

English 345 Tentative Syllabus
Spring 2007
Dr. Loflin
Office : Humanities 205

Course objectives: To learn to read post-apartheid South African literature within its social, political and literary contexts. We will be reading poetry and fiction from contemporary writers in South Africa, and we will be analyzing their thematic and formal creative responses to life in post-apartheid South Africa, including issues such as AIDs, the Truth and Reconciliation commission, racial reconciliation, and post-apartheid social and economic life. I am hoping to connect this class through a shared Blackboard site with Dr. Sam Radithlalo's course on South African literature at the University of Cape Town.

Course Goals:

I expect by the end of the course that you will

- a) be familiar with major themes, issues and formal strategies in contemporary South African literature
- b) have a familiarity with recent South African history and post-apartheid politics, economics 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.

Requirements:

- 1. Class attendance
- 2. Participation on the Blackboard conference
- 3. 4 short response papers
- 4. A takehome midterm
- 5. A research paper, 7-10 pages
- 6. A final exam

Texts:

Achmat Dangor Bitter Fruit
Zakes Mda Ways of Dying
Zakes Mda Heart of Redness
Phaswane Mpe Welcome to Our Hillbrow
Ivan Vladislavic The Restless Supermarket*

Lebogang Mashile The Ribbon of Rhythm*
Lesego Rampolokeng Talking Rain*

*not in bookstore yet

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. . Because excessive absences are disruptive to the entire class, once you have missed three classes you will lose a third of a grade for every unexcused absence after that point.

Class Participation: This will count for 10% 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 96-99 of the Oxford College catalog.

Tentative schedule:

January 17th South African history

January 19th Antjie Krog, Country of My Skull excerpts (handout)

January 22-February 5 Achmat Dangor Bitter Fruit

January 25th first short response due

February 7 AIDs in South Africa (handouts)

February 9-16 Phaswane Mpe Welcome to Our Hillbrow

February 16 second response paper due

February 19-26 Zakes Mda, Ways of Dying

February 28-Mar 7 In The Ribbon of Rhythm (selections) and criticism

Mar 9 Other poetry TBA

Mar 5 takehome exam given out; due Mar 19th.

Mar 12-16 Spring Break

Mar 19 Zakes Mda Heart of Redness

Mar 21-30 Heart of Redness

April 2-6 J.M. Coetzee Disgrace

April 9-13 Disgrace

April 16-20 Nadine Gordimer (novel TBA)

April 23-27 Gordimer

April 30 Review