

English 345: Contemporary World Literature  
Special Topic: African Literature  
Dr. Christine Loflin  
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Office Hours: MW 2-4 and by appointment

**Course Description:** In this course, we will be surveying the field of African literature, from West Africa to South Africa, and from 1958 to the present. We will begin by exploring the African oral tradition, reading folktales from Kenya and West Africa. We will then read West African fiction, poetry and drama. A major unit of the course will focus on South African literature. The final segment of the course will include readings from contemporary works, including works from North Africa.

**Course Goals:** Students will become familiar with a range of styles of African literature, from drama to the novel to poetry. Students will also become skilled at discussing the style, form and context of African literature, considering its political and cultural contexts. In their papers and exams, students will demonstrate their skills in literary analysis and in perceptive reading of culturally diverse texts.

**Course Requirements:**

- 1) Reading: you will be asked to read approximately 100-150 pages a week; in addition, there may be some secondary readings in background materials and critical theory.
  - 2) Two 3-5 page papers
  - 3) One formal research paper
- Occasional short (1-2 page) response papers.  
A take home midterm  
6) final exam

**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.

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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%
Research Paper	20%
Midterm	15%
Class Participation	15%
Final Exam	20%

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

Required Texts:

Chinua Achebe Things Fall Apart  
Wole Soyinka Death and the King's Horseman  
Mariama Ba So Long a Letter  
Cheikh Hamidou Kane Ambiguous Adventure  
Athol Fugard A Lesson From Aloes  
Alex La Guma A Walk In The Night  
J.M. Coetzee Waiting for the Barbarians

Weekly Outline of Reading:

January 17	Introduction and Objectives
Jan 19	Folktales
Jan 22	<u>Sundiata</u> (excerpt)
Jan 24-26	<u>Things Fall Apart</u>
Jan 29-Feb 2	<u>Things Fall Apart</u>
February 5-9	<u>Death and the King's Horseman</u>

Feb12-16	<u>Ambiguous Adventure</u>
Feb19-23	<u>Ambiguous Adventure</u>
February 26-Mar 2	<u>So Long a Letter</u>
March 5-9	<u>So Long a Letter /film</u>
March 12-16	Spring Recess
March 19-23	South Africa: <u>A Walk In the Night</u>
March 26-30	<u>A Walk In the Night/A Lesson From Aloes</u>
April 2-6	<u>Waiting For the Barbarians</u>
April 9-13	<u>Waiting For the Barbarians/</u> Short Fiction from South Africa
April 16-20	Contemporary Literature
April 23-27	North African Literature
April 30 Review	