

LITR 202: The European Novel

John Felice Rome Center

Fall 2019

Mondays & Wednesdays | 3:45 – 5pm

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Office Hours: By Appointment, Mon./Wed.

Course Description

The great European cities will be the focal point of this course. Rome, Paris, London and Prague are the geographical settings of literary masterpieces written by European authors of the 19th and 20th century, describing the rise and the establishment of the modern European metropolis. We will work our way through realistic representations presenting the new urban settings or through fabulous portraits of imaginary cities that will question our own models of ideal city; all the writings we read will link the old world and the new by reminding us the role and the legacy of those ancient European cities.

This course hopes to generate possible answers to the related questions, posed by our authors, of “how does the urban environment meet or disattend expectations of citizens?” (Charles Baudelaire and Walter Benjamin), and alternatively, “what does the architecture of cities tell us about the civilisation itself?” (Pier Paolo Pasolini). Other questions of this course include: Are there city-types? (Italo Calvino) Do cities have a gender, even? (Virginia Woolf) Can a city be an active character and determine an influence on the fate and psyche of its inhabitants? (Franz Kafka)

Although our main concern will be literary descriptions of modern European cities, we will also consider related topics such as how politics, economy, class, gender, and other factors have an impact in shaping the city, and we will explore literature along with visual representations of the modern urban space through paintings, photography, maps and films.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of the course students should be able to:

- Know major literary works and key authors of modern European literature.
- Understand the relation of those literary works to European society and culture.
- Know core themes and ideas in history and culture.
- Understand and describe literary works as modes of social inquiry representing specific historical and cultural contexts.
- Develop skills in reading, thinking and writing critically through the composition of an academic essay and written homework assignments.
- Develop analytical skills and argue interpretations through class discussions.
- Identify different issues, authors and works of art in a comparative perspective.

Required Textbooks (available at the JFRC Bookstore)

- Calvino, Italo. *Invisible Cities*
- Flaubert, Gustave. *Sentimental Education*
- Kafka, Franz. *The Trial*
- Woolf, Virginia. *Mrs. Dalloway*

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

Attendance Policy

In accordance with the JFRC mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, all courses adhere to the following absence policy. Prompt attendance, preparation and active participation in course discussions are expected from every student.

- 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 twice a week, thus a total of two unexcused absences will be permitted. Unexcused absences beyond these will result in 1% lowering of the final course grade, for every absence after the “approved limit”. Consistent tardiness to class will also affect your final grade.

Required Work

The course will fulfill its learning outcomes if you comply with the following requirements:

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 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.

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.

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 four 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 (6-7 pages): The final essay will show your ability to choose a focused question and thesis to guide your discussion and to follow the conventions for writing about literature. 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.

Assessment Components

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| • Quizzes (4) | 60% (or each quiz 15%) |
| • Final Paper | 20% |
| • Attendance | 10% |
| • Participation and Reader Responses | 10% |

Grading

94-100: A	87-89: B+	77-79: C+	67-69: D+
90-93: A-	84-86: B	74-76: C	60-66: D
	80-83: B-	70-73: C-	59 or lower: F

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 to comply with the LUC Student Handbook.

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.

Late or Missed Assignments

Late or missed assignments will not be accepted for grading without the authorization of the instructor.

Accessibility Accommodations

Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center requiring academic accommodations should contact the Office of the Dean at the John Felice Rome Center, the first week of classes.

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.

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.

Course Schedule

Week 1

M 9/2 Introduction to the course



- W 9/ 4 Do cities have types? Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*
REQUIRED READING: Calvino, chapters 1-5
- Week 2**
M 9/9 Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*
REQUIRED READING: Calvino, chapters 6-9
- W 9/11 Discussion of ancient Rome; viewing of clips from *Gladiator*
- Week 3**
Please, note: this week we have a regular class on Monday, no class on Wednesday, and a make-up class on Friday
- M 9/16 What does the architecture of cities tell us about the civilisation itself? Pier Paolo Pasolini's *Rome*
- F 9/20 Pasolini, *The Ragazzi*
- Week 4**
M 9/23 Viewing/discussion of films *La Dolce Vita* and *The Great Beauty*
- W 9/25 **Quiz 1. Discussion of Paris: Walter Benjamin, *Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century* and *The Arcades Project***
- Week 5**
M 9/30 Charles Baudelaire's Paris: readings from *Paris Spleen*
- W 10/2 How does the urban environment meet or disattend expectations of citizens? Baudelaire and Benjamin on Paris
- Week 6**
M 10/7 Flaubert, *Sentimental Education*
REQUIRED READING: Flaubert, chapters 1-5
- W 10/9 Flaubert, *Sentimental Education*
REQUIRED READING: Flaubert, chapters 6-10
- Week 7**
Fall Break (October 11 – 20)
- Week 8**
M 10/21 Flaubert, *Sentimental Education*
REQUIRED READING: Flaubert, chapters 6-10
- W 10/23 **Quiz 2. Discussion on London**
- Week 9**
M 10/28 Do cities have gender? Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*



W 10/30 Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*

Week 10

M 11/4 Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*

W 11/6 Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*

Week 11

M 11/11 **Quiz 3. Discussion of Prague**

W 11/13 Can a city be an active character and determine an influence on the fate and psyche of its inhabitants? Franz Kafka's Prague

Week 12

M 11/18 Kafka, *The Trial*

W 11/20 Kafka, *The Trial*

Week 13

M 11/25 **Topic for final paper due. Kafka, *The Trial***

W 11/27 Milan Kundera, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*

Week 14

M 12/2 Milan Kundera, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*

W 12/4 **Quiz 4. Conclusions.**

Th 12/5 **Final paper due to Sakai by 5:00 pm**

Week 15

M 12/9 Conclusions.