LIT 2100

Student Guide

WORLD LITERATURE
(Distance Learning Format)
Revised Fall 2012

Northwest Florida State College
100 College Boulevard
Niceville, FL 32578

Instructor: Dr. Cheryl Powell
Telephone 863-6526 or 863-6520
E-mail: Powellc@nwfsc.edu

Distance Learning Office
729-6464
Course Overview and Requirements

Statement of Purpose
The purpose of this course is to help students read, analyze, and understand selected works of world literature which deal with universal concepts and viewpoints. A secondary purpose is to help students to become cognizant of the manner in which major works of world literature as expressed by their authors are both a reflection of as well as a contribution to the cultural milieu of the era in which they were written.

Required Textbook:


Course Requirements:

1. Read all assigned materials.
2. Complete all written assignments per schedule attached.
   Summaries 1-5 must be turned in at the beginning of the mid-term exam.
   Summaries 6-10 must be turned in at the beginning of the final exam.
   The research paper will be due 2 weeks before the final exam (the exact date to be announced at orientation).
3. Pass a mid-term examination. (See attached page of exam dates)
4. Pass a final examination. (See attached page of exam dates)
Important College Policies

Accommodations for Special Needs Students

If you have special needs for which accommodations may be appropriate to assist you in this class, please contact the Office of Services for Students with Special Needs in Building C-1 on the Niceville Campus, or call 729-6079 (TDD 1-800-955-8771 or Voice 1-800-955-8770).

Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Academic Integrity

Students are responsible for adherence to all college policies and procedures, including those related to academic freedom, cheating, classroom conduct, and other items included in the NWFSC Catalog and Student Handbook. Students should be familiar with the rights and responsibilities detailed on pages 29-33 of the 2010 NWFSC Catalog and Student Handbook. Plagiarism, cheating or any other form of academic dishonesty is a serious breach of student responsibilities and may trigger consequences which range from a failing grade to formal disciplinary action.

Cell Phone/Electronic Communication Devices

Cell phones, pagers and other such electronic devices must be turned off during class time. Communication by electronic device during class is strictly prohibited unless expressly designated as part of the learning activities. Use of electronic communication devices during examinations or other graded activities may constitute grounds for disciplinary action. Where emergency or employment situations require access to electronic communication services, arrangements may be made in advance with the instructor.
Communicating with Your Teacher:

At the beginning of the semester you will learn your professor’s name, telephone numbers and office hours. Dr. Powell’s office is at the Ft. Walton Beach Campus, Building 4, Rm. 411. Although you do not attend classes, you should stay in touch with your professor by telephone or e-mail. Call or e-mail any time you have a question or need help. If you would like a face-to-face conference with your professor, call and make an appointment. If you experience difficulty in reaching your professor at 863-6526, call the faculty secretary at 863-6520 or the Distance Learning Office at 729-6464.

Grades:

Summary Assignments: 25% of grade
Mid-Term Examination: 25% of grade
Research Paper Assignment: 25% of grade
Final Examination: 25% of grade

90 -100 = A
80 - 90 = B
70 - 80 = C
60 - 70 = D
Below 60 = F
Reading Assignments

Lesson 1: Volume A

THE BIBLE: THE OLD TESTAMENT (Hebrew, c.a. 1000-300 B.C.) ........... 151
Genesis 1-4 [The Creation-The Murder of Abel] .................................. 158
Genesis 6-9 [Noah and the Flood] ..................................................... 163
Psalm 8 ................................................................................................ 218
Psalm 19 ................................................................................................ 218
Psalm 23 ................................................................................................ 219
Psalm 104 ............................................................................................. 219
Psalm 137 ............................................................................................. 221

Volume B

Luke 2 [The Birth and Youth of Jesus] .................................................. 21
Matthew 5-7 [The Teaching of Jesus: The Sermon on the Mount] ....... 23
Matthew 13 [Why Jesus Teaches in Parables] ................................. 27
Matthew 27-28 [The Crucifixion of Jesus and the Resurrection] ....... 29
(The King James Version)

Lesson 2: Volume A

SOPHOCLES (ca. 496-406 B.C.) ......................................................... 701
Oedipus The King (Greek) ............................................................... 707

Lesson 3: Volume B

BEOWULF (Old English, ca. ninth century) ...................................... 107

Lesson 4:

MARIE DE FRANCE (twelfth century) ............................................. 294
Lanval (French) ................................................................................ 297
Lesson 5:
DANTE ALIGHIERI (1265-1321) ........................................ 387-392
The Divine Comedy (Italian) ........................................ 392
The Inferno: Cantos I-XXXIV ........................................ 392-511

Lesson 6:
GIOVANNI BOCCACCIO (1313-1375) .............................. 605-609
The Decameron (Italian) ............................................
[Day 1, Story 1] .......................................................... 609
[Day 2, Story 7] .......................................................... 618
[Day 4, Story 9] .......................................................... 634
[Day 10, Story 9] ......................................................... 636
[Day 10, Story 10] ......................................................... 649

Lesson 7:
SIR GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT (Middle English, 1380?) ..... 725
(Late Fourteenth Century)

Lesson 8:
GEOFFREY CHAUCER (1340?-1400) ................................ 657
The Canterbury Tales (Middle English) ............................ 662
General Prologue ....................................................... 662
The Wife of Bath’s Prologue and Tale ............................. 682
  The Prologue .......................................................... 682
  The Tale ............................................................... 701
The Pardoner’s Prologue and Tale .................................. 709
  The Prologue .......................................................... 710
  The Tale ............................................................... 713

Lesson 9:
Volume C
PAGES
FRANCIS PETRARCH (1304-1374) ..................................... 168
1 [You who hear in scattered rhymes] ............................... 168
3 [It was the day when the sun’s rays turned pale with grief] ...... 168
62 [Father in heaven, after each lost day] ........................... 169
333 [Go, Grieving rimes of mine, to that hard stone] ............. 171
John Donne [Holy Sonnets] ........................................... 768
4 [Oh my black soul] .................................................... 768
5 I am a little world] ..................................................... 769
14 [Batter my Heart] ..................................................... 769

5
Lesson 10:

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564-1616) .................................................. 652
Hamlet, Prince of Denmark................................................................. 656

John Milton (1608-1674)................................................................. 770
Paradise Lost....................................................................................... 774
Book 1
[This Great Argument] ...................................................................... 774
[Satan on the Fiery Lake]................................................................. 775
Assignment For Lesson Summaries

Summaries for Lessons 1-5 must be turned in at the beginning of the mid-term examination.

Summaries for Lessons 6-10 must be turned in at the beginning of the final examination.

Length: (Approximately 2-3 typed double-spaced pages for each lesson)

Summarize each of the reading assignments giving attention to characters, settings, circumstances, and other relevant elements. (Identify specific names and details, and give quoted examples.) Each summary should be typed in good essay format. Staple each summary separately with an MLA style title page. See the attached MLA examples for formatting your paper.
Assignment for Research Paper

X The research paper must be turned in two weeks before the final examination - (Specific date to be announced at orientation).

X Length: Approximately 5 pages with parenthetical documentation. Your essay should have a works cited page, and an MLA style title page.

X Select one of the following lessons for your research paper:
  < Beowulf
  < Sir Gawain and The Green Knight
  < The Canterbury Tales (The Wife of Bath’s Tale, or The Pardoner’s Tale) (choose one)
  < The Divine Comedy (The Inferno)
  < Hamlet

X Analyze the theme of the work giving specific examples and details. Use MLA Style format for all areas of your essay. The sources you use should be carefully selected literary works with publishing information and page numbers to correctly format your parenthetical documentation. (Do not use ordinary encyclopedias or study aids as sources.) Your works cited page should include a minimum of 5 scholarly sources. List your literature book as your primary source.

****Note to Student Regarding Exams****
Examinations will be multiple choice type questions. You will be asked specific questions about each of the assigned lessons as well as about each author’s life. You will be asked to identify quoted lines from some of the lessons. There will also be questions from the introductory sections of each lesson. No books or notes are allowed for the exam. Bring a number 2 pencil to class for the exam.
Aristotle was the giant of ancient criticism. Not only did he attend many tragic performances, but he also read many plays that he had never seen performed. His major critical work, *The Poetics*, is based on this first-hand experience, and in addition it also reflects his own powerful judgment. Interestingly, he uses Sophocles’ *Oedipus the King* as the basis for many of his conclusions.

His famous definition of tragedy appears in the sixth chapter of *The Poetics*. It is that tragedy is “an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude; in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament; ... in the form of action, not of narrative; through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions: (VI. 2, p. 23). A consideration of the main parts of this definition will help you read and respond to tragedies.

**ACTION.** First is the observation that a tragedy is the imitation of a single action and not a narration or epic. By *action* Aristotle means a concentrated, self-contained, non-digressive dramatic portrayal of a real or like-like series of events. Thus, in *Oedipus the King*, the action develops from Oedipus’s determination, as King of Thebes, to free his city from the pollution that is destroying it. (Similarly, in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* the action and the final resolution grow out of Hamlet’s promise to avenge his father’s murder.)

**PLOT (MUTHOS).** Aristotle describes three major elements of *muthos*, or plot, that govern the development of the tragic action. First is the “reversal of the situation: (peripeteia) from apparent good to bad”, or a “change [usually also a surprise] by which the action veers round to its opposite,” as in *Oedipus the King*, where the outcome is the opposite of what Oedipus intends and expects (XI. 1, p. 41). Second is “a change from ignorance to knowledge,” which Aristotle calls *anagnorisis* or recognition (XI. 2, p. 41). Again in *Oedipus the King*, the final action is Oedipus’s recognition of the terrible truth, no matter how he tries to resist it. In the best and most powerful tragedies, according to Aristotle, the reversal and the recognition occur simultaneously.

Aristotle describes the third part of plot as a “a scene of suffering,” which he defines as “a destructive or painful action, such as death on the stage, bodily agony, wounds, and the like” (XI. 6, p. 43). He stresses that the destructive or painful action (not exclusively death) should be caused by “those who are near or dear to one another” (XIV. 4, pp. 49-50). That is, violence should occur within a royal household or family rather than against a hostile for. The resulting suffering is especially horrifying because the trust, love, and protectiveness that one hopes for in a family is replaced by treachery, hate, and mayhem.

Aristotle’s concept of recognition is of great importance because it is an affirmative signal in the midst of negative events. Ideally, upon recognizing the real truth, the protagonist acknowledges errors and accepts responsibility. Without such positive recognition, we would have works that are no more than horrifying, sad, or pathetic. With the affirmation recognition, however, we have tragedy--the dramatic form which illustrates human integrity even in the lowest depths of adversity.
SERIOUSNESS, COMPLETENESS, AND ARTISTIC BALANCE

Of comparable importance with the elements of plot is Aristotle’s assertion that a tragedy is “serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude.” The term serious, or elevated, concerns the play’s tone and level of life, in contrast with the boisterousness and ribaldry of Athenian comedies. While comedy makes people seem worse than they are, tragedy, more seriously, shows them as better (II, 4, p. 13). Seriousness is also a consequence of the political and cosmological dimensions of the issues in which the heroic character are engaged. By complete or whole, Aristotle means that the tragedy must be shaped and perfected to be logical and finished. Everything, whether beginning, middle, or end, must be so perfectly placed that changing or removing any part would spoil the entirety (VII. 2, 3, p. 33). By stating that a tragedy should be of a “certain” or proportional magnitude, Aristotle refers to a perfected limitation in length and subject matter. The play should be short enough to “be easily embraced by the memory,” and long enough to “admit of a change...from good fortune to bad” (VII. 6, p. 33). In other words, everything is artistically balanced; nothing superfluous is included, and nothing essential is omitted.

CATHARSIS OR PURGATION

The most difficult and uncertain part of Aristotle’s definition is his claim that tragedy, by arousing pity and fear, brings about a “proper purgation,” or purification (catharsis) of these emotions. He uses the word catharsis only once in The Poetics, though he often uses the combination “pity and fear,” but the concept of catharsis is essential to tragedy. At a basic psychological level, catharsis may be understood as a sympathetic release of emotions. One of Aristotle’s predecessors, the philosopher Gorgias (ca.483-ca 385 B.C.), has left us a similar description of this effect.

There comes over the audience of poetry [i.e., tragedy] a fearful horror and tearful pity and doleful yearning. By means of the discourse their spirit feels a personal emotion on account of the good and bad fortune of others.

This concept implies that tragedy may improve mental well-being. If people have no way to express their feelings legitimately, they may build up real and imagined grievances that lead to frustration and anger. But the performance of a tragedy brings about sympathy for the character, whose suffering and danger evoke pity and fear (accompanied by responses like shock, horror, and anxiety). When watching a tragedy, then, people’s concerns are directed not inwardly, at their own problems, but rather outwardly, at those of tragic characters. Psychologically, such and emotional purgation is one of tragedy’s major humanizing and civilizing effects.

In addition, catharsis has overtones of religious purification, and tragedy was a key feature of the Dionysiac celebrations for this reason. It has been said that the subject matter of tragedies has “nothing to do with Dionysus,” but the fact is that the City Dionysia in ancient Athens was not only a week-long celebration but was also a period of purification. To the ancient Athenians, the emotional purgation accompanying a tragic performance permitted individuals to become receptive to divine power. In this way the tragic catharsis led toward the spiritual purification that was also sought in the ecstatic and orgiastic worship of Dionysus as the liberating god. Indeed, just attending a tragic performance was considered a religiously purifying experience.
THE TRAGIC HERO
Further on in *The Poetics*, Aristotle explains the artistry necessary to bring about proper tragic responses. His idea is that the misfortunes of the noble protagonist should be caused not by “vice” or “depravity” but rather by “error” or “frailty” (XIII. 3, p. 45). Aristotle’s word for such shortcomings is *hamartia*, which is often translated as tragic flaw (in the New Testament *hamartia* is usually translated as *sin*). Thus we, as normally imperfect human beings, identify with a tragic protagonist who is also imperfect. We could not sympathize with a criminal protagonist, for then the downfall of a saint (one who is “preeminently good and just”), which would produce anger and indignation rather than unmixed pity. An ideal tragedy, therefore, is fine-tuned to control our responses exactly, producing horror or fear because of the protagonist’s suffering, and pity because the suffering far exceeds what the protagonist deserves.

LATER TRAGEDY AND ARISTOTLE
Because Aristotle has been so dominant in the history of philosophy and literature, his views in *The Poetics* may be adapted in the analysis of later tragedies. For example, although Shakespeare and his Renaissance English contemporaries sometimes relied on recorded history for subjects, they were still dealing with “received legends” from the past. Also, even though the tragic milieu changed—the disorganized pantheon of arbitrary and sometimes cranky Greek gods gave way to the more formal Christian theology—writers still attempted to make their tragedies serious, complete, and artistically balanced. In addition, human concerns have remained constant although tragic protagonists have been seemingly reduced in stature. In the eighteenth century the development of domestic tragedy featured characters from the middle class, and later tragedians included members of the working class. Arthur Miller’s name *Loman* for the protagonist of *Death of a Salesman*, for example (“low man”), emphasizes that modern human beings occupy a niche far below the heroes and demi-gods of ancient Greece.

A REVENGE TRAGEDY
A type of English Renaissance drama in which a person is called upon (often by a ghost) to avenge the murder of a loved one. Example: Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. 
How to Succeed at Distance Learning

Read to Learn
< Examine the book. Develop a “feel” for the book before studying it. Read through the table of contents, the preface, introduction and/or forward. Glance through the index, bibliography, glossary, and any illustrations and diagrams the book may contain.
< Ask questions. Frame questions about the text to help yourself better understand the subject. Consider the questions given either at the beginning or the end of the chapter before reading the chapter.
< Be an active reader.
   1) Highlight important or key phrases and words.
   2) Use margins for writing questions or comments.
   3) Make notes on major concepts or points.
< Read it aloud. When you’ve finished reading the chapter, go back once more and read out loud the material you highlighted, along with the notes you made in the margins and the notes made on major concepts.
< Review. Give the highlighted material and your notes one final read.

How to Prepare for an Exam
< Prepare for the test. Review the material you have studied. Pay careful attention to the points you’ve highlighted. Invest the time that’s really required to review the information until you’re as knowledgeable about the subject matter as possible.
< Know the test. The format of the test is important, because it directly relates to your ability to provide correct answers.
< Your physical preparation. Get plenty of rest during the week prior to the test. Set a reasonable study schedule and keep it. Get enough sleep the night before the test, and arrive at the test site early to give yourself time to relax in an otherwise tense environment.
< Taking the examination. Follow these simple procedures:
   1) Read all instructions carefully and follow them precisely.
   2) Quickly review the entire test, noting the relatively easy and difficult parts.
   3) Unless you’re directed to answer the questions in order of their appearance, answer the easier questions first.
   4) Read each question twice to be sure you completely understand it before answering.
   5) Write legibly.
   6) Try to leave enough time to review your answers.
Scheduling Your Study Time
Gaining control of your time is the most important thing you can do to establish a successful study schedule.

- Identify exactly what you are now doing with your time. It may help to keep a log for a short period of time. Prepare a list of the major activities that make up your day. Prepare a chart for each day of the week, identify those portions of your day that can be sacrificed to your study schedule.
- Dictate study material and play it on the car tape player as you drive. Check the local library to see if any of the assigned books have been recorded on audiotape.
- You can accommodate additional study time during your lunch hour.
- Between the time the children go to bed and the time you retire, there are three hours of what should be relative calm in which to study.

When planning your study schedule, you should follow several rules:

- **Don’t overdo it.** Don’t plan your study time unrealistically.
- **Plan for the times likely to be most productive.** Distance learning studying is an individual activity. Plan your study schedule around those times you can be alone.
- **Don’t time-share study periods.** Few people can study and listen to music or watch television at the same time.
- **Start with short study periods.** Discipline yourself to develop the habit of studying and learning can be similar to beginning an exercise program. When you have fully prepared your study schedule plan, make a concerted effort to live up to it. A good study schedule will provide your with the proper environment and frame of mind for successful distance learning study.