

Principles of Literary Study

Mondays and Thursdays, 12:10–1:30 p.m., in Frelinghuysen A4

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introduction to the discipline of English literary studies, focusing on ways to answer the fundamental questions academic readers ask about poems, short stories, and novels: How is it put together? What meanings does it convey? What effects does it achieve? How does it relate to the cultures and societies in which it is read? Learning to answer these questions about a variety of poems, short stories, and novels, students sharpen their skills as readers, writers, and thinkers.

The breadth of literature in English is represented by highly selective introductions to two broad genres, poetry and prose fiction, spanning works from the sixteenth century to the twenty-first, from North America, Europe, Africa, and Asia. Students develop a strong foundation in formal analysis, learning to identify and analyze the components of verse and narrative—rhyme, meter, stanza; plot, character, point of view—as well as significant aspects of literary language in general. But formal analysis matters only in connection with arguments about what texts mean; in discussion and in written assignments, students practice presenting literary interpretations systematically and convincingly.

LEARNING GOALS

1. Master key concepts necessary to the analysis of literature in terms of form, genre, and style.
2. Develop proficiency in using detailed analysis of texts to support the interpretation of literature, especially short poems, short stories, and novels.
3. Become adept at effective, thoughtful participation in academic discussion.
4. Master the conventions of written scholarly argument in literary studies.
5. Make convincing written interpretive arguments about literary texts.

This course satisfies the following Core Curriculum goals:

1. Arts and Humanities (AHP): Analyze arts and/or literatures in themselves and in relation to specific histories, values, languages, cultures, and technologies.

2. Writing and Communication (WCd): Communicate effectively in modes appropriate to a discipline or area of inquiry; evaluate and critically assess sources and use the conventions of attribution and citation correctly; and analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights.

REQUIREMENTS

PARTICIPATION (10%)

Attendance and active, thoughtful participation in discussion are required. Participation means coming to class prepared, with the reading in hand, and joining in constructively. You aren't supposed to know all the answers in advance, but you are required to join in a communal effort to figure things out. Lateness, lack of preparation, and disruptive behavior will affect the participation mark. To receive full credit for participation, you should speak thoughtfully in every class.

From time to time, participation will be assessed with **in-class writing** (collected and graded pass-fail).

If you miss three classes without excuse, the maximum participation mark you can receive is 3.0; if you miss four, 2.0. Missing more than four meetings without an excuse will normally result in a failing grade for the course.

If you fall ill or miss class for a family emergency, please contact us as soon as possible; you can make up for an excused absence.

SHORT EXERCISES (15%)

Short homeworks focus on practicing key skills from class.

PAPER 1 (25%)

1800–2000 words on a single poem.

PAPER 2 (25%)

2000–2500 words on a single novel.

FINAL EXAM (25%)

Short answers and a single essay question.

GRADING STANDARDS

Grades will be given on the four-point scale as specified [in the Undergraduate Catalog](#). In converting the final numerical score to a letter, the equivalents in the Catalog are taken as the maxima of intervals open on the left and closed on the right. Thus A corresponds to scores strictly greater than 3.5 and less than or equal to 4.0, B+ to scores greater than

3.0 and less than or equal to 3.5, B to scores greater than 2.5 and less than or equal to 3.0, and so on. There are no “minus” grades. The general standards for grades are as follows:

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

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

C range (1.0, 2.5]: Satisfactory work, meeting requirements but indicating significant problems mastering the course materials and skills.

D (0.5, 1.0]: Poor or minimally passing work, meeting the basic course requirements, but frequently unsatisfactory in several major areas.

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

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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

SCHEDULE

Readings are to be completed by the day they are listed under.

All poetry readings, except Ali's *Call Me Ishmael Tonight*, will be distributed via Canvas. As much as possible, read on the printed page, not the screen. **You are required to print out the poems listed in boldface.** We will spend substantial time on each of these in class, though we will of course also discuss the other assigned poems.

Each assigned poem should be read multiple times, on multiple days, in multiple ways: silently, aloud; with pencil in hand, with empty hands; deliberately, speedily; standing up, sitting down; dramatically, restrainedly.

You should have all the fiction readings in print form, in the versions assigned for the course. The remaining readings—scholarly essays and other supplemental material—will be distributed electronically and need not be printed for class. We are happy to discuss any issues relating to obtaining and using the course texts one-on-one.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 19. INTRODUCTION: ARS POETICA.

- Emily Dickinson, "Tell all the truth but tell it slant" (1872).
- Anne Bradstreet, "The Author to Her Book" (1678).
- Marianne Moore, "Poetry" (1919 and 1981).
- *OED*, 3rd ed., s.v. "**literature.**"

MONDAY, JANUARY 23. WORDS AND MEANINGS.

- Sir Philip Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella* 1, 55 (ca. 1581–83).
- **John Donne**, "A Valediction: forbidding Mourning" (ca. 1611?).
- William Wordsworth, "A slumber did my spirit seal" (1798).
- **Ezra Pound**, "In a station of the metro" (1913).
- H.D., "Sea Rose" (1916).
- Langston Hughes, "Harlem" (1951).
- Philip Larkin, "This Be The Verse" (1974).
- **Rae Armantrout**, "Will" (2013).

(WEDNESDAY, JAN. 25.)

- Exercise due: The meaning of a word.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 26. LINES AND SENTENCES.

- **William Shakespeare**, Sonnets 18, 30, 116, 129 (1609).
- **George Herbert**, "Jordan" (1), "Prayer" (1) (1633).
- John Milton, "When I consider how my light is spent" (1652?).
- Walt Whitman, "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer" (1865).
- **Wallace Stevens**, "The Snow Man" (1923), "Man Carrying Thing" (1947).

- Gwendolyn Brooks, "We Real Cool" (1959).
- Terrance Hayes, "[The Golden Shovel](#)" (2010).

MONDAY, JANUARY 30. METER (1): FOUR BEATS.

- Stauder, *INTRA*, §2 (§3 is optional).
- "Humpty Dumpty," "Baa baa, black sheep," "Skip-a to my Lou" (dates unknown).
- John Newton, "Amazing Grace" (1779).
- "Sir Patrick Spens" (before 1765).
- William Blake, "The Lamb" (1789), "The Tyger" (1794).
- William Wordsworth, "We are Seven" (1798).
- Felicia Hemans, "Casabianca" (1826).
- Emily Dickinson, "I felt a Funeral, in my Brain" (1862), "I heard a Fly buzz - when I died" (1863).
- Lewis Carroll, "Jabberwocky" (1871).
- Muriel Rukeyser, "Ballad of Orange and Grape" (1973).
- Recommended: Robson, "[Standing on the Burning Deck](#)."

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2. METER (2): PENTAMETER.

- Stauder, *INTRA*, §4.1, 4.3.1-4.3.5 (all subsections of 4.3, on the Attridge system). This technical material will be fully reviewed in class.
- Shakespeare, Sonnets 49, 130 (1609).
- Anna Letitia Barbauld, "[Washing-Day](#)" (1797).
- Wordsworth, "Tintern Abbey" (1798).
- Shelley, "[England in 1819](#)" (1819).
- Wallace Stevens, "The Idea of Order at Key West" (1935).

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6. RHYME: COUPLETS.

- Andrew Marvell, "To His Coy Mistress" (1681).
- Jonathan Swift, "The City Shower" (1710).
- W.B. Yeats, "Adam's Curse" (1903).
- Wilfred Owen, "Strange Meeting" (1918).
- Agha Shahid Ali, "Tonight" (1996).

(WEDNESDAY, FEB. 8.)

- Exercise due: Meter practice.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9. FIXED FORM: SONNETS.

- Thomas Wyatt, "Whoso list to hunt" (1525?).
- Shakespeare, Sonnets 1, 20, 35, 73, 125, 138, and those previously assigned: 18, 30, 49, 116, 129, 130.

- Donne, Holy Sonnets 4, 10 (1609-?).
- Wordsworth, "Composed upon Westminster Bridge" (1802).
- Shelley, "England in 1819" (previously assigned).
- George Meredith, *Modern Love* 1, 2 (1862).
- W.B. Yeats, "Leda and the Swan" (1923).
- Wallace Stevens, "Autumn Refrain" (1932).
- Gwendolyn Brooks, "the rites for Cousin Vit" (1949).
- Patrick Kavanagh, "Epic" (1951).
- Seamus Heaney, "Clearances" 3, 7, 8 (1987).
- Vendler, *The Art of Shakespeare's Sonnets*, 1-10, 487-93.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13. SOME STANZA SHAPES.

- John Donne, "The Canonization" (after 1603).
- George Herbert, "Easter Wings" (1633).
- John Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (1819).
- Thomas Hardy, "The Convergence of the Twain" (1914), "The Voice" (1914).
- Marianne Moore, "The Fish" (1924).
- W.H. Auden, "In Memory of W.B. Yeats" (1939).
- Wallace Stevens, "Final Soliloquy of the Interior Paramour" (1954).
- Elizabeth Bishop, "Sestina" (1965).

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16. SPEAKERS AND ADDRESSEES.

- Donne, "The Flea," "The Sun Rising" (after 1603), "A Valediction: forbidding Mourning" (previously assigned).
- Phyllis Wheatley, "On Being Brought from Africa to America" (1773).
- John Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (previously assigned).
- Robert Browning, "My Last Duchess" (1842).
- Emily Dickinson, "I'm Nobody! Who are you?" (1861), "Publication - is the Auction" (1863).
- Herman Melville, "Shiloh" (1862).
- T.S. Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (1915).
- Langston Hughes, "Good Morning Revolution" (1932).
- Warner, "What Like a Bullet Can Undeceive?"

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20. OPEN FORM: AN EXAMPLE.

- Eliot, *The Waste Land*, in *The Annotated Waste Land with Eliot's Contemporary Prose*.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23. MORE OPEN FORMS.

- John Milton, "Lycidas" (1638).
- Marianne Moore, "An Octopus" (1924).

- A.R. Ammons, "Corsons Inlet" (1965).
- Adrienne Rich, "Diving into the Wreck" (1972).
- A.K. Ramanujan, "Elements of Composition" (1986).

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27. MORE COUPLETS.

- Ali, *Call Me Ishmael Tonight: A Book of Ghazals*. Read the whole volume, then choose a single poem to prepare for discussion.

(WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1.)

- Exercise due: The principled essay introduction.

THURSDAY, MARCH 2. MORE POETS.

- Ali, cont.
- TBD poets hailed by Shahid.

MONDAY, MARCH 6. PLOT.

- From Doyle, *Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*:
 - "A Scandal in Bohemia" (1891).
 - "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" (1892).

THURSDAY, MARCH 9. GENRE.

- Hammett, "Crooked Souls" (1923).
- Frow, *Genre*, 6–19, 134–41.

(FRIDAY, MARCH 10.)

- Paper 1 due.

(SATURDAY, MARCH 11. SPRING RECESS.)

MONDAY, MARCH 20. FRAMES.

- Shelley, *Frankenstein* (1818), vol. 1.

THURSDAY, MARCH 23. INTERTEXTUALITY.

- Shelley, *Frankenstein*, vols. 1–2.
- Percy Bysshe Shelley, "Mont Blanc" (1817).

MONDAY, MARCH 27. NARRATIVE CLOSURE.

- Shelley, *Frankenstein*, complete.

(WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29.)

- Exercise due. The effect of embedding.

THURSDAY, MARCH 30. TEXTUALITY.

- Shelley, *Frankenstein*, continued. Read the preface (5–6).
 - Read the appendix B introduction, 178–79; skim the pages of variants.
 - Recommended: the Oxford editor's note on the texts (li–lv).
- Mary W. Shelley, *Frankenstein*, rev. ed. (London: Colburn and Bentley, 1831; [HathiTrust](#)): introduction and chaps. 1–3 (Canvas).
- *Shelley-Godwin Archive*, M.S. Abinger c. 57, 94r (the last page of the first extant draft).
 - Optional: browse shelleygodwinarchive.org/contents/frankenstein.
- Mellor, “Choosing a Text of *Frankenstein* to Teach.”
- Poovey, “My Hideous Progeny.”

MONDAY, APRIL 3. POINT OF VIEW.

- James, “The Middle Years” (1893).

THURSDAY, APRIL 6. NARRATION.

- Caspary, *Laura* (1942), 5–105.

MONDAY, APRIL 10. SUSPENSE.

- Caspary, *Laura*, 5–139.

(WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12.)

- Exercise due: narration and focalization.

THURSDAY, APRIL 13. CLOSURE (AGAIN).

- Caspary, *Laura*, complete.

MONDAY, APRIL 17. REPORTED DISCOURSE.

- Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (1958), chaps. 1–8.
- Ndibe, “Nigeria.”

(WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19.)

- Exercise due: Paper pre-writing, with a response to a scholar.

THURSDAY, APRIL 20. IRONY.

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

MONDAY, APRIL 24. ARGUMENTS.

- Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, complete.
- Quayson, “Realism, Criticism, and the Disguises of Both.”

THURSDAY, APRIL 27. THE WORLD.

- Coetzee, “The Novel in Africa” (2003).
- Coetzee, “The Dog” (2017).

(FRIDAY, APRIL 28.)

- Paper 2 due.

MONDAY, MAY 1. GENRE (AGAIN).

- Machado, “Especially Heinous” (2013).

(DATE TBD.)

- Final exam.

REQUIRED BOOKS

ISBNs are included to help students ordering books online. The course texts are available via Barnes & Noble.

Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart*. New York: Penguin, 1959. ISBN: 9780385474542.

Ali, Agha Shahid. *Call Me Ishmael Tonight: A Book of Ghazals*. New York: Norton, 2003. ISBN: 9780393326123.

Casparly, Vera. *Laura*. New York: Feminist Press, 2005. ISBN: 9781558615052.

Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein, or, The Modern Prometheus: The 1818 Text*. Edited by Nick Groom. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020. ISBN: 9780198840824. This novel exists in multiple versions from Shelley’s lifetime. Please acquire this edition of the 1818 version.

OTHER READINGS

- Coetzee, J. M. "The Dog." *New Yorker*, December 4, 2017, 60–61. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/12/04/the-dog>.
- . "The Novel in Africa." Chap. 2 in *Elizabeth Costello*. New York: Viking, 2003.
- Doyle, Arthur Conan. "A Scandal in Bohemia." Chap. 1 in *Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*.
- . *Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. New York: Harper, 1892. HathiTrust, 2020. <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/hvd.32044074319898>.
- . "The Adventure of the Speckled Band." Chap. 8 in *Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*.
- Eliot, T. S. *The Annotated Waste Land with Eliot's Contemporary Prose*. Edited by Lawrence Rainey. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/lib/rutgers-ebooks/detail.action?docID=3419857>.
- Frow, John. *Genre*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2015.
- Hammett, Dashiell. "Crooked Souls." In *Crime Stories & Other Writings*, 35–51. New York: Library of America, 2001. http://www.loa.org/images/pdf/Hammett_Crooked_Souls.pdf.
- James, Henry. "The Middle Years." In *Complete Stories 1892–1898*, edited by John Hollander and David Bromwich, 335–55. New York: Library of America, 1996. https://www.loa.org/images/pdf/James_Middle_Years.pdf.
- Machado, Carmen Maria. "Especially Heinous: 272 Views of Law & Order SVU." *American Reader* 1 (5/6 2013). <https://theamericanreader.com/especially-heinous-272-views-of-law-order-svu>.
- Mellor, Anne K. "Choosing a Text of *Frankenstein* to Teach." In *Approaches to Teaching Shelley's Frankenstein*, edited by Stephen C. Behrendt, 31–37. New York: Modern Language Association, 1990.
- Ndibe, Okey. "Nigeria." In *Africana: The Encyclopedia of the African and African American Experience*, 2nd ed., edited by Kwame Anthony Appiah and Henry Louis Gates, 4:234–40. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Poovey, Mary. "My Hideous Progeny: Mary Shelley and the Feminization of Romanticism." *PMLA* 95, no. 3 (May 1980): 332–47. <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/stable/461877>.
- Quayson, Ato. "Realism, Criticism, and the Disguises of Both: A Reading of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* with an Evaluation of the Criticism Relating to It." *Research in African Literatures* 25, no. 4 (Winter 1994): 117–36. <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/stable/3819871>.
- Robson, Catherine. "Standing on the Burning Deck: Poetry, Performance, History." *PMLA* 120, no. 1 (January 2005): 148–62. <https://doi-org.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/10.1632/003081205X36912>.
- Stauder, Ellen. *INTRA: Interactive Tutorial on Rhythm Analysis*. Reed College, 2000. <https://www.reed.edu/english/intra/>.
- Vendler, Helen. *The Art of Shakespeare's Sonnets*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997.
- Warner, Michael. "What Like a Bullet Can Undeceive?" *Public Culture* 15, no. 1 (January 2003): 41–54. <https://doi-org.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/10.1215/08992363-15-1-41>.

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