“I’m a believer in the power of knowledge and the ferocity of beauty, so from my point of view, your life is already artful—waiting, just waiting, for you to make it art.”

— Toni Morrison

Annihilation (Garland, 2018) (based on the novel Annihilation by Jeff VanderMeer, 2014)
# FALL 2023 SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>21L UNITS</th>
<th>CREDIT</th>
<th>SUBJECT TITLE</th>
<th>INSTRUCTOR</th>
<th>DAY</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21L.001</td>
<td>3-0-0</td>
<td>Foundations of Western Literature: Homer to Dante</td>
<td>Frampton, S.</td>
<td>MW</td>
<td>11-12:30p</td>
<td>4-144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21L.003</td>
<td>3-0-0</td>
<td>Great Novels in English [Reading Fiction]</td>
<td>Buzard, J.</td>
<td>TR</td>
<td>7-8:30p</td>
<td>2-103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21L.004</td>
<td>3-0-0</td>
<td>Reading Poetry</td>
<td>Tasscott, S.</td>
<td>MW</td>
<td>7-8:30p</td>
<td>4-238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21L.005 J</td>
<td>3-0-0</td>
<td>Introduction to Drama</td>
<td>Alexandre, S.</td>
<td>TR</td>
<td>11-12:30p</td>
<td>5-232</td>
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<tr>
<td>21L.011 J</td>
<td>3-0-6</td>
<td>Introduction to Film Studies (Lecture)</td>
<td>Svensson, A.</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>3-30-5p</td>
<td>3-277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction to Film Studies (Screening)</td>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>3-30-5p</td>
<td>3-277</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Introduction to Film Studies (Recitation 1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
<td>3-30-5p</td>
<td>3-277</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Introduction to Film Studies (Recitation 2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
<td>4-30-5p</td>
<td>3-277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21L.012</td>
<td>3-0-0</td>
<td>Truth, Lies, and Fiction [Forms of Western Narrative]</td>
<td>Doyle, C.</td>
<td>MW</td>
<td>11-12:30p</td>
<td>56-162</td>
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<tr>
<td>21L.015</td>
<td>3-0-0</td>
<td>School Stories [Children’s Literature]</td>
<td>Gubar, M.</td>
<td>MW</td>
<td>1-2:30p</td>
<td>4-257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21L.020 J</td>
<td>3-0-0</td>
<td>Globalization</td>
<td>Resnick, M.</td>
<td>TR</td>
<td>3-4:30p</td>
<td>14N-325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21L.032 J</td>
<td>3-0-0</td>
<td>Afrofuturism, Magical Realism, and Other Otherwise Worlds</td>
<td>Terrones, J.</td>
<td>MW</td>
<td>3-30-5p</td>
<td>56-167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21L.040 J</td>
<td>3-0-0</td>
<td>Foundations of East Asian Literature and Culture: From Confucius to the Beats</td>
<td>Denecke, W.</td>
<td>MW</td>
<td>9:30-11am</td>
<td>2-103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21L.310</td>
<td>2-0-4</td>
<td>Contemporary Literature [Bestsellers]</td>
<td>Finch, L.</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>11-12:30p</td>
<td>56-191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21L.315</td>
<td>2-0-4</td>
<td>Science Fiction [Prizewinners]</td>
<td>Finch, L.</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>12-30-2p</td>
<td>56-192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21L.320</td>
<td>2-0-4</td>
<td>Reading Paradise Lost [Big Books]</td>
<td>Fuller, M.</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2-30-4p</td>
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<tr>
<td>21L.480 J</td>
<td>3-0-0</td>
<td>Identities and Intersections: Queer Literatures</td>
<td>Terrones, J.</td>
<td>MW</td>
<td>9:30-11am</td>
<td>4-253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21L.489 J</td>
<td>3-0-0</td>
<td>Interactive Narrative</td>
<td>Montfort, N.</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>2-5p</td>
<td>14E-310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21L.493 J</td>
<td>4-0-6</td>
<td>Gateway to Japanese Literature and Culture</td>
<td>Denecke, W.</td>
<td>MW</td>
<td>11-12:30p</td>
<td>4-253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21L.756</td>
<td>3-0-0</td>
<td>Nature Poetry [Writing and Reading Poems]</td>
<td>Bennett, J.</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2-5p</td>
<td>8-119</td>
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<tr>
<td>21L.807</td>
<td>3-0-0</td>
<td>Greek I (ends Oct 20)</td>
<td>Driscoll, E.</td>
<td>TR</td>
<td>11:30-1p</td>
<td>1-134</td>
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<tr>
<td>21L.808</td>
<td>3-0-0</td>
<td>Greek II (begins Oct 23)</td>
<td>Frampton, S.</td>
<td>MW</td>
<td>1-2:30p</td>
<td>4-146</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SEMINAR

| 21L.702   | 3-0-0  | Toni Morrison [Studies in Fiction] | Alexandre, S. | TR  | 1-2:30p  | 4-144 |
| 21L.705   | 3-0-0  | Jane Austen and After [Major Authors] | Buzard, J. | TR  | 3-30-5p  | 14N-112 |
| 21L.706   | 3-3-6  | Indigenous Film and Television [Studies in Film] | Doyle, C. | MW  | 2-30-4p  | 4-146 |

Note: Rooms and times subject to change

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21L Literature Subjects at a Glance – Fall 2023

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Note: Rooms and times subject to change
21L.001 (H, CI-H) Foundations of Western Literature: Homer to Dante

Studies a broad range of texts essential to understanding the two great sources of Western conceptions of the world and humanity’s place within it: the ancient world of Greece and Rome and the Judeo-Christian world that challenged and absorbed it. Readings vary but usually include works by Homer, Sophocles, Aristotle, Plato, Virgil, St. Augustine, and Dante. Enrollment limited.

21L.003 (H, CI-H) Reading Fiction: Great Novels in English

A handful of great short to mid-sized novels from a golden age in English fiction, circa 1815-1930. We’ll study Jane Austen’s *Emma* (1815), Charlotte Bronte’s *Jane Eyre* (1847), Charles Dickens’s *Great Expectations* (1860-61), and Thomas Hardy’s *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), and Virginia Woolf’s *To the Lighthouse* (1927). Topics will include (but not be limited to): social class and its powers and limits; women’s place and power in society; the evolution of fictional realism; the novel of character development (Bildungsroman); the emergence of literary modernism. Some attention will be paid to the historical context in which these works were written, but the main emphasis will be on learning to read some classic texts with insight and appreciation.
21L.004 (H, CI-H) Reading Poetry

An introduction to poetry in English. We will explore poems written during several periods and in several genres (nature-poems, narratives, the epic, sonnets, odes, experimental forms). Focus will be less on names and dates than on tactics of analytic reading. Poets whose work we’ll read include William Shakespeare, John Milton, John Keats, Emily Dickinson, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Robert Frost, Langston Hughes, Sylvia Plath, Elizabeth Bishop, Langston Hughes, June Jordan, Seamus Heaney, Derek Walcott, Li-young Lee, Marilyn Chin, and others. Special course-related events (readings, lectures, film screenings) will take place on selected evenings throughout the term. Regular classroom hours will be reduced in the weeks for which a special event is scheduled.

21L.005[J] (A, CI-H) Introduction to Drama

In her autobiographical play, *To Be Young Gifted and Black* (1969), the playwright Lorraine Hansberry wrote: “I think that virtually every human being is dramatically interesting.” In our own lives—through our own verbal and body language—we alternate between deprecating and eagerly embracing what it means to be dramatic: “Oh gosh, he is so dramatic,” we accuse! “Yes, honey! I’m absolutely a drama queen,” we might hear someone proudly profess. “Dee-rahmu!” we drawl to diagnose a scandalous story. Drama is everywhere around us asserting itself: provoking us, amusing us, challenging us, prompting us, inspiring us, catching the conscience of Kings even—effectively acting on us in some way or another. By reading plays and watching video recordings of some of them, we will attempt to understand what drama does best and uniquely as a literary genre. Toward the end of the semester, we will also consider the various forms drama can take. Where, for example, do we situate a TikTok video, a historical reenactment, a staged protest, a walk down the runway of an underground ballroom, or a flash mob in an Introduction to Drama course? Our encounters may include, but are not limited to, plays by Samuel Beckett, Quiara Alegría Hudes, Lorraine Hansberry, August Wilson, David Henry Hwang, Suzan-Lori Parks, and Shakespeare.
21L.010 (CI-H) Writing with Shakespeare

William Shakespeare didn’t go to college. If he could time-travel like Dr. Who, he would be stunned to find his words on a university syllabus. But he would not be surprised at the way we will be using those words in this class, because the study of rhetoric was essential to all education in his day. We too will focus on communication using words, with Shakespeare as a capacious model and inspiration for dialogue, self-presentation, and writing. By writing ‘with’ Shakespeare—critically, creatively, in groups, and in a variety of media—you will have ample opportunity to explore the elements and occasions that shape effective, meaningful communication. We will consider how his plays have in turn been reinterpreted across the globe: in addition to reciting famous speeches, we will analyze both text and film versions of the comedy *Much Ado About Nothing* and the tragedy *Othello*, and you will explore an online MITx module as preparation to perform dramatic scenes from what is now a ‘problem play,’ *The Merchant of Venice*. Finally, we will look at how Shakespeare revises his stories and style in the late ‘romance’ *A Winter’s Tale*. In the process, you will get to ‘play’ a Shakespeare scholar, and debate the reasons for the playwright’s enduring power. Nevertheless, our aim is less to appreciate his works as an end in themselves than to draw on his remarkable drama (including its vocabulary, variety, verve, and verbal command) in order to help you improve your own writing, speaking, analytic thinking, use of resources, and understanding of media today.

21L.011 (A, CI-H) Introduction to Film Studies

Concentrates on close analysis and criticism of a wide range of films, including works from the early silent period, documentary and avant-garde films, European art cinema, Hong Kong cinema, and contemporary Hollywood fare. Through comparative reading of films from different eras and countries, students develop the skills to turn their in-depth formal analyses into interpretations and explore theoretical issues related to spectatorship. Syllabus varies from term to term, but usually includes such filmmakers as the Coppolas, Spielberg, Eisenstein, Keaton, Godard, Peele, Jenkins, Chan, Deren, Varda, the Wachowskis, and Wong.
21L.012 (H, CI-H) Forms of Western Narrative: Truth, Lies, and Fiction

Once upon a time we began telling stories and we never stopped. Why do we tell them? What makes for a good story? How are the best stories told? This course examines leading examples of major genres of storytelling in the Western tradition including epics, fairy tales, novels, short stories, films, and television. Works studied will include Homer’s *Odyssey*, Grimm’s *Cinderella*, Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*, Virginia Woolf’s *To the Lighthouse*, and Fritz Lang’s *M*. The class will investigate how the formal construction of these stories shape our desires, perceptions, and beliefs. Students will also be introduced to theoretical readings from thinkers such as Marx, Freud, Auerbach, and Jameson.

21L.015 (H, CI-H) Children’s Literature: School Stories

What do school stories teach us? In this course, we will analyze a wide range of youth literature set in and around schools, from amusingly fanciful picture books to powerfully moving young adult novels. In the process, we will consider questions such as: What techniques do children’s authors and artists use to engage the attention of readers? Do they represent the process of schooling as disciplinary, liberating, or something in between? And how does the representation of schooling change over time, as more stories are written by and about members of historically oppressed groups—stories in which characters navigate their way through, around, or away from educational systems and spaces not originally built for them? Texts we will read in this course include Sarah Fielding’s *The Governess* (1749), June Jordan’s *His Own Where* (1971), Ruby Bridges’ *Through My Eyes* (1999), Meg Medina’s *Yaqui Delgado Wants to Kick Your Ass* (2013), and—welcome to Boston!—Sam Graham-Felsen’s *Green* (2018).
21L.020J (H, CI-H) Globalization: The Good, the Bad and the In-Between

This subject examines the cultural, artistic, social, and political impact of globalization across international borders in an historical context. Novels and short stories as well as case studies on global health, human trafficking, and labor migration illuminate the shaping influence of contemporary globalization on gender, race, ethnicity, and class. Guest lecturers visit class as we examine the impact of globalization on cultural identity, the arts, the politics of language, and the media. How has migration changed notions of cultural and racial hybridity? What can we learn from specific examples of global media and expressive culture including popular music and film? In what ways has globalization affected human rights? Students develop sensitivity to other cultures and the ability to read broadly across national boundaries. Furthermore, the emphasis on the historical context gives students a foundation to continue work in literature, history, and the arts from a global perspective.

21L.032J (H, CI-H) Afrofuturism, Magical Realism, and Other Otherwise Worlds

Is this the only possible world? Or are there others free of white supremacy, colonialism, capitalism, patriarchy, and ecological devastation? What might it mean not just to imagine these possibilities but to listen for other worlds that already exist alongside our own? In this course, we will examine how Afrofuturism, magical realism, and other forms of the fantastic in North and Latin America not only envision alternatives to the current order but also identify existing ways of being otherwise in the world. In addition to analyzing texts and films, we will incorporate theoretical insights from black studies, latinx studies, queer studies, and feminism into our discussions. Some of the authors we will read include Octavia Butler, N.K. Jemisin, Samuel Delany, Gabriel García Márquez, José María Arguedas, and Alejo Carpentier; films we will watch include Candyman, Nope, The Devil’s Knot, and Embrace of the Serpent; and pop culture narratives we will study include Janelle Monáe’s Dirty Computer, Ta-Nehisi Coates’ The Intergalactic Empire of Wakanda, Barry Jenkins’ The Underground Railroad, Disney’s Encanto and Beyoncé’s Black is King.
21L.040J (H, CI-H) Foundations of East Asian Literature and Culture: From Confucius to the Beats

Today we have the luxury of reading more literatures in more languages than ever before, giving us the opportunity to explore the great diversity of what is called “literature” across the time and space of world history. This course introduces you to some of the most seminal and thought-provoking texts from East Asia (China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam), and is conceived as complementary to the Foundations of Western Literature course in the Literature curriculum. We persistently ask how “literature” looks different when viewed through the literary heritage of East Asia: what does poetry written in Chinese characters accomplish that alphabetic poetry cannot? How does Buddhist reincarnation change the way you tell stories and devise novels? Why is Japan the world’s only major literature where female authors dominated certain literary genres as early as the 11th century? How did the complex interplay in Japan, Korea, and Vietnam between high-brow literature in the cosmopolitan language of Literary Chinese, and vernacular or popular literatures expand the possibilities of literary expressivity, gender figuration, and identity play? What was it that made American avant garde writers of the Beat-generation so ecstatic about classical Chinese and Japanese poetry?

Our strategic journey through East Asian literatures and cultures will take us through philosophical master texts such as Confucius, Laozi, and Zhuangzi; Tang poetry; China’s classical novels such as Journey to the West; Japan’s female-authored tales and diaries, such as The Tale of Genji and The Pillow Book; Korea’s classical novel The Nine Cloud Dream, and the heart-wrenching pansori play Song of Ch’unhyang.
21L.310 Bestsellers: Contemporary Literature

This class will take you through a sampling of bestselling 21st-century fiction, where we will cover topics such as climate crisis, public health, and social and economic inequity. We will read novels, short stories, and poetry that not only represent the current moment, but that also use fiction as a way to imagine better worlds. Assessment (presentations, short written responses, and group projects) is based on consistent participation and engagement throughout the semester, rather than a final paper.

21L.315 Prizewinners: Science Fiction

The American author Octavia E. Butler once wrote: “There is nothing new under the sun; but there are new suns.” This ability to up-end what we consider possible and to allow us to imagine differently is the hallmark of speculative fiction. In this class we will read contemporary literature that makes use of this radical capacity in order to challenge the oppressive structures of race, gender, colonialism/settler colonialism, and capitalism that we currently live under. By tackling the social injustices of the present, the writers we will read invite us to imagine our futures differently.

This sampling class will give you an introduction to 21st-century science fiction. Assessment (presentations, short written responses, and group projects) is based on consistent participation and engagement throughout the semester, rather than a final paper.

21L.320 Big Books: Reading Paradise Lost

Overturn the government. Invent your own belief system. Go blind. Then rewrite “Genesis,” and reimagine the origins of everything: culture, knowledge, gender, human beings, and the universe. That’s the story behind John Milton’s Paradise Lost: arguably the greatest epic poem written in English.

The focus of the class will be on reading and discussion of Milton’s text. Work will include frequent, informal writing, leading discussions, one or two short quizzes, and a final reflection paper.
21L.480J (H) Literature and Film: Re/presenting Sex and Gender

The focus of this course will be to analyze the ways in which sex and gender are represented and transformed by literature and film. In the first part of the course, we will consider the representation, misrepresentation, and erasure of gendered and sexualized identities, examining feminist critiques and the queering of Hollywood classics such as Hitchcock’s Rear Window (1954) and Hawk’s Gentlemen Prefer Blondes (1953). In the second part of the course, we will explore a wide variety of books and films that challenge and reimagine dominant constructions of gender and sexuality. Topics will include gender fluidity in Virginia Woolf’s Orlando (1928), oppressive domesticity in Chantal Akerman’s Jeanne Dielman (1975), the legendary drag queens and ‘voguers’ of Livingston’s Paris is Burning (1991), and normalizing “illicit” desire in contemporary television. Students will hone their critical capacities through the study of key theoretical texts that engage with questions of gender, race, queerness, transgender identity, and intersectionality.

21L.480J (H) Identities and Intersections: Queer Literatures

This course will focus on LGBT literature from the late nineteenth century to the present with an emphasis on fiction and poetry. In particular, we will analyze how LGBT identities and their literary representations have changed over time. Our discussion will give special attention to the ways in which race, class, and disability intersect with sexuality and gender. Some of the authors we will read include James Baldwin, Virginia Woolf, Samuel Delany, Tony Kushner, Alison Bechdel, Cherrie Moraga, Janet Mock, and Audre Lorde.
**21L.471 (H) Gateway to Japanese Literature and Culture**

This course surveys the nature, history, and distinctive features of Japanese literature and cultural history from the beginnings through the threshold of modernity. Featuring Japanese texts from the seventh through the twentieth centuries, we learn to appreciate their relevance in the historical and cultural context in which authors wrote them, in the broader context of literary traditions from around the world, and for the humanistic and aesthetic powers, which makes them poignant to us today. We will examine various genres of poetry, historiography and mythological lore, prose tales and fiction, diaries, essays, Noh and puppet plays, short stories and novels. Through close readings of original texts in translation, we will address larger questions such as: what is the cultural, social and aesthetic meaning behind the various genres Japanese authors developed? How did it shape the content, purpose, form, and dissemination of their works? Why and how did Japanese literature develop in intense dialogue with older Chinese precedents? Why did authors write in two different literary languages, vernacular Japanese and literary Chinese and how does that make Japanese literature world historically distinctive? Where and how is Japanese literary heritage alive and creative today, in Japan and the world?

Surveying thirteen centuries of one of the world’s most enduring literary traditions will give us the privilege to witness in fast-motion, like in a historical laboratory, how Japanese authors increasingly enjoyed adapting, satirizing, and rewriting earlier themes and models as their literary tradition grew older, while also constantly developing new forms suited to the urgent needs of their time. Includes an eco-literature lab, a creative writing lab, and a history-writing lab for collaborative experimentation.

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**21L.580 (A) Translation: Lost in Translation: World Literature in the Age of Machine**

Today, translation is frequently delegated to machines. But despite impressive technological advances, literary texts quickly demonstrate the limits of artificial intelligence. Why do sophisticated machines struggle with literary translation? We will address this question by engaging perspectives articulated by a range of influential thinkers – from Luther’s reflections on translating the Bible, to Goethe and Schleiermacher’s thoughts on translation as an interpretive act, to twentieth-century responses developed by Nietzsche and Benjamin. Over the course of the semester, students will create a structured portfolio of their own translations with critical reflections that will connect their experiences as translators to issues broached in the theoretical texts. Equipped with a nuanced appreciation of translation as an art, we will turn our attention to machine translation and critically assess the affordances and limitations of translation engines to generate satisfactory output in response to a variety of literary and expository genre. Our discoveries will provide us with a deeper understanding and critical appreciation of a variety of characteristics of literary discourse. Oral fluency in a foreign language is not required, but the willingness and comfort to engage with a language other than English using dictionaries and other tools is required.
21L.607 Greek I

Introduces rudiments of ancient Greek - the language of Plato, Sophocles, Thucydides, and Euclid, and the basis for that of the New Testament - to students with little or no prior knowledge of the subject. Aimed at laying a foundation to begin reading ancient and/or medieval texts. Greek I and Greek II may be combined (after completion of both) to count as a single HASS-H.

21L.608 Greek II

Introductory Greek subject for students with some prior knowledge of basic grammar and vocabulary. Intended to refresh and enrich ability to read ancient and/or medieval literary and historical texts. May be taken independently of Greek I with permission of instructor. Greek I and Greek II may be combined (after completion of both) to count as a single HASS-H.

21L.613/21L.614 Latin Readings & Advanced Latin Reading: Latin Women Poets

Introduction to reading Latin literature in the original language. Provides a bridge between the study of Latin grammar and the reading of Latin authors. Improves knowledge of the language through careful examination of literary texts, focusing on prose and poetry in alternate years. Builds proficiency in reading Latin and develops appreciation for basic features of style and genre.

Building on 21L.613, develops the ability to read and analyze Latin literary texts, focusing on prose and poetry in alternate years. Increases fluency in reading comprehension and recognition of stylistic, generic, and grammatical features. Texts vary from term to term. May be repeated once for credit if content differs. 21L.613 and 21L.614, or two terms of 21L.614, may be combined by petition (after completion of both) to count as a single HASS-H.
21W.756 (A) Writing and Reading Poems: Nature Poetry

This course provides an interdisciplinary exploration of African diaspora poetics, with a special emphasis on environmental poetry. Following Ed Roberson’s contention that “the world does not run the earth, but the earth does run the world” we will linger with the poetry of those who view literary studies not only or primarily as an institutional enterprise, but as planetary thinking, as a commitment to care for the earth. We will draw on a range of texts to wrestle with the key concerns of black writers from the 19th century through the present. As the course title promises, we will indeed read and write poems; but we will also collectively listen to music, study film, and take field trips to local performance venues and community archives. We will establish a workshop space that is also a space of experimentation: one where we craft new works, new forms, new approaches, as an ensemble.

21L.639J (H) Globalization and its Discontents: Spanish-speaking Nations: Consuming Latin America

What do we actually mean by “Latin America”? Is it possible to talk meaningfully about a common identity in a region with such enormous racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity? We will tackle these questions by studying contemporary film, literature, popular music, television, and visual art. In particular, we will study cultural exchanges between Latin America and the rest of the world. How do Latin Americans consume (or resist) foreign goods, ideas, and influences? How do Latin American writers, directors, and artists create work that speaks to both local and international audiences? Course materials will include a focus on work produced by Black and Indigenous authors, filmmakers, artists, and performers from the region. Taught in Spanish.
21L.702 (H, CI-M) Studies in Fiction: Toni Morrison

This subject provides a comprehensive and critical overview of the literary and scholarly work of the inimitable writer Toni Morrison. Morrison’s novels are well known for being stylistically dense and sometimes difficult to read and understand. But to borrow Morrison’s own words, from *The Bluest Eye*, the semester-long exercise of reading, thinking, and writing about her work promises to be “a productive and fructifying pain.” My goal is to ensure that all participants in the class actually gain something useful and fortifying from such an in-depth analysis of her oeuvre. As we allow ourselves the opportunity to meditate on her writings, during the course of the semester, I hope we will open ourselves to the possibility of growing more intellectually conscious not only as readers, writers, and thinkers in the classroom, but also as compassionate citizens out in the world. We will watch interviews of her and read seven or eight of her novels, some of her speeches, her short story “Recitatif,” and critical essays about her work.

21L.702 (H, CI-M) Studies in Poetry: Poetry of Witness

The lyric poem has become one of the few vehicles for the formal of subjective experience, the voice of “the personal.” At least, that is how we popularly characterize the lyric. But what happens when the lyric’s commitments to the personal, or the psychological abut the facts of the social and political worlds and ideologies? How does the “personal” lyric reform when challenged by repressive regimes, absolutist ideologies, or historical traumas? How do poetic forms and ambitions change? does the lyric poem adapt or resist, under such pressures? –or [less defensively], can lyric poetry serve a documentarian purpose? A subversive purpose? Can it bear moral witness or provoke political change? Does poetry really make nothing happen?

We move through various genres and thematic modes [pressures on the lyric under totalitarian/rightist regimes, under occupation, under conditions of extreme poverty, in situations of repression based on gender or object-choice, in exile, under threat of linguistic extinction, and in other situations.] We consider whether literary Modernism was a dead-end, or incomplete project, and we consider how satire, or pastiche, or laugher, or formal reorganization, can also become forms of social “testimony” or witness. We work through poems by South American and Spanish writers [Federico García Lorca, Gabriela Mistral, Antonio Machado, Pablo Neruda], Greek/North African [Constantine Cavafy], Russian [Anna Akhmatova, Boris Pasternak], Ukrainian and the Ukrainian Diaspora [e.g., Ilya Kaminsky], Caribbean [Aimé Césaire], Palestinian [Mahmoud Darwish], German [Paul Celan, Bertolt Brecht, Thomas Mann, Nelly Sachs], and Polish [including Czesław Miłosz, Wisława Szymborska].
21L.705 (H, CI-M) Major Authors: Jane Austen and After

This class features close examination of a few classic novels from a great age of novel-writing, the 19th century. We will most likely read: Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* and *Persuasion*; either Elizabeth Gaskell’s *Wives and Daughters* or Margaret Oliphant’s *Miss Marjoribanks*; and (definitely) George Eliot’s incomparable *Middlemarch*. (George Eliot was the pseudonym of Mary Ann Evans).

The books we’ll study were written by women and feature female protagonists facing a variety of challenges in the society of their day. They take place in a changing rural England in the early to middle stages of the Industrial Revolution — a time when the long-established rules of society were under pressure and new questions arose about such matters as family, courtship and marriage, women’s ambition and scope for action, pride and honor, interpretation and rationalization, innovation and conservatism, old and new money, authority and power. The authors of these novels used their fiction to probe the question of what it means for individuals and society to become “modern.”

21L.706 (H, CI-M) Studies in Film: Indigenous Film and Television

This course examines diverse Indigenous films and television shows from Turtle Island (Canada & the United States) to Aotearoa (New Zealand). Students will study a wide variety of influential and popular Indigenous media, including activist-based documentaries, adventure comedies, sitcoms, and animations. These works challenge accepted historical and contemporary fictions that sustain settler-colonial forms of domination, offering poignant correctives to the misrepresentations of Indigenous peoples that have dominated Hollywood cinema. We will also consider the larger historical, legal, and political contexts to which these works respond. Films/television shows will include: *Reservation Dogs*, by Sterlin Harjo (Seminole/Muscogee Creek), *The Mountain of SGaana*, by Christopher Auchter (Haida), *Hunt for the Wilderpeople*, by Taika Waititi (Māori), *Rhymes for Young Ghouls*, by Jeff Barnaby (Mi’kmaq), *Smoke Signals*, by Chris Eyre (Cheyenne and Arapaho) and *Maliglutit*, by Zacharias Kunuk (Inuk).
LITTEA

When: Monday during the Spring 2023 academic semester @ 4:15pm - 5:45pm
Where: Room 14N-417
Come by for snacks & tea with Literature Section friends, instructors, students, etc.
CONCENTRATION

Students come to Literature to fulfill their Concentrations for many reasons. Some love to read great books, plays, or poems, or want to explore film and media studies. Some wish to hone their skills in thinking and writing about literary questions. Others enjoy participating in lively discussion in small classes. Many have favorite authors or periods they want to know better.

Concentrations may be organized by genre (poetry, drama, fiction, film), historical period and/or national literature (Renaissance, nineteenth-century British and American literatures, modern American literature), subject of study (popular culture, media studies, literature and aesthetic theory), or theme (race and imperialism, literature and the city, etc.).

MINOR

A Literature Minor lays the foundation for advanced study by enhancing the student's appreciation of major narrative, poetic and dramatic texts in relation to the cultures that produced them. In addition, it allows the student to develop a familiarity with interdisciplinary approaches, and encourages engagement with a film and newer media.

The Literature Focus or Film Focus Minor is designed to allow a student to make a smooth transition from a prior Concentration in Literature, as well as to progress smoothly towards a Major in Literature (should the student so desire).

MAJOR

Majoring in Literature at MIT combines a broad coverage of a range of different literary and cultural fields with the in-depth exploration of particular domains. To ensure coverage, students organize their restricted electives in Literature according to one of two rubrics: Historical Periods or Thematic Complexes. More sustained exploration of specific domains is achieved by taking Seminars in areas of interest. In addition, students contemplating graduate work in Literature or a related field are encouraged to consider completing a Literature Thesis.

Students considering majoring in Literature should first see our Undergraduate Academic Administrator to declare interest and to arrange a Major Advisor.

For a list of current term advisors, consult the Literature Section website lit.mit.edu/academic-advisors/ For questions or more information, please contact our Academic Administrator (litacademics@mit.edu).