

English 345: Contemporary World Literature  
Special Topic: South African Literature

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Course Description: In this course, we will be reading South African literature from a variety of writers. We will be studying how writers use literature to reveal conditions, seek social change, and promote ethical and cultural values. We will also be considering gender, identity and narration: how do women tell their stories? How do characters establish their identity in a society of dramatic change?

Course Requirements:

- 1) Reading: You will be expected to read assignments by the day they are due; some readings will be posted online.
- 2) You will be expected to write short reading responses and two 3-5 page papers
- 3) You will also be expected to participate frequently and thoughtfully in our online discussion board, Blackboard.
- 6) occasional quizzes, a midterm and a final exam.

Course Goals:

I expect by the end of the course that you will

- a) be familiar with major authors in South African literature and be able to discuss critically their use of narrative strategies, gender roles and social issues in their works.
- b) have a familiarity with South African history, geography and culture
- c) have a good understanding of what South African students value in South African literature, and can articulate shared values and differences.
- d) become comfortable using Blackboard technology to discuss issues with people you have never met. You will also learn how to use a discussion board ethically and responsibly to communicate internationally.
- e) be able to demonstrate your ability in literary analysis in class and in your written work.

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. 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.

Class Participation: This will count for 20% 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. Your postings to the Blackboard website and participation in the online discussions there will be a part of your class participation grade.

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 94-97 of the Oxford College catalog.

Grade breakdown:

Reading responses:	10%
Short papers	30%
Midterm	15%
Class Participation	20%
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:

Zakes Mda Heart of Redness  
Serote To Every Birth Its Blood  
Head Maru  
Gordimer July's People  
Ngcobo And They Didn't Die  
Wicomb You Can't Get Lost In Cape Town  
Wicomb David's Story

In addition to these texts, we will be reading some history, literary theory, nonfiction, short stories, poems and other materials, generally from the 1970s-1990s.