

English 345: Contemporary World Literature

Special Topic: Island Literature

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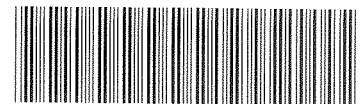
Course Description: In this course, we will be reading works from island writers, starting with Homer, but then rapidly moving into 20th century literature from the Caribbean, the Pacific islands, and other island texts.

Course Goals: Students will become familiar with the range of island texts; explore the role of islands in literature as utopian spaces, prisons, and experimental laboratories, as well as exploring the political, social and cultural features of contemporary island communities around the globe. Through these texts, students will gain a broad experience of writers in English from a variety of cultural contexts.

Course Requirements:

- 1) Reading: you will need to carefully prepare the readings for each class; in addition, there may be some secondary readings in background materials and critical theory.
- 2) Two 3-5 page papers
- 3) a midterm and a final
- 4) Occasional short (1-2 page) response papers and other in-class assignments—these will be part of your class participation grade.
- 5) quizzes

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Policies:

Attendance: You should be present for every class and prepared to participate. If you are absent, you are responsible for informing yourself about any missed assignments or announcements, and for material covered during that class. If you are present but unprepared, I will ask you to leave and count that class as an absence. All absences should be for good reason; however, you may miss two classes without explanation. I will lower your grade for every unexcused absence after these two. Excessive absences (more than five) may be cause for dropping you from the class. **Tardiness:** I expect you to be on time for every class. If you come to class after we have started, it will count as an absence.

Classroom Demeanor: No eating, sleeping or private conversations. I expect you to show respect to me and to your fellow students. Students who are disruptive will be asked to leave.

Class Participation: This will count for 15% of your grade. For full credit, you will need to attend every class ready to participate. This means not just responding when called on, but coming to class with questions from the reading and topics for discussion, responding to other students' comments on the text, and taking active responsibility for the liveliness and pertinence of discussion.

Plagiarism: In this course, as in all other courses, you are bound by the Honor Code. Therefore, the work you submit for this class must be your own. If you use any outside sources in your writing for this course, you must acknowledge them by using the MLA system of documentation, which is presented in detail in *The Bedford Handbook*. All Websites or other Internet sources must be acknowledged and documented. If you have any questions regarding the Honor Code as it applies to this course, please consult me or pages 38-40 of the Oxford College catalog.

Grade breakdown:

Short papers	30%
Midterm	20%
Class Participation	15%
Quizzes	10%
Final Exam	25%

All grades for this course will be recorded using the plus/minus scale described on page 32 of the Oxford College catalog.

Required Texts:

Cliff, Michelle No Telephone to Heaven
Grace, Patricia Potiki

Hau'ofa , Epeli. Tales of the Tikongs
Kincaid, Jamaica. A Small Place
Naipaul, V.S. Miguel Street
Rhys, Jean. Wide Sargasso Sea.

Weekly Outline of Reading:

January 17	Introduction and Objectives
Jan 22	<u>Odyssey</u> Books V and X
Jan 24	Derek Walcott poems (Trinidad)
Jan 29-Feb 7	<u>Miguel Street</u> (Trinidad)
Feb12	<u>A Small Place</u> (Antigua)
Feb14-26	<u>No Telephone to Heaven</u> (Jamaica)
Feb 28	Edwidge Danticat stories (Haiti) First essay due.
March 5-7	<u>Wide Sargasso Sea</u> (Jamaica)
March 9-17	Spring Recess
March 19	Midterm
March 21-28	Patricia Grace <u>Potiki</u> (New Zealand)
April 2-4	Epeli Hau'ofa <u>Tales of the Tikongs</u> (Tonga)
April 9-12	Fantasy Islands
April 16-18	Prison Islands
April 23-25	Georgia Sea Islands
April 25	Second paper due
April 30	Review