

LIT 3312 Studies in Prose

Fall 2006, T 7:00 – 9:45, JO 4.102

Dr. Sean Cotter

sean.cotter@utdallas.edu, 972-883-2037

Office: JO 5.106

Office Hours: Monday 4 – 5:00, Tuesday 6 – 7:00, and by appointment

World Travel and World Literature

This course will compare romances, stories, travel narratives, and novels from a variety of cultures and historical periods. Focusing primarily on writings from Europe (loosely defined), we will examine techniques of plot and character and the ways these techniques change and develop. The driving force of these changes (in the texts we will read) is travel: the techniques develop in order to tell the story of going to foreign places, meeting foreign people, and encountering foreign cultures. There is no plot more exciting than an adventurous journey in a far-away place. The attempt to tell exciting stories then leads to the desire to portray more interesting people. While foreign characters are compelling, the interest in travel also develops self-reflection, a greater interest in local characters. This shift makes the interesting connection between travel and literature. The great characters of world literature, even if the characters never travel, come from a tradition of travel writing. This course will examine the paradoxes of travel: going abroad helps us understand our home, meeting foreign people helps us understand ourselves. Because we will read works from outside American literature, we will also be traveling. We will better understand foreign works, and these works will help us better understand ourselves.

Learning Objectives

Students will identify major works of world literature.

Students will analyze techniques of plot and character in multiple works.

Students will construct substantial arguments connecting travel and literature.

Policies

Participation

It is your responsibility to make your presence and interest in the class known to me. You can demonstrate engagement through participation in classroom discussion, participation in class exercises, visits to office hours, use of the writing lab, or discussions over email.

Classes begin and end at the same time for all involved. You should arrive before class-time and stay for the entire session.

Attendance will be recorded with a roll-sheet. You must sign in to be recorded present. I understand that occasionally circumstances arise (e. g. car trouble, childcare complications, illness) which cause you to miss class. For this reason, you are allowed to miss two meetings over the course of the term. Absences beyond this limit will result in a significant reduction of your final

grade, up to three letter grades.

Please do not send me email via WebCT. I check that service rarely. Send email to the address listed at the top of this syllabus. If I have not returned your phone call or email within two days, please contact me again.

Assignments

You will be responsible for reading all the material on the syllabus, participating in class discussions, and completing all assignments. Assignments A and B will each count for roughly 35% of your final grade. The final exam will count for roughly 30%. I may adjust this mathematical grade up or down to reflect your participation.

Paper topics will be announced. You must turn in a hard copy of your paper. As a guide to the kinds of technical points I will look for in your writing, you should look at Strunk and White's book, *Elements of Style*. While that entire book is useful, some important passages are on WebCT.

It is possible, though not advisable, to extend the deadlines for assignments A and B, provided there is good reason. To ask for an extension, write me an email before 5 pm the Monday before the assignment is due, giving a reason for the extension and the date you will turn the assignment in. The maximum extension is one week past the original date. Extensions cannot be extended. If you do not have my confirmation, you do not have an extension. Your papers will be graded and returned roughly in the order they arrive.

Any assignments not turned in either on time or by the extended deadline are late; late assignments receive zero credit. It is better to turn something in than to turn nothing in.

Paper-Writing Guidelines, in Brief

A five-page paper ends on the sixth page. Use one to one and one-quarter inch margins (no more, no less). Print your paper on one side of the page, double-spaced, in a twelve-point font. Use black ink on white paper. Use a font similar to that used for this page; no sans-serif fonts. Do not use a cover sheet, binder, or slipcover. In the upper left corner of the first page, type your name, the course title and section number, the date the paper is turned in, and my name. The paper's title (a helpful title, not "Joyce v. Puig") follows, centered, on the next line. The title should not be in underlined or bolded. Starting with page two, each page has your last name and the page number in the upper right corner. Do not "justify" your paragraphs. Indent paragraphs one-half inch, block quotes one inch. Block quotes are double-spaced and not centered. Please note that underlining and italics are used for exactly the same purposes. I prefer that you use italics. Do not use footnotes.

Cite all quotations, direct and indirect, using Modern Language Association format. Any paper suspected of plagiarism will be sent to Judicial Affairs. The MLA format works through parenthetical citations at the end of the sentence:

...as he later writes, "time and again the only meaning of 'correct' is 'traditional'" (Kenner 216).

The author's name and the page number (or line number) of the quote are included just before the final punctuation for in-sentence quotes, just after the punctuation for block quotes. The author's name refers to a "Works Cited" listing, which you should include as an appendix to your papers. This list includes the author's name, the book's title, its translator, the city of publication, the publishing house, and the year published:

St. Augustine. *Confessions*. Trans. R. S. Pine-Coffin. London: Penguin, 1961.

Kenner, Hugh. *The Pound Era*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971.

If you are comparing two translations, and it would be confusing to refer to them both by the original author, use the translator's name in the citation...

Ciardi's version of the same passage is deceptively simple, "Midway in our life's journey, I went astray" (Ciardi 28).

...and on the Works Cited page:

Ciardi, John, trans. *The Inferno*. By Dante. NY: Mentor, 1982.

Your papers will be graded in part by the above guidelines, but primarily I will be looking for a paper that is strongly and simply written. The argument should show serious and creative engagement with the text. The introduction should have a clear thesis and forecast the organization of your paper. The body paragraphs should be focused and build from one to the next. You should explain your position using examples from the text, but only quote as much as you use. Transitions should be smooth. The conclusion should gather together the pieces of the argument to show what the reader has gained by reading the essay. Neither the introduction nor the conclusion should contain general statements about "history," "time," "humankind," or "literature." Proofread carefully. Trade papers with a classmate; you learn a great deal by proofreading and commenting on another essay. Lastly, your paper will be much improved if you write a complete draft, let it sit two days or so, and then re-write it.

What Kinds of Papers Get What Grades

F: An "F" paper has serious and obvious problems with basic English grammar. It may not meet the general requirement that the paper perform a literary analysis, or it may be exceptionally short and vague. It is rare that the person handing in an "F" paper does not know in advance what the grade will be.

D: A "D" results from a major misunderstanding of the requirements for the assignment in particular, and a literary paper in general. It lacks a coherent argument. It has various and frequent grammatical mistakes.

C: A "C" paper may have a fragmented argument, one that jumps from point to point without a clear connecting idea. It may be several different paper ideas strung together, each insufficiently argued. It may lack sufficient evidence for its central points, or sufficient explanation of this evidence. Its analytical content may go only so far as to repeat bits of analysis from class. Alternately, this paper may have a good idea but a rough presentation. The style may make the

paper very difficult to understand. The tone may be inappropriate to a college literary essay.

B: A "B" marks a inconsistently good paper: one that suggests an intelligent and inventive idea but strays from the main point during the presentation. Or, the important terms of the analysis may be clearly articulated in the introduction and then unclearly used in the body. The paper may have some points that are strongly argued, and some that are weak. The paper may do everything that students are told to do, and only that. Possibly the paper is a solid presentation of self-evident arguments: "B" can mean boring. Comma splices and run-on sentences may pop up. The paper may have an unclear organization. A "B" paper can give many intelligent readings of the text but not offer any overall reason why the argument matters (also known as the "so what?" question).

A: An "A" paper has its thesis clearly defined in a sentence in the introduction. The framework of the paper is efficiently articulated: both the motivating question and the key ideas. The idea shows a substantial engagement with the text. There is an elegance to the presentation of the ideas: sentences are smooth, paragraphs are shaped, transitions are natural and substantive, and the proof is satisfying. No comma splices or run-on sentences appear. Each part of the presentation has attention paid to it, including the introduction and the conclusion. The payoff for our overall understanding of the text or texts is clear.

Required Texts

Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quixote*.
David Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*.
Gustav Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*.
James Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.
Mikhail Lermontov, *A Hero of Our Time*.
Marco Polo, *The Travels*.
Manuel Puig, *Kiss of the Spider Woman*.
Salman Rushdie, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*.
Chrétien de Troyes, *Arthurian Romances*.
Tales from the Thousand and One Nights.
Ch'eng En Wu, *Monkey*.

Schedule

Where no page numbers are listed, you should read the entire book, including any introductions or afterwords.

August 22	Introductions	
August 29	Chrétien de Troyes, Yvain, Perceval (p. 295 – 494)	
September 5	Marco Polo, The Travels	
September 12	Tales from the Thousand and One Nights	
September 19	Ch'eng En Wu, Monkey	
September 26	Miguel de Cervantes, Don Quixote, First Part, Parts One through Three (p. 3 – 226)	Paper A due
October 3	Miguel de Cervantes, Don Quixote, First Part, Part Four (p. 227 – 454)	
October 10	David Defoe, Robinson Crusoe	
October 17	Mikhail Lermontov, A Hero of Our Time Gustav Flaubert, Madame Bovary (p. 1 – 100)	
October 24	Gustav Flaubert, Madame Bovary (p. 100 – end)	
October 31	James Joyce, Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man	
November 7	Manuel Puig, Kiss of the Spider Woman	Paper B due
November 14	Salman Rushdie, Haroun and the Sea of Stories	
November 21	Conclusions	
November 28	Final Exam: normal class time and place Bring two blue books.	Final exam

Field Trip Policies

Off-campus Instruction and Course Activities

Off-campus, out-of-state, and foreign instruction and activities are subject to state law and University policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities. Information regarding these rules and regulations may be found at the website address http://www.utdallas.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel_Risk_Activities.htm. Additional information is available from the office of the school dean. Below is a description of any travel and/or risk-related activity associated with this course.

Only literary travel is required.

Student Conduct & Discipline

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, Part 1, Chapter VI, Section 3*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391).

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

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 or material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

Email Use

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

Withdrawal from Class

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

Student Grievance Procedures

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

Incomplete Grade Policy

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of F.

Disability Services

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:
The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22
PO Box 830688
Richardson, Texas 75083-0688
(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)

Essentially, the law requires that colleges and universities make those reasonable adjustments necessary to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability. For example, it may be necessary to remove classroom prohibitions against tape recorders or animals (in the case of dog guides) for students who are blind.

Occasionally an assignment requirement may be substituted (for example, a research paper versus an oral presentation for a student who is hearing impaired). Classes enrolled students with mobility impairments may have to be rescheduled in accessible facilities. The college or university may need to provide special services such as registration, note-taking, or mobility assistance.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

Religious Holy Days

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.