pdf
Creation Stories: (Babylonian): http://www.ancient.eu/article/225/
(Several): http://www.indigenouspeople.net/legend.htm
(Lenape): http://henryhahn.net/myths/lenapecreation.html
(Egyptian): http://www.egyptartsite.com/crea.html

Course Competencies/Student Learning Outcomes

The student will be able to demonstrate knowledge of these concepts by being able to perform these tasks:

1. Close Reading: interpret complex texts which may include images, epic and lyric poetry, fiction, orature, memoir, and drama through close reading (ILG 1, 6, 8) [Methods of assessment: in-class workshops, discussions, and individual writing assignments]

2. Literary Strategies: demonstrate knowledge of the distinctive ways writers and translators use words and different literary structures to shape a reader’s response to their work (ILG 1, 6, 8, 9) [Methods of assessment: in-class workshops, discussions, performance/discussion leading of a piece of literature, and individual writing assignments]

3. Synthesis of Texts: create original essays using course texts and scholarly research, synthesizing readings to create original interpretations (ILG 1, 4, 6, 10, 11) [Method of assessment: essay]
4. **Critical Analysis:** analyze a piece of literature using the most appropriate critical framework(s) for that particular work (psychological, historical, philosophical, feminist, Marxist, etc.) (ILG 1, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11)  
   *[Methods of assessment: small- and large-group discussion; individual writing assignments]*

5. **Literary Context:** evaluate literature’s dual role as both product of and producer of culture using textual evidence of major historical and social shifts (conquest, trade, slavery, migration, colonization, economic, political, or religious change, social justice movements). (ILG 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)  
   *[Methods of assessment: in-class workshops, discussion, and individual writing assignments]*

6. **Documentation of Sources:** use correct MLA documentation format for citing literature in essays (ILG 1, 4, 10)  
   *[Method of assessment: essay]*

This course meets the following Institutional Learning Goals

1. **Written and Oral Communication in English:** Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.

4. **Technology:** Students will use computer systems or other appropriate forms of technology to achieve educational and personal goals.

6. **Humanities:** Students will analyze works in the fields of art, music, or theater; literature; philosophy and/or religious studies; and/or will gain competence in the use of a foreign language.

7. **History:** Students will understand historical events and movements in World, Western, non-Western or American societies and assess their subsequent significance.

8. **Diversity and Global Perspective:** Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and culturally diverse peoples.

9. **Ethical Reasoning and Action:** Students will understand ethical frameworks, issues, and situations.

10. **Information Literacy:** Students will recognize when information is needed and have the knowledge and skills to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information for college level work.

11. **Critical Thinking:** Students will use critical thinking skills to understand, analyze, and apply information or solve problems.

**Unit I**   Introduction to the Study of World Literature  
   [SLO 1, 4, 5; ILG 1, 6-11]

*Learning Objectives*

*The student will be able to...*

- differentiate between reading and analyzing works in translation and works written in the original language, especially in regard to “close reading”

- describe the ways literature is embedded in cultural, historical--and therefore linguistic and ethical--context.

- demonstrate understanding that interpreting world literature involves acknowledging and expanding one’s own cultural/critical boundaries
• explain the interconnectedness and mutual influence of world cultures throughout literary history due to factors such as trade, conquest, war, imitation, appropriation, missionizing, and colonization

• apply a variety of critical frames or lenses through which to interpret world literature

Unit II  The Archaic Period  [SLO 1-2, 4-5; ILG 1, 6-9, 11]

Learning Objectives
The student will be able to...
• identify the themes and characteristics of oral narrative and epic poetry.
• present in small groups to the class about how an oral narrative reflects a culture’s assumptions about the nature of things, the relationship of one group to their gods, one group to another, the efficacy of humans in the world, and other cultural codes.
• juxtapose different cultures’ oral stories to notice similarities and differences
• evaluate the epic poem as a means of thematically stabilizing culture, reinforcing the values of the ruling elite, and sometimes appropriating another cultural heritage to establish a more heroic past through translatio imperii

Unit III  The Classical Period [SLO 1-6; ILG 1, 6-9, 11]

Learning Objectives
The student will be able to...
• comprehend the connections between religion, ethics, and drama in the classical Greek world
• apply interpretive dramatic strategies and vocabulary from Aristotle’s Poetics, Freytag’s dramatic theory, and psychology to read Greek classical tragedy
• evaluate the impact of historical, social, political, and religious change on previously discussed themes in Greek thought
• analyze the poetry of Sappho as providing an alternative voice in Greek society
• compare the Indian epic The Ramayana of Valmiki to the epic in Babylon, Greece, or Rome, noticing similarities and differences such as the conception of heroism, the role of women, the role of the gods
• describe the historical and philosophical context of Confucius as a thinker working at a time of great cultural change. Recognize his impact on Asian thought as reflected in “The Ballad of Mulan” and excerpts from The Book of Songs.
• discuss the role of literature in capturing moments of cultural change or upheaval through close analysis of poetry such as Ovid’s Metamorphosis or excerpts from Boethius’s The Consolation of Philosophy
• create an original, peer-reviewed essay analyzing one work from the Archaic or Classical Period using the most helpful critical lens and synthesizing scholarly sources
Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- compare structural patterns, social function, and thematic content between Chinese Zaju drama, Japanese Noh drama, and Western drama following Greek and Roman models

- analyze literature in an increasingly global context through studying works produced in areas of cultural interchange ("contact zones") such as early medieval England, the Iberian peninsula, Mesoamerica, Ethiopia

- discuss the role of literature in reflecting and shaping the cultures of these contact zones

- describe the great influence of Islamic thought and poetry on medieval European and African spirituality and poetry

- explain the social forces leading to the rise in women’s voices across the world, differentiating between female authors (Murasaki Shikibu, Hadewijch, Marie de France, Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz) and female protagonists in works written by men (Sharahzad, Dou E, The Wife of Bath)

- present in pairs a short original performance or creative presentation aiding in the class understanding of a work from the Medieval period

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- analyze literature in an increasingly global context through studying works produced in areas of cultural interchange ("contact zones") such as Mesoamerica, demonstrating working knowledge of the concept of cultural hybridity

- discuss the role of literature in reflecting and shaping the cultures of these contact zones

- apply the sociological concept of The Other to analyze the impact on Europeans of expanding beyond their national boundaries, as evidenced in the literature

- present in pairs a short original performance or creative presentation aiding in the class understanding of a work from the Early Modern period

- create an original, peer-reviewed essay analyzing one work from the Medieval through Early Modern Period using the most helpful critical lens and synthesizing scholarly sources

Evaluation of student learning: The weighted percentage of these means of assessing student learning will vary slightly, but the greatest emphasis should be on formal written work.

Participation (30%). Reading closely and carefully, actively participating in class and/or online discussion, possible quizzes, group and individual workshops, attendance, and draft workshops.
**Essays (55%)** Students will submit 15-18 pages of peer-reviewed, final draft essay, split into individual essays; the total may include a short essay final examination at the instructor’s discretion. Research essays should demonstrate careful text-based analysis, use of an appropriate critical lens, location of the text within an historical, social context, analysis of the characters or speakers in a variety of socially-defined categories, and integration of scholarly sources.

**Presentation/Performance/Discussion-Leading (15%).** Students work in pairs to perform and present some aspect of a work and then help to lead class discussion for the day with open-ended questions.

**Academic Integrity:** Students should be familiar with Mercer’s Academic Integrity Policy, found [here](#). Claiming another’s work as one’s own is **one of the most serious academic crimes**. Students are guilty of plagiarism if they submit another person’s writing or ideas as their own in online discussion, in-class discussion, essay, presentation slides, or exam work. This includes both intentional (copy/pasting ideas from the web, another student, or any other source without citation) and unintentional plagiarism (providing a citation but not using quotation marks around exact borrowed wording, for instance). Students in doubt as to whether or not to cite an idea they borrow from someone else should always provide citation to be safe. We will review how to use other people’s ideas and words legally, and students will be graded on how carefully they do this. Except when students are clearly substituting another’s work for their own, most cases of plagiarism can be avoided by careful citation.

**Plagiarism Policy:** In English 203, all plagiarized work (whether homework, threaded discussion, or essay) will receive **zero** points toward the final course grade. If students plagiarize more than once, they will receive an “**F**” final course grade. All plagiarism will be reported to Mercer’s Academic Integrity Council.