GREAT WORKS OF LITERATURE I

Comparative Literature 2800–Section SMWA
Monday/Wednesday 5:40–7:20 pm
Room: VC 4-120

Instructor: Giorgio Galbussera
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Office: VC 6-280
Office hours: M/W 4:45–5:30 pm and T 7:00–7:40 pm (or by appointment on Zoom)

Course Description

Through close reading and discussion of several literary texts belonging to different genres and cultures, we will do a survey of some major works of world literature from the ancient times to around the 17th century. The main objective of the class is to provide you with a set of skills that will help you in the reading and interpretation of a literary text, as well as comparison between different texts. This class will require active participation on your part and keeping up with the reading and assignment schedule.

Learning Goals

Students who complete this course should be able to:

- Interpret meaning in literary texts by paying close attention to authors' choices of detail, vocabulary, and style.
- Discuss the relationship between different genres of literary texts and the multicultural environments from which they spring.
- Articulate a critical evaluation and appreciation of a literary work's strengths and limitations.
- Write critical essays employing a clearly articulated thesis statement, appropriate textual citations, and a close analysis of literary style and content.

Required Text

- *The Norton Anthology of World Literature.* Shorter Fifth Edition, **Vol. 1**. W.W. Norton. **ISBN 978-1-324-06330-8**
- Additional material will be shared in class and/or made available on Brightspace.

Class Participation

Active, respectful, and interested participation is highly encouraged and will be an important factor in calculating your final grade. You are supposed to come to class on time, always bring the book and be prepared to discuss the texts; if you share your ideas and impressions, the class will be much more interesting for everybody!
You are allowed a maximum of **three unexcused absences**; an excessive number of absences will adversely affect your final grade. If you miss a class, you are supposed to catch up, by contacting either me or one of your classmates. Persistent lateness will also be penalized.

Course Requirements:

- **Papers**
  There will be **two short (2-3 page) papers responding to one of the readings.** I will give you topics and further instructions well in advance of the paper deadline. All papers **must be submitted on Brightspace by the deadline.**

- **Exams**
  There will be **two in-class exams (on October 22 and December 3)** that may include brief essays, identifications and discussion of topics encountered in the texts read and addressed during class discussion. Since it is difficult to schedule make-ups, please let me know as soon as possible if for a **serious reason** you are unable to take the exams at the scheduled time.

- **Discussion Board Responses**
  On the dates indicated in the schedule, you will be asked to respond to a prompt about the readings in a Discussion Board on Brightspace; in order to receive full credit, entries must be completed by 6:45 pm, so that I can have a look at them before class. Late entries will be given partial credit.

- **Final Video Project**
  Instead of a final exam, there will be a **video presentation project** based on the texts read during the semester, and other materials you may want to include. I will give you further directions well in advance of the deadline. Videos **must be posted on Brightspace by the date indicated (during Finals' Week).**

- **Film Response**
  Later in the semester, you will be asked to watch a film that relates to some of the readings from the semester, and post a **response in a Brightspace Discussion**, following a prompt.

Grading Policy

Two Short Papers	10% each
Two In-class Exams	15% each
Final Video Project	15%
Discussion Board Responses	10%
Film Response	5%
Attendance and participation	20%

Your final course grade will be calculated following the official Baruch Undergraduate Course Catalog and website as follows:

Letter grade	GPA	Percentage
A	4.0	93–100
A-	3.7	90–92.9
B+	3.3	87.1–89.9
B	3.0	83–87
B-	2.7	80–82.9

C+	2.3	77.1–79.9
C	2.0	73–77
C-	1.7	70–72.9
D+	1.3	67.1–69.9
D	1.0	60–67
F	0	below 60

Please, keep in mind that CUNY has gone back to the pre-COVID course withdrawal policy: the deadline for withdrawing from a class with a **grade of W** is **November 6.**

Academic Integrity

Please be advised that I fully support Baruch College's policy on Academic Honesty, which states, in part: "Baruch College expects that students will give credit to the proper sources for their work, meet their professors' expectations when doing group work, and prepare for and take examinations without the assistance of prohibited sources or tools. Penalties for academic dishonesty may include academic sanctions, such as failing the course(s) in question or otherwise receiving reduced grades, and/or disciplinary sanctions, which include suspension or expulsion from the institution."

In the summer of 2024, the CUNY Board of Trustees approved policies that identify the use of generative AI (artificial intelligence) without permission from the instructor as a violation of academic integrity policy, as is copying or paraphrasing the content generated without citation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and follow the academic integrity policies. You can read the full policy here.

Baruch College Writing Center

The Baruch College Writing Center offers free one-to-one support to all Baruch students. The Center's professional consultants work collaboratively with you to deepen your writing and English language skills. At any step in the writing process, they'll help you become a more independent, confident, and versatile writer. In order to schedule an appointment, log on to their website, https://blogs.baruch.cuny.edu/writingcenter/ You are strongly encouraged to make use of the Writing Center for writing your essays. Appointment times do fill up quickly, so make your appointment soon!

Student Disability Services

Baruch College is committed to making individuals with disabilities full participants in its programs, services, and activities through compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. It is the policy of Baruch College that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall be denied access to or participation in any program, service, or activity offered by the university. In September 2024, CUNY announced the implementation of its new student disability management system, CUNY Accommodate, which will officially be launched on January 25, 2025. This new system streamlines the accommodation request process for you, the student. I am now pleased to share with you a link to the CUNY Accommodate Portal, as well as Instructional Videos and Documentation Guides (Student Resources). These resources are self-paced, explain aspects of the system in detail, and provide instructions for accessing and using CUNY Accommodate.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Date	Readings and in class activities	Assignments
W 8/27	Welcome and course introduction	
M 9/1	**LABOR DAY–COLLEGE CLOSED**	
W 9/3	**Ancient Epic:** Read introductions to "The Ancient Greek World" and "Homer" (pp 135–156)	
M 9/8	Homer, *The Iliad*, Books I and XXII	
W 9/10	Homer, *The Odyssey*, Book I	**Discussion #1**
M 9/15	Homer, *The Odyssey*, Books IX	
W 9/17	Homer, *The Odyssey*, Book X	**Discussion #2**
M 9/22	**NO CLASSES**	
W 9/24	**NO CLASSES**	
M 9/29	Virgil, *The Aeneid*, Books II and IV	
W 10/1	**NO CLASSES**	
M 10/6	**Ancient Lyric Poetry:** Sappho, poems # 1, 16, 94 (pp 372–377) Catullus, poems [Brightspace]	
W 10/8	**India's Heroic Age:** *The Bhagavad-Gita*, introduction and Chapters 1 and 2 (pp 706–715)	**Discussion #3**
M 10/13	**COLUMBUS/INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY–COLLEGE CLOSED**	
T 10/14	**Class does not meet**	**Paper #1 due**
W 10/15	*The Bhagavad-Gita*, Chapters 3, 6 and 11 (pp 715–723)	
M 10/20	**NO CLASSES**	
W 10/22	**Exam #1 (in class)**	
F 10/24	**Monday Schedule** Lucretius, *De rerum natura*, excerpts [on Brightspace]	
M 10/27	**Greek Tragedy:** Read introduction to Ancient Athenian Drama (pp 387–393)	
W 10/29	Sophocles, *Antigone* [Brightspace]	
M 11/3	Sophocles, *Antigone* [Brightspace]	**Discussion #4**
W 11/5	Class meets at the **Baruch Performing Arts Center (lower level of VC)** for the Joel Segall Great Works Staged Reading performance of Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*	

M 11/10	Euripides, *Medea* [Brightspace]	**Discussion #5**
W 11/12	Euripides, *Medea* [Brightspace]	
M 11/17	Marie de France, from *Lais*: "Prologue," "Bisclavret," and "Laüstic" (pp 978–989)	**Discussion #6**
W 11/19	Dante Alighieri, *Inferno*, Canto I and Canto III (lines 1–18)	
M 11/24	Dante Alighieri, *Inferno*, Canto V	
W 11/26	Watch FILM and post response on Brightspace **(CLASS DOES NOT MEET IN PERSON)**	**Paper #2 due**
	THANKSGIVING BREAK: NO CLASSES **Thursday, November 27–Sunday, November 30**	
M 12/1	Dante Alighieri, *Inferno*, Canto XXVI and Canto XXXIII [Brightspace]	**Film Response on Brightspace**
W 12/3	**Exam #2 (in class)**	
M 12/8	Giovanni Boccaccio, *Decameron*, First Story of the First Day [on Brightspace]	
W 12/10	Giovanni Boccaccio, *Decameron*, Ninth Story of the Fourth Day, and Tenth Story of the Tenth Day [on Brightspace]	**Discussion #7**
M 12/15	Pedro Calderón de la Barca, *Life Is a Dream* [on Brightspace] Wrap-up class: questions, comments, final project review…	
M 12/22	**Final Video Project**	**Video Project due (Post on Brightspace)**