

World Literature: From the Enlightenment to the Present

ENGL 2423 X20/X21, Spring 2021

Professor Kirsten Lodge
kirsten.lodge@msutexas.edu

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. The course is paced to begin slowly, quicken through the middle of the semester, and slow down again toward the end of the semester.

Trigger Warning: Some of these works deal with sensitive issues such as rape, violence (especially against women), and racial relations. If you have been subject to trauma and feel you are not ready to read about any of these issues, please contact me at the beginning of the semester and we can arrange alternative assignments as necessary.

- Jan.** 11 Introduction
14 Voltaire, *Candide* (1759), ch. 1-10
18 Martin Luther King's Day: No Assignments
21 *Candide*, ch. 11-30
25 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust* (Part I, 1808), through *Faust's Study*
28 *Faust*, through *Promenade*
- Feb.** 1 *Faust*, through *Dungeon* (you may skip *Walpurgis Night's Dream*)
4 Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment* (1866), Part I, ch. 1-4
8 *Crime and Punishment*, Part I, ch. 5-7
11 *Crime and Punishment*, Part II
15 *Crime and Punishment*, Part III
18 *Crime and Punishment*, Part IV
22 *Crime and Punishment*, Part V
25 *Crime and Punishment*, Part VI, ch. 1-5
- Mar.** 1 *Crime and Punishment*, Part VI, ch. 6-8 and Epilogue
Optional Midterm Paper Proposal Due
4 Franz Kafka, *The Trial* (1925), 1-57
8 *The Trial*, 58-118
Midterm Essay Due
11 *The Trial*, 119-86
15 Albert Camus, *The Stranger* (1942), Part I

- 18 *The Stranger*, Part II
 22 Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), Parts I-III
 25 *The Handmaid's Tale*, Parts IV-VI
 29 *The Handmaid's Tale*, Parts VII-IX
- Apr.** 1 Easter Break: No Assignments Due
 5 *The Handmaid's Tale*, Parts X-XII
 8 *The Handmaid's Tale*, Parts XIII-XV and *Historical Notes*
 12 J. M. Coetzee, *Disgrace* (1999), ch. 1-6
 15 *Disgrace*, ch. 7-12
 19 *Disgrace*, ch. 13-18
 22 *Disgrace*, ch. 19-24
- Optional Final Essay Topic Proposal Due**
28 Final Essay Due by 11:30 a.m.

Course Requirements:

1. Written Responses (30%): Study questions will be posted in the dropboxes for each class meeting except the first. You will also find the questions in the Content section for each week. Please submit your response to one of the questions, or one part of a multipart question, through Dropbox twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays, by 11:30 a.m. The questions should also serve as a guide to your reading, so you know what to look for. Your written response should be brief: between half a page and one page long, double-spaced, without a heading. Responses will be graded using the rubric posted on D2L. You can reach the written assignments through the calendar on the righthand side of the course homepage, through Content, or through Assessments > Assignments.

2. Discussion (30%): When discussing the study questions 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. Please indicate at the beginning of your response which question you are responding to. You should then reply to a response to a different question by one of your classmates. If no one has responded to a different question yet, you should either wait or post your second response to a different question. Again, if a study question has several parts to it, you do not need to respond to all of those parts. A typical discussion board response on the reading for the day, just to give you an idea, should be about 4-8 sentences long. So in total, for each discussion we hold on the study questions, 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 both quality and quantity, as well as on the number of discussion posts you read. You can go back later and read the discussion to make sure you didn't miss anything important. You should post on the discussion board by 10 p.m. on every Monday and Thursday, starting Thursday, Jan. 14.

In addition, you may post responses and/or questions to any videos I put up for the day, or any other comments or questions. These comments and questions may be of any length.

3. Quizzes (10%): Quizzes will count for 10% of your grade cumulatively. For each quiz you will have three attempts, and the highest grade will be recorded in the Gradebook.

4. Midterm Essay (2-3 pages; 15%): I will give you a list of topics for your paper. If you have an A in the course so far and you would prefer to choose your own topic, please submit a brief, informal proposal by email by **March 1**. The paper is due on **March 8**. Late papers will be marked down one third of a letter grade per day, including weekends and holidays (i.e., A > A-), unless you have a good reason for lateness and have emailed me about it beforehand.

5. Final Essay (15%): The format of the final will be the same as the format of the midterm paper. If you have an A in the course so far, you may choose to write a 3-4 page paper rather than using my prompts. If this is what you would like to do, please submit a brief paper proposal by **April 22**. The final essay is due on **April 28**.

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

Asterisks indicate required editions. Exception: if you do not have *Candide* in time to do the first assignment, you may use an online or other edition.

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.n

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

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

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.