

**ENGLISH 2306, WORLD LITERATURE II (CRN 25332)**

Spring 2013

1:00-1:50 pm MWF, Arkansas Hall 110

Dr. Mike Schaefer  
Office: Irby 408  
e-mail: [schaefer@uca.edu](mailto:schaefer@uca.edu)

Office phone: 450-5119  
Home phone: 329-0538

Office Hours: 10:00 am-12:00 pm MWF; 11:00 am-12 pm, 2:30-3:30 pm TTh; and by appointment

**TEXT:**

Volumes D, E, and F of *The Norton Anthology of World Literature*, third edition (sold together as “package 2”)

**NOTE: This text is required for the course. Students who fail to bring the appropriate book to class will be counted absent for that day.**

**READING SCHEDULE** (Note: these assignments include our text’s introductions to each author, which are very helpful in understanding the literary works):

January 11: Introduction to course

Weeks 1-3: Leo Tolstoy, *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, pp. 735-778, volume E

Weeks 4-5: William Wordsworth, "Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey," pp. 345-48, 351-54, volume E

**Exam 1 due at start of class Monday, Feb. 25 (Week 7)**

Weeks 6-7: Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, pp. 231-93, volume E

Weeks 8-9: Tadeusz Borowski, “This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen,” pp. 693- 707, volume F

Week 10: Naguib Mahfouz, “Zaabalawi,” pp. 882-92, volume F

**Exam 2 due at start of class Monday, Apr. 1 (Week 11)**

Week 11: Chu T’ien-hsin, “Man of La Mancha,” pp. 1232-40, volume F

Weeks 12-13: Chikamatsu Monzaemon, *The Love Suicides at Amijima*, pp. 45-73, volume D

Week 14: Premchand, “The Road to Salvation,” pp. 311-22, volume F

Mon., Apr. 29: **Final Exam, 11:00 am-1:00 pm**

**ATTENDANCE:** Attendance—**on time**—is mandatory. Absences will lower your class participation grade, as will recurrent late arrival. If you miss four classes, you’ll have one week after the last absence to see me with a believable excuse and a promise to sin no more; if you don’t make this deadline, you’ll be dropped from the course with a WF (Withdrawn Failing) grade. And if you miss a fifth class following our conference about the four absences, you’ll likewise be dropped with a WF. **Important note: “Attendance” in this class is defined as being present mentally as well as physically. If you spend the greater part of a class period sleeping, chatting with those around you, texting, doing homework for another class, or in any other way failing to engage with the class discussion, you’ll be marked absent for that period. All materials not essential to your participation in the class must remain in your backpack during class; this includes laptops, cell phones and other communication devices, books and notebooks for other classes, newspapers, etc.**

**EXAMS:** Our first exam will cover our first two authors—Tolstoy and Wordsworth, and our second exam will cover the next two—Douglass and Borowski. The final exam will have one section covering the rest of our authors—Mahfouz, Chu, Monzaemon, and Premchand—and then a second section taking in the whole course, asking you to make connections among the various works and periods we've studied. These exams will consist of essay questions, and all three will be take-home in format. I'll discuss these exams and their make-up in greater detail in class about a week before their dates.

**JOURNALS:** Each student must keep a journal of his or her thoughts on the assigned readings, with one entry devoted to each reading before we discuss it in class (that is, one entry on *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, one entry on "Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey," etc.—not entries for every day of class). Ordinarily, I'll pose a question for you to respond to in each entry, **with that response consisting of at least three paragraphs**, and ask you to end by raising a question or observation of your own about the story. Beyond that requirement you're also free to write as much as you wish about whatever intrigues you, inspires you, confuses you, or upsets you about the work in question, and about this work's relationship to other works you've read and its relevance to human life in general and your own life in particular.

There are two goals to this assignment. First, the act of writing stimulates thinking: even if at the outset you feel you have nothing at all to say about a given work, you'll find that putting fingers to keyboard will bring ideas forth; if you do have some ideas to start with you'll find that writing them down will cause you to extend and refine them. Second, as is obvious from what's just been said, these entries will prove a rich source of class-discussion and exam topics.

You'll submit these journals by e-mail to the address listed for me at the top of the syllabus. Each entry must reach me no later than 24 hours prior to the first class meeting during which we'll discuss that work. I won't accept a journal entry after the due date, but you are allowed to miss one journal with no penalty. I'll grade you for each submission: if your entry shows an honest, thoughtful effort to come to grips with the work, you'll get somewhere from 8 to 10; if it shows a solid but not all that insightful effort, you'll get somewhere from 4 to 7; if you don't do the entry, or if you blow it off with superficial comments, you'll get somewhere from 0 to 3. At the end of the semester, I'll figure your final journal grade by taking the ratio of the total points you've earned to the total points possible. If we do nine journals, for instance, then the total possible score will be 90; if you earn 80, then your percentage is 89, which means a B for your final journal grade. (My grading scale is 90-100=A, 80-89=B, 70-79=C, 60-69=D, below 60=F.)

**GRADES:** Your final grade will come from the following percentages:

Attendance/Participation:	25%
Midterm Exam:	20%
Final:	30%
Journal:	25%

**COURSE EVALUATIONS** (in which *you* get to grade *me*): Student evaluations of a course and its professor are a crucial element in helping faculty achieve excellence in the classroom and the institution in demonstrating that students are gaining knowledge. Students may evaluate courses they are taking starting on the Monday of the twelfth week of instruction—Monday, April 1—through the end of finals week by logging in to myUCA and clicking on the Evals button on the top right.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** Knowingly presenting someone else's work as your own, whether in an exam, journal, or any other format, constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism carries serious penalties, from failure on a particular assignment to failure for the course. If you ever have any questions on this subject, please feel free to ask me about them, without fear of embarrassment, and/or click on this link for more information:

<http://uca.edu/academicaffairs/files/2012/08/Plagiarism.pdf>

**Here is UCA's official policy statement regarding academic integrity:** The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.

**OTHER UNIVERSITY POLICIES:** If you have questions about the university's academic policies, guidelines regarding sexual harassment, or any other matters, please consult the relevant sections of the UCA Student Handbook. UCA adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this act due to a disability, contact the UCA Office of Disability Services at 450-3135.

### Key Ideas for Discussion of Course Focus

The World Cultural Traditions requirement introduces students to broadly significant elements of the cultural traditions of the world in their richness, diversity, and complexity. Each course used to fulfill this requirement entails comparison between several Western and non-Western cultures.

Objectives for students completing the World Cultural Traditions requirement are:

- to better understand significant social, economic, and political developments in Western and non-Western history;
- to better understand significant cultural developments in Western and non-Western civilization (religion, art, philosophy, language, and literature);
- to be familiar with enduring expressions of human thought by study of some major texts of Western and non-Western cultures;
- to better understand the interaction of Western and non-Western cultural traditions.

My heart rouses

thinking to bring you news  
of something

That concerns you

and concerns many men. Look at  
what passes for the new.

You will not find it there but in  
despised poems.

It is difficult

to get the news from poems  
yet men die miserably every day  
for lack

of what is found there.

Hear me out

for I too am concerned

and every man

who wants to die at peace in his bed  
besides.

--William Carlos Williams, "Asphodel, That Greeny Flower"

W. E. B. Du Bois—"Education must not simply teach work. It must teach life."

Mark Edmundson—Literature "is the major cultural source of vital options for those who find that their lives fall short of their highest hopes. . . . The purpose of a liberal arts education is to give people an enhanced opportunity to decide how they should live their lives."

Iris Murdoch—"Education doesn't make you happy, nor does freedom. We don't become happy just because we're free, if we are, or because we've been educated, if we have, but because education may be the means by which we realize we *are* happy. It opens our eyes, our ears, tells us where delights are lurking, convinces us that there is only one freedom of any importance whatsoever, that of the mind."

*littera*

X. J. Kennedy—literature is "a kind of art, usually written, which offers pleasure and illumination."

Robert Frost—literature/poetry provides "a clarification of life--not necessarily a great clarification, such as sects and cults are founded on, but . . . a momentary stay against confusion."

Henry Adams—literature seeks to "run order through chaos."

Chinua Achebe—"Literature, whether handed down by word of mouth or in print, gives us a second handle on reality . . . enabling us to encounter, in the safe, manageable dimensions of make-believe the very same threats to integrity that may assail the psyche in real life; and at the same time providing through the self-discovery which it imparts a veritable weapon for coping with these threats whether they are found within our problematic and incoherent selves or in the world around us."

Kwame Appiah—"Why, you might ask, should we care how other people think and feel about stories? Why do we talk about them in this language of value? One answer is that it is just part of being human. People tell stories and discuss them in every culture, and we know they have done so as far back as the record goes. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, the *Tale of Genji*, the Ananse stories I grew up with in Asante, weren't just read or recited; they were discussed, evaluated, referred to in everyday life. We wouldn't recognize a community as human if it had no stories, if its people had no narrative imagination. So one answer to the question why we do it is: it's just one of the things that humans do. But a deeper answer is that evaluating stories together is one of the central human ways of learning to align our responses to the world. And that alignment of responses is, in turn, one of the ways we maintain the social fabric, the texture of our relationships."

Sir Ben Kingsley (Actor)—I think that the role of the actor, perhaps at its simplest and its purest, is one of the tribal storyteller, and that if you were to transport me back maybe 3,000 years, I'd be sitting around the fire at night with the little tribe, reassuring them about their past, hoping that they will sleep through the night, and comforting them about their future, and try and build those bridges of empathy—particularly aspects of life that are baffling and frightening. . . . I think I'm getting closer to a shaman at the bonfire, telling stories. I think it's just very important to embrace tragedy as a real part of our lives. [Playwright] David Mamet, in his book *Writings in Restaurants*, defined—let me slightly paraphrase and say Western civilization. Western civilization is a civilization determined to outlaw tragedy. If removed, the interpretation of tragedy, and the presentation of tragedy, from the shaman, who's sitting by the bonfire—you're telling the tribe nothing of real life. And it doesn't prepare us as adults. It infantilizes us, and it dodges an enormous responsibility. And all great mythology that we love and respect has included loss and tragedy, as well as great moments of salvation. It braided in. After a performance I gave of *Hamlet*, I was walking across a field near Stratford-upon Avon, and I saw a young woman on the other side of the field walking towards me. So I decided to go that way. And she moved that way. So I moved that way, and she moved that way. She was determined. And she faced me in the middle of this field and she said—because I played *Hamlet* on stage the night before—she said, "I saw *Hamlet* last night. How did you know about me?" That's my job. I know you. I'm trying to know you. And through knowing each other and holding onto that tribal bonfire, we'll be OK.

Fables, parables, myths

Henry David Thoreau—"To read well, that is, to read true books in a true spirit, is a noble exercise, and one that will task the reader more than any exercise which the customs of the day esteem. It requires a training such as the athletes underwent . . . Books must be read as deliberately and reservedly as they were written."

Vladimir Nabokov—"In art as in science there is no delight without the detail, and it is on detail that I have tried to fix the reader's attention. Let me repeat that unless these are thoroughly understood and remembered, all 'general ideas' (so easily acquired, so profitably resold) must necessarily remain but worn passports allowing their bearers shortcuts from one area of ignorance to another."

C. Day-Lewis—"It is unwise to equate scientific activity with what we call reason, poetic activity with what we call imagination. Without the imaginative leap from facts to generalisation, no theoretic discovery in science is made. The poet, on the other hand, must not imagine but reason—that is to say, he must exercise a great deal of consciously directed thought in the selection and rejection of his data: there is a technical logic, a poetic reasoning in his choice of the words, rhythms and images by which a poem's coherence is achieved."

Robert Altman—literature should first of all entertain people but should also "give them pause to think, give them reason to feel important, to be important, [because they're being asked] to put their own ideas together with existing ideas."

Anton Chekhov—literature presents problems, not solutions

William Trevor—literature is a kind of jigsaw puzzle to which the writer has some of the pieces and the reader has the others.

Edward Albee—"Some people ask me, 'Why don't you write plays that I know exactly what the specific answer to the question you're raising is by the end of the play?' And I always have to answer these people by saying that I find I can ask an awful lot more interesting questions if I don't have to supply the answers to them. If I limited the content of my plays to what I could give specific answers to, I think I'd write very dull plays."

Literature: An account (sometimes factual, sometimes not) of some event or incident or feeling that interests, entertains, stimulates, broadens, or ennobles us by inviting our involvement and response?

Barbara Kingsolver—"Fiction creates empathy, and empathy is the antidote to meanness of spirit. Nonfiction can tell you about the plight of working people, of single mothers, but in a novel you become the character; touch what she touches, struggle with her self-doubt. Then, when you go back to your own life, something inside you has maybe shifted a little."

Martha Nussbaum—The liberal arts should give us three things: critical thinking skills, awareness of cultures other than our own, and empathy.

James Baldwin—"the purpose of education is, finally, to create in a person the ability to look at the world for himself, to make his own decisions, . . . to decide for himself whether there is a God in heaven or not. To ask questions of the universe, and then learn to live with those questions, is the way he achieves his own identity."

Tolstoy chapter 1 journal question—due via e-mail by noon Tuesday, January 15:

Why do you think Tolstoy starts this story with Ivan's funeral and then gives us Ivan's life in flashback, rather than going in strict chronological order, starting with Ivan's birth? What are the attitudes of Ivan's family and friends as we observe those at his funeral? Have you witnessed some of the same attitudes toward death in our own culture? Don't forget to ask a question or make an observation of your own after you've dealt with these questions.