



SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY
MADRID

**ENGL 2250 M01 Conflict, Social Justice, and Literature
Fall 2017**

Class Days and Time: MWF, 11:00-11:50
Classroom: PRH 16
Prerequisite(s): English 1900 or equivalent
Credit(s): 3
Instructor: Anne Dewey
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Campus Phone: 91 554 58 58, ext. 226
Office: SIH 316
Office Hours:

- **Monday and Wednesday 13:00-14:15**
- **Friday 9:00-9:45, 12-12:45**

Course Description:

Does conflict dehumanize or make us more humane? Do the grounds for social justice lie in the cosmos, society, the individual...? Through the imaginative power of literature, we experience vivid emotional responses to conflict, from demonizing rage to empathetic reconciliation, from tragic devastation to the struggle for meaning. What can literature add to our understanding of these topics? How does it imagine people in conflict, the forces against which they struggle, and human potential? Does it help us to resolve conflict? We will study literary representations of conflict with nature, fate, society, family, and oneself in a variety of genres and periods from ancient Greek tragedy to postcolonial literature. The course will pay special attention to the role of literature in social and political conflict and its role in the struggle for social justice, particularly its imagination of the role of divine and social orders in achieving justice, its representations of others that feed conflict, and its role in memory and reconciliation.

What is literature? Even if we don't all read literature regularly, most of us have been moved to try to write it, whether jotting our deepest feelings in a poem or trying to give shape to our experience in a story or novel. Why do we have this impulse to express ourselves in language? How does literature connect us to others, whether friends, family, or other cultures and times?

By learning to read closely and critically, to interpret literature in ways that are both intellectually rigorous and personally significant, we come to appreciate and use language more richly. Just as no two writers respond to experience in the same way, every reader brings different experiences, reading styles, and insights to the text. This class will introduce you to some of the diverse theories and methods for interpreting literature. Classes in SLU Madrid's international community of individuals from different national and literary traditions are privileged places to share perceptions and ideas about literature.

Required Texts and Materials:

Orwell, George. *1984*. 1949.
Petry, Ann. *The Street*. 1946.
Nguyen, Viet Thanh. *The Sympathizers*. 2015
O'Brien, Tim. *The Things They Carried*. 1990.
Parks, Suzan-Lori. *Topdog/Underdog*. 2001.
Shakespeare. *King Lear*. 1606.
Sophocles, *Antigone*. C. 442-41 BCE.
Course Reader.

Course Goals and Student Learning Outcomes:

The primary goal of this class is to enrich your experience of reading literature by increasing your knowledge of a variety of the literary forms, strategies, and devices writers have used throughout the history of literature and exposing you to a variety of literature in English. Ideally, you will also develop awareness of your literary taste—what you love and hate and why—and awareness of the many different ways a work can be interpreted, from reading critics and sharing ideas in class discussion.

On a practical level, you will also learn to write about literature, using evidence to argue for your interpretation of a work and to develop your ideas about literature and respond to those of others in discussion. Reading the work of other critics will provide models and alternate perspectives to enrich your interpretative practice.

Because pleasure in and understanding of literature come from knowledge of specific literary forms and movements as they evolve through history and in different languages, this course is designed to develop your skills in three major areas.

- 1) In-depth interpretation of literary texts using knowledge of its traditional forms:
 - To recognize basic forms, strategies, and devices that are the basic components of literary works (narrative voice, plot, setting, imagery, diction;
 - To recognize basic genres and subgenres (short story, novel, poetry, drama [tragedy, comedy])
- 2) Understanding of literary works in the context of the author's life and historical and cultural context:
 - To recognize both how an author's life influences his or her work and how that work goes beyond mere reflection of biography
 - To understand the historical conditions that gave rise to each genre and that contribute to its significance in the period in which the works studied were written and its evolution and change over time
 - To be familiar with some of the intellectual and artistic movements influenced the works we study and to identify how these works reflect these movements
- 3) Interpretation of literary texts with awareness of a variety of theories and methods:
 - To be familiar with a few different theories of interpretation and to be able to apply them in interpreting a literary text
 - To recognize your own approach to literary texts in your interpretive practice
 - To be able to incorporate others' research into your own interpretation, with consciousness of how you contrast or synthesize approaches

You will also develop the practical skills for writing and debating about literature:

- Developing an interpretive thesis about the meaning of a work of literature and constructing an interpretive argument to defend this thesis, using argumentation from textual evidence, including close reading skills
- Integrating literary evidence, historical and biographical information, and secondary criticism into your argument
- Citing literature and secondary criticism using the MLA format for literary study
- Engaging in dialogue to share your interpretation with others, reflect critically on others' understanding of a text, and synthesize differing opinions into richer interpretations of texts

Collection of Student Work for Assessment: Saint Louis University - Madrid Campus is committed to excellent and innovative educational practices. In order to maintain quality academic offerings and to conform to relevant accreditation requirements, the Campus regularly assesses its teaching, services, and programs for evidence of student learning outcomes achievement. For this purpose anonymized representative examples of student work from all courses and programs is kept on file, such as assignments, papers, exams, portfolios, and results from student surveys, focus groups, and reflective exercises. *Thus, copies of student work for this course, including written assignments, in-class exercises, and exams may be kept on file for institutional research, assessment and accreditation purposes.* If students prefer that Saint Louis University - Madrid Campus does not keep their work on file, they need to communicate their decision in writing to the professor.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance Policy: Unexcused absences and lateness will lower a student's grade as follows:

- More than 3 unexcused absences or persistent lateness will result in your **grade being lowered** by one +/- grade for every additional absence.
- More than 9 unexcused absences results in **automatic failure of the class.**
- Arriving more than 10 minutes late counts as an absence.

"Excused" absences are documented illness and documented residency appointments. **For both excused and unexcused absences, you are still responsible for the material covered and for making up work missed.**

Class assignments: Students should read the assigned texts carefully and critically before class. Please come with questions, observations, and ideas to share. All papers are to be typed or printed on a word processor. Thoughtful listening and engagement of ideas discussed in class is essential to our learning community.

Writing Aids: The English Writing Assistance Center (EWAC) (and the Spanish Assistance Center) provides students with help in writing. They will review TYPED draft material to help you improve any aspect of a paper you wish to work on. You can sign up for an appointment online on the English Department webpage or drop in and wait your turn. Be sure to take a copy of the paper assignment to your tutorial if you have one. The English Department webpage posts the hours of EWAC and a series of

links to *online writing resources*, including research resources and style and documentation guides.

Late Paper Policy: The assignment schedule states when papers are due. Late papers will drop one half letter grade (for example, from a B+ to a B) per class late. Always contact me before an assignment is due if you anticipate a problem. All written assignments must be complete in order for you to pass the course.

E-mail: Campus and course announcements will often be handled by e-mail. Students should check their "@slu.edu" e-mail regularly.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism Policy: Because cheating, falsification, and plagiarism are serious academic offenses, because you cheat yourself of the education and self-development you deserve, and because my experience has taught me that offenders who are not punished often repeat, I am merciless in pursuing plagiarism. Sanctions for violations of academic integrity include an F (grade of 0) on the assignment for a first occurrence and an F for the course in the case of further occurrences, with the possibility of further disciplinary action taken by the University. We will discuss plagiarism and review Saint Louis University's policies on academic integrity further during our first class meeting and in the class about writing about literature. *Always* cite your sources, and do not hesitate to ask me if you are in doubt about how to cite your sources properly.

University Statement on Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors. The mission of Saint Louis University is "the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity." Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care and community service via which SLU embodies its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern.

The governing University-level Academic Integrity Policy can be accessed on the Provost's Office [website](https://www.slu.edu/the-office-of-the-provost/academic-affairs-policies) at: <https://www.slu.edu/the-office-of-the-provost/academic-affairs-policies>. Additionally, SLU-Madrid has posted its academic integrity policy online: <http://www.slu.edu/madrid/academics>. As a member of the University community, you are expected to know and abide by these policies, which detail definitions of violations, processes for reporting violations, sanctions and appeals.

The professor will review these matters during the first weeks of the term. Please direct questions about any facet of academic integrity to your faculty, the chair of the department of your academic program or the Academic Dean of the Madrid Campus.

English Department Plagiarism Statement: In the instance of a suspicion of plagiarism or other form of academic dishonesty it should be remembered that the instructor has the right to require the student to prove (by quiz, interview, or other means) that they are the author of submitted work. Inability to do so will result in a report to the committee for academic dishonesty.

University Title IX Statement: Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual misconduct (e.g. sexual

assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic or dating violence), we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident of misconduct, that faculty member must notify SLU's Title IX deputy coordinator, Marta Maruri, whose office is located on the ground floor of Padre Rubio Hall, Avenida del Valle, 28 (mmaruri@slu.edu; 915-54-5858, ext. 213) and share the basic fact of your experience with her. The Title IX deputy coordinator will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the SLU-Madrid's Counseling Services on the third floor of San Ignacio Hall (counselingcenter-madrid@slu.edu; 915-54-5858, ext. 230) or Sinews Multipletherapy Institute, the off-campus provider of counseling services for SLU-Madrid (www.sinews.es; 917-00-1979). To view SLU-Madrid's sexual misconduct policy and for resources, please visit the following web address:
<http://www.slu.edu/Documents/Madrid/campus-life/SLUMadridSexualMisconductPolicy.pdf>.

Students with Special Needs: In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
- University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Academic Dean's Office (San Ignacio Hall) or by going to <http://www.slu.edu/madrid/learning-resources>.

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations must contact Disability Services to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Once successfully registered, the student also must notify the course instructor that they wish to access accommodations in the course. Please contact Disability Services at disabilityservices-madrid@slu.edu or +915 54 58 58, ext. 230 for an appointment. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Once approved, information about the student's eligibility for academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors via email from Disability Services. For more information about academic accommodations, see "Student Resources" on the SLU-Madrid webpage.

Note: Students who do not have a documented disability but who think they may have one are encouraged to contact Disability Services.

Course Requirements and Grading Rationale:

Individual components of coursework are assigned a letter grade; the final grade is a weighted average of those grades. Those percentage weights are calculated as follows:

- 10% Class participation and preparation, including quizzes, and presentations
- 10% First critical paper (close reading analysis, 3-4 pp.)
- 15% Second critical paper (comparative analysis, 4-5 pp.)
- 10% Midterm exam

- 20% Research paper, 6-7 pp., minimum 3 secondary sources
15% Service learning and creative work OR critical journal and paper (4-5 pp.)
20% Final exam

Class presentations: In pairs, prepare one of each kind of presentation below. You need not keep the same partner for both presentations. I will provide a list of suggested topics for the presentations, but you may also pursue your own topics.

- *Passage presentations:* close reading of a passage as it contributes to significance of element of literature or acting out a scene or part of a scene from a play. Your presentation should be 5 minutes long. Each pair does *two*.
- *Context presentation:* research into relevant information from the author's biography, a literary movement, or a historical event. Your presentation should be 5-8 minutes long. Each pair does *one*.
- *Critical article presentation:* Summary and critique of a full-length critical from bibliography provided or of your own finding. Each pair does *one*.

CRITERIA FOR AN EXCELLENT LITERATURE PAPER

1. **Strong, clear, precise, original thesis** (at this introductory level, original means going beyond related ideas discussed in class)
2. **Perceptive argumentation from textual evidence** demonstrating ability to understand literary language, applying the *close reading skills* with *awareness of the literary forms, strategies, and devices* discussed in class
3. **Skillful organization and integration of evidence** into a well-organized argument whose sections or steps are clearly related to the paper's thesis
4. **Clear, varied, vivid style.**
5. **Correct use of mechanics**—punctuation, spelling, MLA citation format
6. Where relevant, **skillful integration of historical and biographical material or secondary criticism** in support of one's argument

Points 1-3 are crucial to passing this class. My grading is holistic; great strength in one area of the paper can compensate for weakness in another, just as great weakness in one area prevents papers from receiving an A. Within this spectrum:

A papers must achieve Points 1-5 with great competence, and where relevant, Point 6. Sloppiness in Points 4-5 prevents papers from earning an A.

B papers are usually missing one of Points 1-3 (and Point 6 where relevant) or more than 1 but excel in the other areas (e.g., a paper with a strong, interesting thesis and good evidence that struggles with organization). Severe problems with Points 4-5 may prevent a paper from earning a B.

C papers usually lack two of Points 1-3 (and Point 6 where relevant) or achieve all 3 at a mediocre level.

D papers lack or are very weak in Points 1-3 (and Point 6 where relevant), struggle with Points 4-5, and lack flashes of insight or excellence to compensate.

F papers are devoid of ideas, partly or completely copied, or still unwritten.

Points 4-5 play a significant role in borderline grades.

DO NOT PLAGIARIZE!*

PLAGIARISTS CHEAT THEMSELVES OF THE EDUCATION THEY DESERVE,

BETRAY THEIR CLASSMATES, AND FAIL TO RESPECT THEIR PROFESSORS.

*If you feel tempted to plagiarize due to time pressure or lack of confidence in your own ability, DON'T. Come talk to me. We will work something out.

Undergraduate Grading Scale Office of the University Registrar

https://sites.google.com/a/slu.edu/registrar_resources/grades/scale

A	4.00	C+	2.30
A-	3.70	C	2.00
B+	3.30	C-	1.70
B	3.00	D	1.00
B-	2.70	F/AF	0.00 (AF = Failure due to excessive absence)

FALL 2017 SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND COSMIC FRAMEWORKS FOR JUSTICE

Week 1

Monday, September 4	Introduction
Wednesday, September 6	Orwell, <i>1984</i> , Section 1, chs. 1-6
Friday, September 8	Orwell, <i>1984</i> , Section 1, ch. 7 – Section 2, ch. 4

Week 2

Monday, September 11	Orwell, <i>1984</i> , Section 2, ch. 5-10
Wednesday, September 13	Orwell, <i>1984</i> , Section 3, chs. 1-4 Notes for Writing about Literature (<i>Course Reader</i>) Writing Literature Papers: evidence, argument, MLA format Troy Place, "Orwell's <i>1984</i> " (<i>Course Reader</i>)
Friday, September 15	Orwell, <i>1984</i> , Section 3, ch. 5 – end Hannah Arendt, "Ideology and Terror" (<i>Course Reader</i>)
Sunday, September 17	Last Day to Drop a Class Without a Grade of W and /or Add a Class, choose Audit (AU) or Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) Options

Week 3

Monday, September 18	First paper due, 3-4 pp., close reading
Wednesday, September 20	Sophocles, <i>Antigone</i> , pp. 1-26 (lines 1-581)
Friday, September 22	Sophocles, <i>Antigone</i> , pp. 26-40 (l. 582-943)

Week 4

- Monday, September 25 Sophocles, *Antigone*, pp. pp. 40-end (l. 944-end)
Short essays by Tripathy on biopolitics, Frank on incest, Kirkpatrick gender in *Antigone* (*Course Reader*)
- Wednesday, September 27 Shakespeare, *King Lear*, Act 1
- Friday, September 29 Shakespeare, *King Lear*, Act 2-3

Week 5

- Monday, October 2 Shakespeare, *King Lear*, Act 4-5
Gil Harris, "Deciphering Death," Shakespeare and Literary Theory

DIFFERENCE AND SOCIAL CONFLICT

- Wednesday, October 4 Parks, *Topdog/Underdog*, Scenes 1-5

- Friday, October 6 **Second paper due, 4-5 pp., comparative**

Week 6

- Monday, October 9 Parks, *Topdog/Underdog*, Scene 6
- Wednesday, October 11 Ann Petry, *The Street*, chs. 1-3
- Friday, October 13 **Fall break – no class**

Week 7

- Monday, October 16 Petry, *The Street*, chs. 4-6
Journal due for midterm review
- Wednesday, October 18 Petry, *The Street*, chs. 7-10
Henderson, "The Walking Wounded: Rethinking black Women's Identity in Ann Petry's *The Street*" (*Course Reader*)
- Thursday, October 19 Midterm grades due
- Friday, October 20 Petry, *The Street*, chs. 11-14

Week 8

- Monday, October 23 **Midterm exam**
- Wednesday, October 25 Petry, *The Street*, chs. 15-end
Slaughter, "The Legibility of Human Rights" (*Course Reader*)

Friday, October 27 Petry, *The Street*, chs. 13-16
Last day to drop a class and receive grade of W

Week 9

Monday, October 30 Rich, "Twenty-One Love Poems" (*Course Reader*)
Last day to drop a class and receive the grade of "W"

Wednesday, November 1 **Holiday – no class**

Thursday, November 2 Spring registration opens

Friday, November 3 Rich, "Twenty-One Love Poems"

WAR, CULTURAL MEMORY, RECONCILIATION

Week 10

Monday, November 6 O'Brien, *The Things They Carried*, "The Things They Carried" – "On the Rainy River"

Wednesday, November 8 **Holiday – no class**

Friday, November 10 O'Brien, *The Things They Carried*, "Enemies" – "The Man I Killed"
Proposal for final paper, 1-2 pp., bibliography with minimum of 3 sources

Week 11

Monday, November 13 O'Brien, *The Things They Carried*, "Ambush" – "Field Trip"

Wednesday, November 15 O'Brien, *The Things They Carried*, "The Ghost Soldiers" – "The Lives of the Dead"
Blyn, "O'Brien's The Things they Carried" (*Course Reader*)

Friday, November 17 Celan, "Death Fugue" (1952) (*Course Reader*)
Nguyen, *The Sympathizers*, chs. 1-5

Week 12

Monday, November 20 **Research paper due, 6-7 pp., minimum 3 secondary sources**

Wednesday, November 22 Nguyen, *The Sympathizers*, chs. 5-7

Friday, November 24 Nguyen, *The Sympathizers*, chs. 8-11

Week 13

Monday, November 27 Nguyen, *The Sympathizers*, chs. 12-15

Wednesday, November 29 Nguyen, *The Sympathizers*, chs. 16-19

Friday December 1 Nguyen, *The Sympathizers*, ch.20-end

Week 14

Monday, December 4 Journal presentations

Wednesday, December 6 **Holiday – no class**

Friday December 8 **Holiday – no class**

Week 15

Monday, December 11 Journal presentations

Wednesday, December 13 Review for final exam
Journal project due, 4-5 pp.

Week 16

Monday, December 18, 8:30-11:30 Final Exam