

Introduction to Twentieth-Century Literature

<http://tcl17.blogs.rutgers.edu>

MW 6 (Mondays and Wednesdays, 4:30 p.m.–5:50 p.m.) in Murray 208

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Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:30–4:30 in Murray 019 or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the pleasures and challenges of studying the literature of the twentieth century. Twentieth-century literature in English is a global phenomenon; this course explores some of the ways fiction, poetry, and drama speak to a world in which distant people and places are brought into contact with one another by world-spanning media and communications systems, large-scale migration, catastrophic war, and the rise and fall, and rise, of empires. Rather than attempt a survey, we read intensively in a selection of writers, paying particular attention to four themes in turn: inner life amidst social division; the poetics of multiple voices; the possibilities of reduction and minimalism; and the politics of the historical imagination.

LEARNING GOALS

1. Become familiar with important themes and concepts of twentieth-century literature in English from across the globe, including connections and distinctions between modernism and post-colonial literatures.
2. Master the skill of analyzing individual narrative, poetic, and dramatic texts in terms of their specific linguistic, formal, and generic characteristics.
3. Acquire proficiency in making meaningful comparisons across time and space in literary texts.
4. Develop effective written arguments about literary texts.

This course also satisfies the AHP Core Curriculum goal: Analyze arts and/or literatures in themselves and in relation to specific histories, values, languages, cultures, and technologies.

REQUIREMENTS

PARTICIPATION (10%)

Attendance and active, thoughtful participation in class are required. There will be both small-group and large-group discussion in every class. Discussion requires every student to take the intellectual risk of offering observations, ideas, and arguments in class in response to one another and to the instructors. You aren't supposed to know all the answers in advance, but you are required to come to class prepared to join in a communal effort to figure things out. Lateness, lack of preparation, and disruptive behavior will affect the participation mark.

I do not permit the use of laptops, smartphones, tablets, or smartwatches in class. Their potential uses do not outweigh their power to distract from discussion. I will make exceptions for students who require accommodation for a disability.

If you fall ill or miss class for a family emergency, please contact me as soon as possible; you can make up for an excused absence. If you miss three classes without excuse, the *maximum* participation mark you can receive is 3.0; if you miss four, 2.0. Missing more than four meetings without an excuse will normally result in a failing grade for the course.

SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENTS AND IN-CLASS QUIZZES (10%)

Occasional short writing assignments (1–2 pp.) will develop the skills needed for the papers. There will also be occasional unannounced in-class reading quizzes.

EXTENDED ANNOTATION (15%)

750–1000 words (about 3 pp.) on a single passage involving extratextual references. The annotation should discuss the references (citing appropriate sources) analytically and go on to interpret the passage. All annotations will circulate to the whole class. Students will be assigned to texts.

PAPER 1 (25%)

1800–2100 words (about 5–6 pp.) making an interpretive argument about a single text. Suggested topics given in advance.

PAPER 2 (40%)

2500–3000 words (about 7–9 pp.) making an interpretive argument about two texts, engaging with at least two secondary sources appropriately.

GRADING STANDARDS

Grades will be given on the four-point scale as specified in the Undergraduate Catalog. In converting the final numerical score to a letter, the equivalents in the Catalog are taken

as the *maxima* of intervals open on the left and closed on the right. Thus A corresponds to scores strictly greater than 3.5 and less than or equal to 4.0, B+ to scores greater than 3.0 and less than or equal to 3.5, B to scores greater than 2.5 and less than or equal to 3.0, and so on. There are no “minus” grades. The general standards for grades are as follows:

A range (3.5, 4.0]: Outstanding work, demonstrating thorough mastery of course materials and skills.

B range (2.5, 3.5]: Good work, demonstrating serious engagement with all aspects of the course but incomplete mastery of course materials and skills.

C range (1.5, 2.5]: Satisfactory work, meeting requirements but indicating significant problems mastering the course materials and skills.

D (0.5, 1.5]: Poor or minimally passing work, meeting the basic course requirements, but frequently unsatisfactory in several major areas.

F [0, 0.5]: Failure due to unmet course requirements or consistently unsatisfactory work. The final grade will be based on a numerical score but is subject to my discretion. Unsatisfactory work in all areas of the course will result in an F even if the numerical score corresponds to a passing grade. It is not possible to pass the course without all three papers and the final.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students and instructors have a duty to each other and to our community to abide by norms of academic honesty and responsibility. To present something as your own original writing when it is not is plagiarism. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating are serious violations of trust. Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will have severe consequences, in accordance with the University Policy on Academic Integrity and the Code of Student Conduct. For details about the University’s academic integrity policies, please see academicintegrity.rutgers.edu.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

All reasonable accommodation will be given to students with disabilities. Students who may require accommodation should speak with me at the start of the semester. You may also contact the Office of Disability Services (disabilityservices.rutgers.edu; 848-445-6800).

SCHEDULE

I may adjust the schedule as the term goes on. The most up-to-date syllabus will always be available via tcl17.blogs.rutgers.edu/syllabus. Unless otherwise noted, readings are required and should be completed before class. You are expected to have the reading, in print form, with you in class. For digital readings in poetry, I will specify which poems you are to print out for class. For other digital readings, you may either print them out, or bring your written notes instead. When a reading is assigned in the *Norton Anthology* (*N* below), please also read the anthology headnote on the author.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18.

Introduction.

MONDAY, JANUARY 23.

“Araby,” “A Painful Case,” in Joyce, *Dubliners*.
 Joyce, “The Dead,” in *N*.
 Annotation assignments made for the rest of term.

(TUESDAY, JANUARY 24.)

Last day to drop the course without a “W.”

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25.

Joyce, “The Dead,” continued.
 Robbins, “The Newspapers Were Right.”

MONDAY, JANUARY 30.

Faulkner, “Barn Burning,” in *N*.
Exercise. The Faulknerian sentence.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1.

Faulkner, “Spotted Horses,” in *N*.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6.

Selections from Woolf, *Monday or Tuesday*:
 “A Haunted House.”
 “A Society.”
 * “Monday or Tuesday.”
 “An Unwritten Novel.”
 * “The Mark on the Wall.”

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8.

Woolf, selections from Woolf, *Monday or Tuesday*, continued.
Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*, chaps. 1 and 3, in *N*. (Chap. 2 is optional.)

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13.

Woolf, continued.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15.

Yeats, selections in *N*. Focus on:
 "Easter 1916."
 "The Second Coming."
 "Leda and the Swan."
 Yeats, *Poems*, additional selections:
 *"Adam's Curse."
 "The Wild Swans at Coole."
 "Meditations in Time of Civil War."
 *"Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen."

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20.

Yeats, continued. In *N*, focus on:
 "Sailing to Byzantium."
 "Among School Children."
 "Byzantium."
 "Lapis Lazuli."
 "The Circus Animals' Desertion."
 Yeats, *Poems*, additional selections:
 "The Choice."
 "Vacillation."
 "Under Ben Bulbin."
Exercise. Yeatsian sentences.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22.

Moore, *The Poems of Marianne Moore*, selections.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27.

Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," in *N*.
 Eliot, *The Waste Land*, in *N*.
Exercise. Essay introductions.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1.

Eliot, *The Waste Land*, in *N*.

(SATURDAY, MARCH 4.)

Paper 1 due.

MONDAY, MARCH 6.

Eliot, *The Waste Land*, in *N*.

Hughes, "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain."

Hughes, *Collected Poems*, selections:

*"The Negro Speaks of Rivers."

"Negro."

"When Sue Wears Red."

*"The Weary Blues."

"Youth."

"Johannesburg Mines."

*"I, Too."

"God to Hungry Child."

"Jazz Band in a Parisian Cabaret."

"Song for a Dark Girl."

"Midwinter Blues."

"Harlem Night Club."

"Open Letter to the South."

*"Let America Be America Again."

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8.

Hughes, *Collected Poems*, selections:

"The Bitter River."

from *Montage of a Dream Deferred*:

*"Dream Boogie."

"Necessity."

"Neon Signs."

"Motto."

"Ballad of the Landlord."

*"Theme for English B."

"Boogie: 1 a.m."

"Deferred."

*"Nightmare Boogie."

"Dime."

*"Dream Boogie: Variation."

*"Harlem" [2].

“Good Morning.”
 * “Same in Blues.”
 “Island” [2].

(MARCH 11–19. SPRING RECESS.)

MONDAY, MARCH 20.

Beckett, *Endgame*, in *N*.
 Last day to withdraw from the course with a “W.”

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22.

Beckett, continued.

MONDAY, MARCH 27.

Bishop, *Complete Poems*, selections:

* “The Map” (1935).
 “Roosters” (1939).
 “The Fish” (1940).
 * “At the Fishhouses” (1955).
 “Sestina” (1956).
 * “Brazil, January 1, 1502” (1960).
 “In the Waiting Room” (1971).
 * “One Art” (1976).
 * “North Haven” (1978).
 “Sonnet” (1979).

Exercise due. Thinking about performance.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29.

Ramanujan, *The Collected Poems of A.K. Ramanujan*, selections:

From *The Striders* (1966):
 “The Striders.”
 “On the Very Possible Jaundice of an Unborn Daughter.”
 * “Self-Portrait.”
 “KMnO₄ in Grandfather’s Shaving Glass.”
 “A Hindu to His Body.”
 From *Second Sight* (1986):
 * “Elements of Composition.”
 * “No Amnesiac King.”
 “Alien.”
 * “Extended Family.”
 “Connect!”

*“Chicago Zen.”
 “Second Sight.”

MONDAY, APRIL 3.

Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, chaps. 1–8.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5.

Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, chaps. 1–12.

MONDAY, APRIL 10.

Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, complete.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12.

Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, continued.
 Quayson, “Realism, Criticism, and the Disguises of Both.”
Optional: Achebe, “Chike’s School Days,” in *N*.

MONDAY, APRIL 17.

Coetzee, “The Novel in Africa,” in *N*.
 Ngũgĩ, “Wedding at the Cross,” in *N*.
 Head, “The Deep River,” in *N*.
 “Pop” quiz.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19.

Kincaid, “Girl,” in *N*.
 Naipaul, “One Out of Many,” in *N*.

MONDAY, APRIL 24.

Silko, “Yellow Woman,” in *N*.
 Díaz, “Drown,” in *N*.
Exercise due. Paper 2 topic and bibliography.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26.

Morrison, “Recitatif,” in *N*.

MONDAY, MAY 1.

Morrison, continued.
Last day to submit the extra-credit assignment.

(TUESDAY, MAY 2.)

Paper 2 due.

READINGS

ISBNs are included to help students ordering books online. The course texts are available at Barnes & Noble. They are also on reserve at Alexander Library. For my general advice about buying course books, see andrewgoldstone.com/book-buying.

- Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart*. 1959. New York: Anchor, 1994. ISBN: 9780385474542.
- Bishop, Elizabeth. *The Complete Poems*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1969. Excerpts available on Sakai.
- Hughes, Langston. *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*. Edited by Arnold Rampersad. New York: Vintage, 1994. <http://literature.proquest.com.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/toc.do?sourceId=Z000220464&action=new&area=poetry-toc&divLevel=0&queryId=&mapping=toc#scroll&DurUrl=Yes>.
- . “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain.” *Nation*, June 23, 1926, no. 3181, 692–94. Available on Sakai.
- Joyce, James. *Dubliners*. Edited by Jeri Johnson. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. Excerpts available on Sakai.
- Moore, Marianne. *The Poems of Marianne Moore*. Edited by Grace Schulman. New York: Penguin, 2003. Excerpts available on Sakai.
- Puchner, Martin, ed. *The Norton Anthology of World Literature*. Vol. F, 1900 to the Present. 3rd ed. New York: Norton, 2012. ISBN: 9780393913347. Only this edition of the anthology is acceptable for this course.
- Quayson, Ato. “Realism, Criticism, and the Disguises of Both: A Reading of Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* with an Evaluation of the Criticism Relating to It.” *Research in African Literatures* 25, no. 4 (Winter 1994): 117–36. <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/stable/3819871>.
- Ramanujan, A.K. *The Collected Poems of A.K. Ramanujan*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999. Chadwyck-Healey. <http://literature.proquest.com.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/toc.do?sourceId=Z000606115&action=new&area=poetry-toc&divLevel=0&queryId=&mapping=toc#scroll&DurUrl=Yes>.
- Robbins, Bruce. “The Newspapers Were Right: Cosmopolitanism, Forgetting, and ‘The Dead.’” *Interventions* 5, no. 1 (January 2003): 101–12. doi:10.1080/13698032000049824.
- Woolf, Virginia. *Monday or Tuesday: And Other Short Stories*. London: Hogarth, 1921. HathiTrust. <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/coo1.ark:/13960/t05x2w944>.
- Yeats, William Butler. *The Poems*. 2nd ed. New York: Scribner, 1997. Chadwyck-Healey, 2000. http://gateway.proquest.com.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&xri:pqil:res_ver=0.2&res_id=xri:lion-us&rft_id=xri:lion:po:Z000351345.