

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO
VIETNAM CENTER

MODERN VIETNAMESE LITERATURE IN TRANSLATION

Fall 2019

Instructor Information:

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Description:

This course is intended to introduce students to Vietnam's rich literary history, with major emphasis on the *modern*. We will explore poetry, short stories, and novels. Literature provides students the opportunity to consider Vietnamese culture, language, history, society, and politics. As indicated in the title, literary works taught in this course are translations, and students should be aware not only of the translational and transcultural nature of their readings, but also of the roles and the choices of translators as they work within their own specific contexts.

Outcome & Objectives:

Learning Outcome

Students will be equipped with a general understanding of the history of Vietnamese literature with an emphasis on the modern/contemporary period. They should be able to apply some literary theories in their reading and analyzing literary texts in general, and to appreciate specific aspects of Vietnamese culture expressed in literary works in particular. As the course ends with contemporary Vietnamese literature, students will have an overview of its long development up until present, and foresee where it is heading for in continuously changing socio-political life of Vietnam.

Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand basic theories of cultural studies, literary criticism (including sociological and anthropological approaches);
2. Critically apply the theories into their analysis of socio-cultural issues in general, and of contemporary Vietnam's subjects in particular;

3. Recognize the universality and local characteristics of a number of problems in regional and global contexts;
4. Appreciate cultural diversity and different cultural values practiced by various nations;
5. Avoid stereotypical prejudices, and recognize the importance of cultural mutual understanding in an interconnected world;
6. Work with people from diverse cultural backgrounds based on their appreciation and respect of those people's cultures.

Conceptual Framework:

Conceptual Framework

As an interdisciplinary field, cultural studies employs a variety of approaches drawn from various disciplines, such as sociology, anthropology, history, or literature. It concentrates on how culture is constructed and organized through the negotiation between the authority and the public; it also examines how "literature" evolves and changes over time.

Diversity

Weekly presentations and in-class discussions allow the student to compare and contrast her personal opinion/thought with those of her classmates. Additionally, as the student is supposed to hold a small weekly discussion with her Vietnamese partner on a course-related subject of her choice, she will have more chances to be exposed to the locals' viewpoints, and consequently will better understand the chosen subject. All these mutual learning environments ultimately help to strengthen critical and multidimensional thinking.

Technology

The course's lectures will be interspersed with discussions that require students' **attentive viewing** for follow-up observations and interpretations.

Institutional Policies & Philosophies:

IDEA Objectives for the Faculty Information Form

- Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends) **ESSENTIAL**
- Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories **ESSENTIAL**
- Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions) **IMPORTANT**
- Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course **IMPORTANT**
- Acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team **IMPORTANT**
- Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing **MINOR**
- Learning how to find and use resources for answering questions or solving problems **MINOR**
- Developing a clearer understanding of, and commitment to, personal values **MINOR**

- Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view
IMPORTANT
- Acquiring an interest in learning more by asking questions and seeking answers
MINOR

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty demands that the pursuit of knowledge in the university community be carried out with sincerity and integrity. For additional academic policies and procedures refer to: http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_main.shtml

Accessibility

Students who have disabilities should refer to the University policy on accommodations and participation in courses available at: <http://www.luc.edu/sswd/>.

Harassment (Bias Reporting)

It is unacceptable and a violation of university policy to harass, discriminate against or abuse any person because of his or her race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, age or any other characteristic protected by applicable law. If you believe you are subject to such bias, you should notify the Bias Response Team at this link: <http://webapps.luc.edu/biasreporting/>.

Reading Materials:

An electronic course reader will be delivered to students via email. Students should have e-book devices or computers to read it. Additionally, a hardcopy of the reader will also be provided.

Additional Readings

The instructor may add additional readings not listed in this syllabus during the course of the semester.

Requirements & Expectations:

Copyright

The Copyright Act requires that people who use or reference the work of others must follow a set of guidelines designed to protect authors' rights. The safest practice is to remember (1) to refrain from distributing works used in class (whether distributed by the professor or used for research) that are copyright protected and (2) that any research or creative work should be cited according to the conventions of your discipline. These same rules apply to students use and dissemination of materials associated with the course. For LUC's copyright resources check online: <http://www.luc.edu/copyright/highlights.shtml>

Preparation

Preparation through completion of each week's readings as well as thoughtful reflections on the topics are critical not only for each individual's intellectual development, but the

course's collective development as well. This is particularly critical in an online, asynchronous learning environment.

Readings have been purposefully selected for their relevance to the given topic and contribution to the overall literature. Rather than assigning a bulk of reading, the philosophy employed in this course design is to carefully select significant and important core readings.

Time should be directed towards examining themes across reading and conducting critical analysis of content and its application in the context of higher education. Students are encouraged to consider this as they read assigned material.

Participation

To achieve full benefit of participation, **this course requires approximately 4 hours per week for completion of assignments**. This time is mainly spent reading course materials, discussing with Vietnamese student partners, and completing assignments. Inability to meet this time requirement will reduce a participant's benefit from the course, or, in some cases, fulfillment of assignments needed to complete and receive credit for the course. It is important to note that *how* a student participates is often a function of their particular learning style. Therefore, participation is less about the frequency with which a student engages and more about the *quality* of the contributions and evaluation of all contributions will reflect this.

For the purposes of this course, participation is valued in which students build upon one another's comments, provide meaningful connections to practice, share critical observations and insights on a topic, and generally increase the complexity and richness of the discussion. Students are also encouraged to pose questions to one another. A portion of the final grade is dedicated to participation and a rubric is provided that outlines how this will be assessed.

EVALUATIVE DIMENSION	"A" GRADE	"B" GRADE	"C" GRADE	"D/F" GRADE
QUALITY OF CONTRIBUTIONS	Contributions are relevant and routinely integrate course reading and life experiences into the discussion; Arguments are evidenced-based and supported through course content and life experiences	Contributions lean more toward either course readings or life experiences, but are relevant to the conversation; Arguments are generally evidence-based	Contributions are not relevant to the conversation and rarely incorporate course readings; Contributions betray a lack of preparation; Arguments are rarely evidence-based	No or minimal contributions or arguments are offered
SIGNIFICANCE OF CONTRIBUTIONS	Contributions add complexity to the conversation and support or build off of others' contributions	Contributions are generally substantive, but occasionally indicate a lack of attention to what others have shared	Contributions repeat what others have shared and thus do not advance the conversation	No or minimal contributions are offered

GENERAL ENGAGEMENT	Regularly contributes to the class; Routinely engaged with course activities and / or discussions	Contributions meet minimal expectations; Does not consistently engage in activities and/ or discussions	Minimal contributions are offered; disengaged from activities and/ or discussions; shifts to off-topic material	No contributions are offered
GATE-KEEPING	Does not dominate the discussion; Regularly encourages the participation of others by posing questions or asking for other students' thoughts	Student occasionally encourages the participation of others; recognizes the contributions of others	Dominates the conversation; Does not engage other students; directs majority of comments to the instructor	No or minimal contributions
ATTENDING SKILLS	Is considerate of appropriately expressed feelings and opinions of others; Actively supports peers' learning processes	Generally considerate of appropriately expressed feelings and opinions of others; generally supports peers' learning processes	Is dismissive of others' feelings and opinions; Does not actively support peers' learning processes	Inconsiderate of others' feelings and opinions; Does not actively support others' learning
TIMELINESS	Consistently submits material and engages in course requirements by specified times	Generally submits materials by the specified times	Demonstrates a pattern of missing course requirement deadlines	Consistently misses course requirement deadlines

Civil Discourse

Students are expected to engage in social perspective-taking, a skill that requires both empathy and the ability to acknowledge multiple points of view. Any interaction in the online course should respect the rights of others by (1) allowing all classmates the right to voice their opinions without fear of ridicule, and (2) not using profanity or making objectionable (e.g., gendered, racial or ethnic) comments, especially comments directed at a classmate. Students should feel comfortable voicing their opinions, but they must also be prepared to assume responsibility for the impact that contributions may have on others.

Email

Email will be used as the primary mode of correspondence between the instructor and students for this course. **You can expect that all emails to the instructor will be responded to within 48 business hours.**

APA Style/ Writing

The quality of writing is also of high importance. **All papers should be submitted in APA 6th Edition format.** Should papers have significant errors in APA formatting, they will not be accepted as complete.

Assignments:

READING RESPONSES:

Each week the student will be expected to write a 500-word response to one reading. ^[11]_{SEP}In the response, the student should respond to one of the following:

- Most interesting issues the student found from the selection

- A discussion of what the student learned from the reading about Vietnamese literature, culture, or history
- Puzzling problem(s) from the reading, or question(s) to discuss with the class
- Preliminary interpretation of a selected literary work from the reading

Students must submit their reports via email **by 10 am on Fridays** to allow the instructor enough time to read and, IF NECESSARY, comment on their works. Instructor's general observations and comments on the students' responses will be offered in every class. Additional guidance of how to write a good response will be provided through email. [L] [SEP]

PRESENTATION:

Each student will take turn to have a twenty-minute in-class presentation during the semester. The presentation will be counted together with the peer-discussion reports (see GRADING below).

The presenter is exempted from writing a response paper. *She should be ready to give-and-take questions, conducting the presentation not simply as a brief talk, but an inspiring class discussion.* [L] [SEP]

FINAL PAPER:

This will be a close reading of a literary work by a Vietnamese writer. It can be a short story, a group of poems, or a novel. Students are encouraged to investigate and choose a work most interesting to them. Their analysis should be from an interdisciplinary perspective. More importantly students should incorporate their **Vietnam experience** into their reading/analysis of the selected works. The final paper should be **10 pages in length.** [L] [SEP]

Students should browse over the course's contents and figure out what they are interested in the most. Starting from Session 7 students should submit their potential paper topic(s) with the instructor for approval. Paper outline and references are due during Session 10. [L] [SEP]

Assignments are due at the time specified in the course syllabus and should be submitted according to the directions provided. *Any weekly response submitted after the deadline is not accepted. No extension will be granted.* Note that the instructor will not hunt down missing assignments and it is *your* responsibility to ensure that they are turned in by the stated deadlines.

The instructor will closely monitor all your weekly responses. Your response will be graded as **"PASS" or "FAIL"** depending on whether or not they meet the requirements of the assignments. Should a response be graded as "FAIL", the instructor will contact you via email with explanations and suggestions. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the feedback provided for a response is integrated into the next one. If problems repeatedly appear across assignments, the percentage of point deduction will be increased. The instructor will synthesize outstanding points made in the responses, sort out noteworthy questions raised in the course's electronic forum, and present/answer them in class.

For the final paper's topic proposal and the detailed outline, students will be provided substantial feedback regarding content, structure, and grammar/APA style. NOTE: To fully develop their argument, students *may exceed* the suggested length of the paper. Additionally, *the suggested length does not include the title page or reference pages.*

Participation

Attendance will be taken for every single class. Regular attendance is crucial; bad attendance will result in a lower grade. Participation in class discussions is crucial and counted toward the final grade.

Students may use laptops or tablets in class to take notes. However, **any other use of these devices and the use of cell phones are strictly prohibited.** Violating this policy will negatively impact the student's class participation (see also below).

Evaluation & Grading:

GRADING^[L]_[SEP]

Attendance and class participation: **30%**^[L]_[SEP]

Weekly responses: **30%**^[L]_[SEP]

Presentation: **10%**

Final Paper: **30%**^[L]_[SEP]

Assignments in this course will be graded according to the rubric provided. *Note that if an assignment fails to follow the instructions provided a grade of zero will be assigned.* Students are encouraged to consult with the instructor regarding any questions associated with assignments:

EVALUATIVE DIMENSION	"A" GRADE	"B" GRADE	"C" GRADE	"D/F" GRADE
Achievement of Specified Learning Outcomes	The assignment demonstrates strong achievement across designated learning outcomes	The assignment demonstrates evidence of meeting the designated learning outcomes	The assignment meets the majority, but not all of the designated learning outcomes	The assignment is not completed, does not conform to the instructions provided, or does not meet the majority of designated learning outcomes
Demonstrated Understanding of Content	Exceptional ability to both synthesize course content and identify similarities and differences between and among content areas	Demonstrates adequate competence in articulating central points of core content	Demonstrates varying degrees of understanding of content with some accurately explained and others missing key points	Assignment is not completed or does not demonstrate accurate or full understanding of content
Complexity of Thought & Creativity	Demonstrates significant complexity of thought as well as creative approaches in both content and structure	Complexity of thought is of adequate depth and elements of creativity are present in work	Complexity of thought varies significantly between topics with some demonstrating adequate complexity and others inadequate	Assignment is not completed or lacks complexity of thoughts required for graduate-level work

Sophistication of Application to Practice	Application to practice is accurate, creative, reasonable, and takes into account multiple perspectives and considerations	Application to practice is accurate and adequate	Application to practice varies in accuracy and does not take into account varying perspectives and considerations	Assignment is not completed or application to practice fails to take into consideration higher education and student affairs context
Depth of Critical Analysis	Depth of analysis is significant offering areas of both strength and limitation, connecting multiple dimensions of content, and offering substantive interpretations	Depth of analysis is adequate and presents both strengths and limitations as well as general interpretations	Depth of analysis varies greatly and lacks consistent representation of strengths and weaknesses, connections between multiple dimensions of content, and/ or meaningful interpretations	Assignment is not completed or depth of critical analysis is not consistent with requirements of graduate-level work
Appropriate Structure, APA Style, and Grammar	The final product is well organized, structured in way that builds on the argument or central thesis, and is free of errors related to grammar or APA style	The final product is well organized and clearly structured with only minimal grammatical and APA style errors	The final product suffers from problems associated with organization and structure and/ or grammatical and APA style errors	Assignment is not completed or final product is poorly organized, structured, and/ or possesses significant grammar and/ or APA style errors

The following point spread will be used to determine the final course grade:

<u>Total Points Earned</u>	<u>Final Grade</u>
100 – 94	A
93 – 90	A-
89 – 87	B+
86 – 84	B
83 – 80	B-
79 – 77	C+
76 – 74	C
73 – 70	C-
69 – 60	D
59 – 0	F

Course Sequence

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT DUE
Session 1	Course Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why Vietnam? ▪ Why Vietnamese Literature? ▪ What are your expectations for course? 	
Session 2	Vietnamese Literature in Global Contexts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ David Damrosch, “Reading in Translation” in <i>How to Read World Literature</i>, Wiley-Blackwell, 2009, pp. 65-85 (packet) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish the assigned readings BEFORE class; • Questions from the readings? Share them with our class.
Session 3	Historically Contextualizing “Modern Vietnamese Literature” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nguyễn Du, <i>The Tale of Kieu</i>, translated by Huynh Sanh Thong, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983. (selections) ▪ Alexander Woodside, “Vietnamese History: Confucianism, Colonialism and the Struggle for Independence”, <i>Vietnam Forum</i> 11 (Winter-Spring 1988), pp. 21-48 (packet) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start the discussion with your Vietnamese student partner on a topic chosen from the assigned essays; • Submit the discussion report; • If this is your turn, ready for conducting the presentation
Session 4	Early Modern Vietnamese Novels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Công Huyền Tôn Nữ Nha Trang, “The Emergence of Modern Vietnamese Literature” (http://vietnamlit.org/nhatrang/modlit.html, also in course packet) ▪ Nhất Linh, <i>Severance</i>, translated by James Banerian, 1998 (selected chapters, packet) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly response • In-class discussion
CONSULT WITH THE INSTRUCTOR FOR A POTENTIAL PAPER TOPIC		
Session 5	Reality Viewed from Different Perspectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Neil J. Jamieson, “The Battle of the Novels” in <i>Understanding Vietnam</i>, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third peer-discussion report

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT DUE
	University of California Press, 1995, pp. 135-154 (packet) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thạch Lam, “The Market Girl” (short story, packet) ▪ Ngô Tất Tố, <i>When the Light is Out</i>, translated by Ngô Vĩnh Long (selected chapters) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation
Session 6	Satire and Social Criticism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vũ Trọng Phụng, <i>Dumb Luck</i>, edited by Peter Zinorman, translated by Nguyễn Nguyệt Cầm and Peter Zinorman, University of Michigan Press, 2005 (Selections) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly response • In-class discussion • Paper topic proposal due
Session 7	“Socialist Realism” Literature <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trường Chinh, “The Stand of Marxist Culture” and “Some Concrete Problems of Our Country’s Present Literature and Art” (Chapters II and II from <i>Marxism and Vietnamese Culture</i>) (packet) ▪ John Schafer, “Three ‘New Poets’ Before and After Revolution” (packet) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly response • In-class discussion
Session 8	Writings from Divided Vietnam (I): The North <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trần Dần, “We Must Win” ▪ Phùng Quán, “What Mother Told Me Once” ▪ Phùng Quán, “Kiss” ▪ Peter Zinoman, “Nhan Van-Giai Pham and Vietnamese ‘Reform Communism’ in the 1950s: A Revisionist Interpretation”. <i>Journal of Cold War Studies</i>, 13 (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly response • In-class discussion
Session 9	Writings from Divided Vietnam (II): The South <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dương Nghiễm Mậu, “Resignation” ▪ Dương Nghiễm Mậu, “The Rats” ▪ Thanh Tâm Tuyền, “Resurrection” ▪ Trịnh Công Sơn, “A Lullaby of Cannons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly response • In-class discussion • Detailed paper outline

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT DUE
	for the Night” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nhã Ca, “The Bell of Thiên Mụ” 	
Session 10	Literature of Post-1975 Vietnam: Nguyễn Minh Châu ^[SEP] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nguyễn Minh Châu, “Writing about War”, translated by Huỳnh Sanh Thông, <i>Vietnam Review</i> 3 (Autumn-Winter 1997), pp. 438-446 (packet) ▪ -----, “A Boat in the Distance” (short story, packet) ▪ -----, “A Ferry Stop in the Country” (short story, packet) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly response • In-class discussion
Session 11	“Renovation” Literature (I): Nguyễn Huy Thiệp <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dana Healy, “Literature in Transition: An Overview of Vietnamese Writing of the Renovation Period. In David Smyth (ed), <i>The Canon in Southeast Asian Literatures</i>, Curzon Press, 200, pp.41-50 (packet) ▪ “Interview” with Nguyễn Huy Thiệp, <i>Journal of Vietnamese Studies</i>, vol. 1:1-2 (February/August 2006), pp. 485-498 (packet) ▪ Nguyễn Huy Thiệp, “The General Reties” (short story, packet) ▪ -----, “The Winds of Hua Tat” (Short stories, packet) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly response • In-class discussion
Session 12	“Renovation” Literature (II): Bảo Ninh <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Steven P. Liparulo, “‘Incense and Ashes’: The Postmodern Work of Refutation in Three Vietnam War Novels”, <i>War, Literature and the Arts</i>, vol. 15:1&2, pp. 71-94 (packet) ▪ Bảo Ninh, <i>The Sorrow of War</i>, translated by Phan Thanh Hao, edited by Frank Palmos, Riverhead Books, 1996 (selected chapters) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly response • In-class discussion
Session 13	Renovation Literature (III): Dương Thu Hương	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly response

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT DUE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dương Thu Hương, <i>Paradise of the Blind</i> (selected chapters) ▪ Hue Tam Ho Tai, “The Literature of Dissent” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class discussion
Session 14	Contemporary Vietnamese Literature <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nguyễn Ngọc Tư, “The Endless Field” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly response • In-class discussion • Final review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FINAL PAPER DUE BY DECEMBER 9, 2019 		