

Honors (Un)Common Reads: Science of Stories
IDH2930 – Class 30081
Fridays 5th Period (11:45 to 12:35)
Honors Village Classroom 114

Instructor

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Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description

Literature is ubiquitous, yet its relevance is continuously questioned. What is it about literature that has caused countless individuals spanning various times and places to feel certain that it could improve life? Is literature still relevant? Why do we teach literature when so few people read literature as adults? In this course, we will seek the answer to such questions.

Using Angus Fletcher's book *Wonderworks* as a jumping-off point, we will discuss literature's effect on individuals while also making space to discuss how cultural context determines one's notion of literature and reaction to it. Students will be encouraged to understand affective involvement with text as the foundation for deeper analysis, and will be given the opportunity to practice this themselves. We will ask questions about the need for literature in society, and if other genres of written text or other modalities might provide the same benefits. We will debate the importance of literature and ultimately make a determination about its relevance in the 21st century.

Learning Outcomes

(1) Students will understand how literary devices and genres have evolved over time. Students will also become familiar with literary tropes, terminology, history, and allusions. Exposure to the book's many literary and historical examples will increase background knowledge and cultural literacy such that students will be able to better navigate the academic disciplines and the world beyond: Fletcher explores texts that are woven into our sociocultural fabric on a deep level, as well as discussing important works of world literature such as *The Story of the Stone* and *One Hundred Years of Solitude*.

(2) Students will understand that emotional reactions to text provide an important foundation for claims about the text's meaning; they will construct their own answers to the questions of human nature that literary study is concerned with. Discussions will be student-centered, and will use a version of Sarah Levine's Up-Down-Both-Why framework: student discussion leaders will initiate discussion using excerpts from the book that evoked strong positive or negative emotion in them. Through the ensuing conversation, the instructor will guide students to develop claims about the larger meaning of the text vis a vis questions pursued by literary experts, e.g., Who am I? Where do I belong? What am I capable of?

Course Prerequisites

Good-standing member of the University Honors Program or First-Year Honors Program.

Required Textbooks

Wonderworks: Literary Invention and the Science of Stories by Angus Fletcher (AF)

ISBN: 1982135980

Publisher: Simon & Schuster

Supplementary Reading (provided by instructor)

Excerpts from *The Cry for Myth* by Rollo May

Excerpts from *The Conquest of Happiness* by Bertrand Russell

Excerpts *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* by Joseph Campbell

“Love After Love” by Derek Walcott

“Song of Myself” by Walt Whitman

“What Value Do the Humanities Have?” by Judith Butler

“What We Talk About When We Talk About Love” by Raymond Carver

“My Name” by Sandra Cisneros

“Early Autumn” by Langston Hughes

“Girl” by Jamaica Kincaid

“Where are You Going, Where Have You Been?” by Joyce Carol Oates

“The Knowers” by Helen Phillips

Course Expectations

Attendance/participation (25%)

This is a discussion-based course. Students are expected to come to class prepared to participate in group discussions and be ready to be engaged and discuss weekly readings and course content.

Class participation rubric

Engagement Level	Engagement Description
Type 5 – 20 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You challenge the group (small and large) respectfully.• You ask insightful questions• Your contributions extend the class readings.• In discussion, you refer to text and experience.• You participate regularly with the group and feel a sense of belonging (inclusion with it, responsibility for it).• You share the collective space. (You neither dominate the discussion, nor intimidate nor remain in the shadows).• You have prepared and thought before class.
Type 4 – 17-19 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You ask questions. Usually these are of clarification rather than instigation.• Your thought/questions are related to the readings.• In discussion, you refer to text and to experience.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You participate regularly. You share the collective space. (You neither dominate the discussion, nor intimidate nor remain in the shadows). You have prepared and thought before class.
Type 3 – 12-16 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You leave class wondering (pondering, uncertain, surprised, speculating, questioning, struck, stuck, amazed, caught up etc.) from the contributions of others. You contribute your perspective to discussions based upon your experience; however, this perspective is not necessarily informed by readings. It is more “in the moment.” You sometimes participate, sometimes not. You sometimes prepare, sometimes not.
Type 2 – 6-11 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You attend and listen attentively to others’ contributions and may find these interesting. You do not regularly contribute to the group You have prepared and thought before class.
Type 1 – 1-5 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You sometimes come to class, sometimes not. You arrive late. You leave early You attend class and leave class. You feel disengaged (for a variety of reasons), not included and/or not responsible.

Discussion posts (25%)

This course will have a weekly online discussion board. Students are expected to read the assigned chapters before class and comment on the readings. Discussion posts should avoid summarizing the assigned reading material.

Discussion post rubric

Excellent - 3	<p>Student shares 2 of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 quotation that aroused in them positive emotion, appreciation, or agreement 1 quotation about which they have mixed feelings or feel confusion 1 quotation that aroused in them negative emotion, disdain, or disagreement <p>And explains why in each case</p>
Acceptable - 2	<p>Student is missing one quotation or explanation is incoherent or shallow</p>
Incomplete - 1	<p>Post is missing multiple quotations or is consistently incoherent or shallow (e.g., it relies on summary)</p>
Unacceptable - 0	<p>Post is off-topic or assignment is not completed</p>

Midterm proposal (10%) and final project (40%)

Over the course of the semester, the instructor will use student comments to build up a list of questions that can be included under the rubric of one of "Who are we?" "What are we capable of?" or "Where do we belong?" Students will select one question from each of the three categories (or take the "head" questions themselves) and compose a response (essay, literary work, photo story, or another genre of their choosing) to convey how the ideas from the book and from the class discussions have contributed to their understanding of their chosen questions. Finally, they will address the question of literature's relevance in the 21st century. Additional information to be provided in class.

Students who wish to submit their work in a form other than a written essay will submit a one-page description of what they propose to do. Possibilities include: creative writing (e.g., short story, poetry), analysis/criticism, film treatment, film/multimedia, visual art, presentation/performance.

Attendance Policy, Class Expectations, and Make-Up Policy

- Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies. Click here to read the university attendance policies: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>
- University and Departmental guidelines will be applied to categorize excused and unexcused absences.
- Students able should notify the instructor of excused absences via email IN ADVANCE of the planned absence; in emergency situations the notification should occur BEFORE THE END OF THE FOLLOWING WEEK
- Regardless of whether an absence is excused or unexcused, students are responsible for any coursework missed as a result of the absence. As most assignments are shared in advance, students should have sufficient time to complete and submit these assignments in spite of excused activities/absences, unless otherwise discussed and approved by the instructor. For excused absences, students are expected to be follow up as necessary (email, office hours) to familiarize themselves with all announcements made in class and all covered materials.

Late Assignments and Make-Up Policy

- Late assignments will be accepted for 24 hours after the due date with a 30% deduction.
- Medical emergencies are excluded if accompanied by a doctor's note.

Grading Policy

You can find the University of Florida's grading policies here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-gradingpolicies/>

90 – 93 A-
87 – 89 B+
83- 86 B
80-82 B-
77-79 C+
73 – 76 C
70 – 72 C-
67 – 69 D+
63 – 66 D
60 – 62 D-
0 – 59 F

A minimum grade of B is required to earn Academic points towards your Honors Completion Requirements. (Exception: Honors Quest I and II sections require a C). Once you have earned your final grade in this course, please upload the course information and final grade from your Unofficial Transcript into your Honors Canvas Cohort: Honors Completion module to earn Honors Completion credit.

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>.

Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

In-Class Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

Academic Resources

- E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
- Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.
- On-Line Students Complaints: View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process
- Honors Program Contact Information: Honors Program, 201 Walker Hall, 352-392-1519
- Quick questions for an Honors advisor? Email advisor@honors.ufl.edu
- Need an Honors advising appointment? Schedule via Microsoft Bookings: <https://bit.ly/ufhonorsadvising>

Important Note

The instructor reserves the right to change any of the administrative information (syllabus, readings, exams, distribution of grades, and papers) throughout the course of the semester and will inform students of such changes with due time and consideration.

Course Schedule (subject to change)

Date	Topic/Deliverables
1/12	AF: Preface, Introduction Discussion of course content
1/19	AF: Chapters 1 and 2
1/26	AF: Chapters 3 and 4
2/2	AF: Chapters 5, 6, and 7
2/9	AF: Chapters 8 and 9 First supplementary reading
2/16	AF: Chapters 10 and 11
2/23	AF: Chapters 12 and 13
3/1	Midterm proposal due AF: Chapters 14 and 15
3/8	AF: Chapters 16 and 17 Second supplementary reading
3/15	Spring break: No class
3/22	AF: Chapters 18, 19, and 20
3/29	AF: Chapters 21, 22, and 23
4/5	AF: Chapters 24 and 25 Third supplementary reading
4/12	AF: Conclusion and Coda
4/19	Final project due Course reflection