

Sample Syllabi

ENGL 475: Imagining the End Times: Science, Fiction, and Climate Change

TR 9:30-10:45am | English Building 127 | Spring 2020

Office Hours: Thursdays 12:45-1:45pm or by appt | English Building 341 | rsoh@illinois.edu

REQUIRED TEXTS

Amitav Ghosh - *The Great Derangement* (U of Chicago P)

Kath Jetñil-Kijiner - *Iep Jaltok* (U of Arizona P)

Elizabeth Kolbert - *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History* (Picador)

Thomas Kuhn - *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 4th ed. (U of Chicago P)

Bill McKibben – *Eaarth* (St. Martin's Griffin)

Sam Miller - *Blackfish City* (HarperCollins)

Naomi Oreskes and Erik M. Conway - *The Collapse of Western Civilization* (Columbia UP)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Climate change is a bigger problem than many realize. In 2000, Nobel-prize winning atmospheric chemist Paul Crutzen coined the term “Anthropocene” or “Age of Man” to denote how big this problem has become. The Anthropocene names a new geological epoch said to be caused by humans. As a species, our collective activities of pollution, waste, extraction, and fossil fuel usage have altered the earth system at scales previously thought to be beyond human interference. According to U of Chicago scientist David Archer for instance, we have warmed the planet enough to defer the next ice age, in effect changing the next 10,000 years of planetary history.

Such proposals have prompted a firestorm of academic debate as well as affective, existential, and imaginary crises. Humanists and social scientists have argued that training in aesthetics, ethics, values, perception and representation will be as important to understanding this new age of human-induced climate change as physical facts or data. This course asks how science intersects with aesthetics and culture in Anthropocene. We will ask: how can climate change be represented or even imagined? How do art and science convey the urgency of the climate crisis? What forms of affective and cognitive stasis must be confronted to do so? How are Anthropocene futures imagined, and in what ways have these new futures already arrived? In short, how must we understand presents and futures newly?

In asking these questions we consider both how science is culturally mediated, and how art and literature raise social, political, and aesthetic questions about climate change that science is not prepared to answer. We will work at different scales and through many genres and media, including realism, nonfiction, climate modeling, art, film, and speculative fiction.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- 1) Consider climate change as an interdisciplinary issue.
- 2) Become familiar with the term Anthropocene and some of the debates surrounding it.
- 3) Consider and analyze the social, ethical and affective dimensions of climate change in addition to its scientific or physical effects.
- 4) Discuss and assess how apprehending climate change is culturally-mediated, shaped by

genres, forms, imagines and narrative techniques.

CLASS POLICIES

Refer to me as Dr. Oh or Professor Oh.

Care and Attendance – We will expect to learn from one another in an environment where everyone feels comfortable contributing. You must treat your fellow students and instructor with respect at all times. Be courteous, curious, generous, and thoughtful. Care-ful attendance requires that you complete the reading, arrive on time, and be fully present in our conversations. You should take notes during your preparation for class and during our discussions. Our classroom can only be as good as you make it.

Readings – Bring all readings to class with you everyday. It is difficult to participate in discussion if you cannot refer to the text. If you do not bring the day's text to class you will lose participation points. You are responsible for acquiring the required books for this class. You may buy/rent them from the university bookstore or other vendors (such as Amazon, Chegg etc.) but you must make sure to get the correct edition. Having the same edition is important so we can all have the same page references during our discussions. Readings will be available on Compass.

Technology – Because we will be looking at different media, including web-based artwork, technology (laptops) will be allowed on specified days when we will need to access these materials in class. These days are marked with an *. Otherwise, technology is not to be used in class.

Requests for Special Accommodations – UIUC provides accommodations to students with documented disabilities. To obtain disability-related adjustments or aids, students with disabilities should be in touch with me and Disability Resources and Educational Services (1207 Oak St./disability@illinois.edu). Once your accommodations have been determined by DRES, please meet with me so we can discuss your needs and make any necessary arrangements. Be aware that it is your responsibility to self-identify and seek accommodations from DRES; also note that accommodations are not retroactive but begin the day you contact me with a letter of accommodation from DRES.

Late Papers – Late papers will be docked 1/3 letter grade per calendar day they are late (i.e. A- to B+). This includes the day it is due, if a paper is turned in after the deadline. For example, if a paper is due at noon and is turned in at 3pm that day, it is considered 1 day late. Extenuating circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Extensions - MUST be requested at least 24 hours in advance of a paper deadline via email. Verbal confirmation does not count. I am willing to work with you on assignment deadlines, but it is your responsibility to request extensions in a timely manner. Do not email me the day a paper is due and ask for an extension. Extenuating circumstances like family or serious medical emergencies will be considered on a case by case basis.

Course Grades – We will use +/- letter grades. A = 96-94, A- = 93-90, B+ = 89-87, B = 86-84, B- = 83-80, C+ = 79-77, C = 76-74, C- = 73-70, D+ = 69-67, D = 66-64, D- = 63-60

NB: You must complete all papers in this class to receive a passing grade.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism - Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated. All work you submit must be your own. Whenever you use ideas from other people, even if you paraphrase them, you must cite your sources. When you quote directly from any materials, including internet pages, make sure to use quotation marks and note the author and page number parenthetically.

We will follow Articles 1-401 through 1-406 of the *Student Code*. This rule defines infractions of academic integrity, which include but are not limited to cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism. You are responsible for following these guidelines. If you have questions about whether something would be an infraction, speak with me. Ignorance of these codes does not constitute an excuse for plagiarism. English department faculty are required to report every suspected case of plagiarism to the Director of Undergraduate Studies before beginning investigative procedures. Consequences for plagiarism can include failing the class or dismissal from the university. No one wants that. Just don't do it.

Office Hours – I ask that everyone come visit me during office hours at least once by October 31. You needn't stay long but this will give you an opportunity to talk about a fictional or theoretical piece you find interesting or frustrating, upcoming assignments and papers, ask questions about the course, ask about topics we have not fully addressed in class, or just introduce yourself. I suggest you come by earlier rather than later. If you cannot make my office hours you can email me to set up an appointment.

GRADES AND ASSIGNMENTS

Attendance - 10%

If you're not in class, you can't contribute to your peers' learning and you miss their insights about course texts. You are allowed three absences during the semester for any reason before your grade will be affected. You do not need to let me know why you are absent, but it is wise to save your absences for times when you are ill rather than skipping class 'just because.' If you exceed the allowed absences, your final grade will be lowered accordingly, typically by 1/3 letter grade per excess absence (i.e. A to A-). Extenuating circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis.

If there is a prolonged period of time when you know you will not be able to come to class or you have extenuating circumstances that will contribute to your missing more than 3 classes (such as an ongoing illness) it is your responsibility to communicate with me in a timely manner, to arrange to turn in any assignments that may be due, and to learn about the proceedings of the class and subsequent assignments. If you register late for the course, it is largely up to you to catch up with the work that you have missed. Lateness for classes is also disruptive, and late arrivals will adversely affect your attendance grade. If you know that you will not be able to attend class on a particular date, or that you will be late, it would help to let me know ahead of time.

Engaged Participation - 10%

In addition to care-ful attendance (outlined above), engaged participation is a requirement for this course. This means coming to class having already read, taken notes on, and reflected on the materials for the day. We will be learning from each other, so come prepared to contribute your thoughts to discussion. Discussion will be a crucial component of your learning and success in this class. I may occasionally 'cold call' on students; if you do not wish to respond you may 'pass' with no adverse effects.

Discussion leading – 10%

Beginning in week four, twice during the semester you will sign up to lead class discussion. You are responsible for **two things**. **First**, think of these days as days when you are extra responsible for the day's readings. On these days you will be one of the individuals primarily responsible for maintaining class discussion and answering questions. While other students will also be participating, you will put forth an **extra** effort to raise interesting points about the text, respond to other students' observations and questions, and help lead class. As such, be sure to prepare for the class by taking notes and preparing page numbers to reference.

Second, you will come up with **three** articulate and thoughtful discussion questions to pose to the class, which you will field to your satisfaction. The questions must go beyond opinions (I "like" or "think") and also "yes" or "no" questions. Think of this as your opportunity to guide us toward parts of the fiction or criticism that you found most illuminating or provocative, or that you have questions about and would like to puzzle through with the class. You might draw our attention to passages you think are particularly relevant, interesting, or challenging, patterns you think are significant, or ask about how the text relates to our organizing themes and questions.

Discussion leading questions should be emailed to me by midnight before your discussion leading day. You should plan for your discussion leading to run about 10-15 minutes.

Critical response papers (3-4pgs) – 30% total

Three times during the semester you will write a short critical assessment/analysis in response to the readings. This is an opportunity for you to review, discuss, assess, analyze, and take stock of our course readings and ideas. Rather than trying to cover all the readings in a section, you should develop a line of thought or argument across a few texts, or focus on unpacking one text. However many texts you decide to focus on, you should follow and develop a main idea or analysis over the course of the paper. Though it does not need to be tightly 'proven' the way you would prove a thesis in an argumentative essay, there should be an identifiable idea, theme, or question that you unpack over the course of the paper. Critical response papers are due at **12 noon** on Fridays the week they are listed on the syllabus via Compass.

*Graduate students should follow these guidelines but be sure to engage with criticism (not just fiction or art) and submit slightly longer, 5-7 page papers.

***The Sixth Extinction* presentation – 5%**

The Sixth Extinction is an exemplary piece of nonfiction writing that tells stories about scientific cultures, science as culture, and the pathways through which scientific knowledge develops and is disseminated or received. While we will read some chapters together in class, we are unable to read the whole book due to time constraints; your job in this presentation will be to report on one of the chapters we will not collectively read.

What is the 'story' that Kolbert tells in the chapter you select? Does she trace a scientific discovery, a process of knowledge dissemination, unpack the history of a word or species? What scale does she work at and to what effect? In addition to presenting your take on Kolbert's argument you should offer some thoughts about how this chapter compliments the rest of her book and the ideas of the course. You may also want to draw attention to particular rhetorical or literary devices she uses to tell her story. After listening to your presentation, your peers should have a sense of why Kolbert's chapter is significant, both within the book and for understanding the effects of climate change. Depending on the size of the class these will be individual or group presentations and should run 10-15 minutes.

***An Eco-topian Lexicon* close reading and presentation – 10%**

An Eco-topian Lexicon borrows or modifies existing words to produce conceptual tools for thinking the climate crisis and its futures. For this assignment you will be assigned one 'loanword' from the *Lexicon*. It is your job to offer a report of this word – to summarize the argument made about it in the *Lexicon* and offer some comments on how you think the word relates to the challenges of apprehending climate change that we are discussing in class. You should assess the word's conceptual strengths, associations, and purchase, and its potential weaknesses or pitfalls.

This assignment is meant to provide scaffolding for your own final project of crafting a climate change keyword, outlined below. Depending on the size of the class these will be individual or group presentations and should run 10-20 minutes.

*While selected entries will be on Compass, my personal copy of the book will be on reserve in the undergraduate library if you wish to peruse more.

Final Project: Apprehending Climate Change Key Word and Analysis – 25%

As a new reality, climate change and the Anthropocene require new languages to make them visible, apprehensible, and hopefully, livable. This final project is inspired by *An Eco-topian Lexicon* and the plethora of other recent collections of climate change/environmental keywords that have been published within the last decade. The proliferation of keyword collections for thinking about our climate present and future signals the inadequacy of our existing vocabularies and the centrality of language for apprehending the real.

In this project you will undertake your own keyword entry similar to the ones we read in *An Eco-topian Lexicon*. You can make up an entirely new word, recontextualize or redefine an existing word, or modify an existing word. Your keyword entry may address the challenge of imagining unimaginable futures, conveying the uncanniness of the present, and/or relinquishing attachments to the Holocene past. Further details will be distributed later in class.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

I reserve the right to modify this schedule at any point during the semester. You will receive timely notice of changes.

* mark days when you may bring computers to class

Unit I: The Limits of Imagination

The Problem of Stasis

Week 1

Jan 21

Paul Crutzen – “Geology of Mankind”

Greta Thunberg - UN speech transcript

Jan 23

Kevin Sack and John Schwartz – *The New York Times*, “Left to Louisiana’s Tides, a Village Fights for Time”

John Schwartz and Mark Schleifstein – *The New York Times*, “Fortified but Still in Peril, New Orleans Fights for its Future”

Naomi Oreskes – “The scientific consensus on climate change”

Apprehending the Present?

Week 2

Jan. 28 – NO CLASS

Read for background: Will Steffen, Jacques Grinevald, Paul Crutzen, and John McNeill, “The Anthropocene: Conceptual and Historical Perspectives,” *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* 369 (2011): 842-67

Jan. 30

Roy Scranton – *Learning to Die in the Anthropocene*, “Introduction: Coming Home”

Jacques Ranciere – *The Politics of Aesthetics*, “The distribution of the sensible” pp. 12-19

Robert Graves and Didier Madoc-Jones - “Postcards from the Future” (Link on Compass)*

Week 3

Feb. 4

Bill McKibben – *Eaarth* ch. 1 pp. 4-27

Thomas Kuhn – *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, ch. 1 pp. 1-9, ch. 6 pp. 52-65

Feb. 6

Bill McKibben – *Eaarth* ch. 1 pp. 28-46

Thomas Kuhn - *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, ch. 10 pp. 111-134

Week 4

Feb. 11

Bill McKibben – *Eaarth* ch. 2 pp. 47-101

Timothy Morton – *Hyperobjects*, “A Quake in Being: Introduction to Hyperobjects”

Kim Stanley Robinson – “There is No Planet B”

Feb. 13

Ursula Heise – “Narrative in the World Risk Society”

Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner – “Tell Them” from *Iep Jaltok*

Feb. 14 – DUE at noon: Critical response paper 1

Urgent Scales

Week 5

Feb. 18

Deborah Coen – “Big is a Thing of the Past”

Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner – “Two Degrees” from *Iep Jaltok*

Feb. 20

Amitav Ghosh – *The Great Derangement*, “Stories” pp. 3-84

Week 6

Feb. 25

Amitav Ghosh - *The Great Derangement*, “History” pp. 87-115

Amitav Ghosh - *The Great Derangement*, “Politics” pp.119-162

Unit II: Imagining the Unimaginable

Speculative Futures

Feb. 27

Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway - *The Collapse of Western Civilization* (through 'Lexicon of Archaic Terms')

Week 7

Mar. 3

Mad Max: Fury Road (watch in class)

Darko Suvin – “On the Poetics of the Science Fiction Genre”

Mar. 5

Mad Max: Fury Road (in class)

Mar. 6 – DUE: Critical response paper 2

Week 8

Mar. 10

Sam Miller - *Blackfish City*, pp. 1-79

Gerry Canavan and Kim Stanley Robinson - *Green Planets*, “Introduction: If This Goes On”

Mar. 12

Sam Miller - *Blackfish City*, pp. 80-163

Week 9 SPRING BREAK NO CLASS

Week 10

Mar. 24

Sam Miller - *Blackfish City*, pp. 164-243

Donna Haraway – “Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: Making Kin”

Mar. 26

Sam Miller - *Blackfish City*, pp. 244-325

Week 11

Mar. 31

IN CLASS – *An Ecotopian Lexicon* close reading and presentation

~*~, apocalypso, gye bale, plant time, shakita ga nai, sila, or solastalgia

Whose Anthropocene?

Apr. 2

Andreas Malm and Alf Hornborg – “Critique of the Anthropocene Narrative”

Dana Luciano – “The Inhuman Anthropocene”

Week 12

Apr. 7

Rob Nixon – “The Great Acceleration and the Great Divergence”

Mike Davis – “Slum Ecology”

Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner - “Dear Matafele Peinman” from *Iep Jaltok*

Apr. 9

Elizabeth Kolbert – *The Sixth Extinction*, “Preface,” chapters 1-2

Apr. 10 – DUE at noon: Critical response paper 3

Week 13

Apr. 14

Elizabeth Kolbert – *The Sixth Extinction* chapters 5, 13

Anohni – “4 degrees” and “Hopelessness” (link on Compass)*

Apr. 16

Kolbert presentations on ch. 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9 10, 11, or 12

Apocalypse Now

Week 14

Apr. 21

Tsing et. al. - *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet* – “Monsters” and “Ghosts”

Chris Jordan – *Midway: Message from the Gyre* (link on Compass)*

Apr. 23

IPCC Summary for Policymakers, 2018 (skim)

Courtney Mattison – “Our Changing Seas” (link of Compass)*

Clips from *The Island President* (watch in class)

Week 15

Apr. 28

Field trip to the National Center for Supercomputing Applications

David Archer, *The Long Thaw* – Prologue, ch. 12

Apr. 30 - NO CLASS – individual final project meetings – bring apprehending climate change lexicon entry draft or concept map

Week 16

May 5 - NO CLASS – individual final project meetings – bring apprehending climate change lexicon entry draft or concept map

May 10 – Apprehending climate change keyword entry due by midnight of May 10th via email

ENGL 301: Introduction to Critical Theory

TR 11-12:15pm | English Building 127 | Spring 2020

Office Hours: Thursdays 12:45-1:45pm or by appt | English Building 341 | rsoh@illinois.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will examine the major theoretical and methodological approaches to literary and cultural studies that have evolved over the last few decades. Our readings will include some of the foundational texts of structuralism, deconstruction, psychoanalysis, feminism, queer theory, Marxism, critical race theory, and postcolonial studies. While we consider how these theoretical approaches have reconfigured the goals and methods of literary studies, and we will also critically assess their ideological agendas and practical implications. Finally, we will determine how best to “use” and engage with theory in our own writing and research as we test their applications to several short works of literature.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Vincent B. Leitch, ed. - *Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, 3rd edition

Robert Dale Parker - *How to Interpret Literature*, 3rd edition

Other critical readings and literary primary texts will be available on Compass

SHARED LITERARY ARCHIVE (print from Compass)

Derek Walcott – “The Light of the World”

Elizabeth Bishop – “One Art”

Alice Munro – “Boys and Girls”

Kate Chopin – “Desiree’s Baby”

Charlotte Perkins Gilman - “The Yellow Wallpaper”

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- 1) Become familiar with the specific terms and concepts of critical theory.
- 2) Be able to discuss, analyze, and compare different theories and their relationships with each other.
- 3) Practice using terms and concepts from critical theory to analyze literature and other cultural or aesthetic objects.
- 4) Practice and hone skills in critical analysis, including reading for academic arguments, identifying argumentative main points, and assessing strengths, implications, or gaps of theories.

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everyone feels comfortable contributing. You must treat your fellow students and instructor with respect at all times. Be courteous, curious, generous, and thoughtful. Care-ful attendance requires that you complete the reading, arrive on time, and be fully present in our conversations. You should take notes during your preparation for class and during our discussions. Our classroom can only be as good as you make it.

Readings – Bring all readings to class with you everyday. It is difficult to participate in discussion if you cannot refer to the text. If you do not bring the day's text to class you will lose participation points. You are responsible for acquiring the required books for this class. You may buy/rent them from the university bookstore or other vendors (such as Amazon, Chegg etc.) but you must make sure to get the correct edition. Having the same edition is important so we can all have the same page references during our discussions. We will also think with a small shared archive of textual objects as we read different theories. Print these and bring a copy with you to class each day.

Technology – The temptation to browse the internet is high, so laptops and cell phones are not to be used during class. Print out readings and bring them with you. If I notice that you are using technology in class your participation grade will be adversely affected. If you require a laptop due to a documented disability, please speak with me.

Requests for Special Accommodations – UIUC provides accommodations to students with documented disabilities. To obtain disability-related adjustments or aids, students with disabilities should be in touch with me and Disability Resources and Educational Services (1207 Oak St./disability@illinois.edu). Once your accommodations have been determined by DRES, please meet with me so we can discuss your needs and make any necessary arrangements. Be aware that it is your responsibility to self-identify and seek accommodations from DRES; also note that accommodations are not retroactive but begin the day you contact me with a letter of accommodation from DRES.

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NB: You must complete all papers in this class to receive a passing grade.

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Office Hours – I ask that everyone come visit me during office hours at least once by March 31. You needn't stay long but this will give you an opportunity to talk about a fictional or theoretical piece you find interesting or frustrating, upcoming assignments and papers, ask questions about the course, ask about topics we have not fully addressed in class, or just introduce yourself. I suggest you come by earlier rather than later. If you cannot make my office hours you can email me to set up an appointment.

GRADES AND ASSIGNMENTS

Attendance (10%)

If you're not in class, you can't contribute to your peers' learning and you miss their insights about course texts. You are allowed three absences during the semester for any reason before your grade will be affected. You do not need to let me know why you are absent, but it is wise to save your absences for times when you are ill rather than skipping class 'just because.' If you exceed the allowed absences, your final grade will be lowered accordingly, typically by 1/3 letter grade per excess absence (i.e. A to A-). Extenuating circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis.

If there is a prolonged period of time when you know you will not be able to come to class or you have extenuating circumstances that will contribute to your missing more than 3 classes (such as an ongoing illness) it is your responsibility to communicate with me in a timely manner, to arrange to turn in any assignments that may be due, and to learn about the proceedings of the class and subsequent assignments. If you register late for the course, it is largely up to you to catch up with the work that you have missed. Lateness for classes is also disruptive, and late arrivals will adversely affect your attendance grade. If you know that you will not be able to attend class on a particular date, or that you will be late, it would help to let me know ahead of time.

Engaged Participation (10%)

In addition to care-ful attendance (outlined above), engaged participation is a requirement for this course. This means coming to class having already read, taken notes on, and reflected on the materials for the day. We will be learning from each other, so come prepared to contribute your thoughts to discussion. Discussion will be a crucial component of your learning and success in this class. I may occasionally 'cold call' on students; if you do not wish to respond you may 'pass' with no adverse effects.

Discussion Leading (5%)

Beginning in week four, once during the semester you will sign up to lead class discussion. You are responsible for **two things**. **First**, think of these days as days when you are extra responsible for the day's readings. On these days you will be one of the individuals primarily responsible for maintaining class discussion and answering questions. While other students will also be participating,

you will put forth an **extra** effort to raise interesting points about the text, respond to other students' observations and questions, and help lead class. As such, be sure to prepare for the class by taking notes and preparing page numbers to reference.

Second, you will come up with **three** articulate and thoughtful discussion questions to pose to the class, which you will field to your satisfaction. The questions must go beyond opinions (I "like" or "think") and also "yes" or "no" questions and instead involve analysis. Think of this as your opportunity to guide us toward parts of the day's readings that you found most illuminating or interesting, or that you had trouble with and would like to puzzle through with the class. You might highlight how you understood the argument, point out interesting or provocative parts of the argument, ask how the piece dialogues with other pieces we have read in class, or ask about the logical implications or limitations of the piece's critical ideas. You may ask up to **1** question about how the theory relates to one of our shared archive of class texts.

Discussion leading questions should be emailed to me by **10pm** before your discussion leading day. You should plan for your discussion leading to run about **10-15 minutes**. Except in the case of documented emergencies, if you are absent during your discussion day you will not have the opportunity to make up this assignment.

Critical analysis papers (3-4 pages) (25%)

Three times during the semester you will write a critical analysis of a few schools of theory by engaging with their primary texts (in *NATC*). These are opportunities for you to review the theories, analyze their main points and contributions, and assess their strengths, weaknesses, or implications. You may also compare and contrast aspects of the theories if appropriate. You may write about a particular work from each unit or write more synthetically across a couple of works from the units designated for a given response paper (i.e. structuralism, deconstruction). While you may cite *HIL* to support your analysis, you should engage primarily with the theoretical primary texts in *NATC*. For all papers, use 12-pt Times New Roman font and 1-inch margins. Papers must be double-spaced and will be graded on a check+/check/check- scale. Papers should be posted to Compass by noon the day they are due.

Short interpretive paper (3-4 pages) (10%)

For this paper you will produce a succinct critical interpretation of a cultural or literary object of your choice using one of our theoretical lenses. The choice of theory and object are up to you; you may write about a novel, short story, poem, advertisement, film, or something else.

Midterm Exam (20%)

This will be an in-class midterm. The format is TBD but will likely include matching terms/definitions, a series of short passages that must be identified (author, work) and briefly explained and one or multiple short essays.

Final Exam (20%)

It will not be comprehensive but will include material covered in the second half of the course.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

**All page numbers refer to the *Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* 3rd edition unless otherwise noted

**HIL = *How to Interpret Literature*, 3rd edition

From New Criticism to Structuralism

Week 1

Tuesday Jan. 21

Walcott – “The Light of the World”, Bishop – “One Art”

Thursday Jan. 23

HIL – ch. 2 - New Criticism pg. 11-42

William Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley – “The Intentional Fallacy” (pp. 1195-1211)

Week 2

Tuesday Jan. 28 - Kirstin Wilcox visit – Humanities career opportunities

Thursday Jan. 30

Ferdinand de Saussure, from *Course in General Linguistics* (pp. 824-840)

HIL - ch. 3 Structuralism pg. 43-62

Munro – “Boys and Girls”

Week 3

Tuesday Feb. 4

Mikhail Bakhtin – from *Discourse in the Novel* (pp. 997-1030)

HIL – ch. 3 Structuralism pg. 62-77 (start w/ “Structuralism, Formalism, and Literary History”)

Walcott – “The Light of the World”

Thursday Feb. 6

Roland Barthes, “The Death of the Author,” (pp. 1268-1272), and “From Work to Text” (pp. 1277-1282)

Michel Foucault, “What is an Author?” (pp. 1397-1409)

Deconstruction/Poststructuralism

Week 4

Tuesday Feb. 11

Friedrich Nietzsche, “On Truth and Lying in a Non-Moral Sense” (pp. 752-762)

HIL – ch. 4 Deconstruction pp. 85-98

Thursday Feb. 13

Plato – from *Phaedrus* (pp. 89-95)

Jacques Derrida – From *Dissemination*, “Plato’s Pharmacy” (pp. 1602-1628)

Elizabeth Bishop – “One Art”

Week 5

Tuesday Feb. 18

Jacques Derrida, From *Dissemination*, “Plato’s Pharmacy” cont. (pp. 1628-1636)

HIL - ch. 4 Deconstruction pp. 98-110

Psychoanalysis

Thursday Feb. 20
Sigmund Freud - "Interpretation of Dreams (pp. 783-799)
HIL ch. 5 - Psychoanalysis pp. 111-127

DUE Friday Feb. 21 at noon: critical analysis paper – structuralism and deconstruction

Week 6

Tuesday Feb. 25
Sigmund Freud - "Fetishism" (pp. 816-820), "The Uncanny" (pp. 799-816)
HIL ch. 5 - Psychoanalysis pp. 111-137
Kate Chopin – "Desiree's Baby"

Thursday Feb. 27
Jacques Lacan – "The Mirror stage" (pp. 1111-1117), "The signification of the phallus (pp. 1105-1137)
HIL – ch. 5 Psychoanalysis pp. 137-147

Feminist Theory

Week 7

Tuesday Mar. 3
Hélène Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa" (pp. 1865-1886)
Simone de Beauvoir - from *The Second Sex* (pp. 1214-1221)
Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper"
HIL - ch. 6 Feminist Theory pg. 148-169

Thursday Mar. 5
Laura Mulvey – "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (pp. 1954-1965)
Judith Butler – from *Gender Trouble* (pp. 2372-2388)
HIL - ch. 6 Feminist Theory pg. 169-184 (from "Visual Pleasure")

DUE Friday Mar. 6 at noon: critical analysis paper – feminist theory and psychoanalysis

Week 8

Mar. 10 – midterm review

Mar. 12 – MIDTERM - in class

Week 9 – SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS

Queer Theory

Week 10

Tuesday Mar. 24
Adrienne Rich – "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence" (pp. 1513-1534)
Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick – "Epistemology of the Closet" (pp. 2283-2288)
HIL - ch. 7 Queer Studies pp. 185-200
Munro – "Boys and Girls"

Thursday Mar. 26

Monique Wittig – “One is not born a woman” (pp. 1821-1829)

Lee Edelman – “The Future is Kid Stuff” (on compass)

HIL - ch. 7 Queer Studies pp. 200-217

Marxism and the Frankfurt School

Week 11

Tuesday Mar. 31

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels – from *Economic and philosophic manuscripts* (pp. 652-659), from *The Communist Manifesto* (661-664), from *Capital, Volume I* (pp. 667-678)

HIL - ch. 8 Marxism pp. 220-230

Thursday Apr. 2

Louis Althusser – From *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* (pp. 1282-1311)

HIL - ch. 8 Marxism pp. 230-256 (“from Contemporary Marxism, Ideology, and Agency”)

Week 12

Tuesday Apr. 7

Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno – from *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (pp. 1030-1050)

New Historicism and Cultural Studies

Thursday Apr. 9

Michel Foucault – “The History of Sexuality,” (pp. 1421-1440), “Society must be defended” (pp. 1440-1450)

HIL – ch. 9 Historicism and Cultural Studies pp. 259-274

DUE Friday Apr. 10 at midnight: short interpretive paper

Week 13

Tuesday Apr. 14

Raymond Williams “Residual and emergent cultures” (pp. 1342-1345)

Stuart Hall, “Cultural Studies and Its Theoretical Legacies” (pp. 1702-1717)

HIL – ch. 9 Historicism and Cultural Studies pp. 274-283 (“Cultural Studies” onward)

Postcolonialism and Critical Race Studies

Thursday Apr. 16

Edward Said – “Orientalism” (pp. 1780-1805), “Culture and Imperialism (pp. 1805-1821)

DUE Friday Apr. 17 at noon: critical analysis paper – Marxism and new historicism

Week 14

Tuesday Apr. 21

Gayatri Spivak – “Can the Subaltern Speak?” (pp. 1997-2021)

HIL – ch. 10 Postcolonial and Race Studies pp. 285-311

Thursday Apr. 23

Fanon – From *The Wretched of the Earth* (1361-1366), from *Black Skin, White Masks* (1251-1360)

HIL – ch. 10 Postcolonial and Race Studies pp. 311-319

Week 15

Tuesday Apr. 28

Toni Morrison – “The Afro-American Presence in American Literature” (pp. 1670-1684)

Gloria Anzaldúa – From *Borderlands/La Frontera* (pp. 1983-1997)

HIL – ch. 10 Postcolonial and Race Studies pp. 319-327 (from “Whiteness studies and racialization”)

Thursday Apr. 30 - Final exam review

Final exam TBD

I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus during the semester.

ENGL 103 Introduction to Fiction
Prof. Rebecca Oh

TR 11-12:15 | 119 English Building | Fall 2019

Office Hours: Thursdays 2:15-3:15pm or by appt | English Building 341 | rsoh@illinois.edu
Credit hours: 3 | Gen Ed requirements: Humanities – Lit and Art | no prerequisites

What is fiction and how does it work? How does it differ from similar genres that tell stories about people and their lives, like autobiography or memoir? Why do we care about made up things, events, and characters? This course will address these questions and serve as an introduction to the genre of prose fiction. Our primary texts will be novels and short stories.

In the first part of class we will introduce key terms used to analyze most fiction, and we will focus on fiction's basic elements: plot, setting, character, symbolism, tone/style, theme, and narrative point of view or perspective. We expand upon these basics in the rest of class by focusing on some particular qualities or capacities of fiction. Our first major unit will focus on how fiction allows us to access the interior states and mentalities of others. We will examine fiction's preoccupation with character interiority and development, and the ways in which it illustrates and interrogates processes of subject formation. This is a process we are all always undergoing but which we can actually observe in fiction.

Our second unit will consider how fiction works to illuminate the contexts in which it is written; we will consider how fiction acts as a historically situated artifact, a form of social commentary, and we will consider how it represents social forces like rapid change or historical violence through aesthetic techniques. The social functions of fiction occur not only at the level of plot (what is represented) but also through form, narrative, or style (how it is represented).

Throughout we will also practice the skill of close textual reading and learn strategies for effective argumentative writing. Critical literary skills of close reading and argumentative writing are important for this class and will stand you in good stead in other courses where you must communicate clearly and persuasively. We will practice low-stakes writing that teaches you the difference between analysis and observation, practice close reading, learn how to use textual evidence to make an argument, think about the connection between argumentative and conceptual organization, learn to formulate argumentative thesis claims, and practice writing persuasive papers.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Henry James - *The Turn of the Screw* (978-0141441351)

Kate Chopin – *The Awakening* (978-0486277868)

Toni Morrison – *The Bluest Eye* (978-0307278449)

Ernest Hemingway – *In Our Time* (978-0684822761)

Joseph Conrad – *Heart of Darkness* (978-0486264646)

Arundhati Roy – *The God of Small Things* (978-0812979657)

Other readings: On Compass – must be printed and brought to class

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1) Become familiar with the meaning of basic literary terms.
- 2) Use literary terms to analyze the form and content of literary prose fiction.

- 3) Practice close reading literary texts.
- 4) Learn the difference between textual analysis and observation.
- 5) Learn how to formulate an argumentative thesis claim.
- 6) Practice and develop skills in using textual evidence to support an argument.

CLASS POLICIES

Care and Attendance – We will expect to learn from one another in an environment where everyone feels comfortable contributing. You must treat your fellow students and instructor with respect at all times. Be courteous, curious, generous, and thoughtful. Care-ful attendance requires that you complete the reading, arrive on time, and be fully present in our conversations. You should take notes during your preparation for class and during our discussions. Our classroom can only be as good as you make it.

Readings – Bring all readings to class with you. It is difficult to participate in discussion if you cannot refer to the text. If you do not bring the day's text to class (whether fiction or criticism) you will lose participation points. You are responsible for acquiring the required readings for this class; you may buy them from the university bookstore or other vendors (such as Amazon, Abebooks etc.) but you must make sure to get the correct edition. Having the same edition is important so we can all have the same page references during our discussions. Do not get electronic editions as they do not have page numbers! Critical pieces and other readings that are not novels will be posted on the course website. These should be printed and brought to class with you.

Technology – The temptation to browse the internet is high, so laptops and cell phones are not to be used during class. Print out readings and bring them with you. If you require a laptop due to a documented disability, please speak with me.

Requests for Special Accommodations – UIUC provides accommodations to students with documented disabilities. To obtain disability-related adjustments or aids, students with disabilities should be in touch with me and Disability Resources and Educational Services (1207 Oak St./disability@illinois.edu). Once your accommodations have been determined by DRES, please meet with me so we can discuss your needs and make any necessary arrangements. Be aware that it is your responsibility to self-identify and seek accommodations from DRES; also note that accommodations are also not retroactive to the beginning of the semester but begin the day you contact me with a letter of accommodation from DRES.

Workshops - These in-class workshops are collaborative spaces for you to assess your work and your peers' work, and to gain the feedback of other readers. You should approach workshops generously and constructively, not negatively. Workshops are a great opportunity for you to hone your argumentative ideas and writing skills. While you are welcome to come by office hours to discuss papers, you should take full advantage of workshops by coming prepared with appropriate materials. There are no opportunities to make up workshops if you miss them. Further instructions for workshops will be handed out in class.

Late Papers - Late papers will be docked 1/3 letter grade per calendar day they are late (i.e. A- to B+). This includes the day it is due, if a paper is turned in after the deadline. For example, if a paper

is due at 12 noon and is turned in at 3pm that day, it is considered 1 day late. Extenuating circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Course Grades –We will use +/- letter grades. A = 96-94, A- = 93-90, B+ = 89-87, B = 86-84, B- = 83-80, C+ = 79-77, C = 76-74, C- = 73-70, D+ = 69-67, D = 66-64, D- = 63-60

NOTE: You must complete all papers in this class to receive a passing grade.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism - Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated. All work you submit must be your own. Whenever you use ideas from other people, even if you paraphrase them, you must cite your sources. When you quote directly from any materials, including internet pages, make sure to use quotation marks and note the author and page number parenthetically.

We will follow Articles 1-401 through 1-406 of the *Student Code*. This rule defines infractions of academic integrity, which include but are not limited to cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism. You are responsible for following these guidelines. If you have questions about whether something would be an infraction, speak with me. Ignorance of these codes does not constitute an excuse for plagiarism. English department faculty are required to report every suspected case of plagiarism to the Director of Undergraduate Studies before beginning investigative procedures. Consequences for plagiarism can include failing the class or dismissal from the university. No one wants that. Just don't do it.

Nuts and Bolts – For all papers, use 12-pt Times New Roman font and 1-inch margins. Papers must be double-spaced and include a Works Cited page in MLA formatting. The Purdue OWL is a good online source of information about formatting. Papers are all due in class unless otherwise noted.

Office Hours – I ask that everyone come visit me during office hours at least once by October 31. You needn't stay long but this will give you an opportunity to talk about a novel or theoretical work you find interesting or frustrating, upcoming assignments and papers, ask questions about the course, ask about topics we have not fully addressed in class, or just introduce yourself. I suggest you come by earlier rather than later. If you cannot make my office hours you can email me to set up an appointment.

GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS

1) Attendance – 10%

If you're not in class, you can't contribute to your peers' learning and you miss their insights about course texts. You are allowed four absences during the semester for any reason before your grade will be affected. You do not need to let me know why you are absent, but it is wise to save your absences for times when you are ill rather than skipping class 'just because.' If you exceed the allowed absences, your final grade will be lowered accordingly, typically by 1/3 letter grade per excess absence (i.e. B to B-). Extenuating circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis.

If there is a prolonged period of time when you know you will not be able to come to class or you have extenuating circumstances that will contribute to your missing more than 4 classes (such as an ongoing illness) it is your responsibility to communicate with me in a timely manner, to arrange to turn in any assignments that may be due, and to learn about the proceedings of the class and subsequent assignments. If you register late for the course, it is largely up to you to catch up with the work that you have missed. Lateness for classes is also disruptive, and late arrivals will adversely affect your attendance grade. If you know that you will not be able to attend class on a particular date, or that you will be late, it would help to let me know ahead of time.

2) Engaged Participation – 10%

In addition to care-ful attendance (outlined above), engaged participation is a requirement for this course. This means coming to class having already read, taken notes on, and reflected on the materials for the day. We will be learning from each other, so come prepared to contribute your thoughts to discussion. Discussion can and will happen in many forms. It includes discussion as a whole class, in response to both open-ended and more guided questions. But it also includes group and pair work, and possibly in-class writings. Your participation grade will also take into account your preparations for discussion, such as OA assignments, and your participation in our workshop day. There are many ways to participate!

3) Reading Quizzes – 5%

These short, simple quizzes will be given randomly during the semester to check that you are keeping up with the reading. They will be extremely easy to pass if you have done the reading. These are easy points!

4) Practicing Close Reading: Observation and Analysis - 20%

Observation and Analysis (OA) assignments are closely related to your argumentative papers. You can think of these as complimentary assignments. OA posts can give you a jumping off point for papers and both give you multiple opportunities to engage with the texts.

Several times during the semester you will be required to submit a short observation and analysis about a text we are reading during that week. These OA assignments are meant to be low-stakes exercises in learning the difference between noticing a feature of the text (observation) and explaining its meaning (analysis). The passage does not need to be from that particular day's readings but must be about the text we are currently reading. The things you notice or observe may include punctuation, changes in tense or perspective, recurrent themes or symbols, a piece of dialogue, etc.

For OA assignments, you should pick a short segment from the text – a passage or a few paragraphs – to focus on. It will be easier to do a thorough analysis on a short segment than several pages. In your passage, identify something that you find interesting, striking, or puzzling about the text. This is your observation. You then want to make an analytic point about it. This can entail things like discussing the meaning it produces in the text, how it illuminates themes in the text, or how it affects your understanding of the text or what you know about the text. Summarizing the text does not count as observation or analysis.

You will want to discuss the significance of your observation in the passage itself, but can also connect it to the work more broadly. For example, if a piece of dialogue in your passage is a crucial moment of character development or reveals an important theme, you should talk about how it is working in the passage (both what is said and how it is said) and can also talk about how it affects or reflects your understanding of the larger work.

By analyzing your observation, you will be learning how to make a claim about the significance of something in the text. We will discuss the difference between observing, analyzing a text, and making claims about the text as a whole in class. They are related processes; observations are expanded into analysis, and a claim is often made through the accumulation of different analytical points. OAs should be about ½ to 1 page single spaced and are **due by 9pm the night before they assigned**. They should be posted to Compass's "Discussion Board." You are encouraged to read your peers' posts. Late responses will not be accepted.

5) Short argumentative papers (2 total) - 30% (15% each)

For your response papers you will build on the analytic skills you have practiced in your OA assignments and in class discussion. In your papers you will make *an interpretive, argumentative thesis claim*

about one of our texts. The point of these papers is to demonstrate the skills in close reading, analysis, and using evidence that you will be developing over the course of the class. Papers must be 3-4 pages, double-spaced in Times New Roman font. They are due in class in hard copy.

6) Guiding Discussion – 10%

You will sign up for one day during the semester where you are responsible for **two things**. **First**, think of these days as days when you are extra responsible for the day's readings. On these days you will be one of the individuals primarily responsible for maintaining class discussion and answering questions. While other students will also be participating, you will put forth an **extra** effort to raise interesting points about the text, respond to other students' observations and questions, and help lead class. As such, be sure to prepare for the class by taking notes and preparing page numbers to reference.

Second, for the day you sign up, you will provide me with **three** articulate and thoughtful discussion questions to pose to the class, which will help shape class discussion. You are not required to lead the discussion about these questions. (If you would like to, let me know). The questions must go beyond opinions (I "like" or "think") and also "yes" or "no" questions and instead involve literary analysis. At least one of the questions should address one of our analytic key words – setting, plot, character, narrative point of view, tone/style, symbolism, or theme. Be sure to make clear in your question which of these terms you want us to think about. Questions should be emailed to me by midnight the day before you present so I can prepare them for common viewing.

7) Take Home Final– 15%

You will have a take-home final exam. It will not be a tricky exam and you should do well as long as you come to class. Further details will be disseminated later in the semester.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

Keywords/Basics

Week 1

August 27 Introduction to class, syllabus
Carrie Mae Weems - "Black Woman with Chicken"
Ernest Hemingway - "Baby Shoes"

August 29 Process of close reading handout (in class)
Anton Chekhov – "Misery"
Kate Chopin – "The Story of an Hour"

Week 2

Sept 3 Jhumpa Lahiri – "Unaccustomed Earth"

Sept 5 Henry James - "Preface to Portrait of a Lady"
Henry James - *The Turn of the Screw* (pg. 1-36)
Examples of OAs (handout)

Week 3

Sept 10 Henry James - *The Turn of the Screw* (pg. 37-77)
DUE: OA on *Turn of the Screw*

Sept 12 Henry James - *The Turn of the Screw* (pg. 78-125)
In class debate: Are the ghosts real?

Character Interiority and Subject Formation

Week 4

Sept 17 Anton Chekhov – “Lady with the Dog”
Alice Munro – “Boys and Girls”
DUE: OA on “Lady” or “Boys and Girls”

Sept 19 Kate Chopin – *The Awakening* (pg. 1-39, “speeding to cover.”)
Proving things in literature (handout)

Week 5

Sept 24 Kate Chopin – *The Awakening* (pg. 39-71, “Alcee Arobin.”)
Argumentative writing tips (handout)

Sept 26 Kate Chopin – *The Awakening* (pg. 71-116)
DUE: OA on *The Awakening*

Week 6

Oct 1 IN CLASS: workshop for paper 1

Oct 3 Toni Morrison - *The Bluest Eye* (pg. 3-50, “candy is named.”)

Week 7

Oct 8 Toni Morrison - *The Bluest Eye* (pg. 51-101)
DUE: OA on *The Bluest Eye*

Oct 10 Toni Morrison - *The Bluest Eye* (pg. 102-152, gone to Macon.”)

Week 8

Oct. 15 Toni Morrison – *The Bluest Eye* (pg. 152-206)
DUE: Paper 1 in class

Historical Change and Aesthetic Innovation

Oct. 17 Ernest Hemingway - *In Our Time* (pg. 11-49)

Week 9

Oct. 22 Ernest Hemingway - *In Our Time* (pg. 50-95)
DUE: OA on *In Our Time*

Oct. 24 Ernest Hemingway - *In Our Time* (pg. 96-157)

Week 10

Oct. 29 Joseph Conrad - *Heart of Darkness* (pg. 1-23)

Oct. 31 Joseph Conrad - *Heart of Darkness* (pg. 24-50, “perfectly round.”)

Week 11

Nov. 5 Joseph Conrad - *Heart of Darkness* (pg. 50-72)
DUE: OA on *Heart of Darkness*

Nov. 7 IN CLASS: workshop for paper 2

Week 12 Arundhati Roy – *The God of Small Things* (pg. 2-56)

Nov.14 Arundhati Roy - *The God of Small Things* (pg. 56-110)
DUE: OA on *God of Small Things*

Week 13

Nov. 19 Arundhati Roy - *The God of Small Things* (pg. 111-164)

Nov. 21 Arundhati Roy - *The God of Small Things* (pg. 175-218)
DUE: Paper 2 in class

Week 14 FALL BREAK – NO CLASS

Week 15

Dec. 3 Arundhati Roy – *The God of Small Things* (219-272)

Dec. 6 Arundhati Roy – *The God of Small Things* (273-321)

Week 16

Dec. 10 review for final

Take home final due by noon 12/14 via email

I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus during the semester.

ENGL 285 Postcolonial Literature in English
Prof. Rebecca Oh

TR 12:30-1:45pm | English Building 69 | Fall 2019

Office Hours: Thursdays 2:15-3:15pm or by appt | English Building 341 | rsch@illinois.edu
Credit hours: 3 | Gen Ed requirements: Humanities and non-Western Cultural Studies | no prereqs

REQUIRED TEXTS

Achebe, Chinua, *Things Fall Apart* (Anchor Books, 1994)
Ghosh, Amitav. *In an Antique Land: History in the Guise of a Traveler's Tale* (Vintage, 1994)
Roy, Arundhati. *The God of Small Things* (Random House, 1998)
Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest* (Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009)
Walcott, Derek. *Selected Poems* Ed. Edward Baugh (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007)
Other readings: on Compass

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Colonialism was much more than a global system of European domination. It demands to be understood as a relationship, however unequal, between European colonizers and non-European colonized peoples. In this course we will investigate how power and resistance are configured within colonial relations and their aftermaths. How does power get produced and contested? By whom is it held? What are its effects? We will focus these questions through the potentials and pitfalls of language and literature. How does English, the language of former colonizers, come to represent diverse forms of non-European experience? How is it taken up, changed, and appropriated to “write back” to empire? Relatedly we will ask how postcolonial writers deploy unique narrative forms, genres, and styles to represent colonized experience. Our inquiries into language and power will lead us to consider how nation, race, gender, and class affect postcolonial experience. Most of our texts will be drawn from the twentieth century, and may include drama, a travelogue, films, novels, poetry, and theory/criticism.

By studying postcolonial literature you should gain an appreciation for how empire shaped the culture of colonized subjects and that of colonizing nations, as well as how imperialism continues to shape ongoing political, cultural, and economic inequalities. Though we begin with Shakespeare we will follow a thematic rather than a historical trajectory and approach all our texts, both fiction and criticism, through close and attentive reading.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- 1) Become familiar with some basic terms, problems, and issues that have shaped postcolonial literature. Be able to discuss and analyze how postcolonial writers have engaged with these ideas.
- 2) Gain a better understanding of some of the historical and social contexts that shape colonialism and imperialism as global projects.
- 3) Gain a deeper understanding of and appreciation for cultures and texts from outside Western Europe.
- 4) Hone skills in close reading, interpretation, and analysis.

- 5) Develop skills in critical writing and argumentation, particularly thesis statements and argumentative organization.
- 6) Begin developing skills in reading and analyzing academic criticism.

CLASS POLICIES

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Readings – Bring all readings to class with you. It is difficult to participate in discussion if you cannot refer to the text. If you do not bring the day's text to class (whether fiction or criticism) you will lose participation points. You are responsible for acquiring the required readings for this class. You may buy them from the university bookstore or other vendors (such as Amazon, Abebooks etc.) but you must make sure to get the correct edition. Having the same edition is important so we can all have the same page references during our discussions. Do not get electronic editions as they do not have page numbers! Critical pieces will be posted on the course website. These should be printed and brought to class with you.

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Late Papers - Late papers will be docked 1/3 letter grade per calendar day they are late (i.e. A- to B+). This includes the day it is due, if a paper is turned in after the deadline. For example, if a paper is due at 12 noon and is turned in at 3pm that day, it is considered 1 day late. Extenuating circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Extensions - MUST be requested at least 24 hours in advance of a paper deadline via email. Verbal confirmation does not count. I am willing to work with you on paper deadlines, but it is your responsibility to request extensions in a timely manner. Do not email me the day a paper is due and ask for an extension. Extenuating circumstances like family or serious medical emergencies will be considered on a case by case basis.

Course Grades – We will use +/- letter grades. A = 96-94, A- = 93-90, B+ = 89-87, B = 86-84, B- = 83-80, C+ = 79-77, C = 76-74, C- = 73-70, D+ = 69-67, D = 66-64, D- = 63-60

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ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1) Attendance – 10%

If you're not in class, you can't contribute to your peers' learning and you miss their insights about course texts. You are allowed four absences during the semester for any reason before your grade will be affected. You do not need to let me know why you are absent, but it is wise to save your absences for times when you are ill rather than skipping class 'just because.' If you exceed the allowed absences, your final grade will be lowered accordingly, typically by 1/3 letter grade per excess absence (i.e. A to A-). Extenuating circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis.

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3) Observation and Analysis (OA) – 20%

Observation and Analysis (OA) assignments are closely related to your argumentative papers. You can think of these as complimentary assignments. OA posts can give you a jumping off point for papers and both give you multiple opportunities to engage with the texts.

Several times during the semester you will be required to submit a short observation and analysis about a text we are reading during that week. These OA assignments are meant to be low-stakes exercises in learning the difference between noticing a feature of the text (observation) and explaining its meaning (analysis). The passage does not need to be from that particular day's readings but must be about the text we are currently reading. The things you notice or observe may include punctuation, changes in tense or perspective, recurrent themes or symbols, a piece of dialogue, etc.

For OA assignments, you should pick a short segment from the text – a passage or a few paragraphs – to focus on. It will be easier to do a thorough analysis on a short segment than several pages. In your passage, identify something that you find interesting, striking, or puzzling about the text. This is your observation. You then want to make an analytic point about it. This can entail things like discussing the meaning of your observation, how it illuminates themes in the text, or how it affects your understanding of the text or what you know about the text.

You will want to discuss the significance of your observation in the passage itself, but can also connect it to the work more broadly. For example, if a piece of dialogue in your passage is a crucial moment of character development or reveals an important theme, you should talk about how it is working in the passage (both what is said and how it is said) and can also talk about how it affects or reflects something about the larger work.

Do not summarize plot. OAs should be about ½ to 1 page single spaced and are **due by 9pm the night before they assigned.** They should be posted to Compass's "Discussion Board." You are encouraged to read your peers' posts. Late responses will not be accepted.

4) Reading Quizzes – 5%

These short, simple quizzes will be given randomly during the semester to check that you are keeping up with the reading. They will be extremely easy to pass if you have done the reading. These are easy points!

5) Discussion Leading - 10%

Beginning in week four, once during the semester you will sign up to lead class discussion. You are responsible for **two things**. **First**, think of these days as days when you are extra responsible

for the day's readings. On these days you will be one of the individuals primarily responsible for maintaining class discussion and answering questions. While other students will also be participating, you will put forth an **extra** effort to raise interesting points about the text, respond to other students' observations and questions, and help lead class. As such, be sure to prepare for the class by taking notes and preparing page numbers to reference.

Second, you will come up with **three** articulate and thoughtful discussion questions to pose to the class, which you will field to your satisfaction. The questions must go beyond opinions (I "like" or "think") and also "yes" or "no" questions and instead involve analysis. Think of this as your opportunity to guide us toward parts of the fiction or criticism that you found most illuminating or interesting, or that you have questions about and would like to puzzle through with the class. When discussing criticism, you might highlight how you understood the argument, point out interesting or provocative parts of the argument, ask how the piece complicates or compliments the fiction, or ask about the logical implications or limitations of the piece's critical ideas. For novels you might draw our attention to passages you think are particularly relevant, interesting, or challenging, patterns you think are significant, or ask about how the text relates to our organizing themes and questions.

You can make a power point of your questions or simply email them to me by midnight before your discussion leading day. You should plan for your discussion leading to run about **10-15 minutes**. Except in the case of documented emergencies, if you are absent during your discussion day you will not have the opportunity to make up this assignment.

6) Essays (2 total) – 15% each (30% total)

For your essays you will build on the analytic skills we will be practicing in class. You will make *an interpretive, argumentative claim* about one of our novels. The point of this paper is to demonstrate the skills in close reading, analysis, and using textual evidence that you will be developing over the course, and your knowledge of the kinds of concerns that motivate postcolonial writing. You are encouraged to expand on thoughts you have developed in your OA responses but this is not required. Papers must be double-spaced, 5-6 pages, 12-pt Times New Roman, with an MLA bibliography.

Your revised essay should take into account the feedback given after the first essay. Along with the essay you should submit a paragraph outlining the changes you made and why or how they strengthened your paper. The grade for this paper will be counted separately from your original essay, so it behooves you to make the revised paper as strong and persuasive as possible. Same formatting - double-spaced, 5-6 pages, 12-pt Times New Roman, MLA bibliography.

NB: All essays are due in hard copy in class.

7) Creative Final and Analytical Essay – 15%

Further details will be distributed later in the semester.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

Week 1:

- | | |
|------|----------------------------|
| 8/27 | course introduction |
| 8/29 | <i>The Tempest</i> , Act I |

Week 2:

9/3 *The Tempest*, Act II
Process of close reading handout (in class)

9/5 *The Tempest*, Act III and Act IV

Week 3:

9/10 *The Tempest*, Act V
Due: OA on *The Tempest*

9/12 “Why Study Critical Controversies about The Tempest,” pg. 91-108 and Cesaire, selections from *A Tempest*, pg. 309-319 in Bedford edition

Week 4:

9/17 Ania Loomba, “Defining the terms” from *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (Compass)

9/19 Chinua Achebe - *Things Fall Apart* (3-38)

Week 5:

9/24 Achebe - *Things Fall Apart* (39-72)

9/26 Achebe - *Things Fall Apart* (73-106)
Due: OA on *Things Fall Apart*

Week 6:

10/1 Achebe - *Things Fall Apart* (107-140)
In class: Argumentative writing handout

10/3 Achebe - *Things Fall Apart* (141-174)

Week 7:

10/8 Elleke Boehmer - “Imperialism and Textuality,” selections from Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Compass)

10/10 Amitav Ghosh - *In an Antique Land*

Week 8:

10/15 Ghosh - *In an Antique Land*
Due: essay 1

10/17 Ghosh - *In an Antique Land*

Week 9:

10/22 Ghosh - *In an Antique Land* (82-149)
Chakrabarty, selection from *Provincializing Europe*, pg. 6-11 (Compass)

10/12 Ghosh - *In an Antique Land* (150-217)
OA on *In an Antique Land*

Week 10:

10/29 Ghosh - *In an Antique Land*

10/31 Ania Loomba - "Constructing racial and cultural difference" from *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (Compass)

Week 11:

11/5 In class workshop: essay 1 (no reading due)

11/7 in class: *Life and Debt*

Week 12:

11/12 in class: *Life and Debt*
Due: OA on *Life and Debt*

11/14 Breiner - "Creole Language in Derek Walcott" (Compass)
Walcott - "Introduction", "Sainte Lucie" from *Selected Poems* pg. 103-116

11/14 Walcott - "The Light of the World" from *Selected Poems* pg. 184-188
Key terms - hybridity, ambivalence etc., on Compass

Week 13:

11/19 Arundhati Roy - *The God of Small Things* (66 pages)

11/21 Roy - *God of Small Things*
Due: Revised essay 1

Week 14: FALL BREAK NO CLASS

Week 15:

12/3 Roy - *God of Small Things*

12/5 Roy - *God of Small Things*

Due: OA on *God of Small Things*

Week 16:

12/10 *Roy - God of Small Things*

12/13 Final creative assignment and analysis due at midnight via email

I reserve the right to make changes to this schedule during the semester.

ENGL 300 Postcolonial Novels: The Country and the City
Prof. Rebecca Oh

TR 10-11:15am | Psychology Building 21 | Spring 2019

Office Hours: Thursdays 3:15-4:15pm or by appt | English Building 341 | rsoh@illinois.edu

This course examines the troubled career of the nation-state in postcolonial novels. We focus on the aftermath of independence movements in Africa and South Asia as postcolonial countries struggled to learn to rule themselves, form national communities, and participate in the global economy and circuits of cultural exchange. While colonialism is easily understood as an antagonistic enterprise between colonizers/colonized, this class focuses on the aftermath of such binaries. After independence, how did nations come to inaugurate themselves amidst fragmented histories, languages, and identities? How are nation-states shaped by global networks of power? How do novels invest in, criticize, and seek to represent both the potentialities of the nation-state and modernities beyond it?

In the first part of this class we will examine nation-building and the role of the writer. How do critics and canonical postcolonial writers understand the challenges of independence and how do novels to grapple with the imminent but unfinished 'many in one' of the nation? How did postcolonial writers understand their role in the formation of new national communities? How does the literary form of the novel respond to the new political terrain of the nation-state, its opportunities, and its limits? How does literature participate in national imaginings as well as the failures and exclusions of the nation-state?

In the second half of class we will move away from the nation-state to more transnational frameworks. We will ask how novels represent the challenges and opportunities of global cities as subnational and international spaces. How do cities relate to rural hinterlands and fit into international networks? How do novels figure the new opportunities but also new conditions of exposure and vulnerability inaugurated by cities as sites of transnational exchange, capital circulation, and environmental pollution? How do global cities disrupt aspirations and forms of belonging formerly organized by the nation? How do postcolonial novels help us understand the extent to which global cities have displaced the nation-state as the primary site of postcolonial experience, identity, and aspiration, while also showing us how the nation-state remains relevant?

In addition to honing close reading, analytic, and interpretive skills, this course will introduce students to basic academic research and to reading critical theory. This course also emphasizes argumentative writing, and paper revision will be an integral part of the course.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- 7) Learn about core problems and questions that have shaped postcolonial studies. Be able to discuss and analyze how postcolonial writers have engaged with these ideas.
- 8) Learn to analyze how the nation-state and global city shape postcolonial experience and intersect with new and old power dynamics.
- 9) Hone skills in close reading, interpretation, and analysis.
- 10) Develop skills in critical writing and argumentation, particularly thesis statements and argumentative organization.
- 11) Develop basic skills in academic research.

12) Learn how to integrate close textual reading with criticism and theory in argumentation.

CLASS POLICIES

Care and Attendance – We will expect to learn from one another in an environment where everyone feels comfortable contributing. You must treat your fellow students and instructor with respect at all times. Be courteous, curious, generous, and thoughtful. Care-ful attendance requires that you complete the reading, arrive on time, and be fully present in our conversations. You should take notes during your preparation for class and during our discussions. Our classroom can only be as good as you make it.

Readings – Bring all readings to class with you. If you do not bring the day's text to class (whether novel or criticism) you will lose participation points. You are responsible for acquiring the required novels for this class; you may buy them from the university bookstore or other vendors (such as Amazon, Abebooks etc.) but you must make sure to get the correct edition. Having the same edition is important so we can all have the same page references during our discussions. Do not get electronic editions as they do not have page numbers! Critical pieces and other readings that are not novels will be posted on the course website.

Technology – The temptation to browse the internet is high, so laptops and cell phones are not to be used during class. Print out readings and bring them with you. If you require a laptop due to a documented disability, please speak with me.

Requests for Special Accommodations – UIUC provides accommodations to students with documented disabilities. To obtain disability-related adjustments or aids, students with disabilities should be in touch with me and Disability Resources and Educational Services (1207 Oak St./disability@illinois.edu). Once your accommodations have been determined by DRES, please meet with me so we can discuss your needs and make any necessary arrangements. Be aware that it is your responsibility to self-identify and seek accommodations from DRES; also note that accommodations are not retroactive to the beginning of the semester but begin the day you contact me with a letter of accommodation from DRES.

Workshops - These in-class workshops are collaborative spaces for you to assess your work and your peers' work, and to gain the feedback of other readers. You should approach workshops generously and constructively, not negatively. I envision workshops as the primary place where you will hone your argumentative ideas and writing skills; while you are welcome to come by office hours to discuss papers, you should view workshops as your primary place to get feedback about your papers. Further instructions for workshops will be handed out in class.

Late Papers - Late papers will be accepted up to 3 days after the deadline. All late papers will be docked 1 letter grade per day they are late. Extenuating circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Extensions (only applicable to revised short papers, annotated bibliography and final research paper) - Extensions **MUST** be requested at least 24 hours in advance of a paper deadline via email. Verbal confirmation does not count. Do not email me the day a paper is due and ask for an extension.

Extenuating circumstances like family or serious medical emergencies will be considered on a case by case basis.

NOTE: Due dates for initial short papers cannot be extended; we will peer workshop these short papers in class on two designated “workshop days,” which are noted on the syllabus. If your short paper is submitted late, you will miss the in-class workshop, valuable feedback, and participation points for that day.

Course Grades – We will use +/- letter grades. A = 96-94, A- = 93-90, B+ = 89-87, B = 86-84, B- = 83-80, C+ = 79-77, C = 76-74, C- = 73-70, D+ = 69-67, D = 66-64, D- = 63-60

NOTE: You must complete all papers in this class to receive a passing grade.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism - Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated. All work you submit must be your own. When you use ideas from other people, you must cite your sources. When you quote directly from any materials, including internet pages, make sure to use quotation marks and note the author and page number parenthetically.

We will follow Articles 1-401 through 1-406 of the *Student Code*. This rule defines infractions of academic integrity, which include but are not limited to cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism. You are responsible for following these guidelines. If you have questions about whether something would be an infraction, speak with me. Ignorance of these codes does not constitute an excuse for plagiarism. English faculty are required to report every suspected case of plagiarism to the Director of Undergraduate Studies before beginning investigative procedures. Consequences for plagiarism can include failing the class or dismissal from the university.

Nuts and Bolts – For all papers, use 12-pt Times New Roman font and 1-inch margins. Papers must be double-spaced and include a Works Cited page in MLA formatting. The Purdue OWL is a good source of information about formatting.

Office Hours - I encourage you to come talk to me during office hours, whether it’s about your papers, a particular theoretical work or novel, or questions you have about the course. If you cannot make my office hours, email me and we can work to set up an appointment.

ASSIGNMENTS

Attendance and Participation – 10%

In addition to attendance (outlined above), engaged participation is a requirement for this course. This means coming to class having already read, taken notes on, and reflected on the materials for the day. We will be learning from each other, so come prepared to contribute your thoughts to discussion. You are allowed **four** absences during the semester for any reason before your grade will be affected. If you exceed the allowed absences, your final grade will be lowered accordingly, typically by 1 letter grade per excess absence. Extenuating circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis.

Your participation grade also includes your participation in our 2 workshop days. These workshops are valuable opportunities for you to learn about the components of argumentative writing and gain feedback for your revised papers.

Discussion Leading – 10%

Beginning in **week 3**, you will sign up to lead discussion **once during the semester**. You should prepare a short **presentation** for the class about the day's reading. Think of this as your opportunity to guide us toward parts of the fiction/criticism that you found most illuminating or interesting, as well as helping us get a grasp of critical arguments if there is a critical piece the day you present. When presenting on criticism, you might highlight how you understood the argument, point out interesting or provocative parts of the argument, discuss how the piece complicates or compliments the novel, and point out logical implications or limitations of the piece's critical ideas. For novels you might draw our attention to passages you think are particularly relevant, interesting, or challenging, patterns you think are significant, or offer your take on how the text relates to our organizing themes and questions. You will also need to pose **3 discussion questions** for the class and field the discussion of these questions until they have been answered to your satisfaction. For days with both criticism and a novel you should propose at least one question about each (i.e. do not make all 3 questions about the novel or all 3 about criticism). Email discussion questions to me before class; I will put them on a PowerPoint for common viewing. A visual accompaniment to your presentation is not required, but if you do make one you should also email this to me before class. You should plan for your discussion leading to run about **15 minutes**. Except in the case of documented emergencies, if you are absent during your discussion day you will not have the opportunity to make up this assignment.

Word of the Day (WOD) – 5%

On the day you post your Observation and Analysis (see below) you will also be responsible for coming up with a “word of the day.” This can be any word (or a short phrase) from the reading that you find striking, interesting, or want to draw our attention to and include in class discussion. Be sure you can explain your thoughts about the word and why you want us to think with or about it. I will use WOD to facilitate our discussion and may call on you to explain your word.

Weekly Observation and Analysis (OA) – 5%

Beginning in **week 2**, before Tuesday or Thursday of each class, you will submit a short Observation and Analysis (OA) response to the readings we are discussing for that day. Observation and Analysis (OA) assignments are meant to be low-stakes exercises in practicing close reading and may be related to your short response papers (see below). You can think of OAs and the short papers as complimentary assignments.

If writing about a novel, you should pick a short segment from the text – a passage or a few paragraphs – to focus on. It will be easier to do a thorough analysis on a short segment than several pages. For your passage, identify something that you find interesting, striking, or puzzling about the text. This is your observation. You then want to make an analytic point about it. This means making a claim about the significance of your observation for the meaning of the novel or your understanding of it. Ideally, your analysis will begin to advance an intellectual position about something from the reading or a critical opinion/interpretation of a passage. You will want to discuss the significance of your observation in the passage itself but can connect it to the work more broadly if you wish.

For critical pieces, the same basic principles apply, but instead of focusing on a formal or thematic aspect of the text, you should close read the critical ideas/argumentation of the piece. You may choose to focus on a particular sub-claim or the overarching idea/claim of the piece. You should identify an idea you find interesting, striking, or puzzling in the piece, and then analyze how it fits into the overall argument (if it is a sub-claim), how it affects your understanding of a novel, or logical implications of the idea/argument that you want to draw out.

Do not summarize. Your OA should 1/2 to 1 page single-spaced. Responses are due on Compass by **8pm** the day before your assigned response day. Late responses will not be accepted.

You do not have to post on workshop days (listed as “no post” on the syllabus) or the week in which you lead discussion.

Initial Short Papers – no formal grade

For your short papers you will build on the analytic skills you have practiced in your OA assignments. In your papers you will make *an argumentative thesis claim* about one of our novels. You must incorporate one critical piece either as part of the argument you want to make about the novel or as part of the evidence you use in proving the argument. You do not want to “apply” the theory to the novel, but rather situate the critical ideas in your own argument about the work. For example, “X says Y about nationalism, and while B novel supports this point it also complicates it by...” While the paper topics are open, you are encouraged to expand on one of your weekly responses. The point of these papers is to help you demonstrate and practice the skills in close reading, analysis, argumentation, using evidence, and reading criticism that you will be developing over the course of the class.

Initial short papers will not receive formal grades (though I will indicate what grade it would have received had you handed it in as is). By suspending initial grades I hope to encourage you to work toward improving your writing. I will use only the final revised drafts for your final grade. In calculating your final paper grade I will take into account improvements between the first and second drafts.

NOTE: Due dates for short papers cannot be extended; we will peer workshop these short papers in class on two designated “workshop days,” which are noted on the syllabus. If your short paper is submitted late, you will miss the in-class workshop, valuable feedback, and participation points for that day.

Revised Short Papers – 20% each (40% of total grade)

Revisions are a required part of this class. You will be expected to take the feedback from your workshop session and incorporate it into your revised short paper. **Your revised paper grade will be your only paper grade**, so it is worth investing the time and energy to revise your paper and make it as strong as possible. Along with your revised paper, you must submit an explanation of the changes you have made between drafts and why/how these strengthen the paper. Do not exceed 1 double-spaced page.

Annotated Bibliography – 10%

As you develop your ideas for your final paper, you will compile a short annotated bibliography on your chosen topic. The bibliography should contain at least six sources that help you develop your ideas and argument for the final paper. No more than three of your entries can be drawn from this course’s assigned reading. Citations should be in MLA format, and each annotation should be no longer than a paragraph—i.e. 250-300 words.

Final Research Paper – 20%

In your final paper, you will undertake a longer version of the short critical analysis you’ve been producing in your weekly OAs and short papers. You are welcome to expand one of your short papers for the final paper, though that is not required. As in your more concise writing, your final paper should make an argument and include an identifiable thesis statement. In addition, outside research is required for this paper; ideally you will draw upon the sources referenced in your annotated bibliography, though you may include other sources as well. 7-10 pages, double-spaced.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Salman Rushdie - *Midnight's Children*
Chimamanda Adiche - *Half of a Yellow Sun*
Chinua Achebe - *Anthills of the Savannah*
Chris Abani - *GraceLand*
Indra Sinha - *Animal's People*
Aravind Adiga - *The White Tiger*

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

From Many, One: The Challenge of Independence

- Week 1
Jan 15 Introduction to class, syllabus
- Jan 17 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, "Introduction" and "Cultural Roots"
B.R. Ambedkar – *The Annihilation of Caste*, pg. 29-41, 47-49, 52-56, 63-64, 83
- Week 2
Jan 22 Salman Rushdie - *Midnight's Children* (pg. 3-109, "All is well.")
Brennan – "The National Longing for Form"
- Jan 24 *Midnight's Children* (pg. 109-220)
- Week 3
Jan 29 *Midnight's Children* (221-336)
David Lloyd – "Nationalisms Against the State"
- Jan 31 *Midnight's Children* (337-441)
Argumentative essay handout
- Week 4
Feb 5 *Midnight's Children* (441-533)
- Feb 7 DUE Paper 1 // IN CLASS WORKSHOP (no reading or posts)

Fragmented States

- Week 5
Feb 12 Chinua Achebe - *Anthills of the Savannah* (1-109)
Chinua Achebe - "Where the Problem Lies"
- Feb 14 *Anthills of the Savannah* (110-216)
- Week 6
Feb 19 Chimamanda Ngozi Adiche - *Half of a Yellow Sun* (1-126)

Raymond Williams – “Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory”

Feb 21 *Half of a Yellow Sun* (127-216)
Franz Fanon – “The trials and tribulations of national consciousness” from *The Wretched of the Earth*, pg. 148-154, 158, 166-169, 197-205

Week 7

Feb 26 DUE Paper 1 revisions with 1 page explanation
Half of a Yellow Sun (217-324)

Feb 28 *Half of a Yellow Sun* (327-433)

Week 8

Mar 5 *Half of a Yellow Sun* (434-541)
Chinua Achebe, “The Truth of Fiction” and “The Novelist as Teacher”

Urban Underbellies, Global Futures

Mar. 7 Chris Abani - *Graceland* (3-106)
Dawson and Edwards – “Global South Cities: Introduction”

Week 9

Mar 12 *Graceland* (107- 215, “the rain took him”)
Simone – “People as Infrastructure”

Mar. 14 *Graceland* (215-321)
University library research methods instructional session

Week 10 Mar 17-24 SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS

Week 11

Mar 26 DUE Paper 2 // IN CLASS WORKSHOP (no reading or posts)

Mar 28 Indra Sinha - *Animal's People* (1-91)

Week 12

Apr. 2 *Animal's People* (92-187)
Mike Davis – “Slum Ecology”

Apr 4 *Animal's People* (188-251, “in the end is love.”)

Week 13

Apr 9 DUE paper 2 revisions and 1 page explanation
Animal's People (251-366)

Apr 11

Aravind Adiga - *The White Tiger* (1-95)
Ulka Anjaria, “Realist Impulse and the Future of Postcoloniality”

Week 14

Apr 16 *The White Tiger* (97-189)

Apr 18 *The White Tiger* (191-276)
DUE Annotated Bibliography

Week 15

Apr 23 No class - individual research paper meetings
Bring outline or introductory paragraphs; no full drafts

Apr 25 No class – individual research paper meetings
Bring outline or introductory paragraphs; no full drafts

Week 16

April 30 No class – individual research paper meetings
Bring outline or introductory paragraphs; no full drafts

May 4 Final Research papers due by midnight via email

ENGL 261: Genres of Living on a Damaged Planet: from Nature/Culture to NatureCultures

Prof. Rebecca Oh | MW 1-3:30pm | ENGL 150 | Fall 2018

Office Hours: Fridays, 11-12:30pm or by appt | English Building 341 | rsoh@illinois.edu

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the environment was often seen as external to humans; created by a divine God, site of vast natural forces which humans could not control, and testament to the limitations of human imagination. It was also the source of resources powering European industrial expansion, from steam and water power to metals, timber, and coal. In the twentieth century, it became more commonplace to think of the environment as needing protection from the ravages of human activity – not just industrial resource extraction but also its byproducts, in the form of waste and pollution.

In this course we will examine how writers have reckoned with the entanglement of humans and the natural world, as ideas of the environment have moved inward: from that which is external to, to threatened by, to closely entwined with, human life. This shift is also signaled in our title, as we move from “nature/culture,” the idea that nature and culture are opposed and defined against each other, to “naturecultures,” a word that bespeaks the intimacy of the human and the natural. We will examine some of the aesthetic categories or genres that strive to represent, and give us access to, these conceptions of nature and culture.

Why does so much environmental writing take the form of genre writing? We will ask this question not to find an “answer” but to examine and analyze the productiveness of genre for environmental writing. What is genre? As convention or norm, affective contract, or behavioral provocation, what are the capacities and limitations of common genres of environmental writing and what does the idea of genre more generally offer those who write about the environment? If not genre, what other organizational forms or ideas might we use? We will consider these questions by interrogating a range of media including images, film clips, poetry, and novels.

The first part of this class will consider the constructed opposition of nature and culture in genres like the sublime, wilderness, and pastoral. We will examine texts of American nature writing, Romantic poetry, and visual media. The genre of apocalypse will act as our hinge between the ideas of nature/culture and naturecultures, and the second part of class will consider an idea which has gained much traction over the twentieth century: that humans and nature are closely entwined and often subject to similar harms. The final part of this class will thus consider forms of environmental harm and the genre of “slow violence,” in which humans and their environments are commonly subject to forms of spatially diffuse and temporal dilated harm. And, even though only the latter part of our class explicitly theorizes humans and the environment together, we will consider how our earlier genres are also concerned with human impact upon the environment, through the ways in which they strive to construct the environment as a thing apart.

Throughout, we will ask how changes in the environment have been depicted over time, and the desires, fears, or assumptions that underpin these responses to environmental change. We will consider all five genres for the affective, formal, or narrative conventions they invoke or violate, the kind of affective contracts they produce, the ways in which they depict temporal relationality, and the kinds of actions or mental orientations they seek to provoke.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- 1) Be able to discuss historical changes in representations of nature and the environment.
- 2) Learn about and be able to discuss different conceptions of nature, culture/society, and the relationships between them.
- 3) Learn about and be able to discuss different genres used in writing about the environment, their characteristics, and potential uses.
- 4) Practice thinking comparatively between local and global perspectives on the environment.
- 5) Hone close reading, oral communication, writing and research skills.
- 6) Gain an appreciation for the ways in which knowledge and action are shaped by aesthetic mediums, genres, or forms,

CLASS POLICIES

Care and Attendance – Because we will expect to learn from one another in an environment where everyone feels comfortable contributing, you must treat your fellow students and instructor with respect at all times. Be kind, curious, generous, and thoughtful. Respectful attendance requires that you complete the reading with care, arrive on time, and be fully present in our conversations. You should take notes during your preparation for class and during our discussions. Be a good classroom citizen.

Technology - Do not use laptops or cell phones during class. Print readings and bring them with you. If you require a laptop due to a documented disability, please speak with me.

Requests for Special Accommodations – UIUC provides accommodations to students with documented disabilities. To obtain disability-related adjustments or aids, students with disabilities should be in touch with me and Disability Resources and Educational Services (1207 Oak St./disability@illinois.edu). Once your accommodations have been determined by DRES, please meet with me so we can discuss your needs and make any necessary arrangements. Be aware that it is your responsibility to self-identify and seek accommodations from DRES; also note that accommodations are also not retroactive to the beginning of the semester but begin the day you contact me with a letter of accommodation from DRES.

Readings – You are responsible for acquiring the required novels for this class; you may buy them from the university bookstore or other vendors (such as Amazon, Abebooks) but you must make sure to get the correct edition. Having the same edition is important so we can all have the same page references during our discussions. Short stories, handouts, and other readings that are not novels will be posted on the course website. Bring the novels with you and print off and bring the other readings from the course website with you to class each day. Reading texts in hard copy allows you to annotate as you read and as we discuss them in class.

Late Papers - Late papers will be docked 1/3 letter grade per day they are late. This includes the day it is due, if a paper is turned in after the deadline. For example, if a paper is due at 12 noon and is turned in at 3pm that day, it is considered late. Extenuating circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Course Grades – We will use +/- letter grades.

Academic Integrity – We will follow Articles 1-401 through 1-406 of the *Student Code*. This rule defines infractions of academic integrity, which include but are not limited to cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism. You are responsible for following these guidelines. If you have questions about whether something would be an infraction, speak with me.

Plagiarism - Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade. All work you submit must be your own. When you use ideas from other people, you must cite your sources. When you quote directly from any materials, please make sure to use quotation marks and note the author and page number parenthetically. For your substantial writing assignments (response papers, final) I will ask you to include a Works Cited page. This should be formatted in MLA style and include the publication information for each text.

Nuts and Bolts – For assignments, use 12-pt Times New Roman font and 1-inch margins. Papers should be double-spaced and cited in MLA formatting. The Purdue OWL is a good source of information about formatting.

Office Hours - I encourage you to come talk to me during office hours, whether it's about your papers, a particular story or novel, or questions you have about the course. If you cannot make my office hours, email me and we will work to set up an appointment.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

NB: You must complete all assignments in order to receive a passing grade. I reserve the right to make changes to our reading schedule as the course develops.

1) Attendance and Participation (15%) – In addition to attendance (outlined above), engaged participation is a requirement for this course. This means coming to class having already read, taken notes on, and reflected on the materials for the day. We will be learning from each other, so come prepared to contribute your thoughts to discussion. You are allowed **two** absences before your grade will be affected. If you exceed the allowed absences, your final grade will be lowered accordingly, typically by one letter grade per excess absence. Extenuating circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis.

2) Weekly Compass post (20%) - These posts should reflect your thoughts and questions about the texts and ideas for each week. Posts should be ½ to 1 page single-spaced and are due by **9 pm the day before class**. It's important to post on time: everyone is responsible for reviewing each session's compass discussion before class. Extra posts with links to interesting articles or popular culture materials are welcome! Your first post will be due in Week 2. You do not need to post for Week 5 (fall break).

3) Local toxicity (group) presentations (15%)

In order to think about our own embeddedness in the circulation of toxins and pollutants, as well as the protections, blockades, or exposures we experience in our particular places, research how some sort of common chemical – a pesticide, detergent, household cleaner, batteries, etc – is treated where you live or in a place you have lived previously. What are your options for disposing of the chemical? Are there clear directions on the product? If not, how would you find out how to dispose of them? Are there services for disposal or sites near you where you can dispose of them safely? Are

there barriers to accessing any of these? What are the physical consequences of inappropriate exposure to the chemical you picked?

If possible, find out what happens to the chemical after it leaves your immediate attention. You do not need to do exhaustive research; you may choose to visit a site, make online inquiries, call, or read information on a product website. Part of the purpose of this task is to find out what information is easily available and accessible to the public – and what is not. How does what you learned (or were not able to learn) affect your concepts of where you live and how toxicity impacts you.

Depending on the size of the class, you will either give a short (5-10 minute) presentation of your findings or discuss your findings in small groups before reporting back to the class.

4) Reflection Papers: Slow Violence, Compared (2-3 pages) (15%)

More information about this assignment will be given out during the semester.

5) Discussion Leading (15%)

Once during the semester beginning in week 2, you are responsible for two things.

First, think of these days as days when you are extra responsible for the day's readings. On these days you will be one of the individuals primarily responsible for maintaining class discussion and answering questions. While other students will also be participating, you will put forth an **extra** effort to raise interesting points about the text, respond to other students' observations and questions, and help facilitate discussion. As such, be sure to prepare for the class by taking notes and preparing page numbers to reference.

Second, on these days you will provide **two** articulate and thoughtful discussion questions to pose to the class, which will help shape class discussion. They can be about a particular reading for the day, a conceptual arc we are developing, a compare/contrast question about the genres we are reading about (including the one we are in), etc. You will own your questions and be in charge of leading the discussion until you feel there has been a satisfactory exploration of the issues, for 15-20 minutes. You must email the discussion questions to me by **10pm** the day before your discussion-leading day; I will put them in power point format so they will be easily viewable in class.

6) Final Paper (20%)

You will have two options for final papers. You may write a traditional argumentative essay or you may write a short story in the mode of one of the genres we have studied in the course, accompanied by a critical analysis of your story and the genre. Further details will be distributed later.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Paolo Bacigalupi - *The Water Knife* (978-0804171533)

Cormac McCarthy *The Road* (978-0307387899)

Indra Sinha - *Animal's People* (978-1416578796)

Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner - *Iep Jaltok* (978-0816534029)

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

Nature/Culture

Week 1

Oct. 22 – Intro

Introduction to class, syllabus

What is genre? – Lauren Berlant, selection from *The Female Complaint* and
Ralph Cohen, “History and Genre” (in class)

Raymond Williams Keywords – “Ecology,” “Nature” (in class)

Oct. 24 - Sublime and Wilderness

Raymond Williams – “Ideas of Nature”

Sublime

Edmund Burke – selections from “A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of
the Sublime and Beautiful,” Part I, sect. 7, Part 4, sect. 3

William Wordsworth – selections from *The Excursion*, Book 4 “Despondency Corrected”

Percy Shelley – “Mont Blanc: Lines Written in the Vale of Chamouni” (in class)

Charles Wright, “Clear Night” – in class reading and discussion (in class)

Wilderness

John Muir – *Our National Parks* chapter 1, “The Wild Parks and Forest Reservations of
the West”

Jean Craighead George, *My Side of the Mountain* (in class)

Week 2

Oct 29 – Pastoral

Henry David Thoreau – “Sounds” from *Walden*

Leo Marx – “Sleepy Hollow, 1844” from *The Machine in the Garden*

Thomas Hardy – chs. 2 and 30 from *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* (in class)

Oct. 31– Apocalypse

Mad Max: Fury Road, clips (in class)

Lawrence Buell – “Environmental Apocalypticism” from *The Environmental Imagination*

Cormac McCarthy - *The Road*, pgs. 3-115 (“Shh. Yes. Yes they will.”)

Week 3

Nov. 5 - Apocalypse

The Day After Tomorrow, clips (in class)

Fredric Jameson, “Progress versus Utopia, or, Can We Imagine the Future” from
Archaeologies of the Future

Cormac McCarthy - *The Road*, pgs. 115-287

Nov. 7 - Apocalypse

Paolo Bacigalupi - *The Water Knife*, pgs. 1-141

Ursula Heise – “The Invention of Eco Futures”

Week 4

Nov. 12 - From Nature/Culture to NatureCultures (transition week)

Paolo Bacigalupi - *The Water Knife* (142-371)

William Cronon – “The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature”

Rachel Carson – “Fable for Tomorrow” from *Silent Spring* (in class)

Nov. 14 - Environmental Justice

EJ Bullard – “Race and Environmental Justice in the United States”

“Principles of Environmental Justice”, Adopted at the People of Color Conference on Environmental Justice, Washington, D.C. 1991 (in class)

Week 5 Nov. 17-25 FALL BREAK NO CLASS

Week 6

Nov. 26 - Slow Violence

DUE Local toxicity (group) presentations

Rob Nixon – “Introduction” from *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*

Nov. 28 - Slow Violence: Toxicity

Indra Sinha - *Animal's People* (pg. 1-122)

Rob Nixon – chapter 1, “Slow Violence, Neoliberalism, and the Environmental Picaresque” from *Slow Violence*

Week 7

Dec. 3 – Slow Violence: Toxicity

Indra Sinha - *Animal's People* (pg. 123-244)

Greenpeace, “Bhopal Principles of Corporate Accountability” (only Intro and the 10 principles, not logging)

Indra Sinha, “Bhopal: A Novel Quest for Justice” (in class)

Dec. 5 – Slow Violence: Toxicity

DUE Reflection Papers: Slow Violence in the News

Indra Sinha - *Animal's People* (pg. 245-366)

Slow Violence: Floods

Jean Lafitte, LA – “Left to Louisiana’s Tides, a village fights for time”

New Orleans, LA – “Fortified but still in peril, New Orleans Braces for the Future” (in class)

Week 8

Dec. 10 - Sea Level Rise and Climate Change

Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, *Iep Jaltok*

Watermark, partial screening (in class)

Dec. 12 - *Watermark*, screening cont.

Course evaluations (in class)

Dec. 14 - Final papers due via email

GNSE/CHDV 11001 Love and Borders: Theoretical and Ethnographic Perspectives

Jennifer Cole and Rebecca Oh
Fall 2015

Monday & Wednesdays: 1:30-2:50 pm

Office Hours:

Jennifer Cole (Most Wednesdays 3:30--sign up sheet by the office)

3rd floor of Rosenwald, Suite 305

jcole@uchicago.edu

Rebecca Oh (Wednesdays 3-4:30) Sign up via Google Doc.

roh@uchicago.edu

The experientially compelling nature of romantic love and companionate marriage notwithstanding, marriage is neither an entirely individual matter, nor an entirely familial one. Rather, marriage and family has long been central to how states regulate their populations and constitute national belonging. At the same time, marriage especially, and intimate relations more generally, have long been central to the constitution of social class. Yet even as intimate relations contribute to the constitution of bounded groups of various kinds, they often provide the means to transcend them. Building on these ideas, this class examines how love, gender, and family have figured in the constitution of various kinds of borders and boundaries. Topics to be examined include the relationship between kinship and national belonging, the role of marriage in the constitution of class hierarchies, race and the regulation of sexuality in colonial contexts, moral panics and contemporary efforts to regulate bi-national marriage and same sex marriage.

Requirements:

Attendance and Participation (20%) – Two (2) questions posted to the Chalk blackboard site by midnight the night before each class. These questions should pull particular passages with page numbers and ask analytical questions about the argument; please be as specific as possible.

Attendance: If you have to miss a class please let the instructors know; you are allowed one missed class without penalty.

Computer Policy: Experience has shown that computers and the Internet prove to be an irresistible distraction beyond most human's control. Therefore, we do not allow computers or cell phones in class. Please print out your readings and bring them with you for discussion. If this is an undue financial burden let us know and we'll work something out.

Midterm (40%) 5-6 page essay, double spaced, DUE Monday Nov. 2nd in class

Final (40%) 5-6 page essay, double spaced, DUE Monday Dec. 7th, handed in to Spencer in Comparative Human Development, 3rd floor of Rosenwald

No late papers accepted.

Required books from Seminary Co-op:

John Stuart Mill, *The Subjection of Women* (Dover Thrift Edition, unabridged)
Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, volume 1 (Vintage books)
Nadine Gordimer, *The Pickup* (Picador 2013)
EM Forster, *Passage to India* (Mariner 1965)

Schedule of Readings and Topics**Week 1:**

Monday, September 28th Hegel on Love (handed out and read in class)

Wednesday, September 30th The Subjection of Women, pp. 1-48

Week 2:

Monday, October 5th The Subjection of Women continued, pp. 49-101

Wednesday, October 7th Engels "The Family" from *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (on Chalk)

Week 3:

Monday, October 12th Nira Yuval-Davis, "Theorizing Gender and Nation";
Partha Chatterjee, "The Nationalist Resolution of the Women's
Question" (Chalk)

Wednesday, October 14th Gayle Rubin, "The Traffic in Women;"
Bourdieu, selections from *Bachelors Ball* (Chalk)

Week 4:

Monday, October 19th Foucault, *History of Sexuality* (pg.1-73)

Wednesday, October 21st Foucault, *History of Sexuality* (pg. 77-102, 135-159)

Week 5

Monday, October 26th Edward Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 1-28 (Chalk)
Ann Laura Stoler - "Making Empire Respectable" in *American
Ethnologist* 16.4 (1989) (pg. 634-652)

Wednesday, October 28th Povinelli, "Notes on Gridlock," from *Public Culture* (on Chalk)

Week 6

Monday, November 2nd Midterm due IN CLASS

See: Nord. Sud.com

Wednesday, November 4th EM Forster, *Passage to India* (ch. I-V, pg. 3-54), Leela Gandhi – *Affective Communities* (pg. 13-20, 26-33)

Week 7

Monday, November 9th EM Forster, *Passage to India* cont. (ch. VI-XI, pg. 54-132)

Wednesday, November 11th EM Forster, *Passage to India* cont. (ch. XII-XXIV, pg. 135-257)

Week 8

Monday, November 16th EM Forster, *Passage to India* cont. (ch. XXV-XXXVII, pg. 257-362)

Wednesday, November 18th Maite Maskens, “Screening for Integration and Romance in Brussels Immigration,” and Jennifer Cole, “Working Mis/Understanding” from *Cultural Anthropology*

Week 9

Monday, November 23rd Nadine Gordimer - *The Pickup* (pg. 3-89)
Zygmunt Bauman – “Tourists and Vagabonds” in *Globalization: The Human Consequences* (pg. 77-102)

Wednesday, November 25th no class

Week 10

Monday, November 30th Nadine Gordimer - *The Pickup* cont. (pg. 90-179)

Wednesday, December 2nd Gordimer - *The Pickup* cont. (180-268)

Final paper due Monday, Dec 7th, handed in to Spencer in Comparative Human Development, Rosenwald 3rd floor