

Mid-19th Century to the Present

Spring 2021

HUMN 2043/4043, X20

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This interdisciplinary course will introduce students to the cultures of the United States, Europe, China, Japan, Africa, and Latin America from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. The emphasis will be on Western cultures, including the major movements in the arts in literature that have shaped our culture, such as Impressionism, Modernism, and Postmodernism. We will look at all aspects of culture, including history, art, literature, philosophy, and music. Students will thus acquire an understanding of world cultures and how they have developed during this time period; encounter different ways of viewing the world; learn to analyze, interpret, and think critically about diverse works of art, literature, and music; experiment with interdisciplinary approaches to the material; and learn to identify, describe, and discuss major themes, works, movements, and historical events. They will also develop critical thinking and writing skills in short essays, evaluating individual works and synthesizing the knowledge they have gained. Participation in class discussion and activities will help them to express themselves and support their ideas at an advanced level. In exploring these different cultures, students will hopefully wish to continue to learn about them after the end of the semester, and even visit some of the countries we will discuss.

Course Schedule

Chapter 18: Impressionism and Postimpressionism

Jan. 12 Introduction; Impressionist Art

15 Art; Symbolist Poetry; Music; Opera

Reading: 238-46; 258-59

Writing: Response to Charles Baudelaire or Stéphane Mallarmé

19 Martin Luther King's Day Celebration: No Assignments

22 Naturalist Literature; Post-Impressionist Art

Reading: 246-51; 259-60

Writing: Response to Kate Chopin

26 Naturalist Literature; Art

Reading: 260-64

Writing: Response to Henrik Ibsen

Upper-Level Presentation Topic Proposal Due

29 Art; Sculpture; Architecture; Philosophy

Reading: 252-56; 264-68

Writing: Response to Friedrich Nietzsche

Feb. 2 Art; Philosophy

Reading: 268-71

Writing: Response to Sigmund Freud

Chapter 19: Later Chinese Civilization

5 History; Painting; Calligraphy

Reading: 274-81; 290

Writing: Response to Yuan Hong-Dao or Yuan Zhong-Dao

9 Ceramics; Architecture; Literature

Reading: 281-85; 290-92

Writing: Response to Cao Xueqin or Zhang Ting-Yu

12 Music; Modern Chinese Literature

Reading: 285-88; 292-93

Writing: Response to Lu Xun, Bei Dao, or Li-Young Lee

Chapter 20: Later Japanese Civilization

16 History; Painting; Woodblock Prints; Gardens; Literature

Reading: 296-300; 302-7; 312-15

Writing: Response to Saikaku Ihara, Hakuin Ekaku, or Yosano Akiko

Essay on Chapters 18 and 19 Due

19 Architecture; Modern Japanese Literature and Film

Reading: 301-2; 315-16

Writing: Response to Ryunosuke Akutagawa

23 Theater; Music; Modern Japanese Literature

Reading: 307-10; 316-17

Writing: Response to Yukio Mishima

Chapter 21: Later Africa and Latin America

26 African History; Sculpture; Music; Literature

Reading: 320-28; 336-37; 344-45

Writing: Response to Chinua Achebe or Wole Soyinka

Mar. 2 South African Literature

Reading: 345-47

Writing: Response to J. M. Coetzee

5 Latin American History; Painting; Music; Literature

Reading: 328-34; 337-40; 342-44

Writing: Response to Jorge Luis Borges or Gabriel García Márquez

9 Latin American Literature

Reading: 340-44

Writing: Response to Pablo Neruda, Julio Cortázar, or Rosario Castellanos

Chapter 22: Early Twentieth Century

12 Art Before World War I; Music; Literature

Reading: 350-56; 364-69; 384

Writing: Response to Franz Kafka

16 Art; Music; History; Literature

Reading: 356-61; 385-87

Writing: Response to T. S. Eliot

Essay on Chapters 20 and 21 Due

19 Art; Sculpture; Literature

Reading: 361-62; 392-93

Writing: Response to William Butler Yeats or Rainer Maria Rilke

23 Art; Architecture; Literature

Reading: 362-64; 387-88; 390-92

Writing: Response to Virginia Woolf or James Joyce

26 American Art and Literature

Reading: 370-82; 387-91

Writing: Response to Langston Hughes or Ernest Hemingway

30 Russian Art and Literature

Reading: 357-58; 384-85

Writing: Response to Anna Akhmatova or Osip Mandelstam

Apr. 2 Easter Break: No Assignments

6 Russian Film

Reading: 369-70

Chapter 23: Mid-Twentieth Century and Later

9 History; Philosophy; Art

Reading: 396-404; 418-20

Writing: Response to Sartre

13 Art; Architecture; Drama; Sculpture

Reading: 404-7; 421-24
Writing: Response to Eugene Ionesco
Upper-Level Paper Proposal Due

16 Pop Culture and Artists of the Everyday
Reading: 407-11
Essay on Chapter 22 Due

20 Minimal and Conceptual Art; Architecture; Literature; Music
Reading: 411-16; 420-21; 424-25
Writing: Response to Allen Ginsburg or Wislawa Szymborska

23 Twenty-First Century; Modernism vs. Postmodernism
Reading: 428-29; 437-38
Writing: Response to Eric Chevillard (D2L)

27 Final Essay Due by 11:30 a.m.

30 Upper-Level Papers Due by 11:30 a.m.

Course Requirements:

1. Written Responses (2043, 25% total; 4043, 20% total). You will write short critical responses of about one double-spaced page (c. 250 words) to the primary readings in the textbook as indicated in the syllabus. Note: these are the readings at the back of each chapter in the textbook, as indicated by the last set of page numbers. Your response should 1) briefly demonstrate your understanding of the text; 2) offer an interpretation or commentary; 3) briefly situate it within the context we are studying and/or compare and contrast it with other primary texts. One way to situate the text within the context is to do the background reading on it in the textbook and at least say who the author is, what they were known for, or something similar. Another way to put the text in context is to compare it with texts or artworks we have already discussed, or even with works you have encountered in other classes or on your own. The quality of your writing (grammar, spelling, and organization) will also be counted for these assignments, which should be considered “mini-essays.” I have posted the rubric I use to grade these assignments in “Start Here!”

Please submit your daily assignment by **11:30 a.m.** on the day it is due. You may click on the assignment on the course homepage calendar, access it through Content, or click on Assessments > Assignments. The Dropbox has already been prepared for all of your assignments, so you may work ahead if you choose to.

2. Discussion (2043, 30% total; 4043, 25% total). When discussing the primary readings for the day, you should first post what you think is most interesting from your response. You may copy and paste it from the response if you wish. Your second post may be a thoughtful response to a classmate or your thoughts on one or more of the videos or other

materials due that day (for example, you may post about something you found particularly significant, surprising, or interesting). Just to give you a general idea, a typical discussion board response should be about 4-8 sentences long. So in total, for each discussion, you should post at least two responses, but you should feel free to post more. Your participation in the discussions will be graded based on their quality and quantity, as well as how many posts you read. You should return to the discussion later to read any posts you may have missed. You should post on the discussion board by 10 p.m. on every Tuesday and Friday, starting **Friday, Jan. 15**.

3. Quizzes (2043, 10%; 4043, 5%). For each quiz you will have three attempts, and the highest grade will be recorded in the Gradebook.

4. Short Essays (15%). There will be three short essays on chapters we have covered.

5. Final Essay (2043, 20%; 4043, 15%). The final exam will consist of a critical thinking essay that will allow you to demonstrate your understanding of the course material as a whole. It will be due on **Apr. 27**.

6. Research-Based Presentation (4043, 10%). Upper-level students must choose a topic for a presentation (if you were giving the presentation in class, it would be about 10 minutes long). The topic should complement the textbook, not repeat what it says. You will be expected to consult at least three scholarly sources, and give me an outline of the presentation and a bibliography in MLA or APA style on the day of your presentation. You may choose to do a video presentation or a PowerPoint presentation. You may post your presentation yourself, or you may send it to me and I will post it for you. If you choose to do a PowerPoint presentation, you should write out a transcript, or at least an outline, of what you would say if you were presenting it in class. You should look through the textbook and submit an informal topic proposal to me by email by **Jan. 26**, and we will set a date for your presentation.

7. Research Paper (4043, 10%). Upper-level students will write a 4-5 page research paper on a topic of their choice, but not on the same topic as their presentation. **The paper must be in MLA or APA format, including in-text citations.** Please submit a brief paper proposal by **Apr. 13**. The paper is due on **Apr. 27**. If it is late, your grade will be reduced by one-third of a letter grade (e.g., A > A-) per day, including weekends.

4000-level students will not see their grades for the presentation and the paper in D2L. I can only set up one Gradebook, and it is set up for the 2000-level. I will calculate your grades separately at the end of the semester.

Course Policies:

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty: Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, including on the daily assignments. If you deliberately plagiarize on any assignments or papers (that is, copying or cutting and pasting), or engage in any other form of academic dishonesty as defined by the course plagiarism policy posted

on D2L and the MSU Student Handbook, you will get an F in the course and disciplinary proceedings will be initiated.

Safe Zone Statement: This class is a “safe zone” in which all students will be treated and will treat one another equally, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or ability. Diversity of thought is encouraged.

Required Text (available at the College Bookstore or Amazon, and on reserve at the library):

Benton, Janetta and Robert DiYanni. *Arts and Culture: An Introduction to the Humanities*. Vol. 2. 4th ed. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2012. Note: Do not purchase the edition combining volumes 1 and 2.

Additional Assistance:

Office Hours: I will be monitoring my email closely every day from 2-3 and will respond to you immediately. We can chat by email, or, if you wish, we can set up a Zoom meeting or phone call. In general, I will check email regularly and respond to you as soon as possible. You may always request a Zoom meeting or phone call. Communication is extremely important, especially in an online class. Please contact me if you have any questions whatsoever, or if you think a quiz answer may be ambiguous or incorrect, or if you don't understand why you didn't get an answer right, or if you don't understand my feedback or would like to reply to it, etc. This will allow me not only to help you, but to fix any problems and thus help other students as well. Do not be afraid to contact me. I know I am fallible and will take all of your questions and comments seriously.

D2L Problems: If you are having trouble submitting an assignment, or if you are having any other technical issues, please email me and let me know. It may be a glitch in D2L that I can easily fix, and I can inform other students of the problem as well as assisting you. You may also go to the D2L homepage and click on “Report a Problem.” Fill out the form and submit it. An alternative is to send an email to D2Lhelp@msutexas.edu describing your problem in detail and providing the full course number and title.

Tutoring and Academic Support Programs: TASP provides free drop-in tutoring for MSU students. Located on the first floor of Moffett Library, TASP's Learning Center provides tutoring support in a number of core courses and subject areas. Writing tutors are available Monday through Thursday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Sunday 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. You don't need an appointment to use these services.

Additional Tutoring: TASP has partnered with Thinkingstorm, an online tutoring company that provides you with high-quality, 24/7 tutoring support. Located at the top of your D2L course page, select More > Tutoring to book an appointment with a tutor.

