

World Literature From the Enlightenment to the Present

ENGL 2423/202, Spring 2019
MWF 11-11:50, Ferguson 202

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Office Hours: MW 10-11 and 12-1;
F 10-11 and 12-2; TR 11-12:30 and by appointment

This course is designed to introduce students to a selection of texts from the Enlightenment to the present, which have been chosen for their outstanding cultural and historical significance, as well as for their thematic emphasis on justice. As we study these texts, we will develop skills and habits of close observation, analysis and argument, as well as respect for different ideas and cultures. We will also examine various views on issues of justice, good and evil, sin, crime, and punishment. In addition, we will discuss the importance of these texts in their cultural context; their significance in shaping cultural norms; their influence on literature, art, and the performing arts; and their meaning for us today. We will focus primarily on three skills: a firm knowledge of the content of the works; the ability to do close reading and analysis; and the ability to integrate various works through the discussion of common themes.

TRIGGER WARNING: If you feel you may have difficulty discussing any particular subject matter due to emotional trauma, please see me at the beginning of the semester, or as soon as possible, to discuss your concerns and arrange alternative assignments if necessary. Some of the books contain controversial topics and adult situations, such as violence and rape.

- Jan.** 14 Introduction
16 Voltaire, *Candide* (1759), ch. 1-3
18 *Candide*, ch. 4-13
21 **No Class**
23 *Candide*, ch. 14-20
25 *Candide*, ch. 21-30
28 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust* (1808), Parts 1-3 (through *Prologue in Heaven*)
30 *Faust*, Parts 4-6 (through *Faust's Study (I)*)
- Feb.** 1 *Faust*, Parts 7-11 (through *Evening*)
4 *Faust*, Parts 12-23 (through *A Cathedral*)
6 *Faust*, Parts 24 and 26-28 (through the end, skip *Walpurgis Night's Dream*)
8 Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment* (1866), Part I, ch. 1-2
11 *Crime and Punishment*, Part I, ch. 3-5
13 *Crime and Punishment*, Part I, ch. 6-7
15 *Crime and Punishment*, Part II, ch. 1-4
18 *Crime and Punishment*, Part II, ch. 5-7
20 *Crime and Punishment*, Part III, ch. 1-4
22 *Crime and Punishment*, Part III, ch. 5-6

- 25 *Crime and Punishment*, Part IV, ch. 1-3
 27 *Crime and Punishment*, Part IV, ch. 4-6
- Mar.** 1 *Crime and Punishment*, Part V, ch. 1-3
 4 *Crime and Punishment*, Part V, ch. 4-5
 6 *Crime and Punishment*, Part VI, ch. 1-4
 8 *Crime and Punishment*, Part VI, ch. 5-8
 11 *Crime and Punishment*, Epilogue
 13 Franz Kafka, *The Trial* (1925), 1-26
 15 *The Trial*, 27-63
Close Reading Assignment Due
 18-22 **No Class**
 25 *The Trial*, 64-118
Optional Midterm Paper Topic Proposal Due (through Kafka)
Last Day for "W"
 27 *The Trial*, 119-65
 29 Albert Camus, *The Stranger* (1942), Part I
Take-Home Midterm Due (through Kafka)
- Apr.** 1 *The Stranger*, Part II
 3 Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), I-III
 5 **No Class**
 8 *The Handmaid's Tale*, IV-VI
 10 *The Handmaid's Tale*, VII-IX
 12 **No Class**
 15 *The Handmaid's Tale*, X-XII
 17 *The Handmaid's Tale*, XIII-XV and *Historical Notes*
 19 **No Class**
 22 J. M. Coetzee, *Disgrace* (1999), ch. 1-6
 24 *Disgrace*, ch. 7-13
 26 *Disgrace*, ch. 14-18
 29 *Disgrace*, ch. 19-24
- May** 1 Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis 2* (2002), 92-130
Optional Final Paper Topic Proposal Due (Camus through Satrapi)
 3 *Persepolis 2*, 131-87
 6 **Final Exam, 10:30-12:30 a.m.**

Course Requirements:

1. Participation (10 %): Participation in class discussions will help you to understand and remember the material. It will also demonstrate that you have done the reading and improve your critical thinking and verbal communication skills. I encourage you to speak with all of your classmates and respond to one another's ideas during discussion, rather than addressing your thoughts only to me. Please note that participation is different from attendance. Participation means talking in class.

2. Daily Assignments (30 %): For each class meeting, I will post one question on the readings on D2L under **Dropbox**. In your response, you should answer my question and pose one discussion question of your own. Your question should not be a yes/no or a factual question, but rather one that you believe will stimulate class discussion. Each assignment must be submitted online by 10 a.m. on the day of the class. It should be copied and pasted (or written) in the Comments box, and the system will require you also to upload a document. I will read your responses and may use your discussion questions in class anonymously. You must look at your grades and read his responses to your assignments—they are for you, and he will give you feedback on how to improve your

responses in the future. You will receive grades for your responses based on a rubric distributed on the first day of class and posted on D2L. If you have an excused absence, you may submit the assignment late. If this is the case, please write on your assignment why you were absent, as we sometimes forget. If you are absent and your absence is not excused, you are nevertheless responsible for submitting the day's assignment on time. **No other late study question responses will be accepted.**

3. Presentations (5% each): At the beginning of the semester you will sign up for two presentations. You will be expected first to summarize the reading for the day, then to discuss something that interests you and pose at least one question to initiate class discussion. You should briefly explain the topic, say why you think it is significant, offer a few of your own thoughts on it, and then ask the class what they think. Your presentation should be about five minutes long, and will be graded based on a rubric distributed on the first day of class and posted on D2L.

4. Close Reading (3-4 pages, not counting the cited text; 15%): We will be doing a lot of close reading in class, and this paper will help you to develop this skill on your own. The paper is due on **March 14**. Late papers will be marked down one third of a letter grade per day (i.e., A > A-), including weekends and holidays, unless you have a good reason for lateness and have preferably spoken to me about it beforehand.

5. Take-Home Midterm Exam (3-4 pages, 15%): The take-home midterm exam will be a comparative thematic essay. It is due on **March 25**. If you have an A average on daily assignments and you prefer to write a paper on your own topic, please submit a brief proposal by **March 11**.

6. Final Exam (20%): The final will include a close reading and an essay topic. Students with an average of B or above on daily assignments may choose to write a 4-5 page paper instead of taking the exam. If you choose this option, you must submit a topic proposal by **May 1**.

7. Attendance. You must attend class to help you master and contextualize the material. You are permitted two unexcused absences. Absences will be excused on the basis of a note from a doctor, dean, military official, or coach. If you believe that your absence should be excused but you do not have a note, you must see me in person and explain your absence. Your explanation must be more detailed than "I didn't feel well" or "I was sick." I will then tell you whether your absence is excused. Having to work does not constitute an excused absence. *Communication is essential:* if you do not explain your absence to me immediately before or after, it will not be excused. Your final grade will be lowered by one point for each unexcused absence in excess of the two permitted unexcused absences. In addition, three "lates" will count as an unexcused absence. If you miss class, you are nonetheless responsible for everything covered that day.

Please check your grades online regularly and let me know if you have any questions.

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, or engage in any other form of academic dishonesty as defined by the MSU Student Handbook and the course Academic

Dishonesty Policy (distributed in class and available on D2L), *you will get an F in the course and disciplinary proceedings will be initiated. There will be no second chances!* Other forms of academic dishonesty include, for instance, forging doctor's notes, working with others on assignments, and lying to the professor.

Cellphones: No cellphones should be visible in class at any time! If you try to hide your phone under your desk or behind your bag, don't think I won't see it. If I see you use your cellphone during class, you may be marked late or absent without any warning. You may not leave class to use your cellphone except under exceptional circumstances, of which you have informed me beforehand. You may not use your cell phone during the final exam. The same policy applies to iPods and other electronic devices.

Food: You may bring beverages to class, but please do not eat while class is in session.

Computers: You may bring your computer to class only to consult the texts we are discussing (etexts). If you do so, you must inform me before the class starts. If you use your computer for any other purpose during class, you may be marked late or absent without warning.

Attention: Please be alert and do not lay your head down on your desk during class, or I may mark you late or absent without warning.

Class Dismissal: Please do not start to pack up your things or leave until I have dismissed the class. If you believe I have gone over the allotted time, please raise your hand and let me know.

Email Communication: I will communicate with you through email. You are responsible for checking your email daily for any reminders, clarifications, or other communications from me. I will also use the new D2L app Pulse to communicate with you, and you may use it to access D2L from your phones and other devices.

Safe Zone Statement: This classroom 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.

REPEATED AND/OR SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF ANY OF THESE POLICIES WILL RESULT IN A LOWERED GRADE WITHOUT WARNING, ESPECIALLY IF YOUR GRADE IS BORDERLINE.

Other Important Information:

Office Hours: My office hours are given above, and I am always happy to help you with any questions you may have, whether they are about the texts we are reading, assignments, exams, absences, or anything else—or you may just come by to talk. If you can't make my office hours, we can make an appointment. You may also contact me by phone or email; email is much better, as I check it more often than phone messages.

D2L: Handouts and additional course-related material, required or recommended, will be posted on D2L.

Academic Accommodations: If you require special accommodations, please contact Disability Support Service, 168 Clark Student Center, 397-4140, at the beginning of the

semester so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Arrangements cannot be applied retroactively.

Required Texts (available at the College Bookstore or Amazon and on reserve at the library). *You must use the starred editions.*

Atwood, Margaret. *The Handmaid's Tale*. Anchor Books, 2017.

Camus, Albert. *The Stranger*. Everyman's Library, 1993.

Coetzee, J. M. *Disgrace*. Penguin, 2008.

*Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *Crime and Punishment*. Vintage, 1993.

*Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von. *Faust*. Oxford, 2008.

*Kafka, Franz. *The Trial*. Oxford, 2009.

Satrapa, Marjane. *Persepolis 2: The Story of a Return*. Pantheon, 2004.

Voltaire. *Candide*. Norton Critical Edition, 1991.