San José State University Department of English & Comparative Literature English 208: Seminar in Comparative Literature, Fall 2022

Instructor: Revathi Krishnaswamy

Office Location: Canvas Online

Telephone: (408)-924-1384

Email: Revathi.krishnaswamy@email.sjsu.edu

Office Hours: Mon 6:45-7:30 pm and by appointment

Class Days/Time: Mon 4.00-6.45 pm (synchronous meeting via zoom)

Classroom: Canvas Online

Messaging : You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU and Canvas.

Course Format: Seminar. Synchronous meeting via Zoom. This course satisfies SJSU's Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR).

Course Description: Decolonize! Literature, History, Theory

What do we mean when we say Western Civilization, Classical Literature, British Literature, American Literature or English Literature? How were these areas of study constituted, their canons established, their literary history constructed, and their disciplinary practices institutionalized? What role did literary criticism/theory play in these processes? Taking a broad comparative approach to these questions, we will (i) examine the structures of power that shape literary production and consumption, (ii) consider the legacy of eurocentrism (and androcentrism), (iii) deconstruct established definitions, conventional narratives, dominant ideologies, and (iv) learn about world-wide efforts to "decolonize" literature and literary studies. This course aims to be not only informational but also transformational. The questions we ask, the ideas we consider, and the materials we read are intended to defamiliarize and disorient established conceptions of literature, literary history and literary theory. I therefore expect you to bring along the knowledge you have accumulated from prior literary studies so you can test it against this course. Intellectual curiosity, academic rigor, openness of mind, commitment to work hard, tolerance for difficulty, ambiguity, and uncertainty are essential to succeed in the class. The course will be taught mostly synchronously, using Canvas and Zoom. The course satisfies the 4-unit GWAR requirement for both MFA and MA students.

Course Materials:

- 1. Course Materials in Canvas and online
- 2. Norton Anthologies (Classical, British, American as available)

MA Program Learning Outcomes

- 1. Students will demonstrate an appropriate level of expertise in literary history, literary theory, and rhetoric.
- 2. Students will demonstrate high-level proficiency in literary research and in the synthesis of research.
- 3. Students will demonstrate critical and analytical skills in the interpretation and evaluation of literary texts.
- 4. Students will demonstrate a command of written academic English, including the abilities to a) organize and present material in a cogent fashion, b) formulate and defend original arguments, c) employ effectively the language of their discipline and d) write under time constraints.
- 5. Students will demonstrate a reading knowledge of at least one foreign language.
- 6. Students preparing for teaching careers will receive the appropriate instruction.
- 7. Students will be prepared for further graduate study.

Course Student Learning Objectives

- a. Demonstrate familiarity with the materials and methods of literary research.
- b. Demonstrate a robust understanding of decolonization, particularly as it applies to literature, literary history, literary theory, and literary pedagogy.

One Unit Course Credit Enhancement:

Because this is a 4-unit course, students can expect to spend a minimum of twelve hours per week preparing for and attending classes and completing course assignments. Specifically, the following 1-unit enhancement is integrated into this course: **Increased course content and/or collateral readings** (10% of course grade). Students will work on a project that involves reading additional primary and secondary materials, giving a formal oral presentation, and preparing a written report. I will conduct workshops to provide detailed comments on proposals and drafts. Based on my feedback, students will revise and edit their reports.

Assignments: All assignments must be submitted in Canvas on dates indicated in the schedule. Unless you have received prior permission from me, late assignments will be automatically reduced one letter grade for each late day and no assignments will be accepted beyond a week after the due date.

1. Reader Response: 100 points (10 points each)

You will post a 250-300 word response to the week's assigned reading; you may choose to respond to the readings as a whole or focus on one in particular. Your RR should (i) critically engage one or more key ideas/arguments, and (ii) raise one or two questions for class discussion. In addition to posting your own RR, you will respond briefly (2-3

sentences) to a discussion question posted by a classmate; you will do this before class meeting. You will be expected to share your RR as part of class discussions. Scoring: based on evidence of thoughtful engagement with course materials, proper organization, number of RRs submitted, and discussion questions answered. (PLO 1)

2. Critical Project Review: 300 points (150 points each) (PLO4)

You will write a critical review of two projects -- one in Brit Lit and another in American Lit – from the list below. You may be asked to informally share your reviews in class during scheduled discussions. Each written review must include three components: (i) a brief and accurate summary or description of the project, its goals and archival content (ii) a critical analysis and assessment of the project addressing the questions raised in the guidelines below, and (iii) one or two concrete suggestions with rationale for improving or advancing decolonization. Each review should be 750-1000 words (4-5 pages), double spaced, standard font and margins, and must reference at least three of our course readings. Scoring: based on accuracy and clarity of description, quality and depth of critical analysis, thoughtfulness of suggestions offered.

Brit lit projects

Global Shakespeare

MIT Global Shakespeares

Shakespeare Performance in Asia

Use the Macbeth collection as an example and sample 2-3 of the 35 or so Macbeths in the archive. Engage the following questions in your review: what is the purpose or goal of this project? what does the archive reveal about the project? how is this project decolonizing Shakespeare? To what extent do globalization, diversity, inclusion advance the goal of decolonizing?

Victorian Studies: "Undisciplining the Victorian Classroom," https://undiscipliningvc.org/ is a project to provide pedagogical materials for teaching beyond the established literary canon of the 19th-century (crowdsourced and ongoing).

Engage the following questions in your review: Why do these scholars think Victorian studies need decolonizing? What is their understanding of or approach to decolonizing? What exactly are they doing and why? To what extent does the project in fact advance decolonization?

American history projects

American History: The 1619 (vs 1620) project https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/1619-america-slavery.html

Engage the following questions in your review: What is the purpose of this project? What is its rationale? How does it achieve its goals? How does the project challenge or change the dominant narrative of American history? What are some of the objections raised by critics? To what extent are these objections valid?

➤ The Settler Colonial City Project

https://settlercolonialcityproject.org/Decolonizing-U-S-Literature

Engage the following questions in your review: What is the purpose of this project? What is its rationale? How does it achieve its goals? How does the project challenge or change the dominant narrative of American history? How does it complicate decolonization?

3. Glossary: 300 points (70+30; 70+30; 100 points each) (PLO2)

We will jointly create a glossary of key terms relevant to decolonizing. Each of you will be randomly assigned two terms from the list below. You will get a chance to revise these two glosses (70 points for first draft; 30 points for revision per gloss). In addition, you will all write your own gloss for "Decolonize/Decolonization" (100 points). Each gloss must do the following: (a) define the term's meanings, (b) provide historical context and examples, and (c) critically analyze the implications for decolonizing; each gloss should be 500-750 words, and must reference at least three course readings. For sample entries, consult a standard literary glossary such as *The Bedford Glossary of Literary and Critical Terms* or https://mthoyibi.files.wordpress.com/2011/05/a-glossary-of-literary-terms-7th-ed_m-h-abrams-1999.pdf.

Student sample:

Scoring: based on accuracy, depth, and clarity of definition, context, and examples.

Decolonize/Decolonization

- i. The Greek Miracle,
- ii. The Great Divergence,
- iii. The Columbian Exchange,
- iv. Classical-Medieval-Modern periods,
- v. Renaissance Humanism
- vi. The Enlightenment,
- vii. Nation/Nationalism,
- viii. Eurocentrism,
 - ix. Orientalism.
 - x. Colonialism (External, Internal, Settler)
- xi. American Exceptionalism,
- xii. The American Dream,
- xiii. Assimilation/Melting Pot,
- xiv. Modernity,
- xv. Modernization/Westernization,
- xvi. Capitalism,
- xvii. Liberation Philosophy,
- xviii. Three-world theory/First-Second-Third World,
 - xix. The Free World.
 - xx. Afrocentrism
- 4. Critical Case Study of Norton Anthologies: 300 points (200 for group PPT + presentation; 100 for individual written report) (PLO4)

This collaborative project will culminate in a group presentation and an individual written report. We will form three groups; each group will work on one of the following anthologies:

i. Norton Book of Classical Literature
https://www.christianbook.com/the-norton-book-of-classical-literature/9780393034264/pd/34267
and
on Hathitrust via sjsu library:
https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/002708080?

ii. Norton Anthology of English Literature
Vols A-F (https://wwnorton.com/books/9780393603026/overview)

iii. Norton Anthology of American Literature (https://wwnorton.com/books/9780393264548/overview)

Critically analyze the latest edition's Table of Contents (ToC) (if possible, check earlier editions to identify any significant changes). Do not merely describe the ToC; critically analyze the ToC by examining what/who is included/excluded, how the material is organized, what the ToC reveals about the construction of literary history, the canon, national cultural identity etc and offer suggestions for how the field can be further decolonized. Each group will give a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the main findings of the group's research and analysis. Each group member will be expected to take responsibility for researching, preparing, and presenting specific parts of the project/ppt. In addition, each group member must submit an individual written report (750-1000 words) briefly summarizing the main findings and detailing the specific contributions you made to the project.

Scoring: based on rigor of analysis, relevance of findings, and clarity of presentation.

Grading: Total points 1000

Reader Response	100
Critical Project Review	300
Glossary	300
Critical Case Study (Norton)	300

This course is letter graded

980-1000 = A+ 930-970 = A 900-920 = A-880-890 = B+ 830-870 = B 800-820 = B-780-790 = C+ 730-770 = C 700-720 = C->700 = F

The following statements have been adopted by the English department:

- 1. In English Department courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of ideas conveyed. All student writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs.
- 2. Grading Policy: The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the official SJSU <u>Catalog</u> ("The Grading System"). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: $A = \underline{\text{excellent}}$; $B = \underline{\text{above average}}$; $C = \underline{\text{average}}$; $D = \underline{\text{below average}}$; $F = \underline{\text{failure}}$. Courses graded according to the A,B,C, No Credit system shall follow the same pattern, except that NC, for No Credit, shall replace D or F. In A,B,C, No Credit courses NC shall also substitute for W (Withdrawal) because neither NC nor W affects students' grade point average.

Classroom Protocol

Zoom: All class meetings will be held synchronously via zoom. Not ideal. But we'll try to make the best of it. In order to simulate a face-to-face, in-person class environment, I request you to join class meetings with your camera on and your face visible (unless you're having technical difficulties); feel free to use zoom virtual background setting.

Attendance & Participation: Regular attendance and active participation in class discussions are extremely important. You are responsible for all materials assigned, presented and discussed. You are encouraged to take notes in class, but you should have studied the materials before class begins. Poor attendance/participation will have negative effects on your final grade. Since most classes will be based on group discussions, presentations and workshops it is crucial for you to keep up with the readings and take an active as well as thoughtful role in all classroom activities. Your questions, comments, insights, and interpretations are valuable no matter how outlandish they may seem. So, do speak up!

Communicating: Good communication is key to class success, especially in an online environment. So please maintain regular communication with your classmates and with me. Seek timely advice and assistance on any difficulty you may be having with the materials, assignments, canvas, zoom or other aspects of the course. I am completely open to criticism and suggestions because the only way I can fix things is if I know what is wrong.

Submitting work: All work must be turned in exactly as and when indicated in the schedule. All readings are listed against dates they will be discussed in class; so, when you come to class you should have already read the materials and be prepared to discuss them

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. <u>Information on add/drops are available at http://info.sjsu.edu/webdbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-324.html</u>. <u>Information about late drop is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/</u>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.

University Policies

Academic integrity

Students should know that the University's <u>Academic Integrity Policy is availabe at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf</u>. Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University's integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The website for <u>Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html</u>.

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

Learning Assistance Resource Center

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center. It is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. The LARC website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are

well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. The Writing Center website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff//.

Peer Mentor Center

The Peer Mentor Center is located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall in the Academic Success Center. The Peer Mentor Center is staffed with Peer Mentors who excel in helping students manage university life, tackling problems that range from academic challenges to interpersonal struggles. On the road to graduation, Peer Mentors are navigators, offering "roadside assistance" to peers who feel a bit lost or simply need help mapping out the locations of campus resources. Peer Mentor services are free and available on a drop –in basis, no reservation required. The Peer Mentor Center website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor/.

Course Number / Title, Semester, Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to change with fair notice made available via canvas or mysjsu. All readings are in the Longman anthology, unless otherwise indicated.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	8/22	Overview of course & syllabus
		Introduction: What is decolonizing? Ending colonialism? Diversity and inclusion? Globalizing? Social justice? What are the obstacles and challenges to decolonizing?
		Reading:
		Tuck & Yang: Decolonizing is not a metaphor (Canvas)
		Discussion: Eurocentric Historiography Readings:
		➤ N. Ferguson: <u>Killer Apps</u> Of Western Civilization (Canvas)
		➤ Huntington: Clash of Civilizations? (Canvas)
		> Jones: The European Miracle (Intro to the Second Edition)
		► https://www-fulcrum-
		org.libaccess.sjlibrary.org/epubs/kh04dp86z?locale=en#/6/34
		[xhtml00000017]!/4/4/1:0
		➤ The Challenge of Eurocentrism (Canvas)
		Homework
		Reader Response 1 Due 8/27 by 11:59 pm
		Respond to Discussion Question before next class.
2	8/29	Discussion: Decolonizing History
		Readings:
		A.G. Frank: Introduction to ReOrient (Canvas)
		Subramanyam: Connected History (Canvas)
		MacNeil: Rise of the West Twenty-Five Years Later (Canvas)
		Douki & Minard: Global History, Connected Histories
		https://www.cairn-int.info/article-E_RHMC_545_0007
		global-history-connected-histories.htm# ➤ M. Ferguson: Why the West? (Canvas)
		 Pieterse: Many Renaissances, Many Modernities? (Canvas)
		7 Telefise. Wally Renaissances, Wally Woderlines. (Calivas)
		Workshop: Critical Project Review
		Additional resources on Renaissance History (optional)
		https://yaleglobal.yale.edu/role-arab-islamic-world-rise-west-
		implications-contemporary-trans-cultural-relations
		https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/islamic-science-and-making-

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		european-renaissance
		Homework: ➤ Reader Response 2 Due 9/10 by 11:59 pm Respond to Discussion Question before next class
3	9/12	Discussion: Decolonizing periodizing - Classical/Medieval/Modern
		Guest Speaker: Nancy Stork Topics Globalizing/Decolonizing the Classics How Gilgamesh became part of the western canon Discussion: Decolonizing the Classics - Ancient Greece Reading
		 The big Black Athena battle Martin Bernal's Black Athena vol 1 – Introduction & Conclusion https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/002544636? (Links to an external site.) Temporary Online Access on HathiTrust via SJSU library (can be sporadic so don't wait till the last minute!) Pollock: https://www.india-seminar.com/2015/671/671_sheldon_pollock.htm
		Homework ➤ Reader Response 3 Due 9/17 by 11:59 pm
4	9/19	Respond to Discussion Question before next class. Discussion: Decolonizing Theory 1 Readings
		Readings
		 Marxist Theory Notes on Postcolonial theory Said: "Introduction" to Orientalism Pratt: Imperial Eyes (Introduction/ch 1: criticism in the contact zone) CRT: Intro by Delgado & Stefancic; Twenty Years of CRT by Crenshaw Intersectionality Crenshaw
		Workshop: Drafting Glossary Entries

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		Homework: ➤ Reader Response 4 Due 9/24 by 11:59 pm Respond to Discussion Question before next class.
5	9/26	Discussion: Decolonizing Theory 2
		 Decoloniality: Latin American Global Social Theory https://globalsocialtheory.org/topics/decolonial ity/ https://www.e-ir.info/2017/01/21/interview-walter-mignolopart-2-key-concepts/ Dussel: Eurocentrism and Modernity (Canvas) Mignolo: Introduction to The Darker side of the Renaissance; The Geopolitics of Knowledge (Canvas) Bhambra: Postcolonial and Decolonial Reconstructions
		Homework ➤ Reader Response 5 Due 10/1 by 11:59 pm
6	10/3	Respond to Discussion Question before next class Workshop: Starting Critical Case Study of Norton Anthologies
7	10/10	Readings: > Krishnaswamy: World Literary Knowledges (Canvas) > World Literature Anthologies (Canvas) Homework > Glossary Entry #1 First Draft Due 10/8 by 11:59 pm Discussion: Decolonizing Brit Lit
/	10/10	
		Guest Speaker: Dr. Jose Villagrana Reading
		 Villagrana: John Donne's Colonial Innocence (Canvas)
		Readings
		 Eagleton: The Rise of English Viswanathan: Intro to Masks of Conquest (Canvas) Ngugi: on the abolition of the English Dept (Canvas)
		Homework: ➤ Reader Response 6 Due 10/15 by 11:59 pm Respond to Discussion Question before next class
8	10/17	Discussion: Global Shakespeare Guest Speaker: Dr. Adrienne Eastwood

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		 Discussion of Kurasawa's film Throne of Blood – an adaptation of Macbeth (so please read/reread Macbeth as preparation); free streaming on Kanopy using SJSU library card https://www.kanopy.com/product/throne-blood-0 Discussion of MIT Global Shakespeares project Loomba: Intro to Shakespeare, Race, and Colonialism (Canvas) Loomba: The Tempest (Canvas)
		Homework ➤ Reader Response 7 Due 10/22 by 11:59 pm Respond to Discussion Question before next class
9	10/24	Discussion: Decolonizing Romantic & Victorian studies
		Guest Speaker: Kathy Harris
		Readings
		 Raymond Schwab: Oriental Renaissance Chander: Intro to Brown Romantics Romantics: The Bigger 6 Collective: https://bigger6romantix.squarespace.com/ is an internationally recognized group of scholars who began their work on Twitter under #bigger6. Their goal is to decolonize the field of Romanticism. Here's a version of Bigger6 taught by Prof. Kathy Harris: Engl. 232, Bigger 6 (Spring 2019): https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1316224 Chatterjee et al.: Undisciplining the Victorian Classroom," https://undiscipliningvc.org/ is a project that aims to provide pedagogical materials for teaching beyond the established literary canon of the 19th-century (crowd-sourced and ongoing).
		Homework: ➤ Critical Project Review #1 Due: 10/29 by 11:59 pm
10	10/31	Discussion: Decolonizing Americas Lit
		Readings > Gilroy: Black Atlantic – Chapters 1 & 2 Temporary Access on HathiTrust via SJSU library: https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/002730400 ?
		➤ "Cheek to Cheek" (pp 1-5): Intro to <i>Do the Americas have a common literature?</i> (on HathiTrust via SJSU library)

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/002235179?
		➤ Allen: Why not Trans-Indigenous Studies?
		Workshop:
		Homework: ➤ Reader Response 8 Due 11/5 by 11:59 Respond to Discussion Question before next class ➤ Glossary Entry #2 First Draft Due 11/5 by 11:59 pm
11	11/7	Discussion: Decolonizing American History & Lit
		Guest Speaker: Dr. Allison Johnson
		Readings: https://www.latimes.com/books/la-et-jc-decolonize-syllabus-20181008-story.html The 1619 (vs 1620) project: https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/1619-america-slavery.html The Settler Colonial City Project https://settlercolonialcityproject.org/Decolonizing-U-S-Literature The Story of America: a tribalography (Canvas) Newman: Ethnic Scholar views American Literature (Canvas) Mehta: This Land is Our Land - Interview: https://www.c-span.org/video/?461865-1/this-land-land Homework: Reader Response 9 Due 4/12 by 11:59 pm Respond to Discussion Question before next class Critical Project Review #2 Due 11/14 by 11:59 pm
12	11/14	Discussion: Decolonizing here and now
		Reading: Morton: The Undercommons: ch 2 The University and the Undercommons Garba & Sorentino: Slavery is a Metaphor (response to Tuck & Yang) Moten: The University and the Undercommons (ch 2) Mayorga et al: Burn It Down
		Workshop: Norton Case Study

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		Homework:
		➤ Reader Response 10 Due 11/19 by 11:59 pm
		Respond to Discussion Question before next class
13	11/21	Round Table on Glossary Entries
		Homework
		➤ Glossary Entry #3 & Revised Entries 1 & 2 Due 11/21 by
		11:59 pm
14	11/28	Workshop: Finalizing Norton Case Study Presentations
		Homework:
		Group PPT Due 12/4 by 11:59 pm
15	12/5	Group PPT Presentations: Norton Case Study
		Homework : Individual Written Report Due 12/5 by 11:59 pm
16		