

ENGLISH 2110-02: SURVEY OF WORLD LITERATURE'S TRICKSTERS

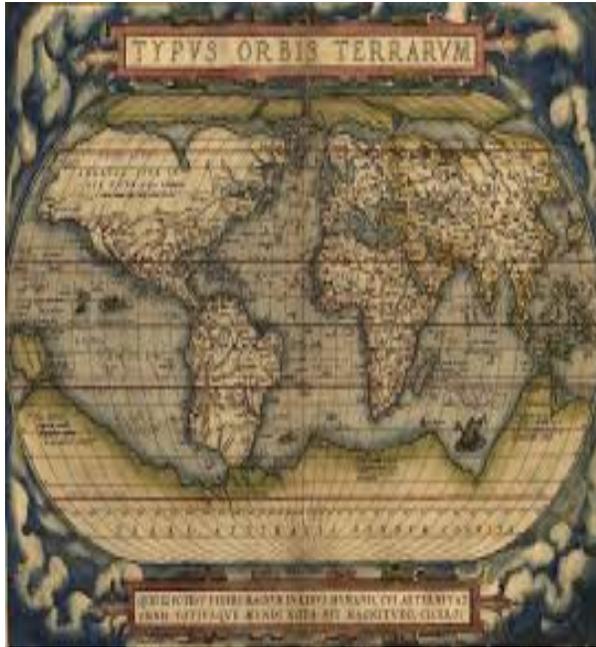
Spring 2018 * T/Th 11:00-12:15 * Humanities 134

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Office Hours: M: 11-1 online; T: 10-10:55 and 2:20-3:20; Th: 10-10:55 and 4:50-6; or by appt.



Course Description

What is the relationship between creation and deception? Between magic and mischief? Literature and lies? In this world literature course, we'll explore these (and other) timeless questions by examining the role of the trickster, broadly defined, as a figure capable of creating and transgressing boundaries between good and bad, male and female, human and non-human, lust and love, life and death, and this world and other worlds. Paying attention to similarities and differences in the styles of the texts with which we are engaged, we will consider what works created by different cultures and time periods tell us about human aspiration and failure alike.

Course Objectives

- Identify and assess the traditions, conventions, and contexts associated with the study of the English language and world literatures, including how relevant social, historical, and aesthetic contexts shape texts and authors.
- Apply critical thinking skills to the analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of information and ideas from diverse oral, written, and or visual sources.
- Conduct research, develop organizational strategies, and compose professional documents using the academic conventions of English Studies as a discipline.

Required Texts

Aeschylus. *Prometheus Bound*. Dover: 1996. (978-0486287)

The Arabian Nights. Trans. Hussain Haddaway. Norton: 2009. (978-0-393-92808-2)

Homer. *Odyssey*. Ed. Albert Cook. 2nd edition. Norton: 1993. (978-0-393-96405-9)

Wu-Cheng. *Monkey: A Folk Novel of China*. Trans. Arthur Waley. Grove Press/Perseus Academic, 1958. (978-0-8021-3086-0)

Supplementary readings due will be available via CourseDen or online

You will also need to view the following movie, which is on reserve in the library and can be rented from the English Department as well (where there three copies that can be checked out for a three day period of time):

Labyrinth. Dir. Jim Henson. Perf. David Bowie and Jennifer Connelly. 1986.

[Streaming at Amazon and Vudu too]

Required Work

Fuller descriptions of your written assignments and study guides for your exams will be posted to CourseDen.

- *Daily Participation* (10%): You are expected to not only do the assigned readings, but also to come to class prepared to discuss said readings. This does not mean that you have to have everything “figured out” ahead of time; questions and clarifications are perfectly reasonable ways to contribute to class discussions, though you need to make an effort to share your opinions and insights too if you want higher than a “C” in this component of your grade. Challenge yourself to talk at least once a week if not once a class. To that end, you should take notes while reading, bring those notes to class, and come prepared to take notes during class discussions. If I get the sense that you are not reading, I will incorporate reading quizzes into this component of your grade. I will post your participation grade twice: around midterm and at the end of the semester.
- *Daily Reading Questions* (5%): You should come to class daily with at least two questions about the assigned readings that you can share if called upon to do so. These questions should be written down, and they should not solicit simple yes/no or fill in the blank answers (save these factual questions for general class discussion, should you have them). Rather, your questions should challenge you and your peers to evaluate your opinions and observations about the text in question, and to consider a variety of possible perspectives and scenes before answering them. In other words, think about questions that start with “how” or “why” instead of “what”; questions that make comparisons between the same character over the course of a single text as well as different characters—either from the same text or different texts—are also excellent conversation starters. Each class, I will randomly ask five students to write one of their questions on the board to help focus that day’s discussion. I will also periodically check that all students are writing their questions down ahead of class.
- *Problem Papers* (30%): twice during the semester you'll be asked to compose short papers (two and a half to three pages, worth 15% each) on one of the texts we have read thus far. Each paper should focus on a short passage from the text you have chosen to work on, and you should use your close reading skills to argue for a specific interpretation of the passage in question.

- *Syllabus Pitch Presentation (20%)*: Working in groups, you will design a unit you would add to our syllabus if your group were responsible for teaching this class. You will then pitch your unit to your peers by way of a fifteen-minute formal presentation.
- *Midterm (15%)*: a writing intensive exam covering the texts and concepts from the first half of the semester.
- *Final Exam (20%)*: a writing intensive exam covering class readings, discussions, and lectures. While the exam will be cumulative, it will focus more on the materials covered post-midterm than it will the materials covered through the midterm.

Attendance

You are expected to attend class daily and be on time. I take roll by asking the class a specific “attendance question”; if you show up after I am done with roll you will be considered late. You may miss three classes with no questions asked. Absences four and five will result in your final grade dropping by two percentage points. Six or more absences will result in you not passing this class. Three late arrivals count as one absence. Leaving class early without permission also counts as an absence, as does showing up more than twenty-five minutes late. If you are asked to leave class for any reason, that too will count as an absence. Should you miss a class at any point in the semester, it is your responsibility to talk to your peers to figure out what you missed. In-class work cannot be made up except for cases of documented emergency and missing multiple in-class discussions will negatively impact your participation grade.

Deadlines and Submitting Assignments

All of your work is due on the days and times indicated by the schedule below. You will submit your work electronically via CourseDen (or email if there happens to be server trouble). Your grade will drop by two grade scales (four points) for every day that it is late, including weekends, and I will not accept work that is over a week late. If you are going to be absent the day that something is due, it remains your responsibility to make sure that your work is turned in on time. Failure to do so will result in your grade dropping. If you are having trouble with an assignment, come and talk to me **well ahead** of that assignment’s due date; I do not grant last minute extensions for assignments nor can I be of much help the night before an assignment is due, but I am happy to do everything in my power to help you produce work that you are proud of. It is your responsibility to regularly back up your work and to ensure that the submitted product is formatted correctly. “My computer ate my file” and “I thought I submitted that file” are not accepted excuses for late work, so I strongly suggest you save your work to a USB drive regularly (backing your work up on Google Drive or another cloud service might also be advisable) and double check that ALL of your submissions to CourseDen go through as planned. If you have questions or concerns about CourseDen, you should contact the Distance Learning office (<http://uwgonline.westga.edu/>).

Grading and Revision Policies

Grades are based on student performance on each assignment. Simply turning in every assignment does not guarantee that you will receive the grade you want on those assignments, nor does earning a “good” grade on one assignment guarantee that you will earn a similar grade on the next assignment. The grading scale and standards I use are detailed in the “Grading Scale and Guidelines for Formal Assignments” document on CourseDen. I do not offer extra credit for this class. I do accept revisions of problem papers **if you meet with me** to discuss your plans for revision **within a week** of me handing the graded paper back to you. You should come to this meeting with your **revision plan/goals typed up or written out**. Revised papers do not necessarily

earn higher grades, but I do guarantee that your grade will not drop in any way should you decide to attempt a revision. If you are revising a paper that was penalized for plagiarism, your old grade and your new grade will be averaged to determine the final grade that you will receive.

University Policies and Student Rights/Responsibilities

Please carefully review the following Common Language for all university course syllabi:

http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf. It contains important material pertaining to university policies and responsibilities. Because these statements are updated as federal, state, university and accreditation standards change, you should review the information each semester.

Academic Honesty

The act of plagiarism—claiming someone else’s ideas, language, images, or other original materials as your own without giving full credit to your source—is a serious offense. As members of an academic community, it is important that we engage in responsible and honest communication with one another. Plagiarism, whether accidental or intentional, will result in a failing grade for assignment and will, as a result, negatively impact your overall grade. Repeat offenders will fail the course and might be subjected to additional action by the University.

If you are unclear about how to cite a source, ask me **before** you turn your work in. Sources you should consult before talking to me include:

- The department's website: <http://www.westga.edu/%7Eengdept/Plagiarism/index.html>
- The writing center’s site: <https://www.westga.edu/academics/coah/writing>
- The Bedford/St. Martin student site: http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/rewriting2e/#t_526483
- The research and citation section of Purdue’s online writing lab: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/>

Submitting someone else's work as your own, resubmitting your own work done for another class, or collaborating with peers on individual assignments are also forms of academic dishonesty that will result in failing grades for the assignment in question.

Accessibility Services

UWG adheres to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), which requires that accommodations be made to make programs accessible for people with disabilities. If you are a student with a disability, please make sure to register at the Accessibility Services Office and provide me with a copy of your Accommodation Request as soon as possible. The Accessibility Services Office is located at 123 Row Hall. You may call them at 678-839-6428 or visit their website at <http://www.westga.edu/counseling/4486.php>.

Classroom Environment

Since everyone is expected to participate in class, it is important that you all feel comfortable doing so. Some of the content we will be discussing involves topics or perspectives with which you might not agree or feel wholly comfortable, and that is okay. Differing viewpoints are welcome in class discussions; however, disrespectful comments against specific individuals or groups will not be tolerated under any circumstances. In the event that such a statement is made, the speaker will be asked to leave class immediately and will be marked absent for the day. Disagreeing with someone is one thing, disrespecting or attacking him or her is another—do not do it. On a related note, it is

disrespectful to both me and your fellow classmates to let your cell phones ring during our time together, so please turn off your phones before class. Other portable electronics should, likewise, be turned off during class unless you are given permission to use them for a specific purpose. If I see you text messaging, emailing, checking facebook, or doing work for another class, I will ask you to leave and mark you as absent.

Additional Help

I am happy to meet with you outside of class to discuss Homework due, your progress on projects, or any other questions/concerns you might have. I will be in my office during the office hours listed at the top of this syllabus. (On the occasion that I need to reschedule office hours, you will be given as much advanced notice about these changes as possible.) If you are unable to come to office hours, let me know and we'll figure out another time to meet that is convenient for us both. I am also happy to answer specific questions over email and will do so as quickly as I can. That said, please don't panic if you don't hear from me right away, especially if you send your email at, say, midnight. If, however, I haven't responded in 24 hours, feel free to send a follow up email.

The University Writing Center is another excellent resource that I encourage you to take advantage of as all writing benefits from multiple sets of eyes; indeed, professional writers workshop their pieces all of the time. You may go to the Writing Center at any stage in your writing process. For more information or to make an appointment, call 678-839-6513, visit TLC 1201, or email writing@westga.edu.

UWG Cares

College can sometimes feel stressful. Please know that everyone at UWG is committed to supporting you to the best of our abilities; we've been in your shoes. If at any point during the semester you or someone you know starts to feel overwhelmed, I'd encourage you to call the Counseling Center (it's free and anything you discuss can remain confidential) at 678-839-6428. If you need me to help you find a particular support service or walk with you to an office, I am happy to do that; you need to know, however, that I am legally obligated to report any incident of sexual assault. If you are worried about someone who does not seem to want to ask for help, visit <http://www.westga.edu/uwgcares/> to file an anonymous report on that person. In case of emergency, don't be afraid to call national help lines, like the national suicide prevention lifeline at 800-273-8255 or the national sexual assault hotline at 800-656-4673.

Schedule of Homework due and Assignments (due the date on which they are listed)

This syllabus is a general plan for the course and might be modified as the semester progresses to meet course objectives or address the needs of the class. Most (if not all) of the changes made will be in consultation with the class as a whole. I will announce any changes made in class before sending out a revised syllabus. It is your responsibility to check CourseDen and your email regularly to ensure you are up to date on all class announcements, etc.

Week One: Introductions

Jan. 9	Historical overview and course expectations.
Jan. 11	Defining tricksters. <i>Homework due:</i> Hyde, "Introduction" to <i>Trickster Makes this World</i> (e-reserve); watch <i>Labyrinth</i> .

Week Two: A Legacy of Lies

Jan. 16	<i>Discussion Questions Start Today.</i> Ancient Greece: epic. <i>Homework due: Odyssey, Books 1-4</i>
Jan. 18	<i>Homework due: Odyssey, Books 5-8</i>

Week Three: A Legacy of Lies, Cont'd

Jan. 23	<i>Homework due: Odyssey, Books 9-13</i>
Jan. 25	<i>Homework due: Odyssey, Books 14-18</i>

Week Four: From Liars to Thieves

Jan. 30	<i>Homework due: finish the Odyssey</i>
Feb. 1	Ancient Greece: from myth to tragedy. <i>Homework due: Aeschylus, Prometheus Bound; "Hope for Humankind" (e-reserve)</i>

Week Five: Cleverness and Betrayal

Feb. 6	Analysis Workshop.
Feb. 8	Ancient Rome. <i>Homework due: Virgil, Aeneid, Books 1-4 (e-reserve); skim the following overview of the whole poem too: http://people.duke.edu/~wj25/UC_Web_Site/epic/aeneidsum.html</i> <i>Problem Paper #1 due by noon tomorrow (2/9)</i>

Week Six: Transcendental Tricksters

Feb. 13	<i>Homework due: Ovid, Metamorphoses excerpts (e-reserve); skim the following overview of the whole poem too: http://www.ancient-literature.com/rome_ovid_metamorphoses.html.</i>
Feb. 15	Ancient (and modern) India. <i>Homework due: pp. 10-45 ("Complaining in Love" to end) Canto Ten of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa (e-reserve: "thebutterthief.pdf"); "The Adventures of Young Krishna" (e-reserve)</i>

Week Seven: Divine Troublemakers

Feb. 20	Scandinavian mythology. <i>Homework due: Sturluson, "Glyfaginning" from the Prose Edda (e-reserve)</i>
Feb. 22	Hebrew Bible (aka Old Testament) and the New Testament. <i>Homework due: Genesis, chapters 2-3, 27-33, and 41-46 (http://www.bartleby.com/108/01/); Esther, chapters 2-9 (http://www.bartleby.com/108/17/); 2 Corinthians, chapters 2, and 11-12 (http://www.bartleby.com/108/47/)</i>

Week Eight: Examing

Feb. 27	Midterm review/creation.
Mar. 1	<i>Midterm</i> <i>Drop period with "W" ends at 4 p.m. tomorrow.</i>

Week Nine: Flirting With Death

Mar. 6	Medieval Middle East. <i>Homework due: Arabian Nights, pp. 5-66 ("Prologue" through "The Twenty-Seventh Night")</i>
Mar. 8	<i>Homework due: Arabian Nights, pp. 203-49 ("The Story of the Hunchback" through "The Tailor's Tale")</i>

Week Ten: Laughing in the Face of Despair

Mar. 13	Medieval Italy. <i>Homework due:</i> Boccaccio, <i>Decameron</i> excerpts (e-reserve)
Mar. 15	Medieval France. <i>Homework due:</i> <i>Reynard the Fox</i> (e-reserve)

Week Eleven: Break

Mar. 20	No class: Spring Break.
Mar. 22	No class: Spring Break.

Week Twelve: Aggressive Outsiders

Mar. 27	Introduce Syllabus Pitch Presentations. China's classical age. <i>Homework due:</i> <i>Monkey</i> , pp. 11-77.
Mar. 29	No class. <i>Homework due:</i> Read ahead for next week and start thinking about/drafting your papers.

Week Thirteen: Journeying West

Apr. 3	<i>Homework due:</i> <i>Monkey</i> , pp. 78-180.
Apr. 5	<i>Homework due:</i> <i>Monkey</i> , pp. 181-233.

Week Fourteen: Animated Animals

Apr. 10	<i>Analytical Paper #2 due by noon tomorrow (4/11).</i> <i>Homework due:</i> finish <i>Monkey</i> .
Apr. 12	Native American traditions. <i>Homework due:</i> "American Indian Myths" (e-reserve); "Tokwah" (e-reserve)

Week Fifteen: Coming Full Circle

Apr. 17	African and African American traditions. <i>Homework due:</i> "African and African American Tales" (e-reserve); ""John" from "Jack and John" (e-reserve); "Bride of the Evil One" (pp.123-28), "All of These Are Mine" (p. 131), "The Tar Baby" (pp. 132-22), "How Brer Rabbit Bought Dust Out of the Rock" (pp. 145-46), "John, His Boss Man, and the Catfish" (pp. 146-47), "When Brer Frog Gave a Big Dinner" (pp. 147-49), "Mr. Deer's My Riding Horse" (pp.149-50), and "Abe and Dinah" (pp. 150-53 from "American Folktales," e-reserve)
Apr. 19	Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment Fairy Tales. Some in class time for group work. <i>Homework due:</i> "Jack and the Beanstalk" (http://www.surlalunefairytales.com/jackbeanstalk/stories/langbeanstalk.html); "Jack" from "Jack and John" (e-reserve); "One-Eyed Giant" (pp. 136-38 from "American Folktales," e-reserve)

Week Sixteen: Presentations

Apr. 24	<i>Presentations.</i> Course evaluations.
Apr. 26	<i>Presentations.</i> Final exam overview.

Final Exam: Tuesday, May 8 from 11-1