

English 316K (34855-34910)
Comparative Literature 315 (33300-33355)
Tu Th 9:30-11, UTC 2.112A

Prof. E. M. Richmond-Garza
Parlin 119, 232-5708
Office Hours: Tu 11-12:30,
Th 1-2:30, and by appointment
emrg@mail.utexas.edu

Masterworks of Literature: World Fall 2009

well you can't place faith in material things; material things
will fail you. a hurricane triggered by a butterfly's wings can
still ignore the trade winds don't place faith in human
things; human beings are unreliable things. don't place
faith in human beings; human beings or butterfly wings.
Machines of Loving Grace,
"butterfly wings," *concentration*

Description

What is a "self," an individual? Is it a single entity or is it always entangled with others? Is it something created by history, by politics, by art, by culture or by the divine? Or does it fashion itself? Does it change over time and across space? At some level, art is always concerned with making and unmaking the individual and with freeing or chaining this being. Tracking texts from Classical Greece, Palestine and India to medieval Europe and Japan, we will focus on the continuing, and sometimes desperate, attempts of ancient and early modern artists and authors both to phrase and to answer this question. Expected names from the western canon, like Euripedes, Shakespeare, Goethe and Baudelaire will keep company with Japan's Bashô, Russia's Pushkin, Argentina's Borges and Nigeria's Achebe.

We shall not limit ourselves only to the western canon but will look at points of crisis where, whether because of gender, race, ideology or class, an individual's voyage of discovery will demand answers and action. We shall trace a drama of self-actualization, more than two thousand years old, one that is still being enacted. From the extremities of the Greek stage to a lonely cry of agony in the Assyrian desert, from ideal Platonic love to its witty and non-dialectical Asian counterparts, from a Parisian's insomnia in 1900 to the painful experience of post-colonial Africa, from compulsive gambling to uncanny hauntings, from the dark voyages of Romantic self-discovery to imagined journeys through magical lands, we shall explore the limits of this question's answers.

While the basis of the course will be the literary texts, we shall pillage often and importantly the resources of the other arts of painting, sculpture and film especially to conjure back to life the spirits of these past identities in preparation for a spring in which we shall interrogate our own century as it emerges from the twilight of the twentieth-century experiment.

Readings

All selections will be from *The Norton Anthology of World Masterpieces* (Expanded Edition in One Volume, Maynard Mack, Ed., 1997, ISBN 0-393-97143-0). This volume is available at the University Co-op. There is a class webpage with the reading questions, syllabus, etc. and all film clips, websites and images used in class. It is under construction and the URL is <<http://www.laits.utexas.edu/richmond/>>. The user name is "richmond;" the password: wilde (all lower case and the letter "i" is replaced by a number "1").

Policy Statement and Requirements

Attendance and Class Preparation/Participation (10%):

In accordance with the change in UT undergraduate grading policies, students in the course will be graded on a 4-point scale which includes + and -.

A	4 grade points	C	2 grade points
A-	3.67 grade points	C-	1.67 grade points
B+	3.33 grade points	D+	1.33 grade points
B	3 grade points	D	1 grade point
B-	2.67 grade points	D-	0.67 grade points
C+	2.33 grade points	F	0 grade points

1. The final grade for this course includes a grade for attendance. Attendance of the lectures and the discussion sections is required, and participation and questions are encouraged. Attendance will be taken regularly at the start of each lecture and discussion section by the TAs for the students in their sections. It is the obligation of the student to make sure that his or her presence is recorded. Each student will be allowed three unexcused absences in the course of the semester. A student with three or fewer absences will receive the grade for the course earned by the written assignments. Any further absences will lower the student's grade for the course by a half grade (i.e. a B becomes a B-, and a B- becomes a C+). All non-emergency requests, beyond the three allowed absences, must be submitted to the instructor for approval at least 48 hours in advance of the days to be missed. Students should think carefully before "using up" the absences early in the semester.
2. Students are expected to come to the lectures prepared and to bring their books with them. Careful reading of all assigned texts is required for the day on which they are assigned. Students should skim the introductory notes to each section as well as read the primary texts carefully. Further multi-media resources will be presented in class and made available on-line. The written texts, films, and extra multi-media-materials together form the content of the course for which students will be held accountable on the examinations. Reading questions are posted on the course webpage to assist students with their reading their studying for the examinations.
3. Attendance and active participation in the weekly one-hour discussion sections is required. Attendance will be taken regularly at the start of each section meeting. Students are expected to have done the required reading and to come with comments and questions about the texts and lectures. All teaching assistants will provide their students with a policy statement about their sections and will hold regularly scheduled weekly office hours.
4. Students are expected to behave in a collegial and polite manner during lectures and in the discussion sections. Texting, answering email, talking with other students, and in any way being disruptive of the sessions are not permitted. Students who do not pay attention in class will be asked to leave class and will be counted absent for the day.

Consistent attendance and a record of active participation in the discussion sections may assist in improving the student's final grade in borderline cases.

Written Assignments (25%+25%+25%+15%):

1. The written assignments will include three midterm examinations. Two one-hour examinations will be administered during regular class periods. The third midterm will be given on the date scheduled for the final examination for the course. The time allowed for the last examination will be one and a half hours and the questions will cover the last third of the course in more detail and may refer to material from earlier in the course. Any arrangements to take the examination at a time other than the one scheduled are subject to approval and must be made to the instructor in writing at least 48 hours prior to the original time for which the examination is scheduled.
2. Each student will maintain a daily reading journal to be turned in periodically in the discussion session. The journal may be collected at any of the lectures or discussion sections without advance notice, so students should bring it with them. The grade assigned will be based on the work completed at the time of the journal being collected. Instructions for completing the journals are on the course webpage.

In order to pass the course, all four assignments must be completed.

Failure to complete any one of the assignments will constitute failing the course.

All work submitted for the course must be the student's own. Any work which is academically dishonest and has been plagiarized from other sources including the internet will receive a failing grade and may result in failing the course and further disciplinary actions as outlined by the Office of the Dean of Students at:

<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/scholdis_plagiarism.php>

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259. The U. S. Federal Government defines someone with disabilities as "any person who (i) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities [and] (ii) has a record of such impairment. University regulations stipulate that students with disabilities may seek "reasonable accommodations," but they "must first register with Services for Students with Disabilities [,] provide appropriate documentation regarding [their] disability, [and] meet instructor expectations concerning attendance, class participation, performance and work standards."

Schedule of Topics, Readings and Assignments

Topic I: World Literature's Crucible

August 27	Introductions
September 1	<i>Before class:</i> Read <i>Gilgamesh</i> (Mesopotamia, 7 th century BCE), Sections 1-3, pages 10-31 <i>In class:</i> Epic, Myth, Tyranny and Individualism
September 3	<i>Before class:</i> Read <i>Gilgamesh</i> , Sections 4-7, pages 31-42 <i>In class:</i> Loss and Coming of Age Then and Now

Topic 2: Gods and Monsters

- September 8 *Before class:* Read Euripedes *Medea* (Greece, 5th century BCE), lines 1-742, pages 433-451
In class: Gender, Imperialism and Orientalism
- September 10 *Before class:* Read *Medea*, lines 743-1394
In class: Guilt, Innocence and Revenge
- September 15 *Before class:* Read Chuang Chou (China, 4th-3rd century BCE), Chapter 2, pages 555-565
In class: Taoism and the Limits of the Human
- September 17 *Before class:* Read Kâlidâsa, *‘Sakuntalâ* (India, 4th Century CE), Acts I-III, pages 746-774
In class: *Rasa* or What a Play Should Do
- September 22 *Before class:* Read *‘Sakuntalâ*, Acts IV-VII, pages 774-811
In class: Rings of Power or the Power of Love?

Topic 3: Literature Defers Death and Expands Life

- September 24 *Before class:* Read *The Thousand and One Nights* (Persia, Syria and Egypt, 14th Century CE) Pages 923-948
In class: Shahrazad’s Fiction as Salvation
- September 29 *Before class:* Read Dante, *Inferno* (Italy, 13th and 14th Century CE), Cantos I-VI, pages 1010-1039
In class: Midlife Crisis and the Need to Organize Your Sins
- October 1 *Before class:* Read Dante, Cantos XIII, XVIII, XXXII-XXXIV, pages 1060-1064, 1078-1082, and 1130-1142
In class: Which Punishment Fits which Crime?
- October 6 *Before class:* Review for Examination
In class: **First Midterm Examination**

Topic 4: Letting Go or Just Escaping

- October 8 *Before class:* Read Montaigne, *Three Essays*, especially *Of Cannibals* (France, 16th Century CE), pages 1502-1523
In class: Brave New Worlds and Selves
- October 13 *Before class:* Read Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (England, 16th Century CE), Acts I-II, pages 1629-1671
In class: The Modern Undergraduate Under Stress
- October 15 *Before class:* Read *Hamlet*, Acts III-V, pages 1671-1726
In class: The Consequences of Preferring a Fictional Self
- October 20 *Before class:* Read Bashô, *The Narrow Road of the Interior* (Japan, 17th Century CE), pages 2108-34
In class: Selfhood’s Journey and the Loss of Self

October 22	<i>Before class:</i>	Read Goethe, <i>Faust, Part I</i> (Germany 18 th and 19 th Century CE), pages 2159-82
	<i>In class:</i>	Ambition and Betrayal in the Modern University
October 27	<i>Before class:</i>	Read Goethe, pages 2183-217
	<i>In class:</i>	In the Company of Men/Devils: Sex and Money
October 29	<i>Before class:</i>	Read Goethe, pages 2217-2263
	<i>In class:</i>	Who Wins? Good, Evil, or “the Girl”?
November 3	<i>Before class:</i>	Review for Examination
	<i>In class:</i>	Second Midterm Examination

Topic 5: Threats and Hallucinations

November 5	<i>Before class</i>	Read Pushkin, <i>The Queen of Spades</i> (Russia, 18 th and 19 th Century CE), pages 2284-305
	<i>In class:</i>	Why You Should <i>Never</i> Gamble
November 10	<i>Before class:</i>	Read Baudelaire, from <i>The Flowers of Evil</i> (France 19 th Century CE), pages 2420-2432
	<i>In class:</i>	“It Has <i>All</i> Been Said Before”
November 12	<i>Before class:</i>	Read Proust, <i>Overture, Swann’s Way, Remembrances of Things Past</i> (France, 19 th and 20 th Century CE), pages 2674-713
	<i>In class:</i>	Tea, Cookies and Memory

Topic 6: Future, Possible Selves

November 17	<i>Before class:</i>	Read Woolf, <i>An Unwritten Novel</i> (England 19 th and 20 th Century CE), pages 2735-46
	<i>In class:</i>	Bored Women and Murder
November 19	<i>Before class:</i>	Borges, <i>The Garden of Forking Paths</i> (Argentina, 20 th Century CE), pages 2871-2881
	<i>In class:</i>	Imaginary Selves Trapped in Reality’s Labyrinths
November 24	<i>Before class:</i>	Achebe, <i>Things Fall Apart</i> (Nigeria, 20 th Century CE), pages 2931-80
	<i>In class:</i>	Worlds in Conflict
November 26	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	
December 1	<i>Before class:</i>	Read Achebe, pages 2980-3030
	<i>In class:</i>	Is There Life after Empire?
December 3	<i>Before class:</i>	Review for Examination
	<i>In class:</i>	Review for Examination
December 11	Third Midterm Examination (Friday, 9-10:30 AM)	