

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**
<https://ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies>

2021-2022 C LIT 101 – 800 World Literature I
(Fall Term)

Delivery: mainly remotely

Instructor: Sajad Soleymani Yazdi	Time: mainly asynchronous; synchronous classes TBD
Office: Online [307 Old Arts]	Place: Online
E-mail: ssoleyma@ualberta.ca	Office Hours: Tuesdays, 12:00 – 13:00
Personal Website: N/A	or by appointment
Course Website: eClass	

Bachelor of Arts / Major in Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:

<https://www.ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies/undergraduate-program-information/prospective-undergraduate-students>

Course Prerequisite: Not available to C LIT 100 students. Otherwise, none.

Technology requirements (minimum): This course will be administered mainly online; you will need a stable, high-speed internet connection with regular access to a computer that has a webcam and a microphone (all laptops) and one which can run files not limited to the following formats: pdf, doc, ppt, mp3, mp4, mkv.

Experiential Learning Component

this course has a significant experiential learning component (15% or more of the course grade)

Course-based Ethics Approval in place regarding all research projects that involve human testing, questionnaires, etc.?

Yes No, not needed

Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material Available

Exam registry – Students' Union

<http://www.su.ualberta.ca/services/infolink/exam/>

See explanations below

Document distributed in class

Other (please specify)

NA

Course Description, Objectives and Expected Learning Outcomes:

How do you survive a pandemic and emerge unscathed? Ask the guy who survived The Black Death and lived to tell the tale – Boccaccio! In the past, people endured problems similar to what we face now. They wrote about how they were impacted by them and how they overcame them, quite often, in literary ways – through fiction, plays, and poems. The

main question we will ask throughout this course is what literature can teach us about the problems we face today. Some of the problems we will focus on are: pandemics, dictatorships, climate catastrophes, patriarchy, racism, and the crisis of spirituality. We will employ a ‘world literature lens,’ and do some ‘close reading’ of literatures from colonial Canada to ancient Greece, medieval Italy, early modern Ethiopia, all the way back in time and space to ancient Persia and China! While we focus on ancient solutions to modern-day problems, we will have to deal with our own biggest challenge in the classroom – to try and find the answer to this question: What is world literature?

Developing your critical thinking and reading skills is the key objective of this course. To that end, at the end of this course, you will be able to

- Recognize and define key terms pertaining to world literature
- Identify the main features of at least three literary periods in history and across the globe
- Describe the main similarities and differences between at least two literary genres
- Formulate an original and complex thesis which you will use to write a well-argued and well-organized essay on world literature
- Articulate ideas about modern day problems in relation to literary texts from across time and cultures

Course Format: The objectives of this course will be learned from a combination of formal lectures, guest presentations (from the Writing Centre, a member of which will present on how to write essays using primary sources; Laura Velazquez who will be lecturing on Chinese literature and the environment; and Banafsheh Mohammadi who will be lecturing on the relations among architecture, literature and religion), assigned readings and audiovisual materials. Moreover, you will have the option to participate in monthly ‘tour-days’ on which we will go on field trips to visit the Bruce Peel Special Collection, the Mactaggart Art Collection, and the Royal Alberta Museum. Dates to be announced on eClass.

Texts: This is a Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) course. You are not required to purchase any textbooks. Links to all texts will be provided on eClass. Texts are in English translation.

Recommended Texts:

- Mitchell, Stephen, tr. *Gilgamesh: A New English Version*. Atria Books, 2006.
- Puchner, Martin, gen. ed. *The Norton Anthology of World Literature*. Vol. 1 (ABC; longer version), Norton, 2018.
- _____. *The Written World: The Power of Stories to Shape People, History, Civilization*. Penguin, 2017.
- Abrams, M. H., and Geoffrey Galt Harpham. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. n.p.Australia, 2015.

Additional Course Fees

Yes No

Important Dates: See Academic Schedule in current Calendar – Refer to <https://calendar.ualberta.ca/content.php?catoid=34&navoid=10289>

First Day of Class: September 1, 2021

Add/Delete Date: September 15, 2021

50% Withdrawal Date: October 4, 2021

Withdrawal Date: November 30, 2021

Last Day of Class: December 7, 2021

Final Exam Date: December 12, 2021

Date of Deferred Final Exam (if applicable): Please consult the following site:

[https://calendar.ualberta.ca/content.php?catoid=34&navoid=10107 - examinations-exams](https://calendar.ualberta.ca/content.php?catoid=34&navoid=10107-examinations-exams)

Deferred Final Examination: For information on how to apply for a deferred exam see [“I Missed my Final Exam, Now What?”](https://www.ualberta.ca/arts/media-library/student-services/documents/2019-documents/deferred-final-exams-april-2017.pdf) (<https://www.ualberta.ca/arts/media-library/student-services/documents/2019-documents/deferred-final-exams-april-2017.pdf>)

Components of Course Grade (see “Explanatory Notes”):

Participation (weekly discussions on Discord): 25%

Short essays/reports -- one of the two options below: 15%

Three short essays on an assigned reading

Three field trip reports

Our Wiki Page(weekly update): 15%

Midterm exam 15% (October 15, 2021)

Long essay 15% (November 6, 2021)

Final exam 15% (December 12, 2021)

Explanatory Notes on Assignments:

Participation: As you can see above, the biggest portion of assignments (25%; 1% for each session) is allocated to your active participation in this course. Participation will happen through discussions you will have on an app called *Discord*. More information on how to create an account on and login to Discord is provided on eClass, under the heading “Joining Discord”. Here, twice a week, class will be divided into three or more groups, and we will discuss topics not limited to the following:

- a) how the texts at hand provide solutions to their contemporary problems (or further complicate them),
- b) how they might be able to shed light on our modern-day problems (or how those problems have changed throughout time),
- c) and the ways the social, political, and cultural contexts of the texts make understanding them easier:
 - a. this is where we will look – and try our hands at – playing some of the games our historical figures might have played (like the Royal Game of Ur!);
 - b. in this same vein, we will listen to some of the music of that culture/time and try to imagine how some of the poems or plays were set to music;
 - c. further, we will listen to how the texts sounded in their original (untranslated)

languages, and discuss how translation complicates their transmissions.

Three short essays/reports: For this task, you have the option either to participate in a field trip and write a short, one-paragraph long (200 words), report for each trip, or write a one-paragraph (200 words) long essay on a topic which will be assigned on eClass, under the heading “Short Essays”. Either way, each report or essay counts as 5% of the total course score. For the reports, you will be asked to provide a short critique of the one piece you viewed at the collections we visit. Format descriptions are provided on eClass, under the heading, “how to write a field trip report”.

Wiki Page: Once a week, I will ask students to write or edit an entry on the texts we have assigned on a wiki page. This counts for 15% of the total score (1% for each week). A tutorial on how to access, write, and edit the wiki is provided on eClass, under the heading “Let’s Wiki”. For this task, your main tasks are to:

- Compile a glossary of terms and/or concepts assigned that week.
- Revise an entry with accurate and evidence-based reasoning
- Classify links to texts based on their temporal and geographical contexts
- Provide contexts for each text entry
- Collaborate in writing annotated bibliographies

Long Essay: Three topics will be provided. You will write a three page long (1500-2000 word) essay on a topic of your choice using course material and the knowledge you acquired from the guest presentation on how to use/cite sources. Sample topic and essay provided on eClass, under a similarly titled heading.

Midterm and Final Exam: These two exams will follow similar formats and similar scoring (15%). Each will have three parts: 20 multiple choice questions (20% of exam), 15 short answer questions (30% of exam), and 1 short essay (50% of exam). More information will be provided in class during the sessions prior.

Explanatory Notes on Experiential Learning:

Experiential learning is students’ purposeful engagement in direct experience, focused reflection, and authentic assessment in order to promote learners’ initiative, increase knowledge, develop skills and strategies, clarify values, and apply knowledge in the real-world setting (adapted from [the Association of Experiential Education](#)). Experiential learning may include Community-service learning, project-based learning, field work, or other type of activity that allows students to apply their knowledge in practice in a multitude of settings inside and outside of the classroom. For more information on experiential learning in MLCS see [URL](#).

In this course, we will take advantage of the relative easing of Covid-19 restrictions and relative fall in cases and rise in vaccination rates to go out on field trips! As mentioned above, we will visit the Bruce Peel Special Collection (to view a facsimile of the Voynich Manuscript!), the MacTaggart Collection (to view a fantastic collection of Chinese paintings and manuscripts), and to RAM (to view its human history collection on how writing and our literary civilization began)! After the trips, you will write a critique of the pieces as if you were a real-life literary or art critic!

Policy for Late Assignments:

Students who consult **in advance** with an instructor regarding contingencies preventing the timely completion of an assignment may, at the discretion of the instructor, be granted an extension just one time throughout the course with no penalty. However, if a second excuse will be granted for late assignments, half of the mark assigned for this particular work will be deducted. Otherwise, all assignments should be handed in on the stated deadline. Any assignment not handed-in in time or unexcused late assignments will not be given any marks.

Required Notes:

Policy about course outlines can be found in the [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#) of the University Calendar.

Student Responsibilities:***Academic Integrity:***

The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the [Code of Student Behaviour](#) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

All students should consult [the Academic Integrity website](#). If you have any questions, ask your instructor.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the [Academic Discipline Process](#).

Recording of Lectures:

Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with **the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan**. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Those enrolled in a class should be fully informed:

- I. That the lecture or discussion is being recorded. Please ask that students ensure that no other people are in the student's camera/recording view and that there is nothing identifiable or sensitive in that view (personal belongings, records, medications, etc.) prior to the class recording starting. Students should be informed that they can turn off their computer's camera or microphone if they are uncomfortable with being recorded.
- II. Why the recording is being made and any additional uses (beyond sharing with the students in the course) that will be made of the recording.
- III. Who will have access to the recording and how it will be disseminated (through eclass, google drive, zoom cloud drive, etc.). And
- IV. How long this access will be provided and when the recordings will be destroyed or otherwise deleted.
- V. Please include wording regarding the 4 above points in your course outline. All students should be fully informed of these points before the first recorded lecture. Also, consider making an eclass announcement regarding these points.

Disclaimer:

Any typographical errors in this syllabus are subject to change and will be announced in class and posted on eClass. The date of the final examination is set by the Registrar and takes precedence over the final examination date reported in this syllabus.

Student Resources:

The best all-purpose website for student services is: <https://www.ualberta.ca/current-students>.

[The Academic Success Centre](#) provides professional academic support to help students maximize their academic success and achieve their academic goals. We offer appointments, advising, group workshops, online courses, and specialized programming year-round to students in all university programs, and at all levels of achievement and study.

They also administer the University of Alberta's [Duty to Accommodate procedure](#) for students and works with students, instructors, campus units, Faculties and departments, community and government agencies, and on and off-campus service providers to coordinate students' disability-related accommodation needs for participation in university programs.

For general information and to register for services visit the [Academic Accommodations](#) webpage.

[The Centre for Writers](#) offers free one-on-one writing support to students, faculty, and staff. Students can request consultation for a writing project at any stage of development. Instructors can request class visits and presentations.

[The First Peoples' House](#) provides an environment of empowerment for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit learners to achieve personal and academic growth.

[Health and Wellness Support for Students](#) outlines available mental and physical health resources that are offered on-campus and in the community.

[The Office of the Student Ombuds](#) is a confidential service that strives to ensure that university processes related to students operate as fairly as possible. We offer information, advice, and support to students, faculty, and staff as they deal with academic, discipline, interpersonal, and financial issues related to student programs.

Learning and working environment:

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring that all students, faculty and staff are able to work and study in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment.

It is the policy of the University of Alberta that sexual violence committed by any member of the University community is prohibited and constitutes misconduct.

Resources and more information can be found at <https://www.ualberta.ca/campus-life/sexual-violence>

The University of Alberta acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, and respects the histories, languages, and cultures of the First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and all First Peoples of Canada, whose presence continues to enrich our vibrant community.

Policy about course outlines can be found in the [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#) section of the University Calendar.

Grading:

Assessment of the individual course components may be in the form of numerical marks or letter grades. The final letter grade will be based on "a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in a class" (University Calendar, [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#)). The University Grading Procedure mandates that "a student's level of achievement of the goals/outcomes of a course, their grade, and the descriptor of that grade must be aligned" (<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/>). The following guidelines have been adopted by the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:

“MLCS Undergraduate Grading Scale”

Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	%
Excellent. A+, A or A- is earned by work which is superior in content and form and demonstrates an exceptional grasp of the subject matter. The grade of A+ designates work that far exceeds course expectations.	A+	4.0	95-100
	A	4.0	90-94
	A-	3.7	86-89

Grades in the A range are normally achieved by a small number of students.			
Good. B+, B or B- is earned by work that demonstrates a thorough comprehension of the course material and a good command of relevant skills. Grades in the B range are normally achieved by the largest number of students.	B+	3.3	82-85
	B	3.0	75-81
	B-	2.7	70-74
Satisfactory. C+, C or C- is earned by work that demonstrates an adequate grasp of the course material and relevant skills. Grades in the C range designate work that has met the basic requirements of the course.	C+	2.3	66-69
	C	2.0	61-65
	C-	1.7	58-60
Poor/Minimal Pass. D+ or D is earned by work that demonstrates minimal familiarity with the course material. Grades in the D range generally indicate insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.	D+	1.3	55-57
	D	1.0	50-54
Failure.	F	0.0	0-49

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