

**THE LITERARY EXPERIENCE**  
**(ENGLISH 1050)**

*Course Descriptions*  
*Fall 2016*

***THESE COURSES ARE NOT FOR LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES STUDENTS***

**1050-001**

**MWF 8:30 – 9:20**

Cathleen Velez

**An Existential Journey**

The concepts of man's struggle to find justice in a world of injustice and his need to search for self are addressed in *The Stranger*, the 20th century work of Albert Camus. In Jean-Paul Sartre's *No Exit*, the conception of an afterlife is explored, questioning the existence of hell and its impact on the human mind. In Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, the relationship of man to a superior being is addressed while underscoring the need to believe. The course is interdisciplinary and while focusing on the literary experience will delve into the areas of philosophy, theology, sociology and psychology. It is a writing intensive course. In this course you'll improve your writing and critical thinking skills by reading, discussing, and writing about literature. You will also gain confidence and pleasure in your reactions to literature and related arts. You'll give close readings to selections of fiction, poetry, drama, and memoir and respond to them in class discussions, formal papers, and informal writing. To enhance the coherence and interdisciplinary nature of the course, we will focus on the explosion of literature created by American, Irish, British, and French writers living in Paris between WWI and the Great Depression: the so-called Lost Generation. We will examine how the artistic, financial, and social freedoms of this milieu led to creative surges not only in literature but also in art and music. We will visit the art museum to see literary innovations mirrored in art. To widen our perspective of literary modernism, we may also read works from contrasting historical period.

**1050-002**

**MWF 9:30 – 10:20**

Cecilia Ready

**The Beats and their Spawn**

Kerouac, Cassidy, Ginsberg, Ferlinghetti, DiPrima, Snyder...

These artists and many more exploded onto the post-World War II American literary scene. From Columbia University in New York to City Lights Book Store in San Francisco, they spread out across the country—beat, downtrodden; beat, moving to the rhythms of jazz; beat, seeking the beatific vision of America. Fueled by French Existentialism, Zen Buddhism, Catholicism,

hungry for “kicks, joy, darkness,” they voiced the dreams, fears, and obsessions of their generation. And they spawned a revolutionary aesthetic in literature, music, and film which lives on after them. Some of it is beautiful, some of it not, but none of it is boring. Can you dig it?

**1050-003****MWF 9:30 – 10:20**

Robert Duggan

**Apocalypse Now/Then: A-Ha! Moments in Literature**

Say “apocalypse” and people think of the end of the world, but the ancient Greeks knew it as meaning a “revelation” or “uncovering.” From Kate Chopin’s short gem “The Story of an Hour” to Alan Moore’s musings on time and eternity in the graphic novel *Watchmen*, we’ll uncover great “a-ha!” moments of knowledge—both good and bad—and reveal their impact on both characters and readers. We’ll time travel to experience the Greeks’ original tale of (not) seeing and (not) believing, Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex*. Together, we’ll drift down the Congo River towards “The horror! The horror!” in Joseph Conrad’s novella *Heart of Darkness* and watch how Francis Ford Coppola reinterprets that tale in the film *Apocalypse Now*. From these literary experiences, we’ll discuss not just the works themselves, but also the intertwined nature of reading and writing to generate both informal and formal essays incorporating the writing process from thesis to draft to final (not necessarily finished) product.

**1050-004****MWF 10:30 – 11:20**

Karen Graziano

**A Cultural Journey**

Mark Twain once wrote, “The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why.” Through our journey, we develop what poet Mary Oliver describes as “a new voice which you slowly recognized as your own”. This process, in which Twain called on us to dream and discover, is where we turn our questions about the future into our quest for the future. In the *Literary Experience: A Cultural Journey*, we’ll explore psychological, intellectual, travel, and spiritual journeys in short stories, memoirs, personal essays, and poetry that profoundly impacted the lives of the characters and individuals. We’ll experience how reading fiction provides what *The New York Times* reported as a foundation “to understand other people, empathize with them and view the world from their perspective,” and how we can use fiction techniques in our nonfiction writing. We’ll analyze the techniques used by writers as well as the challenges they faced as we write analytical papers and essays that examine these journeys. We’ll share our reactions to these cultural journeys and use the texts as springboards to identify elements in our own stories, our own journeys. Writing workshops will enhance our writing process and sharpen our skills, helping us to develop a strong writing process that involves brainstorming, outlining, and revising. Through this process of examining others’ journeys, we’ll discover more possibilities for our own, recognizing the truth of Loren Eiseley’s

idea: "Perhaps he knew, there in the grass by the waters, that he had before him an immense journey."

**1050-005****MWF 11:30 – 12:20**

Robert O'Neil

**War and Society**

In this course we will survey different genres of literature in order to further understand the dynamic relationship between American culture and American war-making. The course will open with readings from *The Vintage Book of Contemporary American Short Fiction*. This collection of stories will serve as the base for our understanding of the dominant themes that permeate American culture, including race, gender, and identity. How do these themes affect American war-making? We will then transition into books that explore how American citizens and soldiers experienced the War on Terror. *The Yellow Birds* by Kevin Powers and *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk* by Ben Fountain offer us a fictional approach to the relationship between the home and battlefronts. In addition, we will read a journalistic approach to war entitled *Generation Kill* by Evan Wright. At the end of the course, students will be expected to argue their own conclusions about the relationship between culture and war, and the responsibility citizens should bear for both fighting and returning American soldiers.

**1050-006****MWF 12:30 – 1:20**

Robert O'Neil

**War and Society**

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**1050-007****MW 1:30 – 2:45**

Charles Cherry

### **The Joy of Short Fiction**

This course has two goals: 1) To give you additional writing practice in order not to teach you how to write—you can already write—but in order to make you better editors of your own prose; 2) to read and discuss a range of short stories in order to witness the range of human experience and grapple with the question of what constitutes an artful rendering of that experience.

### **1050-008**

**TR 8:30 – 9:45**

Cathleen Velez

### **An Existential Journey**

The concepts of man's struggle to find justice in a world of injustice and his need to search for self are addressed in *The Stranger*, the 20th century work of Albert Camus. In Jean-Paul Sartre's *No Exit*, the conception of an afterlife is explored, questioning the existence of hell and its impact on the human mind. In Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, the relationship of man to a superior being is addressed while underscoring the need to believe. The course is interdisciplinary and while focusing on the literary experience will delve into the areas of philosophy, theology, sociology and psychology. It is a writing intensive course. In this course you'll improve your writing and critical thinking skills by reading, discussing, and writing about literature. You will also gain confidence and pleasure in your reactions to literature and related arts. You'll give close readings to selections of fiction, poetry, drama, and memoir and respond to them in class discussions, formal papers, and informal writing. To enhance the coherence and interdisciplinary nature of the course, we will focus on the explosion of literature created by American, Irish, British, and French writers living in Paris between WWI and the Great Depression: the so-called Lost Generation. We will examine how the artistic, financial, and social freedoms of this milieu led to creative surges not only in literature but also in art and music. We will visit the art museum to see literary innovations mirrored in art. To widen our perspective of literary modernism, we may also read works from contrasting historical period.

### **1050-009**

**TR 11:30 – 12:45**

**Ellen Bonds**

### **The Nobel Prize in Literature**

“...for works of lyrical beauty...” “who...gives life to an essential aspect of American reality...” “for impassioned writing with wide horizons...” These are just a few of the comments used to describe recent winners of the Nobel prize in literature. Since 1901, poets, dramatists, novelists, and writers whose works defy easy categorization have been honored for the contributions their writing has made, not only to the world of literature, but also “to humanity.” Although no single prize (even one as prestigious as the Nobel) automatically signifies greatness, it can help direct readers' attention to works of literature that expand our literary experiences. So, we'll take a look at some of these writers, their literature, and their analyses of literature as expressed in the

Nobel acceptance speeches. We'll look at recent winners such as Seamus Heaney, Toni Morrison. We'll also look at works by well-known authors such as W. B. Yeats, and William Faulkner. Students will read, discuss, research, and write about this literature, and together, we will build our awareness of world literature.

**1050-010****TR 4:00 – 5:15**

Mary Ellen Fattori

**Exploration and Response**

As individuals, we bring our unique experiences and knowledge of our world to any work of literature that we read. As a result, English 1050 offers students the opportunity to explore and share their individual responses to literary works that frequently reflect aspects of their own lives. Students will examine various works of fiction, drama, and poetry in conjunction with the external forces (historical, philosophical, religious, social, etc.) that contributed to their creation and were affected by them. Students will be encouraged to think critically about what they read and respond clearly to it through class discussion, oral reports, and variety of writing assignments, both formal and informal. These assignments will provide students with many opportunities to participating in all phases of the writing process, including research, brainstorming, outlining, creation and revision of rough drafts, and ultimately the submission of well-written, polished final drafts.

**1050-100****TR 6:00 - 7:15**

Joseph Edgette

**Viewing the Human Condition**

Literature has often been described as the written record of the human experience. This course will explore the literary account of the impact of nature, society, and self on the individual from a humanistic perspective. Through the examination, analysis, and discussion of selected literary examples, and films, the student will have the opportunity to become better acquainted, more accurately informed, and more keenly aware of literature's overall influence on and by its human creator. A rich sampling from the writings of selected authors, poets, and dramatists, and others will shape the topics that comprise this excursion into the human condition.