



INTRODUCTION

Introduction to Literature
August 1, 2025
IIIT Hyderabad

Agenda



Go over the syllabus in
some detail



Start thinking and talking
about literature



What is this course about?

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- What do we mean by literature in this course?
- Reading and interpreting literary texts
- In the process, major concepts, methods, and theories

What is this course about?

- Three questions: what is literature, and why and how do we study it?
- Themes/Modules/Units:
 - Defining Literature and Its Place in the World;
 - The “Literariness” of Literature; Representation and Reality;
 - Major Genres of Literature;
 - Major Concepts, Methods, and Theories of Literature; and
 - Literature in the Digital Age

- On successful completion of the course, students will have
 - an appreciation of the perspective of a literary scholar;
 - foundational skills in literary concepts and methods that are necessary to critically interpret, analyze, and appreciate literature;
 - a basic foundation to conduct computational research on creative writing;
 - the ability to differentiate between literature and other forms of cultural production;
 - improved their ability to think and communicate carefully about the literary merit of creative texts beyond casual impressions or value judgements;
 - acquiring – in the process – fundamental skills in oral and written communication
 - learnt new things that will challenge them.

Expected Outcomes

Type of Evaluation	Weightage (in %)
Quizzes	20% (2 x 10%)
In-Class Writing Assignments	20% (2 x 10%) (Sep 9, Oct 14)
Mid-Semester Exam	25%
End-Semester Exam	35%

Grading Plan

Remarks

- This is a literature course and will involve a significant amount of reading. Students should read and prepare continuously throughout the course in advance of the class in which texts will be discussed.
- Please bring hard copies of assigned texts to the class in which they will be discussed.
- Please bring paper and pen to write notes. No devices allowed in class.
- The course will entail active participation of students in class discussions.
- Texts will be made available to students in English translation (original language texts can also be shared with students wherever available).

Reference Books

(arranged according to the order of use in class lectures)

- Woolf, Virginia. "How Should One Read a Book" (1925)
- Eagleton, Terry. *How to Read Literature* (2013)
- Abrams, M.H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (1957)
- Barnet, Sylvan, William Burto, and William E. Cain, eds. *An Introduction to Literature: Fiction, Poetry, and Drama* (1961)
- Moretti, Franco. *Distant Reading* (2013)

- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities* (1983)
- Barry, Peter. *Beginning Theory* (1995)
- Barth, John. "It's a Short Story" (1993)
- Bhabha, Homi. "Introduction: Narrating the Nation." *Nation and Narration* (1990)
- Farner, Geir. *Literary Fiction: The Ways We Read Narrative Literature* (2014)
- Habib, M.A.R. *A History of Literary Criticism and Theory* (2005)
- Hutcheon, Linda. *Historiographical Metafiction* (1989)
- Klages, Mary. *Literary Theory: A Guide for the Perplexed* (2006)
- Limbale, Sharankumar. *Towards an Aesthetic of Dalit Literature* (2004)
- Lockers, Matthew J. *Macroanalysis: Digital Methods and Literary History* (2013)
- Mufti, Aamir R. "A Greater Story Writer than God: Genre, Gender and Minority in Late Colonial India" (2002)
- Mukherjee, Meenakshi. "Indian Novels in Translation" (1972)
- Natarajan, Nalini. *Handbook of Twentieth Century Literatures of India* (1996)
- Nussbaum, Martha. *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities* (2010)
- Paniker, K. Ayyappa. *Indian Narratology* (2003)

Further Reading

(arranged alphabetically)