

SYLLABUS WL104

Modern World Literature

This course offers a comparative study of diverse texts (1600-present) from around the world. Despite the loose chronological organization, there is no intention of “covering” all four centuries, nor of fully addressing all the literatures of the world – that would be impossible in one semester! Instead, these texts – many of them considered “classics” – have all been selected for their treatment of human love. What do we mean by “love?” That is precisely the question we will ask as we read. Other questions we will pursue are: What has been the role of literature in creating our ideas about romantic love? What other kinds of love have been less discussed? How can love act as a metaphor for other struggles, whether political or personal? Is love real, or can it be only an ideal? Where do these texts diverge or converge in their portrayal of love? How much of that has to do with literary convention and historical context? We will try to answer some of these questions, keeping in mind the literary and historical context of each text. All texts are taught in English translation.

FEATURED TEXTS

- *Don Juan*. Tirso de Molina; Molière (*Spain, 1616?*; *France, 1665*)
- *The Story of the Stone*. Vol. 1, *The Golden Days*. Cao Xueqin. (*China, mid-18th century*)
- *Mansfield Park*. Jane Austen. (*England, 1814*)
- *Madame Bovary*. Gustave Flaubert. (*France, 1857*)
- *A Doll's House*. Henrik Ibsen. (*Norway, 1879*)
- *Death in Venice*. Thomas Mann. (*Germany, 1911*)
- *Some Prefer Nettles*. Tanizaki Jun'ichirô. (*Japan, 1929*)
- *Xala*. Ousmane Sembène. (*Senegal, 1974*)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

By the end of the quarter you will have taken a **midterm** and a **final exam** (non-cumulative). Both of these will be short answer/essay format, and will emphasize comparison among our course texts. Tutorial time will be spent on closer discussion of the texts and how to formulate written arguments about literary texts. Based on this work, you will write **2 introductory essay paragraphs**, one early in the semester, one late (see due dates on schedule). This may sound easy, but we will work exhaustively on these (sometimes in tutorial) and standards will be HIGH. You can also expect the occasional **pop quiz** on the reading during lecture, so read carefully! Finally, I'd like you to work together to read these texts, so we'll split up into **study groups** (we'll work it out once we know how many are in the class). Prior to every lecture, one group will be responsible for posting a) one in-depth researched argument on the text (about one page), and b) one fleshed out issue/question the group would like to discuss with the rest of the class during lecture. Don't worry – we'll go over exactly what this means. Each group will be responsible more than once during the semester. In order to disseminate each group's ideas, I will set up a discussion board on WebCT where a) and b) should be posted by **NO LATER THAN 6 p.m.** the evening before the next lecture (earlier is better, of course). The rest of the class should read them before

lecture, and come ready to comment. Note: doing this right requires advance planning among members of the group, and quite possibly a meeting with me!!

OTHER IMPORTANT STUFF

This is a lecture course, but we also spend a good amount of time on discussion. I will not be a talking head at the front of the class. You are expected to have read the texts for each class meeting in full. I have been known to call on people to have them comment! I do this not to embarrass you, but because it's boring for the class to be talked at by me the whole time. Feel free to speak up, make comments, ask questions -- and respect others' rights to do so as well. I am confident that we, as a group, can create an environment where everyone will feel comfortable contributing.

Needless to say, regular attendance is key to your success in this course; chronic absenteeism will not be tolerated and will affect your grade negatively.

Classroom etiquette: you are welcome to bring drinks, but please do not eat obnoxious foods in class. Also, turn off your cell phones. Finally, leave your laptop and other devices at home or in your bag; bring a notebook and pen instead (AND the texts we are discussing that day). Engagement is the name of the game, and you can't do that if you are staring at a screen.

GRADING

Midterm	20%
Final	20%
Discussion questions on WebCT (study group grade)	10%
Participation	10%
Pop quizzes	10%
Intro paragraph 1	15%
Intro paragraph 2	15%

SCHEDULE (subject to change):

<i>Week 1</i>	<i>Beginnings</i>
January 6/8	Lecture: What is love? The big question! Tutorial: Introduction to Surrey Academic Services
<i>Week 2</i>	<i>Imaginary Love</i>
January 13/15	Reading: de Molina; Molière, versions of <i>Don Juan</i> (available on WebCT)
<i>Week 3</i>	<i>Fate, Love and Family</i>
January 20/22	Reading: Cao, <i>Story of the Stone</i>

<i>Week 4</i>	<i>Fate, Love and Family cont'd</i>
January 27/29	Reading: Cao, <i>Story of the Stone</i> During lecture, we will have a guest speaker, Dr. Shuyu Kong of the Humanities Department. She is a specialist in Chinese literature and culture.
<i>Week 5</i>	<i>Love and Marriage</i>
February 3/5	Reading: Austen, <i>Mansfield Park</i> Introductory Paragraph 1
<i>Week 6</i>	<i>Love and Marriage, cont'd</i>
February 10/12	Reading: Austen, <i>Mansfield Park</i>
<i>Week 7</i>	
February 17/19	No class meeting; midterm break (We'll discuss whether we can get the whole class together during Thursday tutorial)
<i>Week 8</i>	<i>Love and Marriage (Part II)</i>
February 24/26	Reading: Flaubert, <i>Madame Bovary</i> During Tuesday lecture, 1 hr. and 15 mins.: Midterm
<i>Week 9</i>	<i>Love and Marriage (Part II), cont'd</i>
March 3/5	Reading: Flaubert, <i>Madame Bovary</i>
<i>Week 10</i>	<i>Love and Marriage (Part III)</i>
March 10/12	Reading: Ibsen, <i>A Doll's House</i> Introductory Paragraph 2
<i>Week 11</i>	<i>Love and the Artist</i>
March 17/19	Reading: Mann, <i>Death in Venice</i>
<i>Week 12</i>	<i>Love and Nation Part I</i>
March 24/26	Reading: Tanizaki, <i>Some Prefer Nettles</i>
<i>Week 13</i>	<i>Love and Nation Part II</i>
March 31/April 2	Reading: Sembene, <i>Xala</i>
April ??	Final Exam (not comprehensive)