In this course we will be exploring the world through literature. More than that, we will be examining a variety of contemporary social, cultural, and political issues that connect in powerful and sometimes surprising ways to the literature featured in the course. Together we will use the literature and those issues to better understand our current social and political moment. Frequently we will be moving back and forth, from the past to the present, or from literary to socio-historical contexts, and doing so will help us to see how the questions and concerns raised in the literature remain with us across time and cultures. In turn, this reinforces how literature – no matter how removed it may be from us chronologically or culturally – can still resonate with us. In fact, that’s what good literature does: it links us to one another, to ourselves, to the deep and profound realities of being human.
How to Take This Course

In her excellent syllabus for her US History Survey II course at Worcester University, Dr. Tona Hangen encourages her students to think of her course as the ocean and “to go as deep” as they dare. Using her concept – with some adjustments for our course – I extend the same invitation to you.

Wading - Your background in world literature is new or developing; basically, you’re "in the shallows," and you are going to need some "water wings" in the form of additional guidance from the instructor. As writers, Waders are used to skimming the surface in their writing, and need to work on plunging into the depths more in their writing.

Snorkeling - You’re familiar with world literature thanks to some adventurous high school English teachers, and you’re ready to take your knowledge into deeper waters. You want to look below the surface. Snorkerlers understand that the interplay between literature and history is often key to unlocking meaning. They are keen to explore the ways texts “talk” to each other. They are equipped to look extensively at a text and from multiple angles, both in classroom discussion as well as in their writing.

Scuba Diving - You are very comfortable with “the deeps” of literary analysis, from close reading to even some literary theory, and you’ve taken an AP English class or a few college-level literature course, so you are up for the reading common to survey literature courses like this one. You actively seek out extra readings and information, and prefer writing assignments that challenge your skill sets. Scuba Divers are driven by curiosity and are passionate about taking their writing well beyond the shallows.
COURSE POLICIES

ATTENDANCE  In an asynchronous online course, there are no mandatory meetings to attend, and thus there is no true attendance policy. However, I recommend that you "attend" class by logging in to the course, completing some of the course reading or course assignments EVERYDAY so that you can stay on top of the course.

LATE WORK  I allow one “get out jail free” for late work, which means you can turn in a paper up to three days late without penalty. No papers will be accepted after four days.

PLAGIARIASM  In all my courses, I expect work that represents original work and the correct use of sources. If at any time you are unsure about how to cite a source or how to incorporate work into your writing, please see me for help. If you do engage in plagiarism that is in violation of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, you will receive a zero for the assignment and be reported to the appropriate Academic Dean. A second offense is an automatic failing grade for the course, and you will again be reported to your Academic Dean.

DISABILITY SERVICES  To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester to receive accommodations in a timely fashion.

MASKS / SOCIAL DISTANCING  Masks (cloth face coverings) must be worn over the nose and mouth at all times in this class and appropriate physical distancing must be observed. Students not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be asked to leave the class. All incidents of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be reported to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Students who are reported for multiple infractions of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing may be subject to disciplinary actions.

Required Texts


All other required texts for the course are available in D2L.
Grading Scale

An “A” paper is an exceptional paper that meets all of the requirements of the assignment as outlined by the assignment guidelines. Such a paper has a clearly stated and critically sophisticated thesis statement; supporting paragraphs are thoughtful and well-supported; transitions between paragraphs and ideas are smooth; a formal introduction and conclusion are provided and both paragraphs meet the expectations of introductions and conclusions as outlined by the instructor; and there are few to no grammatical errors.

A “B+” paper is a superior paper that meets all of the requirements of the assignment; thesis statement is clear but lacks some of the critical sophistication of an “A” thesis statement; paragraphs are nicely developed and supported; transitions between paragraphs and ideas are generally smooth; the introduction and conclusion are for the most part formally constructed and follow most of the guidelines for introductions and conclusions as explained by the instructor; and has a few grammatical errors.

A “B” paper is a strong paper that meets most to all of the requirements of the assignment; the thesis statement is identifiable but lacks the level of clarity and sophistication found in “A” and “B+” papers; paragraphs show attention to development, but not as consistently or as rigorously as “A” or “B+” papers; smooth transitions between paragraphs and ideas are present in places, but not consistent; the introduction and conclusion lack some of the necessary formality and components as stipulated by the instructor; and there are several grammatical errors.

A “C+” is a good paper that meets a large number of the requirements of the assignment; the thesis is identifiable, but may be awkwardly constructed and is somewhat lacking in critical depth; paragraphs are fairly developed, but could use more support and development; transitions are abrupt or in some places non-existent; the introduction and conclusion are too informal and are lacking in some of the components outlined by the instructor; and there are several grammatical errors.

A “C” paper is an average paper that meets most of the requirements of the assignment; the thesis is identifiable, but its claim is vague, observational, or underdeveloped and is too informal in its construction and critical thinking; paragraphs show some development, but not as much as a “C+” paper; transitions are hard to find between paragraphs and ideas; the introduction and conclusion are too informal and have few of the components outlined by the instructor; and there are many grammatical errors.

A “D+” is a mediocre paper meets only one or two of the requirements of the assignment; there is no discernible thesis statement; the paragraphs lack structure and critical development; transitions are absent; the introduction and conclusion are awkwardly constructed and do not provide adequate set-up or closure to the paper; and there are many grammatical errors.
Grading Scale

A “D” paper is a poor paper that does not meet the requirements of the assignment; the thesis statement is not identifiable; supporting paragraphs are underdeveloped and unfocused; there are no transitions to move from idea to idea or paragraph to paragraph; the introduction and conclusion are hard to follow, have no clear purpose or direction, and do not meet any of the expectations as outlined by the instructor; and the paper has many errors on each page.

An “F” paper does not meet any of the requirements as a whole or those for the introduction and conclusion; the paper has no discernible main idea; paragraphs are short and underdeveloped; the paper does not meet the minimum page length; the paper lacks focus; and there are grammatical errors throughout the entire paper.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

11% Modern-Day Proposal: Using a graphic design platform like Canva, students will construct a proposal outlining a modern-day issue that links meaningfully to one of the featured texts, presenting supporting images, video, and text that clarifies that connection and its significance as a teaching tool.

24% Discussion Board: Students will engage in at least one Discussion Board conversation a week, engaging in a question or problem associated with the featured literature that week, and responding to posts made by their classmates.

30% Mini Exams: At the end of each module, students will complete a short mini exam comprised of small essays and short answer questions covering the literature and concepts presented in that module.

35% Reading Journal: Each week students will write 2–3 short entries in their reading journal, which will be used to gauge understanding of the featured literature, supporting terminology, and concepts.