

0502E113

Introduction to Modern Western Literature

Instructor: TBA

Email: TBA

Time: October 20, 2025 - November 21, 2025

Office Hours: by appointment

Contact Hours: 60 (50 minutes each)

Credits: 4

Course Description

This survey course will involve reading selected samples of literature of the Western World (not just from the United States and England) and discussing their historical and literary contexts. We will consider landmark works from the Enlightenment, Romanticism, Realism, Symbolism, Naturalism, and Modernism. The characteristics of different genres will be explored through lectures, class discussions, and oral and written assignments. Short papers, a presentation, and a final take-home exam will be required.

Course Goals

At the end of the course the student will be able to:

- Explain the active and reactive processes of Western literary developments
- Differentiate fundamental characteristics of different literary genres
- Identify and describe a number of different writers and styles from each period
- Give a general overview of the historical context of certain literary movements

- Explain the subjective/objective characteristics of different literary periods

Required Text

The Norton Anthology of Western Literature, Vol. 2 (2005).

Assignments

Reflections (short essays): You will write three reflections over the course of the semester. I would like you to use these reflections to discuss what you think about the texts we're reading in class. You may offer interpretations (what does this text mean to you?), raise questions about the text or about the video lectures, express your admiration for a text, describe the experience of reading a text, or make connections between a text and something else you've read (either in our class or beyond). Please focus on details in the text. These are opportunities for "close reading," a concept I'll introduce in the video lectures. **Over the course of the semester I may offer additional suggestions for how to complete these short essays.** Each reflection should be at least 500 words.

Oral presentation: Once during the semester you will make a short video and send it to me in MP4 format. Making reference to at least three different texts, this five-minute video should answer the question, What does Romanticism mean to me?

Final Take-Home Exam: This short-answer exam will be given in the final three days of the course. You should answer the questions in complete sentences and use examples from the readings and the videos to support your points. Detailed instructions will be given as the exam date approaches.

Format of all written work

Please have all your written work double-spaced, in Times New Roman, size 12 font. Please also include a word count at the end of all of your work.

Course Schedule

Prior to watching each video, please read the pages indicated in parentheses (all readings can be found in the Norton textbook).

WEEK ONE

Unit 1: The Enlightenment

1. Introduction to the Enlightenment: 1-7
2. Jean de la Fontaine: 201-207
3. Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: 208-209
4. "Sophia" : 243-247
5. Jean-Jacques Rousseau: 255-263
6. Mary Robinson: 284-289
7. Jonathan Swift: 289-291, 341-347
8. Voltaire: 375-384
9. Alexander Pope: 347-367
10. Enlightenment conclusion

Unit 2: Romanticism I

1. Introduction to Romanticism I: 483-495
2. John Adams and Abigail Adams: 645-657

***Reflection#1 due by 11:59am(BJT), Friday**

WEEK TWO

Unit 2: Romanticism I (continued)

3. William Wordsworth: 693-704
4. Lord Byron: 743-748
5. Percy Shelly: 748-754
6. John Keats: 755-764

7. Anna Petrovna Bunina: 770-772
8. Alphonse de Lamartine: 772-774
9. Giacomo Leopardi: 776-780
10. Romanticism I conclusion

Unit 3: Romanticism II

1. Victor Hugo: 780-786
2. Alexander Pushkin: 800-820
3. Alfred, Lord Tennyson: 820-843

***Reflection #2 due by 11:59am(BJT), Friday**

WEEK THREE

Unit 3: Romanticism II (continued)

4. Robert Browning: 843-856
5. Frederick Douglass: 856-916
6. Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer: 793-795
7. Rosalía de Castro: 796-799
8. Emily Dickinson: 986-995
9. Walt Whitman: 916-923
10. Romanticism II conclusion

Unit 4: Realism & Symbolism

1. Introduction to Realism & Symbolism: 997-1006
2. Nikolai Gogol: 1008-1033
3. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: 1381-1390
4. Friedrich Nietzsche: 1396-1403
5. Guy de Maupassant: 1474-1486

***Oral Presentation Video due by 11:59am(BJT), Friday**

WEEK FOUR

Unit 4: Realism & Symbolism (continued)

6. Charles Baudelaire: 1838-1859
7. Anton Chekhov: 1866; 1893-1898
8. Paul Verlaine: 1867-1892
9. Arthur Rimbaud: 1872-1882
10. Realism & Symbolism conclusion

Unit 5: Modernism and Modernity I

1. Introduction to Modernism & Modernity I: 1621- 1626
2. William Butler Yeats: 1873-1896
3. Marcel Proust: 1871-1926
4. Rainer Maria Rilke: 1870-1926
5. Wallace Stevens: 1897-1955
6. T.S. Eliot: 1898-1962
7. Alfonsina Storni: 1899-1955

***Reflection#3 due by 11:59am(BJT), Friday**

WEEK FIVE

Unit 5: Modernism & Modernity I (continued)

8. André Breton: 1896-1966
9. Jean Paul Sartre: 1905-1980
10. Modernism & Modernity I conclusion

Unit 6: Modernism & Modernity II

1. William Faulkner: 1897-1962
2. Federico García Lorca: 1898-1936
3. Jorge Luis Borges: 1899-1986

4. Pablo Neruda I: 2189- 2205
5. Pablo Neruda II: 2189- 2205
6. Simone de Beauvoir: 2382-2387
7. Chinua Achebe: 2391-2394
8. Gabriel García Márquez: 2348-2357
9. Modernism & Modernity II conclusion
10. Course summary and wrap up

*Final Take-Home Release at 11:59am on Tuesday

*Final Take-Home Exam due by 11:59am, Friday

Grading Policy

Details	Percentage
One oral presentation	20%
Three reflections (short essays)	35%
Final Take-Home Exam	45%
Total	100%

Grading Scale

The instructor will use the grading system as applied by JNU:

Definition	Letter Grade	Score
Excellent	A	90~100
Good	B	80~89
Satisfactory	C	70~79
Poor	D	60~69
Failed	E	Below 60

Late Policy

For the Reflections and the Oral Presentation, late submissions will be reduced three points for each calendar day they are late. For instance, if a Reflection that would have earned an "A" (95) is submitted on Saturday, rather than on its Friday due date, it will receive 92 points, or 89 points if submitted on Sunday, etc. The only exception is the final exam. Because we need to complete final grades shortly after the last class, the exam due date is firm--we won't be able to accept work after Friday, Week 5.

We understand that sometimes circumstances beyond our control may lead to late assignments. If you would like to make-up points for late assignments, please reach out to the instructor for instructions on extra credit assignments.

Academic Integrity

As members of the Jinan University academic community, students are expected to be honest in all of their academic coursework and activities. Academic dishonesty, includes (but is not limited to) cheating on assignments or examinations; plagiarizing, i.e., misrepresenting as one's own work any work done by another; submitting the same paper, or a substantially similar paper, to meet the requirements of more than one course without the approval and consent of the instructors concerned; or sabotaging other students' work within these general definitions. Instructors, however, determine what constitutes academic misconduct in the courses they teach. Students found guilty of academic misconduct in any portion of the academic work face penalties that range from the lowering of their course grade to awarding a grade of E for the entire course.