

## **LIT 2331.002: Masterpieces of World Literature**

Fall 2016	Madhavi Biswas
Section 002	Email: Madhavi.Biswas@utdallas.edu
MWF 3:00 p.m. – 3:50 p.m.	Office Number: JO 4.134
Class Location: JO 3.532	Office Hours: M 1:50 – 2:50 p.m.

**Note:** All matters associated with this course are subject to change at the instructor's discretion. Any and all changes will be communicated to students in writing.

**Course Prerequisites:** None

### **Course Description**

**LIT 2331 - Masterpieces of World Literature** (3 semester credit hours) A study of selected themes in world literature. This course will serve as a prerequisite for all upper-division literature courses. (3-0) Y

### **Journeys and Displacements in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Literature**

We will read and discuss contemporary world literature, including twenty-first century novels, short stories, essays, and films in an attempt to sample – from within our historical moment – some compelling experiences and narratives of our globalized age. The selected texts center on the themes of journey and displacements. We will discuss how issues of marginalization, mobility, environment, and identity are communicated and received in our contemporary age.

---

### **Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes**

**Masterpieces of World Literature** (LIT 2331) is a core course that fulfills the new general education objectives in the foundational component area of “language, philosophy, and culture.”

**General Education Core Objectives** associated with “language, philosophy, and culture” are:

- Critical thinking skills – Students will engage in creative and/or innovative thinking to develop skills that encourage inquiry, analysis, evaluation, synthesis of information, conceptual organization and formulating solutions.
- Communication skills – Students will demonstrate effective written, oral and visual communication.
- Social responsibility – Students will demonstrate intercultural competency and civic knowledge by engaging effectively in local, regional, national and global communities.

### **Masterpieces of World Literature 2331.002 Course Objectives:**

- Communication skills – Students will strengthen processes and use effective tools to enhance their oral communication skills by participating in and presenting individual and group assignments.
- Critical thinking skills – Students will engage processes and use effective tools to enhance their written communication skills by completing essay assignments.
- Teamwork – Students will collaborate effectively to strengthen their writing skills by engaging in peer reviews of their written essay drafts.
- Personal responsibility – Students will apply ethical principles for synthesizing research and documenting sources for their written assignments.

### **Required Textbooks**

**Novels:** (You can get any edition of these four texts. Keep in mind that the complete *Persepolis* is required.)

- Satrapi, Marjane. Trans. Mattias Ripa. *Complete Persepolis*. (2003)
- Martel, Yann. *Life of Pi*. Orlando: Harcourt, 2001.
- Zechen, Xu. Trans. Eric Abrahamsen. *Running Through Beijing*. San Francisco: Two Lines Press, 2014.
- Herrera, Yuri. Trans. Lisa Dillman. *Signs Preceding the End of the World*. London, New York: & Other Stories, 2015.

### **Films that will be discussed in class.**

- *Spirited Away*. Dir. Hayao Miyazaki. 2001.

- *Persepolis*. Dirs. Marjane Satrapi and Vincent Paronnaud. 2007.
- *Babel*. Dir. Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu. 2007.
- *The Road*. Dir. John Hillcourt. 2009.
- *Life of Pi*. Dir. Ang Lee. 2012.

## **List of Possible Short Stories and Essays: (Many will be uploaded on E-Learning)**

### **Short Stories:**

- Yi Yun Li: “A Thousand Years of Good Prayers,” “Alone,”
- Haruki Murakami: “Town of Cats,” “Chance Traveler”
- Alice Munro: “Too Much Happiness,” “Train,” “To Reach Japan,”
- Jhumpa Lahiri: “When Mr. Pirzada Comes to Dine,”  
“Durbaan”(Gatekeeper), (Selected Stories from *Interpreter of Maladies*)
- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: “Ghosts,” “Cell One,” (selected stories from *The Thing Around Your Neck*)
- Junot Diaz: “Invierno,” “Otravida Otravez” (selected stories from *This is How You Lose Her*)
- Octavia Butler: “Amnesty,”

### **Additional Reading: Essays and Opinions:**

- Salman Rushdie “Step Across this Line” (The Tanner Lecture on Human Values, 2002)
- Mahasweta Devi “The Republic of Dreams” (Inaugural address at the 2006 Frankfurt Book Fair)
- Michael Chabon “Trickster in a Suit of Lights: Thoughts on the Modern Short Story,” “Imaginary Homelands” (*Maps and Legends: Reading and Writing Along the Borderlands*, 2009)
- Jhumpa Lahiri: “Teach Yourself Italian,” (*The New Yorker*, Dec. 2015)
- Junot Diaz: “Mind the Gap: Crossing Imaginary Lines” (Pen Ideas in Dialogue, April 2016, YouTube)

## **Academic Calendar**

### **Week 1 (Aug 22/24/26)**

Introduction and Syllabus

*Spirited Away* (Film) and discussion

### **Week 2 (Aug 29/31/Sept 2)**

*Persepolis* (Book 1) Discussion

*Persepolis* (Book 2) Discussion

*Persepolis* : Film

### **Weeks 3 and 4 (Sept 7/9) (Sept 12/14/16)**

*Life of Pi* (Novel) Discussion

*Life of Pi* (Film)

Presentations Begin

### **Weeks 5 and 6 (Sept 19/21/23) (Sept 26/28/30)**

*Running through Beijing*

*The Road*

Presentations

### **Weeks 7 and 8 (Oct 3/5/7) (Oct. 10/12/14)**

*Signs Preceding the End of the World*

Discussion

Presentations

### **Week 9 (Oct 17/19/21)**

Rushdie, Devi, Chabon (essays)

Presentations

### **Week 10 (Oct. 24/26/28)**

Lahiri, Diaz,

*Babel*

*Presentations*

### **Week 11 (Oct 31, Nov 2/4)**

Short Stories (Yiyun Li, Murakami, Munro)

*The Road*

Presentations

### **Week 12 (Nov. 7/9/11)**

Short Stories (Lahiri, Adichi, Diaz, Butler)

Presentations

### **Weeks 13 (Nov 14/16/18)**

Presentations

**Week 14 (Nov 21 – 26)**  
**Fall Break and Thanksgiving**

**Weeks 15 (Nov 28/30 Dec 2)**  
Rough Drafts are due:  
Conferences

**Week 15 (Dec 5/7)**  
Presentations  
Final Paper Due: Dec 7

---

**Requirements and Assignments:**

- 10%: Attendance and pop quizzes.
- 15%: Participation in class discussion (one insightful comment per class)
- 15%: One 10-minute presentation on a short story, chapter, or film
- 30%: Weekly reading response paper (9 total of 12 opportunities, one page each)
- 30%: Final paper: 5 pages, plus "Works Cited" page in MLA format

**Grading Policy**

**Grading Scale**

97-100 A+	87-89 B+	77-79 C+	67-69 D+	0-59 F
94-96 A	84-86 B	74-76 C	64-66 D	
90-93 A-	80-83 B-	70-73 C-	60-63 D-	

---

**Course & Instructor Policies**

**Attendance**

This is a discussion based class and class participation is essential. Your written work as well as your informed oral participation (which includes preparation before coming into class) will define your grades. You are allowed 4 absences, no questions asked. Save them for when you really need them. Each additional absence after that will result in 4% taken off your entire grade (-4 out of 100 per absence).

**Punctuality**

The class begins on time and you are required to be in class when it begins. I take attendance at the beginning of the class and if you are more than 5 minutes late or leave class early it will be noted as a “tardy.” Three tardies equal one absence. Persistent tardiness will directly affect your class participation grade.

### **Late Work**

No late work will be accepted.

---

### **Comet Creed**

*This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same:*

“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”

---

### **UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures**

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University’s policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus.

Please go to <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for these policies.

***The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.***