

English 44B, World Literature

10:00 MWF

Betty Higdon, Instructor, Office HUM-61, Phone 638-3641, ex.3407 (college)
225-4068 (home)

INTRODUCTION TO THE CLASS

English 44B is the second semester in a year-long course, but you may take it without taking English 44A. You do need to be eligible for English 1A because the reading and writing required in English 44B are fairly demanding. The class will read and talk about both major and minor works in world literature—works from the East, Africa, Europe, and the Americas. Of course in one semester we cannot read more than a sample of the works available, but we hope for a broad view and opportunities to compare and contrast works from different times and places. There should be something for everyone in the choices and assignments.

Our principal goal is to read and understand the literature in ways that permit or encourage us to understand others and ourselves better. There should be chances to discover writers, works, and genres you may not know about. Opportunities for improved reading, more skillful writing, and lots of discussion are built into the course, which will be conducted essentially through discussion. We may notice both how literature reflects the time and place in which it is written and also how literature may make history of its own.

The required text is Mary Ann Caws and Christopher Prendergast, The Harper Collins World Reader: The Modern World, Longman, 1994. You will need this text immediately. There is much more here than we can read in a semester, which means that we may select what interests us, trying for lively and thoughtful works that capture the readers' attention. In addition to the text, each person will choose a novel to read (from a list of several). The list of novels will be introduced during the third week of the semester. There will be other opportunities for you to choose the direction of your own reading, too.

The class will be conducted through much discussion and some lecture and explanation. Good discussions depend on everyone's being prepared for them: completing the reading assignments on time for each class is vital. Please plan to participate, to ask questions, and to work with others in class. There will be five or six major papers assigned. While these papers are written outside class time, we will discuss the assignments, the works in progress, and individual topics as they develop. These papers will serve as the major "tests" of the class. Unlike most tests, they may be revised and improved after they have been graded once. A good revision will warrant an improved grade. Short quizzes or tests are possible but not inevitable. (If everyone is prepared and participating regularly in discussion, quizzes may not be necessary.)

Grades in the class are based on the major papers (60-70%), test grades or journal grades (10%), and the final examination (30%). If regular brief quizzes are needed, all of them will be averaged to equal one major paper grade and included in that percentage. The final examination will have two parts, both required: (1) a take-home essay test and (2) an oral or written final conducted during the final exam period.

You are expected to attend regularly and be prepared, to complete written assignments in a timely and thoughtful way, and to participate in the work of the class. Late papers will be accepted, but this policy will be revised if too many people turn in too many late papers. (Any change in this policy will be discussed in class.) You are expected to come to class on time, but if you are late, you are still expected to get here

and get to work. Once class is well started, you will have an assignment sheet that outlines what should be completed before each class so that you can discuss the day's work even if the instructor is tardy.

The college policy on attendance, that you may be dropped from class after the equivalent of two weeks' absence (six class meetings), will be followed. If illness or other emergency interferes with attendance, please communicate with the instructor. The **drop date** for this class (the date after which you may not drop without a letter grade) is Friday, March 10, 2000.

This class may be taken credit/no credit. To earn credit you need to earn at least a C grade in the class. If your semester is very busy or you feel threatened by the work but want the experience offered in this class, you may choose credit/no credit, but that decision must be made by Friday, February 11, 2000.

There is some flexibility in our schedule so that the assignments will be arranged to fit the interests of those in the class. The quality of our work is more important than the number of pages we read or write; still, there is much to read and think about, so the work will be challenging. It should be a pleasure, too. **You are encouraged to ask the instructor for information or help whenever you need or want it.**

The final examination is scheduled for Monday, May 15, 2000, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE (This shows the direction of the course but will be revised.)

Week 1 Getting started.
Monday, 1/10 Introduction to the class
Wednesday, 1/12 Read the following stories in the text:
 Hisaye Yamamoto, "Seventeen Syllables," 2456
 Njabulo S. Ndebele, "Death of a Son," 1903
Friday, 1/14 Read the following stories:
 Jamaica Kinkaid, "Girl," 2342
 Rabindranath Tagore, "The Editor," 1350

Week 2 ~~Monday~~ ^{Wednesday} 1/19 Read the following stories:
 Lu Hsün, "My Old Home," 1480
 Leslie Silko, "Lullaby," 2497

When we see how these assignments work for you, the rest of the schedule will be developed.

 Selections from South and Southeast Asia

Weeks 3 and 4

 Modern East Asia (China, Japan, and Korea)

Week 5

 Modern Middle East

Week 6

 Modern Africa

Weeks 7, 8, and 9

 Modern Europe

Weeks 10 and 11

 Latin America and the Caribbean

Weeks 12 and 13

 The United States

Week 14

 Oral Literature Today

Week 15

 Writing Across Boundaries

Weeks 16 and 17

(1) Following themes

(2) Relating the novel
 to other readings