Text: Norton Anthology of World Literature, vol B, 2nd Ed.

Course objectives
- To explore exciting new worlds and ways of thinking through the beauty and power of literature.
- To introduce students to the literature of various cultures around the world from the fourth century through the fifteenth. This course is introductory, i.e., only bits and pieces of an author’s work can be studied, but as with any introductory course, the hope is that the student will be inspired to read or learn more of what he or she liked most.
- To set these works of literature in their cultural and historical contexts. We will be asking as we read: What kinds of things do writers in each culture write about? What interests or matters to the people in that society? What do they value? How do political and religious movements affect the literature?
- To put literature from cultures around the globe into conversation with one another, in order to examine the ways literary genres (poetry, prose, drama) give voice to the concerns and ideals of each culture. To that end, much of the class will focus on comparative analysis along the following lines:
  - By themes – how do these authors explore themes such as marriage and romance, death and loss, the transience of life? Are the differences more due to broad cultural differences or to the differences between individuals?
  - By genre – how does any particular genre reflect the author’s intention? How does the genre fit the chosen theme? Does a poet’s elegy, for example, tell us any-thing about the way the people in general related to death?
  - By tone – can we generalize from the tone of a work of literature anything about the culture it came from?
  - By close readings – exercises in understanding how a piece of literature works by close analysis of particular parts in relation to the whole. Students will be expected to know and use the vocabulary of literary analysis.

Explanation of assignments
(1) Reading assignments
It is important to have read the material well and to have thought about it in comparison with other readings before each class. Good thinking and its corollary and consequence, good writing, result from preparedness before class and participation in class. Class discussion is an important part of this course, and students will be expected to participate. Plan ahead. The poems need several readings for their meaning (and beauty) to sink in and for class lecture and discussion to be meaningful. Some of the longer readings may take some good time management on your part for class preparedness. We will also make a noble attempt at correct pronunciations.
(2) "Viking Outlaw"
This movie, a rendition of the Icelandic saga about Gisli, is on reserve in the video room of the Knight Library. Discussion of the movie will take place on Feb. 17. Be sure to have watched the film before then – and realize that forty students can’t all watch it on Feb. 16.

(3) Ten one-page essays (30%)
Nine of these essays must come from the assignments. The other will be on your presentation topic. You may choose which pieces of literature to write about, but you may write only one essay per assignment. I.e., even though we study Shakuntala and the Ring of Recollection for three class periods, you cannot write more than one essay about that play.

Begin each paper with a title page with an indication of the essay number (Essay 1, Essay 2, etc.), a skipped line, and the title of the essay and a subtitle (indicating the topic of the paper) in the center of the page. Four lines below that put your name, my name, the name of the class, and the date. For the presentation, the title should be "Presentation" followed by the topic: e.g., "Presentation: Music of Arabia."

Each essay must be exactly one page in Times New Roman font, 11 or 12 point. Each must be an essay. That is, it must have a thesis statement presented at the end of the (very short) introduction; all elements of the paper must address that thesis, and the paper must present an argument. A list of facts or a statement of the obvious will not suffice. The trick to these papers is to keep the topic narrow and specific and the prose lean. Eliminate all wordiness. There is no room for anything except what exactly pertains to the thesis.

Essays are due no later than the class period after the last class covering that particular assignment. LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION.

(4) Group presentation
Groups of three (and one group of four) will be formed within the first week of class. Each group is to pick a suitable topic from the given list (see handout) for a brief (10-minute) presentation to the class on the given date, beginning the third week of class. The purpose of these presentations is to broaden the context of the literature. We’ll have presentations as close as possible to the days we discuss the relevant literature. Topics that take us into visual or audial experiences are encouraged – art, music, architecture, dance, landscape design, fashion, sports, etc. Presentations can include visual and audial aids, creative skits, role-playing, audience participation – be creative. Have fun. To prevent presentations from being boring recitations of what we could find on Wikipedia for ourselves, each presentation must include at least three sources. (Wikipedia is not one.) If the group has four people, four sources are required. If someone drops out, and there are only two group members, only two sources are required. The essay accompanying the presentation should have a bibliography attached.
(5) Mid-term exam (30%)
Students will be expected to know the specifics of the literature and time periods studied. There will be both multiple-choice questions and an essay component. Names of characters, approximate dates of composition, political contexts, religious influences, use of genre, appropriate literary terms, and recognition of quoted material are examples of the kinds of things students will be expected to know for both parts of the exam. Students must bring exam books to class on exam day.

(6) Final exam (40%)
The format will be the same as that for the mid-term. The essay question will cover material from the whole term. The multiple-choice part will cover material since the mid-term with the exception of literary terms, which will be pulled from the whole term. Students must bring an exam book to class.

Grade scale
1000 points total
Essays (30%) – 300 points total; 30 points each
   Grades diminish by one point: 30=A+; 28-29=A; 27=A-; 26=B+, 25=B, 24=B-, 23=C+, etc.
Mid-term exam (30%) – 300 points total
   300=A+; 285-295=A; 270-280=A-
   260-265=B+; 250-255=B; 242.5=B-
   230-235=C+; 220-225=C; 210-215=C
   200-205=D+; 190-195=D; 180-185=D-
   <180=F
Final exam (40%) – 400 points total
   400=A+; 345-355=A; 360-375=A
   345-355=B+; 330-340=B; 320-325=B-
   305-315=C+; 290-300=C; 280-285=C-
   265-275=D+; 250-260=D-; 235-245=D-
   <245=F

Final grades
   1000 = A+
   950-995 = A
   900-945 = A-
   870-895 = B+
   840-865 = B
   800-835 = B-
   770-795 = C+
   740-765 = C
   700-735 = C-
   670-695 = D+
   640-665 = D
   600-635 = D-
   <600 = F

Use of electronic devices: Turn off all electronic devices before coming to class. Use of such devices during class is grounds for dismissal. If there is a legitimate reason for you to have such devices available during class, be sure to inform me at the beginning of term. Later explanations will not be accepted.
Plagiarism: All of the work that you submit for this class must be your own and written exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented. Please refer to the summary of the Code of Student Conduct in the Schedule of Classes. In cases where plagiarism has been clearly established, the award of an F for the final course grade is the standard practice of the English Department. Please see me if you have any questions about your use of sources.

Disability Information: If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me soon. Please bring a notification letter from Disability Services outlining your approved accommodations. If you do not have a notification letter, contact Disability Services at 346-1155.

Writing Resources: In addition to the Learning Center (located in the basement of PLC, Prince Lucien Campbell Hall), which offers basic editing and writing advice, Purdue Universities “On-line Writing Lab (OWL), at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/, is an excellent comprehensive source for all MLA formatting questions, basic writing advice, and grammatical rules. Please also see me for any and all writing questions, either during my office hours, or by appointment. I love to help.

Reading and Assignment Schedule – subject to change as necessary

NOTE: Always read ALL introductions – the general introductions to each culture’s literature and the specific introductions for each writer or series of writers. These pages are not individually listed in the assignments below, but they are part of the expected reading.

Numbers in parentheses refer to page numbers in the Norton Anthology

Jan. 3 – Introduction to the course
   Tu Fu: “Spending the Night in a Tower by the River” (1389)

5 – Chinese literature: All the poems of Li Po (1379-1384), Wang Wei1373-13760, and Po Chu-i (1393-1398)
   “Afterword” from Records on Metal and Stone,” Li Ch’ing-chao (1410-1414)


12 – (Islamic cont.) Rumi (1541-1548). Also poems on Blackboard. –

17 – Indian literature: Kalidasa: “Shakuntala and the Ring of Recollection,” Acts I-II (1271-1288)

19 – (Indian cont.) Kalidasa: “Shakuntala and the Ring of Recollection,” Acts III-V (1288-1310)


26 – Japanese literature: Murasaki Shikibu: The Tale of Genji, Ch. 4 (2204-2224)
31– (Japanese cont.)
   From The Man’yoshu (2148-2160)
   From The Kokinshu: (2160-2174)

Feb.  2  Open for syllabus revision; mid-term exam prep
    7 – Mid-term exam
    9 – Anglo-Saxon literature: *Beowulf* (1-2199)
    14 – (Anglo-Saxon cont.) *Beowulf* (2200-3182)
    16 – Icelandic: *Thorstein the Staff-struck* (1776-1782)
        *Viking Outlaw* (movie on reserve in Knight Library)
    21 – Arthurian: Marie de France (1767-1776)
        *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Parts I -II (1991-2016)
    23 – (Arthurian cont.) *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Parts III-IV (2016-2045)

Mar.  1  Middle English: Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, General Prologue
        (2045-2067); “The Miller’s Tale” (2067-2082)
    6 – (Middle English cont.) Geoffrey Chaucer, "The Pardonar's Tale" (2106-2119)
    8  Exam review.

Mar. ??:    Final exam