

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY-AFRICA

LIT 3351: MASTERPIECES OF WORLD LITERATURE

CREDIT: 3 UNITS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course entails sampling and close reading of literary texts that have been acclaimed as world masterpieces. The choice of texts can be made from any of the three main genres of literature, which are prose fiction, drama and poetry. The course explores aspects of the chosen texts that make them grand, including social context, structure, characterization, language and style.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the course are:

- 1.1 to sensitise students to certain elements of art that make literary works great
- 1.2 to motivate students to read texts of literature meaningfully
- 1.3 to invite students to relate literature to their daily life experience.
- 1.4 To encourage students to critically reflect on the issues portrayed by the authors so as to re-examine their morality.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance in class. Students are responsible for accessing material covered in class. A student missing more than 5 lectures without official excuse will receive “F”.

Daily reading and homework assignments. Homework assignments are due at the beginning of the class period for which they are assigned; late homework will receive half credit.

Class participation. This course will be taught by the lecture method and by discussion; students are expected to have read the material under discussion and to take part actively in the discussion.

Policy on Plagiarism. If a student uses the words or ideas of another in his writing he must cite the source fully and accurately, including title, author, place and date of publication, publisher, and page number. If he uses the exact words of another he must enclose them in quotation marks; changing a word or two here and there does not absolve you of this responsibility. Plagiarism will not be tolerated; any one found guilty of plagiarism will receive an automatic 'F' for the course.

COURSE CONTENT

Week 1

Introduction

What makes a literary text appealing to the reader?

- ◆ Social context – world view and author’s thought
- ◆ Structure – story, plot and technique
- ◆ Character and characterization
- ◆ Expression – language and style

Week 2

Sophocles – Antigone

- ◆ Social context
- ◆ Theme(s)
- ◆ Relevance to contemporary life

Week 3

Sophocles – Antigone (continued)

- ◆ Structure
- ◆ Characterization
- ◆ Language and style

Week 4

William Shakespeare – Hamlet

- ◆ Social context
- ◆ Theme(s)
- ◆ Relevance to contemporary life

Week 5

William Shakespeare – Hamlet (continued)

- ◆ Structure
- ◆ Characterization
- ◆ Language and style

Week 6

Anton Chekhov – Lady with the lapdog

- ◆ Social context
- ◆ Structure
- ◆ Theme(s)
- ◆ Characterization
- ◆ Language and Style
- ◆ Relevance to contemporary life.

Week 7

MID-TERM EXAMINATION

Week 8

Nikolai Gogol – The government inspector

- ◆ Social context
- ◆ Structure
- ◆ Theme(s)
- ◆ Characterization

- ◆ Language and Style
- ◆ Relevance to contemporary life.

Week 9

Chinua Achebe - Things Fall apart

- ◆ Social context
- ◆ Structure
- ◆ Theme(s)

Week 10

Chinua Achebe - Things Fall apart (continued)

- ◆ Characterization
- ◆ Language and Style
- ◆ Relevance to contemporary life

Week 11

Classical poetry

Week 12

Modern poetry

Week 13

Revision and oral presentations

Week 14

FINAL EXAMINATION

COURSE TEXTS

Sophocles – Antigone

William Shakespeare – Hamlet

Anton Chekhov – Lady with the lapdog

Nikolai Gogol – The government inspector

Chinua Achebe - Things Fall apart

Poetry handouts (prepared by lecturer)

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

1. Attempt a critical analysis of a Greek or Roman tragedy
2. Explore how the moral values are treated in a novel by a major writer of your choice.
3. Research paper / Oral presentation.

RESEARCH PAPER

Required of all students

1. Using the library
2. Taking notes
3. Organizing papers and writing drafts
4. Preparing final copy

Choose a topic for research based on any relevant material which is available in USIU library for this course. **It must be approved by instructor.**

Read from at least two sources about the chosen work or the author (preferably the work). Single out a facet of the work that your paper will investigate and prove.

Write an analysis of about 10 typed pages covering as many aspects of the work as possible.

Documentation:

Include quotations from the critical sources and the work in body of your theme. You should have a minimum of five quotations and therefore a minimum of five footnotes.

Include a brief bibliography.

Follow the form of quotation which you have been taught at USIU.

Follow the form of quotations, especially lines of poetry, as you were taught in Research Writing.

Format of Paper:

Title page

Thesis statement

Outline (brief)

Body of paper plus conclusion

Bibliography

PAPER MUST BE TYPED

An important part of your writing is having personal conferences with your instructor. Before, after or while writing assignment, please feel free to see me (by appointment before or after the class) about any writing problems you may have

TEACHING METHODOLOGIES

Lecture, discussions, notes taking, oral presentations, written assignments, learners' involved in discussions, research writing etc.

COURSE EVALUATION

Attendance & participation	10%
Assignments	20%
Term paper	20%
Mid-Quarter exam	20%
Final exam	30%
TOTAL	100%

FINAL GRADE/GRADING SYSTEM

The final grade will be determined according to the following scale that is a USIU Grading System/Grading yardstick.

A	90 - 100
A-	87 - 89
B+	84 - 86
B	80 - 83
B-	77 - 79
C+	74 - 76
C	70 - 73
C-	67 - 69
D+	64 - 66
D	62 - 63
D-	60 - 61
F	0 - 59

A subjective evaluation of the student's application and improvement will be a deciding factor in determining the final grade in borderline cases.

