“That is part of the beauty of all literature. You discover that your longings are universal longings, that you're not lonely and isolated from anyone. You belong.”
— F. Scott Fitzgerald

“Literature is what unites the world through common experience and this unity is what makes us human.”
— From a student feedback on Primo Levi's literary use of Dante Alighieri

Fall 2018 Course Syllabus – LITR 202
THE EUROPEAN NOVEL
MW 3:40-4:55

Professor: Barbara Castaldo
Office: Faculty Office
Office Hours: By Appointment, MW 2:30-3:30
E-mail: bcastaldo@luc.edu

Course Description
This course explores how modern European authors have used literature to respond to, and make sense of, a complex contemporary world confronting them with dramatic historical events and social issues: Holocaust and World War II; women’s struggles for legal rights and gender equality; and racial, gender and class relations of inequality in various other forms, such as in the North-South divide and in the Sicilian Mafia.
What is the role of literature in the relationship with society? What does literature teach us about the past? And how can literature help us to connect with each other in the present? These are some of the questions we will address.
Over the course of the semester, we will read novels and short stories written by Italian authors of the 20th century (Primo Levi, Leonardo Sciascia, Beppe Fenoglio, Carlo Levi and Sibilla Aleramo); in-class screening of films and videos will enhance understanding of the topics.
Besides reading literary works, students will learn the historical and cultural contexts that informed the texts. The course becomes thus the occasion to learn about Italian culture and history through literature. Finally, by discussing different narrative strategies (such as autobiography, fiction and non-fiction writing, direct and indirect narration), students will also learn to identify different literary genres and techniques.

Required Textbooks (available at the JFRC Bookstore)
Please, make sure to purchase the following editions and not other editions you might find. This will ensure that each student is referring to the same translation and pages when we discuss books in class.


Additional Readings: A selection of reading material posted on Sakai.

In-Class Screenings

Learning Outcomes
Assuming you fulfill the expectations below, by the end of the semester you should be able to:
1. Know major literary works and key authors of modern Italian literature.
2. Understand the relation of those literary works to Italian society and culture.
3. Know core themes and ideas in European/international history and culture.
4. Understand and describe literary works as modes of social inquiry, representing specific historical and cultural contexts.
5. Develop your skills in reading, thinking and writing critically through the composition of an academic essay and written homework assignments.
6. Develop your analytical skills and argue your interpretations through class discussions.
7. Identify different issues, authors and works of art in a comparative perspective.

Required Work
The course will fulfill its learning outcomes if you comply with the following requirements:
Attendance: 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 twice a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences. Unexcused absences beyond these will result in a lowering of your final grade. Tardiness to class will also affect your final grade.
Participation: This course relies largely on class discussion, and the success of discussions depends upon your active presence, thus your presence and contributions are crucial - both to me and to your classmates. To help stimulate class discussions, you should come to class prepared on the assigned readings, and you should participate actively through your Reader Responses. Always bring the assigned text to class. Annotate it with questions and observations before you arrive. If it is a file posted to Sakai, have notes of your comments and page numbers with you. Have the reading in front of you during discussion. I recommend you take notes as we discuss; you will find your notes invaluable when you need to prepare for the quizzes or if you write a paper on the text.
Reader Responses: For each new reading you will find a handout on Sakai with a list of topics/questions that we will discuss in class. In order to enhance both your reading and class discussion, you will write down your responses to these questions: choose one or two questions that interest you and address them in a short, informal essay. Include a quotation or two as evidence in support of your claims. These informal (but well-edited) meditations are a chance for you to consider the readings before coming to class. As the semester progresses, your responses should become more analytical and offer connections between the works, the authors, and the literary theories. Your Responses will also be useful when writing your final paper. Please, note that I will occasionally collect and grade your Reader Responses.
Textbook (TB): The kind of reading we will practice requires marking up a material text, thus electronic textbooks cannot be accepted. You are required to bring your textbook to each class.
Sakai: This course will be using Sakai. You are required to check the course site on a regular basis for announcements, readings and assignments posted there.
Quizzes: There will be five in-class quizzes on the material covered (multiple-choice questions). Note taking is essential to succeed in the quizzes. The quizzes will be taken as scheduled: there will be no make-ups. Quizzes may be made up only in the event of serious illness and provided a doctor’s letter is presented.
Final Paper (7-8 pages): The final essay will show your ability to follow the conventions for writing about literature and to choose a focused question and thesis to guide your discussion. The topic for this paper you must develop on your own but in conjunction with the professor. You may
either discuss your topic directly with me (preferred option) or write a one-page proposal that outlines your discussion and bibliography. See the two Handouts on Sakai: Requirements for the Final Paper, for suggestions on choosing a good topic and for detailed instructions on writing your paper; and the handout Resources on Literature, for suggestions on researching your topic. If you decide to write a proposal for your paper, see the handout Paper Proposal on Sakai.

**Required Work and Grading Assessment**

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<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes (5)</td>
<td>50% (or each quiz 10%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation and Reader Responses</td>
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**Grading Scale**

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<td>90-93</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<td>84-86</td>
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<td>59 or lower</td>
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**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](http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml).

I expect that all work you produce for this course will be your own, and that you will not submit work you have already completed for other courses. Doing your homework together and submitting the same Reader Responses will be considered plagiarism. Cutting-and-pasting part or all of another person’s writing into your paper, or paraphrasing or otherwise copying work without citing the source of the words and ideas, will be considered plagiarism. If you have any questions about using or citing texts, please talk with me.

**Resources at the JFRC**

As well as a substantial collection of physical books, the Rome Center Library allows access to a vast range of online resources. In order to learn how to use these to your best advantage, attendance at the Library Resources Session, held at the beginning of each semester, is strongly recommended. There are no other classes held on this day because of the Papal Audience.

**Disabilities**

Students with documented disabilities, who wish to confidentially discuss academic accommodations, are invited to contact me, as well as the Senior Academic Services Advisor, during the first week of classes.

**And finally…** Welcome to this class! I find the study of literature both intellectually and emotionally fascinating (as well as a lot of fun), and I look forward to exploring it together. Please do not hesitate to converse with me about the course or the readings throughout the semester, and do not feel that you have to wait until your conference to talk with me about your final paper. As far as possible, I want to make sure the class meets your own academic goals as well as those I have outlined in this syllabus.
Schedule of Meetings and Readings

Week 1
Introduction. The passage from 19th century to 20th century narrative

Week 2
Suffragette movement, birth of women’s studies and feminism. Aleramo’s A Woman.

Week 3
Sibilla Aleramo: A Woman.

Week 4
In-class screening of film: A Journey Called Love

Week 5
Quiz 1. World War II and the Holocaust. Primo Levi: If This Is a Man.

Week 6
Primo Levi: If This Is a Man

Week 7 – Fall Break

Week 8

Week 9
Neorealism in cinema. In class screening of film Bicycle Thief

Week 10
Quiz 3. The Southern Question. Carlo Levi: Christ Stopped at Eboli

Week 11
Carlo Levi: Christ Stopped at Eboli

Week 12
Quiz 4. Sicilian Mafia. Leonardo Sciascia: The Day of the Owl

Week 13
Sciascia: The Day of the Owl

Week 14
Quiz 5. Conclusions

Week 15
Final paper due