Masterworks of World Literature 2331.002 – Spring 2010

"It is when suffering finds a voice and sets our nerves quivering that this pity comes troubling us." -H.G. Wells

Instructor: Lauren Dixon
TTH 10:00-11:15, CB1 1.105
Office: JO 4.904
Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:40-12:40, and by appointment
Phone: 972-883-2250 or 512-914-1761 (cell; please only call in case of emergency)
Email: lcd062000@utdallas.edu or Lauren.dixon@gmail.com

Course Description

Non-human animals make up many of our creation stories, they are oft the stuff of nightmares, and in literary texts, more than not, they come to look, think, and act just like us. This course will examine how animals are depicted in literature—we will consider at what point are our renderings of them "speciesist" and how our depictions of them help constitute the ways our societies are constructed. By reviewing other phenomena, like the hybridities of the monster and cannibalism in literature, we will consider whether nonhuman animals are like us after all and whether they are defined by what we are not.

This course takes up the question of what it means to write and the "animal," specifically in ways cultural attitudes help define what that term means. Grounding ourselves in the discussion of "animals," and more specifically, the differences between human and non-human animals, we will question and focus upon the contexts and circumstances that give rise to such works and their general receptions. From such a focus, students will learn the value of "other" voices/texts often hidden beneath "canonical" perceptions, writing, and viewpoints.

While the focus of the course is on literature and literary studies, it is an interdisciplinary course in the sense that we will incorporate ideas from cultural studies, philosophy and other disciplines of the humanities in our study and analysis of our texts. Students will also become thoroughly acquainted with different literary traditions and literary terms.

Student Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Develop a critical awareness of issues in literature
- Demonstrate an ability to discuss literature appropriately and intelligently
- Develop a proficiency in reading and analyzing literature
- Articulate an understanding of several major pieces of World Literature
- Articulate the ways literature reflects the historical period and the culture that produced it; and more importantly, why this literature is still relevant
- Demonstrate an understanding of the relationships between literature and life
- Demonstrate an ability to write about literature using textual evidence to support assertions, a thesis, and argument

Required Texts:

Coetzee, J.M. Elizabeth Costello. New York: Penguin, 2003. Print.
ISBN-10: 0142004812; ISBN-13: 978-0142004814

Epic of Gilgamesh: An English Version with an Introduction. Trans. N.K. Sandars. New York: Penguin, 1960. Print. ISBN-13: 978-0140441000

Kafka, Franz. The Complete Stories. Ed. Nahum N. Glatzer. New York: Schocken Books, 1995. Print. ISBN-10: 0805210555; ISBN-13: 978-0805210552

Kyoka, Izumi. Japanese Gothic Tales. Trans. Charles Shirö Inouye. Honolulu: U of Hawaii P, 1996. Print. ISBN-10: 0824817893; ISBN-13: 978-0824817893
**Note: "The Holy Man of Mount Koya," the only story assigned from this text, will be available on e-learning. However, you must print it out and bring to class, should you choose not to purchase the textbook.*

Ovid. Metamorphoses: A Norton Critical Edition. Trans. Charles Martin. New York, W.W. Norton & Co., 2009. Print. ISBN: 978-0-393-92534-0
**Note: The first section assigned from this text will also be available on e-learning. However, you must print it out and bring to class, should you choose not to purchase the textbook.*

Pancatantra: The Book of India's Folk Wisdom. Trans. Patrick Olivelle. New York: Oxford, 2009. Print. ISBN-10: 0199555753; ISBN-13: 978-0199555758

Shakespeare, William. The Oxford Shakespeare: Titus Andronicus. Ed. Eugene M. Waith. New York: Oxford, 2008. Print.
ISBN-10: 0199536104; ISBN-13: 978-0199536108

Tolstoy, Leo. Master and Man and Other Stories. Trans. Ronald Wilks. New York: Penguin Classics, 2005. Print. ISBN-10: 0140449620; ISBN-13: 978-0140449624

Other handouts and essays will be available on e-learning.

Recommended Texts:

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.* 7th ed. New York: Modern Language Association, 2009.
ISBN-10: 1603290249 ISBN-13: 978-1603290241
NOTE: Your handbooks must be the 7th edition.

Course Expectations

For happiness and success in this course, you'll want to do the following:

1. First, last, and always, read for *pleasure*. You'll be happiest if you see your reading not as the last straw on your pile of homework every night but as a *break* from other work. In this respect, it helps to look at reading as a kind of freedom. I do!

2. Keep up with your reading (including relevant background and biographical information: take initiative and dig some of this up on your own) and attend all class sessions. The reading is exciting, yes, but also demanding, and catching up if you fall behind will be very difficult. Class discussions will proceed on the assumption that you have read the material.

3. Participate in class discussions with attention, thoughtfulness, and respect for our classroom community.

4. Take notes as completely and carefully as possible. Include not only information from lectures but also connections or ideas that occur to you (or your classmates) during discussions – these can be interesting seeds for papers.

5. Plan and prepare your papers before the due date and complete them on time.

6. Write competent prose. We will spend little class time on mechanical issues, so if you feel unsure about your writing skills, you should make an appointment with the UTD Writing Center, form a workshop group with your fellow students, or see me in my office.

7. Understand and avoid plagiarism. If you are uncertain about quoting or citing, ASK.

8. Attend all class sessions on time and let me know well in advance if you must be absent.

9. See me in my office or email me if you have any questions, problems, or issues. I'm glad to talk to you – that's why I'm here!

10. Take responsibility for your own success. Be professional, prompt, and prepared – every day.

Grading

Paper 1 (Analysis) 20%
Paper 2 (Research) 25%
Reading journal 25%
Presentations 15%
Class Participation 10%
Attendance 5%

Paper Grading Criteria

The characteristics of an "A" paper include the following:

1. A clear, multilayered, and interesting thesis sentence (for example, not just "Most of Sappho's poems exist only as fragments," but "Because much of Sappho's lyric poetry was destroyed well after she was acknowledged as a major poet, we must consider why poems about erotic love between women were conceived as taboo and scandalous, despite the acknowledgement of amorous love between Grecian men and young boys"). Thesis sentences should answer the implicit question, "So what?" Ask yourself not just how an author has made certain choices but *why* he or she might have made those choices – what cultural or biographical factors, for instance, might be at work?
2. Close, thoughtful, and original readings of a text, supported well by quotations from that text. I want to see that you've really read and thought about the work.
3. Attention to the technical details (structure, meter, sound, imagery, et cetera) that help to create a work's meaning.
4. Support from reputable scholarly sources when needed.
5. Clearly structured paragraphs with clear topic and concluding sentences.
6. Clear, formal writing (minimal "I") that is free of misspellings, grammatical errors, and citation errors.
7. Typed and formatted with 1" margins and all citations in MLA style.

A paper – outstanding, above-average work
B paper – good work, still a bit above average
C paper – average work, meets expectations
D paper – below average work
F paper – much below average, failed to address the assignment

Papers become late after class ends on the day they are due. If a paper is turned in within the first 24 hours of the late period, its grade will be reduced by one full letter grade. A paper that is between 24 and 48 hours late will be reduced by two full letter grades. Any paper more than 48 hours late will receive an F. In case of absence, papers **must be submitted in hard copy.** ***I do not accept emailed assignments***. Please discuss with me any problems or emergencies related to due dates as soon as possible.

Academic Ethics:

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts, or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work material that is not one's own. Scholastic dishonesty may involve, but is not limited to, one or more of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion, use of annotated texts or teacher's editions, and/or falsifying academic records.

Plagiarism is the use of an author's words or ideas as if they were one's own without giving credit to the source, including, but not limited to, failure to acknowledge a direct quotation.

Cheating is the willful giving or receiving of information in an unauthorized manner during an
examination, illicitly obtaining examination questions in advance, copying computer or Internet files, using someone else's work for assignments as if it were one's own, or any other dishonest means of attempting to fulfill the requirements of a course.

Collusion is intentionally aiding or attempting to aid another in an act of scholastic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, providing a paper or project to another student, providing an inappropriate level of assistance, communicating answers to a classmate during an examination, removing tests or answer sheets from a test site, and allowing a classmate to copy answers.

MANY CASES OF PLAGIARISM ARE THE RESULT OF CARELESS DOCUMENTATION OR FAULTY NOTETAKING. Unfortunately, the reader who finds the error, not knowing the writer's intent, can only assume the plagiarism is intentional. Intentional or not, plagiarism in any paper will still carry serious penalties.

Many students overreact when they learn what plagiarism means. They either assume that they should not use any sources (thus avoiding the problem entirely), or they assume they should document every word they have written. Both reactions are in error, for good writing involves the synthesis of your own ideas with the ideas of others. Documentation serves the purpose of clearly indicating which ideas are yours and which are those of other writers. If you are in doubt about that dividing line, ask your instructor or the Writing Center tutors for guidance.

Attendance, Participation, and Related Issues

Because each class period will consist of a mixture of lecture, discussion, group work and journal writing, your thoughtful, attentive, and active participation is ESSENTIAL (and will form a portion of your grade). If you sleep, engage in non-class-related activities (such as reading *Cosmo* or text messaging on your mobile phone), or interfere with your classmates' ability to learn, you will be counted absent for that day. Be on time – class will start promptly at 10:00 am. ***You will fail the course if you miss more than four classes.***

CELL PHONES MUST BE POWERED OFF BY THE START OF CLASS. Laptops may only be used for course presentations.

Incomplete Grade Policy

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted **only** for work unavoidably missed and if the student has completed 70% or more of the required course work.

Student Conduct, Discipline, Academic Integrity, Handicap, and Religious Holiday Information

This information is contained in the UTD publication *A to Z Guide,* the *Handbook of Operating Procedures*, and the *Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System*. All of these publications are available online at utdallas.edu.

Useful Information

Disability Services – SU 1.610 (972-883-2098)
Student Counseling Center - SU 1.608 (972-883-2575)
McDermott Library reference librarian: Linda Snow (972-883-2626)
UTD Writing Center – CN 1.302 (972-883-6736)
http://www.utdallas.edu/ossa/student-success/gems/GEMSWritingCenterFAQ.htm

Course Calendar

Please note: This calendar is tentative. I will distribute written revisions as I adapt instruction and materials to your needs.

**Bring the assigned reading with you to class!!!

PART I—Origin Myths

January 12 (T):
Introduction to the course and reading journals (Why read? Why study world literature in particular? How is the "canon" formed? These questions will be revisited throughout the semester.)
Comparison assignment—write a paragraph discussing the differences between Stephen Mitchell's translation of Job and the "Behemoth" version

January 14 (TH):
Reading: (handouts)—Rabassa; Problems and concerns in translating texts
Translation and World Literature; The vocabulary of close reading; how does one read effectively, and how does one spot what is important?

January 19 (T):
Reading: (e-learning handouts); Hesiod's Theogeny—Origin Stories—Greek myths and background on Hesiod, Greek literature, and epic poetry
Reading the Historical/Cultural Argument in a text

January 21 (TH):
Reading: (e-learning handouts); Ovid's Metamorphoses, "Introduction" (ix-xxiv), Translation Note (3-11), Part I "Shaping of Changes" (15-42)
Roman origin stories, background on Ovid, Roman literature
Group 1 Reading Response #1 Due

January 26 (T):
Reading: Epic of Gilgamesh (1-53); Epic poetry continued
Introduction of "The Monster"
Group 2 Reading Response #1 Due

JANUARY 27 –LAST DAY TO DROP WITHOUT A "W"

January 28 (TH):
Reading: Epic of Gilgamesh continued (54-100)
Group 3 Reading Response #1 Due

February 2 (T):
Group 1 Student Presentations

February 4 (TH):
Reading: Pancatantra (1-61)
Background on Indian folk wisdom, fables
Group 1 Reading Response #2 Due

February 9 (T):
Reading: Pancatantra continued (62-130)
Group 2 Reading Response #2 Due

February 11 (TH):
Reading: Pancatantra continued (131-159)
Group 3 Reading Response #2 Due

February 16 (T):
Group 2 Student Presentations
Assign Paper 1

February 18 (TH):
Reading: (e-learning handout) "Holy Man of Mount Koya" by Izumi Kyoka
Group 1 Reading Response #3 Due

Part II—Cannibalism, Monsters, and Man

February 23 (T):
Reading: (e-learning handout) Michel de Montaigne's "On Cannibals" (228-41), excerpt from Girolamo Benzoni's History of the New World
Group 2 Reading Response #3 Due

February 25 (TH):
Reading: (e-learning handout) "Eaten Heart" by Giovanni Boccoccio, "Modest Proposal" by Jonathan Swift
Claim for Paper 1 due in class

March 2 (T):
Reading: Titus Andronicus, Acts 1-3
Background on Shakespeare, critical reception of play, and historical contexts
Group 3 Reading Response #3 Due

March 4 (TH):
Reading: Titus Andronicus, Acts 4-5
Peer Review—Bring TWO typed copies to class!

MARCH 5 MIDTERM GRADES DUE

March 9 (T):
Group 3 Student Presentations
Reading: **Continue to work on final draft; completed draft due next class period**

March 11 (TH): Final Draft of Paper 1 due

MARCH 15 (M): Last day to withdraw with WP/WF
***MARCH 15-20* SPRING BREAK HOLIDAY—NO CLASS!**

PART III—Learning to Fashion Ourselves after Animals…

March 23 (T):
Reading: (e-learning handouts) Montaigne, Darwin, Descartes, Aristotle
On the lineage of animals and humans
Group 1 Reading Response #4 Due
PAPER 2 ASSIGNED

March 25 (TH): Leo Tolstoy, "Strider" (67-107)
Reading: **Group 2 Reading Response #4 Due**

March 30 (T):
Reading: Tolstoy continued, "Master and Man" (230-82) and "The Bear Hunt" (e-learning handout, 44-54)
Group 3 Reading Response #4 Due

April 1 (TH):
Reading: Franz Kafka, "Metamorphosis" (89-139)
PAPER 2 CLAIM DUE IN CLASS

April 6 (T):
Reading: Franz Kafka continued, "Investigations of a Dog" (278-316) and "Report to an Academy" (250-62)

April 8 (TH):
RESEARCH DAY-NO CLASS!

April 13 (T):
Reading: (e-learning handouts) Multiple ways of viewing: Rainer Marie Rilke's "The Panther," Wislawa Szymborska's "Two Monkeys," "The Tarsier," and "Monologue of a Dog Ensnared in History"
Group 1 Reading Response #5 Due

April 15 (TH):
Reading: Elizabeth Costello (Chs. 1-2, 1-58)
Forming a dialectic: the search for empathy
Group 2 Reading Response #5 Due

April 20 (T):
Reading: Elizabeth Costello continued (Chs. 3-4, 59-116)
Group 3 Reading Response #5 Due

April 22 (TH):
Reading: Elizabeth Costello continued (Chs. 5-6, 116-82)
Peer Review—Bring TWO typed copies to class!

April 27 (T):
Reading: Elizabeth Costello continued (Chs. 7-Post Script, 183-230)

April 29 (TH): LAST CLASS DAY!
Course evaluations; **Final draft of Paper #2 due**

Reading Journal

Journal Entry Due Dates (please post on e-learning by class time):

Group 1: Jan. 21, Feb. 4, Feb. 18, Mar. 23, Apr. 13

Group 2: Jan. 26, Feb. 9, Feb. 23, Mar. 25, Apr. 15

Group 3: Jan. 28, Feb. 11, Mar. 2, Mar. 30, Apr. 20

The purpose of the reading journal is to help you remember what you read as well as to encourage you to think critically about what you have read. For each journal entry, write a brief description of the story, poem, novel, etc. (no more than two paragraphs). Then, write your analysis of the literature. This is NOT reader response – ie, do not write whether or not you *liked* the literature. Rather, write any observations you made about the text while reading or any questions you asked while reading. Questions about a text are particularly useful in leading to fruitful paper topics.

What kind of question leads to an effective paper? First of all, you'll want to avoid questions with easy, obvious answers or answers that don't require further elaboration. Yes-or-no questions are out. "How" and "why" questions are generally more fruitful than fact-based questions, though this is not always true.

A paper addressing a factual question that does not have a generally accepted answer can be very interesting. "When was *Beowulf* written?" is a valid starting point for an analytical essay, since the dating of the poem is still a subject of scholarly debate. The dating of Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market" is not, however, so if you're interested in talking about it, you'd be better off asking a more detailed questions, such as, "In what way is 'Goblin Market' a product of the era in which it was written?" (*A Practical Introduction to Literary Study*)

Feel free to speculate about answers to your own questions, or to note down page numbers to return to for further study. Remember to consider the text as part of a particular culture and time period. Much of our discussion will detail the context in which the work was produced, and why it either remains significant now, or has been ignored by a larger, problematic structure like the "canon."

**When writing a journal entry for a secondary source, state the author's claim as well as his or her supporting evidence. Note the strengths and weaknesses in the argument.

See the journal entry below as an example.

Wilde, Oscar. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890)
The painter Basil befriends the handsome young Dorian Gray and decides to paint his portrait. Basil's friend Harry meets Dorian when Basil is painting his portrait. Harry is drawn to Dorian's youthful innocence as well as his good looks and, against Basil's wishes, views Dorian as a psychological experiment. Harry convinces Dorian that youth and beauty reign supreme, and Dorian subsequently laments that he will grow old. He wishes the portrait would age in his place, and magically this does happen. As a result, Dorian grows increasingly evil as he is able to act however he would like without the consequences showing upon his face. Dorian hides his increasingly disfigured portrait in his attic so no one can know the truth about him. Meanwhile, Harry encourages Dorian in his selfish lifestyle, and Basil, jealous of Harry's time with Dorian, tries to reason with Dorian. Several years after the portrait is painted, Basil stops at Dorian's house to try to convince him to repent of his evil ways. Dorian takes Basil to the attic and shows him the portrait. Now that Basil knows the truth, Dorian decides to kill him, stabbing him behind the ear. Dorian is driven mad and sees accusing eyes everywhere. He stabs his own portrait, now hideous, and he himself dies. When Dorian is found, the portrait is pristine and Dorian is hideously disfigured.

Analysis:
• Is this novel didactic? Compare with Wilde's introduction that the reader who goes below the surface does so at his/her own risk. At what point is Wilde being serious and at what point is he poking fun and being cynical?
• What, if anything, does Wilde's work tell us about the cultural context and setting of his time? Why does it matter?
• Wilde examines class structure and the frivolous/deviant lives of the upper class. This seems to be the decadent lifestyle gone awry, as beauty is more important than goodness.
• What is the significance of Wilde using "scientific thinking"? Harry treats Dorian like an experiment – without personal consequences. Dorian also lives a life without consequence. Chapter listing Dorian's collections – scientific organization
• Why does Wilde include the chapter of lists? It is boring and slow – seems out of place compared to the fast pace of the rest of the novel.
• Why does Wilde use humorous language and wit to tackle such a serious subject?

NOTE: These reading responses receive **completion grades**; however, if you are not attempting to write analytically based comments and are instead asking questions that ask your classmates to repeat or summarize obvious elements/events/actions from the text, I will not give the reading response a grade, or will count points off from the completion grade.

Essay #1 – Close Reading of a Text

Submit your claim by **Thursday, February 25**
First Draft Due: **Thursday, March 4**
Final Draft Due: **Thursday, March 11**

Your first essay will be a **four-page argument** about ONE of the short stories or poems we've read in class, on a topic of your own design. You should make a claim about authorial and/or translator's intention (as the designer of the text) in the particular context in which it was written. These are not intended to be research papers. The skills I would like for you to practice are those of **textual interpretation**, and **your evidence should come from the text**.

I recommend that you avoid compare/contrast arguments (they have weak claims) and that you avoid treating characters as people. Think about the choices the author (or translator) makes.

For example, why does Kafka write from the point-of-view of a dog, and why should this matter to human readers? What does this tell us about his intention? Or, as another way of looking at it, what does Kafka illuminate about the human condition via the perspective of a dog? How might one use the specieist attitude in rendering a story from a non-human animal's point-of-view in order to actually benefit a non-human animal?

You shouldn't strive to discuss all of these questions—they are descriptive, not prescriptive.

Your goal in this paper will not be to express yourself or to give your impressions of the text, but to convince the reader of something new – something not discussed in class. Your claim can be about any aspect of the work, but it must be framed so as to teach the readers something new or to change the reader's mind. To sharpen your topic, think about it as either solving some "problem" about the text, or arguing against an interpretation of the text that other people may hold.

For the rough draft: Please submit the clearest, cleanest, fully developed, TYPED rough draft possible. It should be at least 2 full pages long, written out rather than in outline format. Really work on narrowing your claim. Be sure to state your claim and the evidence that you will use.

Citations from the text must be in MLA format.

I look forward to reading your essays!!

Essay #2 – Research Paper

Paper Topic Due: **Thursday, April 1**
Peer Review/Rough Draft Due: **Thursday, April 22**
Final Draft Due: **Thursday, April 29**

This **six-page research paper** is a synthesis exercise, an opportunity to pull together the tools the class has given you and your own research to study a topic relating to the masterworks of world literature we have discussed this semester. In addition, you will demonstrate that you have mastered the secondary sources related to the topic and have an original contribution to make to the field.

Look over the readings in the class, or any other reading or author that particularly interests you. Frame some questions you would like to investigate further. This could be a specific "case study" of a particular book, author (**not** a biography), kind of book, or a bigger issue like power within the text, etc.

Then begin your research and see what you can find related to the topic. Decide on the kind of secondary sources you will need to consult. For example, the biography of the author, or research on literacy levels of the time, or do you need contemporary reviews of text? The MLA Bibliography is going to be very useful for this. Ideally, what you find will give you ideas to respond to, question, challenge, or extend, which will help you focus your topic.

Then formulate a working thesis, an argument or a position that requires defense or support (a reasonable person could disagree with you on this). As you go through texts and articles you found useful while writing the paper, you may realize you want to refine or change the argument in some way – go ahead and do it! You are also encouraged to use the "yes/but" introductions since they work very well with research papers.

Finally, each student must have a **minimum of 6 – 8 secondary sources** in their working bibliography. At least 1 must be a scholarly book while the rest can be articles in peer-reviewed journals. Citations from the text must be in MLA format. **No Wikipedia or random "googled resources!"** You **can** use Google Scholar or Google Books, however.

For your peer review, you will be asked to submit four pages. You will be asked to expand the rough draft into six full pages as your final draft.

A REMINDER: The purpose of most academic papers is two-fold: 1. demonstrate you know what has been said about this topic in the past and understand it; 2. show that you have an original intervention or contribution to make. (You should attempt to do both).

Student Presentations

Tuesday, February 2: Group 1 Presentations
Tuesday, February 16: Group 2 Presentations
Tuesday, March 9: Group 3 Presentations

Three times during the term, each of the larger groups (Groups 1, 2, and 3) will be split into three smaller groups, and on the days listed above, these smaller groups will present a ten-minute presentation that encompasses the reading units we've just covered. This will be your chance to delve further into the historical backgrounds surrounding the text, dig up important information about the author, or present anything about the works that we've not covered in class. This is a chance to synthesize your findings about the readings and present an analytical, team-oriented talk about whatever it is you find most compelling about the works.

You may do this several different ways. You can take a creative approach and present us with a song, dramatic performance, or poetry reading (again, this is descriptive, not prescriptive) about your topic. Conversely, you can make up handouts that delineate the topic for your classmates (although I do not wish for you to read from the handouts when you give the presentation—these handouts should be for your fellow classmates only). Powerpoint presentations are fine as well. Basically, as a group, you want to choose something that interests all of you, decide how to bring it to the class, and then execute your plans.

Each group will have ten-minutes for the presentation, with a five-minute follow-up question and answer session from the rest of the class.

When I grade these presentations, I look for comprehension of the material and of the cultural backgrounds of the works (so you won't say that Kafka was Roman or Ovid was a woman from India, etc.), how the group interacts (is it working as a unit, or is one person doing all of the talking, etc.?), the creative effort involved in presenting the material, and how well the talk is organized. Each group is graded as a whole, so teamwork is essential when you approach this task.