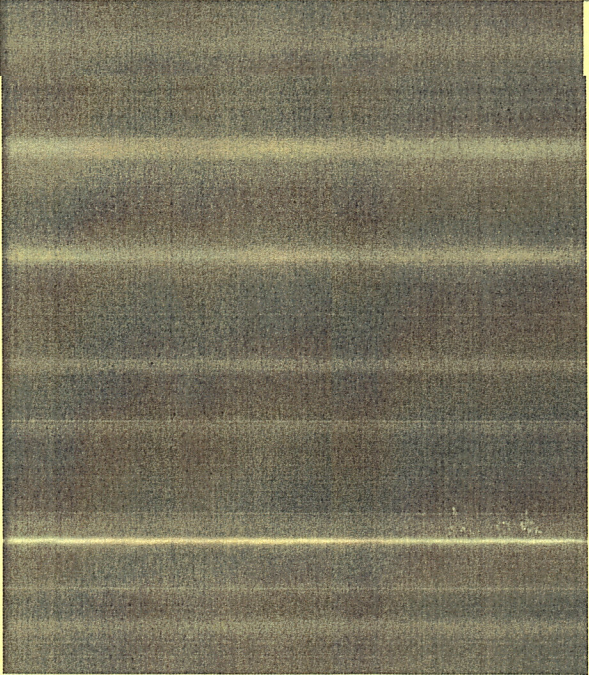




Introduction to Contemporary African Literature

2018 ENG211

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the first term of English III!

You have passed English I, and want more English literature. We are happy to oblige!

This reader covers term 1. There will be a separate reader for term 2. You will find the schedule for the two terms on pages x and y.

The course covers a wide range of periods and regions, and raises many questions. The ways in which you find the answers will further develop your analytic skills, your ability to write, research and construct arguments, and to keep on asking more questions.

The course consists of two compulsory or core modules.

In the first term, we study contemporary African literature through a selection of South African poetry, and a Nigerian and South African novel.

Most of the action in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006) takes place during the Nigerian Civil War or Biafran War (July 1967--January 1970). *Age of Iron* (1990) by JM Coetzee also takes place during a period of conflict, for it is set in Cape Town during the struggle against apartheid. All parts of the course place literature "in the world" in a literal, conceptual and figurative sense. A novel such as *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006) has a clear set of historical and geographical references, but through the questions that it raises about love, sex, gender, power, race, violence and literacy, it draws us into a world of concepts, relationships and sensations that also speak to novels such as *Reef* (1994), which you read last year, and *Wuthering Heights* (1847), which you will read in the second semester.

You should also see *Age of Iron* as transitional text that links Contemporary African Literature to Literature and Myth. The novel is set in Cape Town during the 1980s – a period of heightened resistance to apartheid, and the state's violent responses to this resistance. Its central character is an old white retired Professor of Classics (the study of the ancient and classical Greek and Roman history, culture and literature) who is dying of cancer. Through a number of important experiences, she gains some insight into what she does not know or could not face about South Africa and the people around her. That description might give you the impression that it is a tame novel – it is not.

Between the two novels there will be six lectures on poetry that will expose you to a range of SA poets, including Arthur Nortje, Mongane Wally Serote, Jeremy Cronin, Ingrid de Kock, Chris van Wyk, Mafika Pascal Gwala, and Rustum Kozain.

In term 2, we turn to literature and Myth. Myths and mythology can be seen as the "founding documents" of many societies in at least ...ways: as stories about the origins of the world; as stories that legitimise a particular social order, eg through conquest by valorising the status of the elite; as stories that explain the inner, psychological workings of men and women.

Many western literary and cultural critics regard *The Odyssey* (circa 1200 BCE) as the basis of modern western literature because so many artists (novelists, poets, playwrights, composers, musicians, painters, sculptors and film makers) in the "developed" and "developing" world have found something valuable and interesting in it which speaks to their personal or social values. You should already know what this means and how this can work, because *The Island* (1973) is based on the classical Greek tragedy *Antigone* (443 BCE). *The Island* shows that it is possible to use a play that is over 2400 years old to comment on and criticise the evils of apartheid, and to explore complex relationships between men in the modern world. Of course this does not mean that "non-European" societies are inferior to "Western" or "European" societies. In the second term we will also read and analyse parts of *Emperor Shaka the Great* (1979), a modern African epic poem by Mazisi Kunene (1930-2006).

HOUSEKEEPING

Assessment

The 60% CAM and 40% exam division remains.

The types of assignments and tests, for instance sit-down test or online test, and their timing may differ in terms 1 and 2 may differ.

We start the course on the assumption that your semester1 CAM will consist of

- Two essays uploaded onto TII, with correct coversheet, type-signed and dated anti-plagiarism declaration and bibliography: $2 \times 30\% = 60\%$
- Two tests; these may be sit-down tests written under exam conditions, or take-home or online tests, or a series of short reading test administered by your tutor: $2 \times 15\% = 30\%$
- Attendance and Participation mark: 10%

Turn It In

Apart from sit-down tests or work that you hand in to your tutor, you will have to upload everything else to TII. This includes, but is not limited to, assignments and take-home tests. The department will do its best to ensure that all names are on TII, but it is your responsibility to check that your name appears on the list of 211 students.

Increasingly, tutors do not require a signed hard copy, because they can mark your essays on TII. TII also assesses the originality/similarity of a student paper, but it is not the only way to assess whether or how much a student has used unacknowledged sources.

You will have to upload your essay onto TII in order to generate a "similarity index". The department's policy is that you may only submit your essay to TII once, and that a SI of 14% or more attracts the attention of your marker.

In some cases, the declaration pushes the SI above, but that is not your concern. Obviously, your tutor will not penalise you for plagiarising the anti-plagiarism declaration. In addition, the declaration is NOT part of the essay word count.

You will find the cover page with declaration on the 2018 ENG211 iKamva course resources site.

We also keep a record of plagiarism cases from ENG111/121; if you signed the admission of plagiarism form in 2017, then we will have a record of that. If you already have a "plagiarism record", you can expect to receive 0% for the next offence; this will reduce your DP to below 40%, which in turn will prevent you from writing the exam, and you will fail the module.

Tutors and markers use the TII similarity index (measured as a percentage) in different ways. On its own it may provide concrete proof of plagiarism, but in other cases it is an indicator. *In other words, a low Similarity Index does not prove that you have not plagiarised.*

Please adhere to essay deadlines, and meet all the necessary presentation and referencing requirements that you applied in ENG111/121. The same penalties for not meeting those requirements will apply.

Sit-down tests

You can expect to write the term main sit-down test on a Friday afternoon 15.30-16.30, and the sick test two Fridays later. To qualify for the sick test: within seven days of the main test, you submit documentary proof, eg medical certificate, to the TAs in the TA office; those eligible to write the sick test will be notified two days before the test.

ikamva

The course coordinator, lecturers and tutors will upload information and communicate with students via ikamva. Normally the names of all students who register for a module are uploaded onto the module ikamva site, but you must check that your name is there, and please check your student email regularly for notices. This is also your responsibility.

Staying in touch

In these uncertain times, remember to check your UWC email and ikamva accounts regularly for information about the course. There might be changes to the lecture schedule; notices about test dates and venues; opening and closing dates for online tests; details about secondary readings or useful websites. Please check that you are on the ikamva and TII systems so that you receive announcements, and can upload your assignments on time.

Stresses, strains and solutions

For some students, university life may be a stressful experience. Contributing factors may be academic, financial (including food, transport, fees), political, and personal or family matters. It sometimes happens that a student who experiences stress will withdraw, and stop attending lectures and tutorials. If that happens, we ask you do the opposite – to contact the Centre for Student Support Services (CSSS), and your tutor or course coordinator. Lecturers and tutors are not trained therapists or counsellors, and cannot replace them. However we do have experience in dealing with students who have these problems, and we can contribute to the healing process.

We are not psychics. For instance, if you are sick, involved in an accident, held up by public transport delays, need to attend to a relative, or attend a funeral, you need to email your tutor as soon as possible. If these or other events or reasons cause you to miss a deadline, tutorial or test, provide as much documentary proof as possible, eg a medical or death cer-

tificate. Please do not wait until the end of the semester or after we have published the CAM; the longer you delay, the less convincing your explanation becomes.

Exam requirements

Remember: as second-year students, you need a CAM of 40% to write the exam.

At the end of the semester, the most common reason for a low CAM is that students have not completed and submitted all assignments, or they have moved from one tutorial gp to another without informing Ms Roos.

The content of the exam scope is at the discretion of the course coordinator.

As you know by now, to pass the course, you need to submit all assignments, write all of the tests, and attend all of your tutorials.

Please do not gamble with your future by assuming that you can skip an assignment or test, and make up for that by obtaining a high mark for the other assessments.

Reading

This is a full time course. We expect you to attend all of the lectures and the tutorials.

You should also read all of the primary material, the articles that we prescribe for essays and tutorials, and those we recommend.

The ISBN shows you which edition your lecturers and tutors will use because we think they are the most accessible and helpful. For some works like *The Odyssey* there are many editions; if you find a second-hand copy, check that it is the complete version (not an edited-down or censored version for children), and that it has an introduction and notes; both will help you to navigate the text.

In some case, you may be able to find free, complete online versions that you can download to your smartphone or tablet, or copy and paste to a file that you save on your computer or memory stick.

For term 1, we expect you to buy or obtain:

- Adichie, C.M, *Half of a Yellow Sun*; ISBN 978007200283
- Coetzee, J.M. *Age of Iron*; ISBN 9780241951019

For term 2:

- Homer, *The Odyssey*, ISBN 9780140445565; many online prose and poetry translations available
- Kunene, *Emperor Shaka the Great: a Zulu Epic*; there is a free online version available on the UWC Library database; there is also a 2017 book edition, ISBN 9781869143152

Who we are

Course coordinator: Julia Martin, jmartin@uwc.ac.za

Semester 1 lecturers

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- Peter Kohler, pkohler@uwc.ac.za
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Public holidays will affect some lectures or tutorials. If your tutorial falls on a public holiday, or something prevents you from attending your designated tutorial, please attend another group that week and inform your tutor. If there is a persistent tutorial clash, then you must go to Ms Roos, so that she can place you in a suitable tutorial gp.	
T1: Wednesday 21 March, Human Rights Day	T2: Monday 2 April, Family Day
T2: Friday 27 April, Freedom Day	T2: Tuesday 1 May, Workers' Day
T2: Friday 16 June, Youth Day	

Other events that we cannot predict may affect teaching, learning, tests and deadlines. We are all learning from experience how to adapt to these events. As your lecturers and tutors, we are committed to your education and development. This may mean that we may adapt conventional face-to-face teaching and learning, or combine it with other forms of teaching, learning, and assessment.

SEMESTER 1 SCHEDULE

	Term 1: Introduction to Contemporary African Literature			
Wk	Mon p 2; DL1	Wed p 4; DL1	Tuts	Test/essay cycle
Wk 1 05/02-09/02	L1: Intro (JM)	L2: Adichie, <i>Half of a Yellow Sun</i> (MW)	No tut in wk 1	
Wk 2 12/02-16/02	L3: Adichie, <i>Half of a Yellow Sun</i> (MW)	L4: Adichie, <i>Half of a Yellow Sun</i> (MW)	Adichie	
Wk 3 19/02-23/02	L5: SA poetry (ME)	L6: SA poetry (ME)	Adichie	
Wk 4 26/02-02/03	L7: SA poetry (ME)	L8: SA poetry (ME)	Poetry	Adichie essay due: 01/03, 23.59
Wk 5 05/03-09/03	L9: SA poetry (ME)	L10: SA poetry (ME)	Poetry	Sit-down test 09/03 14.30-15.30
Wk 6 12/03-16/03	L11: Coetzee, <i>Age of Iron</i> (PK)	L12: L11: Coetzee, <i>Age of Iron</i> (PK)	Coetzee	Sick applications deadline 16/03 12.00; TA office
Wk 7 19/03-23/03	L13: L11: Coetzee, <i>Age of Iron</i> (PK)	L14: No lec: Human Rights Day If your tut falls on a Wed, attend another tut gp this week.	Coetzee	Sick test 23/03 13.30-14.30

PREPARING FOR TERM 2

In term 2, we shift our focus to the literature, or perhaps orature, from or about nonliterate societies. We will begin with Mazisi Kunene's modern epic *Emperor Shaka The Great*. Between those two, we will explore some of the most popular and profound stories from the *Metamorphoses* by Ovid, and one of the foundational texts in western literature, the *Odyssey*.

The works fall into three basic groups: transcriptions of what indigenous people have spoken about their beliefs and practices in a form that tries to remain faithful to the original communication; reworked versions adapted for modern readers to fit the conventions of language, style and form with which they are familiar; an epic written in the 20th century that self-consciously draws on many of the conventions found in much earlier epics in Africa and Europe.

Although all of it has been adapted in some form for modern readers, you may still find that the stories are unusual and that the mode of delivery, pacing and language style is unfamiliar. For these reasons, it is important to start reading the material before term 2 starts.

The term 2 reader will be available before the end of term 1.

Term 2: Introduction to Literature and Myth			
WK 8	Mon p 2; DL1	L1: L1: Intro: canon formation, myth and classics (multivocal/RF)	Shaka
WK 9	L2: Kunene, <i>Emperor Shaka the Great</i> (NS)	Shaka	
WK 10	L4: Kunene, <i>Emperor Shaka the Great</i> (NS)	Shaka	
WK 11	L6: <i>Metamorphoses</i> (CAM)	L7: <i>Metamorphoses</i> (CAM)	<i>Metamorphoses</i>
WK 12	L8: <i>Metamorphoses</i> (CAM)	L9: <i>Metamorphoses</i>	<i>Metamorphoses</i>
WK 13	L10: <i>Odyssey</i> (RF)	L11: <i>Odyssey</i> (RF)	<i>Odyssey</i>
WK 14	L12: <i>Odyssey</i> (RF)	L13: <i>Odyssey</i> (RF)	<i>Odyssey</i>
STUDY PERIOD: 18-20/05			
MAIN EXAMS: 21/05-13/06			
RE-EVALS: 18/06-28/06			