

BUTTE COLLEGE

COURSE OUTLINE

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION

ENGL 53H - Honors World Literature

3 Unit(s)

Prerequisite(s): ENGL 2 or concurrent enrollment and Admission to the Honors Program

Recommended Prep: NONE

Transfer Status: CSU/UC

51 hours Lecture

This course is an honors level survey of important 20th- and 21st-century works of literature by a diverse selection of authors representing different cultures. Short works of theory will provide the foundations for a postcolonial approach to contemporary world literature, but our primary focus will be on reading and analyzing complete novels from as many different contemporary cultures as possible to expose some of the ways that identity, power, law, ethics, economics, and familial structures have been constructed and reconstructed through conflicts within and between these cultures. Graded only.

II. OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- A. analyze and critically think about key concepts in postcolonial theory, including the concept of the native informant, the problem of hybrid identities and the function of imperialist driven education;
- B. apply key postcolonial concepts to analysis of full-length works of fiction from multiple cultural perspectives, and use specific examples from the novels to question and refine postcolonial theories;
- C. demonstrate critical thinking skills in seminar discussions;
- D. demonstrate advanced writing skills and critical, creative thinking in composing a minimum of 5000 words in analytical papers and reading responses;
- E. generate creative, original responses to course material.

III. COURSE CONTENT

A. Unit Titles/Suggested Time Schedule

Lecture	
<u>Topics</u>	<u>Hours</u>
1. Postcolonial Africa	8.00
A. Tribal histories and culture	
B. Colonial histories and their influence on African cultures	
C. Post-colonial identities: <i>negritude</i> and its opponents	
D. The legacies of imperialism in contemporary Africa, the diversification of culture and reactionary responses	
2. Revolutionary China	8.00
A. The Qing dynasty and the legacy of Confucianism	
B. The Nationalist Revolution and the influence of the West	
C. The Communist Revolution, the People's Republic, the Great Leap Forward, the Cultural Revolution and their legacies	
D. Contemporary China and the diversification of culture and reactionary responses	

3. Imperialist Japan	6.00
A. The Meiji push to modernize Japan and the meeting of ancient Japanese traditions and philosophies with the "modern" West	
B. Sino Japanese Wars, World War II and the bombing of Hiroshima	
C. Post-war Japan and the horror and fascination with pre-Meiji traditions	
D. Contemporary Japan and the diversification of culture and reactionary responses	
4. Postcolonial India	6.00
A. Ancient civilizations, oral traditions and myths	
B. British imperialism and the meeting of diverse ancient Indian traditions and philosophies with western ones	
C. Post-colonial identities and conflicts, tensions between Hindus and Muslims, the Partition of Pakistan, the Kashmir conflicts, the assassination of Indira Gandhi and the Sikh massacres	
D. Contemporary India and the diversification of cultures and reactionary responses	
5. The Middle East	6.00
A. Ancient Ottoman and Persian histories	
B. World War I battle grounds and alliances, drawing of borders, and the legacies of those borders in the conflicts between Kurds, Christians, Sunni and Shi'a	
C. The British Mandate and the history of the Israel/Palestine conflict	
D. The Contemporary Middle East, the diversification of cultures and reactionary responses	
6. South/Central America	6.00
A. The Spanish Conquest and the meeting of indigenous traditions and philosophies with western traditions and philosophies	
B. Cultural responses to Spanish Civil War and the World Wars	
C. Post-colonial identities, communist revolutions and reactionary responses	
7. American and European Hegemonies and Their Legacies	8.00
A. Ancient histories, myths and oral traditions	
B. Self-conscious definitions of the modern and how it relates to Imperialism	
C. Post-colonial identities of the conquerors or would-be conquerors: decadence, communism, fascism and capitalism	
D. Contemporary U.S. and European diversity and reactionary responses	
8. Defining more and less shared contemporary global problems and potential solutions	3.00
Total Hours	51.00

IV. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

- A. Lecture
- B. Group Discussions
- C. Guest Speakers
- D. Field Trips
- E. Homework: Students are required to complete two hours of outside-of-class homework for each hour of lecture
- F. Discussion
- G. Reading Assignments
- H. Multimedia Presentations

V. METHODS OF EVALUATION

- A. Research Projects
- B. Papers
- C. Oral Presentation
- D. Homework
- E. Journal
- F. Class participation
- G. Written Assignments
- H. Essays and research papers
- I. Class Discussion

VI. EXAMPLES OF ASSIGNMENTS

A. Reading Assignments

1. Please read Roy's **The God of Small Things** and consider Spivak's claims about how postcolonial feminism is plagued by the concept of "white men saving brown women from brown men." Which details in Roy's novel seem to support Spivak's claims, and which details add yet more complications to the problem of postcolonial feminism? What are these complications?
2. Please read Achebe's **Things Fall Apart** and think about Nwoye as a native informant and the particular conditions that lead him to this path. How much are his and Okonkwo's fates a result of British imperialism? Or does British Imperialism simply play the role of "catalyst" as Soyinka claimed?

B. Writing Assignments

1. Choose two specific passages from the work in question, analyze the significance of these passages and connect the analysis of the details to the larger themes of the work that you've identified so far.
2. Analyze the character of Caliban in Césaire's **A Tempest** as an example of a subaltern, and argue whether (and to what extent) his attempts to regain a voice are successful and how his example can help us better understand contemporary individual attempts to regain a voice for subaltern groups, usually through various forms of violence, and the effects of these attempts on their cultures and on others.

C. Out-of-Class Assignments

1. Collaborate with a small group of your classmates on a context presentation for one of the unit titles that will synthesize research from a variety of sources including written texts, photographs, audio recordings and/or short films synthesized into a slide presentation that each group member will present orally to the class.
2. Please visit the Asian Art museum in San Francisco with the CCC and/or attend at least one local function or exhibit devoted to exploring multicultural identities and issues, and write a one to two page explanation of how the exhibit or event reflected and/or challenged some of the postcolonial concepts we've been exploring this semester.

VII. RECOMMENDED MATERIALS OF INSTRUCTION

Textbooks:

- A. Césaire, Aimé. *A Tempest*. TCG Translations, 2002.
- B. Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart*. Anchor Books, 1994.
- C. Roy, Arundhati. *The God of Small Things*. Random House, 2008.
- D. Lu Xun. *Diary of a Madman and Other Stories*. University of Hawaii Press, 1990.

Materials Other Than Textbooks:

- A. Films such as *Farewell My Concubine*, *Hotel Rwanda*, *Khaki Kushi Kabi Gham*

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