

LITR 200: European Masterpieces

Fall 2018

Wednesdays | 2:00-4:30 p.m.

Dr. Mena Mitrano

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Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description

The great literary critic Fredric Jameson writes that "texts come before us as the always-already-read." In other words, we "never really confront a text in all its freshness as a thing-in-itself" because we apprehend and understand them through the "sedimented layers of previous interpretations" (*The Political Unconscious*). This idea of the text as an object enveloped in the aura of the reading others is particularly true of masterpieces. When we confront them, masterpieces are never quite complete strangers to us. Other people have read and talked about them, and when we finally encounter them first hand it is as if we recognized their stories and their ideas. A strange trading of roles take place: it's as if we participated in their writing and they, in turn, became our readers. Such is the magic of a classic. In this course we will read a lot. From Marcel Proust to James Joyce, from Robert Walser to Virginia Woolf, we will dive into narratives that are one with the idea of Europe. Week after week, we will live in these stories, moods, atmospheres, conflicts and aspirations, and will learn to respond to them.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Marcel Proust, *In Search of Lost Time*, vol. 1: *Swan's Way*, trans. Lydia Davis (Penguin/Random House).

James Joyce, *Ulysses*, ed. Gabler (Vintage)

Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, ed. David Brashaw (Oxford UP)

Robert Walser, *The Walk*, trans. Susan Bernofsky (New Directions)

Additional packet of critical readings provided (on Sakai) including readings by Walter Benjamin (on Proust and Walser), Derek Attridge (on Joyce), and Erich Auerbach's wonderful essay on Virginia Woolf.

COURSE OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. To read major narratives of the European tradition and respond to them in meaningful ways.

2. To improve one's understanding of modern literature and of cultural and intellectual history.
3. To improve one's oral skills, engaging in discussion and debate and developing one's own position.
4. To carry out an individual research project, and to produce well-structured, interesting research papers.

REQUIREMENTS:

This is a writing intensive course. There will be 3 critical essays of varying length: the first (4-5 pp) will be the Midterm paper; the second, also of 4-5pp, and the third, which will be the final research paper, of about 7-8 pages. All three essays will be based on reading and research. MLA Stylesheet. Print version; typed; spacing: 1,5. Paper topics as below:

Essay 1: on Proust.

Essay 2: on Joyce

Essay 3: Research topic chosen by the student with the supervision and approval of the instructor.

Class will be divided into two segments: the lecture part and the seminar session. There will be student presentations in the seminar session.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

In accordance with the JFRC mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, all courses adhere to the following absence policy:

- For all classes meeting once a week, students cannot incur more than one unexcused absence.
- For all classes meeting twice a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.
- For all classes meeting three times a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.

This course meets once a week, thus a total of one unexcused absence will be permitted. Unexcused absences beyond these will result in a lowering of your final grade.

EVALUATION:

- Participation 20 %
- Midterm Exam 20 %
- Short responses 20 %
- Final Project 40 %

GRADING:

94-100: A

90-93: A-

87-89: B+

84-86: B

80-83: B-

77-79: C+

74-76: C

70-73: C-

67-69: D+

60-66: D

59 or lower: F

Late work: minus one grade.

ACADEMIC HONESTY:

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are unacceptable at the JFRC and will be dealt with in accordance with Loyola University Chicago's guidelines. Please familiarize yourself with Loyola's standards here:

http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml. You are responsible for understanding what constitutes plagiarism according to the LUC Student Handbook.

DISABILITIES:

Students with documented disabilities who wish to discuss academic accommodations should contact me the first week of class, as well as the Senior Academic Services Advisor.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE:

Date	Topic	Assigned readings for following class
Sept. 5 Week One	Introductory lecture	Proust, <i>Swann's Way</i>
Sept. 12 Week Two	Proust	<i>Swann's Way</i>
Sept. 19 Week Three	Proust	<i>Swann's Way</i>
Sept. 26 Week Four	Proust	Joyce, <i>Ulysses</i> : Telemachus Nestor Proteus

Oct. 4 Week Five	FIRST PAPER DUE (Midterm paper), 4-5 pp.	Joyce, <i>Ulysses</i> : Calypso Lotus Eaters
Oct. 10 Week Six	James Joyce, <i>Ulysses</i>	Joyce, <i>Ulysses</i> : Hades Lestrygonians Sylla and Charybdis Wandering Rocks
Oct. 17 Week Seven	Fall Semester Break--no class	
Oct. 24 Week Eight	SECOND PAPER DUE,4-5 pp. Joyce, <i>Ulysses</i>	Joyce, <i>Ulysses</i> : Sirens Cyclops Nausicca Oxen in the Sun
Oct. 31 Week Nine	Joyce, <i>Ulysses</i>	Joyce, <i>Ulysses</i> : Circe Eumaeus Ithaca Penelope
Nov. 7 Week Ten	Joyce, <i>Ulysses</i>	Robert Walser, <i>The Walk</i>
Nov. 14 Week Eleven	Walser	Robert Walser, <i>The Walk</i>
Nov. 21 Week Twelve	Woolf	Virgina Woolf, <i>To the Lighthouse</i>

Nov. 28

Week Thirteen

Woolf

Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*

Dec. 5

Week Fourteen

FINAL RESEARCH PAPER DUE, 7-8 pp.

Dec. 12

Week Fifteen

Class Symposium