

# AREAS OF INQUIRY

ENGL 205

World Literatures in Dialogue

## **GLOBAL AND MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVES**

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This form must be submitted to the Faculty Council on Liberal Learning and Academic Life as part of the submission process.

Please attach a proposed syllabus for this course and the Undergraduate Curriculum Course Proposal Form.

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DEADLINE FOR PROPOSALS: **16 September 2005**

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Please answer the following questions:

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### **Check Only One:**

✓ This course is an existing course (in the current curriculum) that we are now proposing for this Area of Inquiry.

ENGL 205: World Literatures in Dialogue

◇ This is a new course that we are now proposing for this Area of Inquiry.

1. Name and contact information for the department chair administering this course.

Dr. Scott Pollard, Department of English, [spollard@cnu.edu](mailto:spollard@cnu.edu)

2. In any given semester, how many sections of this course is your department willing to offer?

1-2

3. Why is this course being offered/what is it designed to achieve (Course purpose/goal)?

This sequence is designed to promote an intercultural understanding of key themes of world literature in a comparative context. The courses explore cultural difference, and highlight diversity. They allow students the opportunity to study literatures of various cultures, periods, and traditions in depth and in dialogue with one another. In doing so, the courses will challenge students to consider and question their own values and assumptions in relation to other traditions.

4. Check the objectives below that the course will address. The first objective is required and every proposal must include at least two more objectives from the list below.

✓ Interrogate the dominate [*sic*] culture in relationship to other cultures (**required**)

◇ Compare communication styles among cultures

✓ Assess how culture impacts and informs the development of creative expression/movements, politics, economics, or philosophy

✓ Analyze how concepts of “self” and individuals in various cultures differ and/or intersect

◇ Articulate how culture influences the structure of languages, societies, and institutions

5. Briefly explain how this class addresses the above objectives. A course may cover more than three objectives.

a.) Lectures, readings and audiovisual materials will familiarize students with relevant cultural and literary background. Class discussions will initially be geared towards close reading of literary and cultural details, after which students will interrogate specific, thematic world traditions their particular section is addressing in comparison with the Euro-American traditions.

b.) In 205, “World Literatures in Dialogue,” students will read combinations of texts that cross time and place, but address similar themes. Course topics could be: “Transgression and Sacrilege,” “Representing Revolution,” “Literatures of Trauma,” or “Exile.”

In 206, “Forms and Expressions in World Literature,” students will explore the way that form contributes to and/or constrains meaning: “War Stories: Poetry, Drama, and Film,” “Ritual and Performance,” “Digital Reeds, Singing Rocks: The Technologies of Representation”

c.) Much world literature explores the question of the relationship between the “self” (in one form or another) in relation to culture. Exam and discussion questions will press students to consider various representations of self-hood to contemporary Euro-American notions.

6. Course Assessment: Identify how this course will accomplish the above objectives (choose at least one):

✓ Participating in class discussion and debate

✓ Engaging in teamwork and other collaborative exercises

✓ Writing analytical or evaluative papers, perhaps incorporating original research

✓ Making oral presentations

◇ Creating an artistic product or a performance

◇ Participating in fieldwork

◇ Other means – please identify

7. Attach a proposed syllabus, which includes a statement of purpose, course objectives, and how these objectives will be accomplished.

8. Please identify and explain if this course contributes to the Foundations of Liberal Learning expectations for:

◇ Oral Communication Literacy:

Students will present at least one oral presentation per semester.

◇ Information Literacy:

Students will use/learn to use appropriate internet, database and library resources to explore the questions and themes of the course, as well as to support their own ideas.

◇ Writing Literacy:

Students will write essay exams as well as various informal in-class writing exercises that will help focus thought and discussion. Some instructors will also assign research papers.

9. Explain how this course connects to Vision 2010 – the CNU Strategic Plan.

This sequence could be described as *the* quintessential liberal learning course, and an ambitious one at that. Readings can include authors and texts as diverse as: Homer and *Star Wars*, Machiavelli and Scorsese, Montaigne and Derek Walcott, Rumi, Chuang-tze, Achebe and Gabriel Garcia Marquez; the Bible, the Koran, etc. The course will demand academic excellence, and push the limits of interdisciplinary studies by bringing together issues of text, form, technology, and human expression, in language, on stage, and on film.

Submission Checklist:

By the deadline, submit a packet with the following documents to the Assistant Dean for Liberal Learning. Please submit in electronic and hard copy form.

  X   Area of Inquiry Course Proposal Form

  X   Syllabus for the Course \*\*\*Sample syllabi for both 205 and 206 are attached

 NA  Undergraduate Curriculum Committee Course Proposal Form

Dr. Margarita Marinova  
**English 205: World Literatures in Dialogue**  
***Homelands Lost and Regained: The Literature of Exile***  
Office: Radcliffe 216  
e-mail: margarita.marinova@cnu.edu  
Office Hours: TBA, and any time via e-mail

## ***Homelands Lost and Regained: The Literature of Exile***

The trope of exile in literature provides a useful site for the comparative examination of texts' critical engagement with both global and local spaces and identities. This course, then, is meant to offer a wide-ranging investigation of literary as well as other cultural representations of the exilic experience. We will read fictional explorations of the topics of dislocation and uprooting by such well or less known writers as Voltaire, Vladimir Nabokov, Franz Kafka, Milan Kundera, Slavinka Drakulic, Jamaica Kincaid, and others. We will investigate their works' main thematic preoccupations and their specific formal realizations, while paying special attention to what they are trying to tell us about the importance of language and personal and historical memory, the shaping of "double-consciousness" in immigration, and the effects of cultural displacement on creativity. As appropriate to an interdisciplinary course, our discussions will also take us beyond the literal and figurative space of the classroom, and let us visit the homes and movie theaters of people from diverse cultural backgrounds: We will sample delicious dishes, conduct interviews, and watch films that will help us relate better to the experience of immigrants in their newly adopted lands.

### **Required Texts:**

**Drakulic, Slavenka. *The Taste of Man*.**  
**Kafka, Franz. *The Metamorphosis*.**  
**Kincaid, Jamaica. *Annie John*.**  
**Kundera, Milan. *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*.**  
**Nabokov, Vladimir. *Pnin*.**  
**Voltaire. *Candide*.**

Course packet of secondary readings including essays by **Chinua Achebe (*Home and Exile*); Svetlana Boym (*The Future of Nostalgia*); Joseph Brodsky, Joseph Conrad, Eva Hoffman, Victor Hugo, Czeslaw Milosz, Petrarch, Edward Said, Madame de Stael, and others.**

### **Films:**

*Beautiful People* (Dir. Jasmin Dizdar, 2000)  
*The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (Dir. Philip Kaufman, 2000)

### **\*A Note on Attendance:**

You are allowed 3 absences maximum this semester. Each absence after the third absence will lower your grade by one-half (for example, an A- will become a B+).

Regular and prompt attendance is an essential part of this class. Since late arrivals tend to disrupt class, please be on time. If you are more than five minutes late I will count that as a half absence.

### **Assignments and Grading:**

- **Astute and unfailing contributions** to the seminar discussion--10%
- **Class presentation:** Once during the semester, each student will prepare a 15 min presentation on a topic related to the theme of the class--15%
- **A journal,** to be handed in at the end of the semester, which will contain a 1-2 page argument for each class session on a problem of students' choice—15%

- **Two critical essays:** 8-10 page long research papers—40% (20% each; you will have the chance to workshop your draft with your classmates before turning in the paper for a grade)
- **A final exam**—20%

We want you to succeed at CNU; therefore I may notify the Academic Advising Center if you seem to be having problems with this course. Someone may contact you to help you determine what help you need to succeed. You will be sent a copy of the referral form. I invite you to see me at any time that I can be of assistance in helping you with your course material.

#### **My Office/Office Hours:**

The English Department offices are upstairs in Radcliffe Hall. I am in Room 216. Please come and see me if you want to discuss ideas, ask for advice, get some extra help or info about further readings (either primary or secondary), or just talk. I'm always happy to see you, and will do my best to be of help! Don't be shy.

#### ***CNU Disability Policy:***

Any student who believes that he/she is disabled should make an appointment to discuss his or her needs. In order to receive an accommodation, student disability should be on record at the Academic Advising Center, 594-8673, Admin. Bldg. 125.

#### **The Honor Code:**

*"On my honor, I will maintain the highest possible standards of honesty, integrity and personal responsibility. That means I will not lie, cheat or steal, and as a member of this academic community, I am committed to creating an environment of respect and mutual trust."*

*Tentative Schedule:*

Week 1

Introduction to the course.  
Edward Said. "Reflections on Exile" in course packet (CP)

Week 2

Voltaire, *Candide*

Week 3

Definitions: Ewa Hoffman, "Obsessed with Words," Joseph Brodsky, "The Condition We Call Exile," Petrarch, "A Letter from Exile", Madame de Stael "On Exile," Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (excerpts) (CP)

Week 4

Franz Kafka, *The Metamorphosis*  
Writing workshop for Paper #1 (paper due by next class date)

Week 5

Vladimir Nabokov, *Pnin*

Week 6

Vladimir Nabokov, *Pnin* (cont'd)  
Chinua Achebe, "Home and Exile"; Begin Jamaica Kincaid, *Annie John*

Week 7

Jamaica Kincaid, *Annie John* (cont'd)

Week 8

Slavenka Drakulic, *The Taste of Man*

Week 9

Slavenka Drakulic, *The Taste of Man* (cont'd)  
Film screening: *Beautiful People*

Week 10

Kundera, Milan. *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*.

Week 11

Kundera, Milan. *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (cont'd).

Week 12

Kundera, Milan. *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (finish). Czeslaw Milosz, "Notes on Exile,"  
Joseph Conrad, "Poland Revisited" (CP)  
Film screening: *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*

Week 13

Writing workshop for paper #2.  
"Sampling the difference": food fest (location TBA)

Week 14

Oral presentations.

Week 15

Oral presentations.

Final exam date: TBA