



上海财经大学

Shanghai University of Finance & Economics

中国上海市国定路777号 邮编200433 777 Guoding Road, Shanghai, 200433, China

Shanghai University of Finance & Economics

2020 Summer Program

ENG 115 How Literature Works

Course Outline

Term: June 1 – June 26, 2020

Class Hours: 14:00-15:50 (Monday through Friday)

Course Code: ENG 115

Instructor: Joseph Bowling

Home Institution: University of Wisconsin

Office Hours: TBA and by appointment

Email: jdbowling@wisc.edu

Credit: 4

Class Hours: This course will have 52 class hours, including 32 lecture hours, professor 8 office hours, 8-hour TA discussion sessions, 4-hour review sessions.

Course Description:

Literary scholar Kenneth Burke defined literature as “equipment for living.” By this, Burke understood literature, whether lyric poetry or narrative prose, as a response to a social problem, a solution. In other words, literature *does something*: it creates community, prompts emotions and passions, generates ideas, provides opportunities for reflection and intellectual inquiry. But how? In this course, we will study different genres of literature, including poetry, short stories, a novella, a play, and graphic novels, and we will ask how each work uses language differently to tell a story that, as Burke describes, does something to and for us. We will ask foundational questions—What is literature? Why study it?—in order to tackle more advanced, sophisticated questions—How does literature represent the world? How does literature create visions of new and different world? How does literature respond to and shape history? How does literature help us understand ourselves and others? We will answer these questions by attending to the literary techniques and practices that make literature work, from the use of figurative language, to narrative structure, to character development, and beyond. In addition to learning how to analyze literature, we will study how to write about literature.

Course Objectives:

This course introduces literary study by familiarizing students with the basic genres and key terms of literature, by teaching students how to read and think critically about literature, and by equipping



students with the necessary skills and terminology to talk and write about literature.

Required Textbooks:

Jonathan Culler, *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*

Stephanie Burt, *The Poem Is You: 60 Contemporary American Poems and How to Read Them*

Jennifer Egan, *A Visit from the Goon Squad*

Franz Kafka, *The Metamorphosis*

Harold Pinter, *The Homecoming*

David Beauchard, *Epileptic*

Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis*

Grading & Evaluation:

Participation, attendance	10%
Informal writing	10%
Analytical essay	30%
Research Essay	30%
Final examination	20%

A 94-100

A- 90-93

B+ 87-89

B 84-86

B- 80-83

C+ 77-79

C 74-76

C- 70-73

D+ 67-69

D 64-66

D- 60-63

F 0-59

Course Schedule

Week1

Read:

Culler, “What is literary theory?”; “What is literature and does it matter?”; “Language, meaning, and interpretation”; “Rhetoric, poetics, and poetry”

Selected poems from Burt

Week2

Read:

Culler, “narrative”

Egan, *A Visit from the Goon Squad*

Kafka, *Metamorphosis*

Week3

Culler, “Performative language”



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Pinter, *The Homecoming*

Week4

Culler, "Identity, identification, and the subject"; "Ethics and aesthetics"

Beauchard, *Epileptic*

Satrapi, *Persepolis*