

Course Title: The Pleasure of Reading: Humor and Satire (幽默與諷刺文學)

Instructor: Shuyu Lee

Course TA:

Credit Hours: 3

Classroom Language: English

Course Description:

Satire is a socially conscious literary practice that exposes public issues or human moral failings in order to inspire reform, and laughter tends to be the most effective vehicle for the satirical enterprise. In its power to entertain while vocalizing social critique lies satire's enduring appeal in the 21st century. However, the polysemy and multivalence essential to satire means that a high level of linguistic sensibility on the part of the audience is necessary for satires to be effective. Moreover, satire's socially critical purpose demands audience familiarity with the socio-political contexts of satirical texts. These factors make the appreciation of English-language satires doubly difficult in English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) environments.

Paying close attention to linguistic and cultural contexts, this course aims to bring EFL readers the pleasure of reading satire, a pleasure derived not only from understanding the humor involved but, most importantly, from cultivating social consciousness.

This course is conducted mainly through lectures, with a strong emphasis on active student participation.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will become improve their understanding of literary techniques.

Students will develop the ability to analyze and interpret contemporary socially critical literature.

Students will be able to learn to engage in scholarly discussions with their peers.

Core Capabilities (大學部學生核心能力):

1. The ability to communicate and express oneself in English (溝通表達與語文能力) 10%
2. The ability to analyze classic canons of literature (文學經典的分析與詮釋) 10%
3. The ability to look for problems and conduct research (問題發掘與研究能力) 20%
4. The ability to think creatively (創作與創新能力) 30%
5. The ability to examine issues through global and multicultural perspectives (全球化與國際視野及多元文化認知能力) 30%

Required Texts:

David Sedaris: “Adult Figures Charging Toward a Concrete Toadstool” (2008)

“Keeping Up” (2008)

Donald Barthelme: “The School” (1974)

“Rebecca” (1975)

Flannery O’Connor: “Everything That Rises Must Converge” (1961)

Dave Eggers: excerpts from *The Every* (2021)

George Saunders: “My Amendment” (2006)

“Liberation Day” (2022)

Riley Stearns (director): *The Art of Self-Defense* (2019)

Assessment:

Attendance	5%
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Active Participation:	15%
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- Volunteering to raise and answer questions
- Volunteering to read texts
- Other behaviors that **demonstrate** attention and engagement in class

In-Class Group Discussions	15%
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Term Project Presentation	20%
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Mid-Term Exam	20%
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Final Exam	25%
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Class Policies:**1. Attendance**

1-A: Regular attendance is expected. Exceptions:

- ♦ Sick Leave: documentary evidence, such as a doctor’s note or a similar certificate from a healthcare professional, is required to prove the legitimacy of the leave request.
- ♦ Compassionate Leave (bereavement leave): documentary evidence is required to prove the legitimacy of the leave request.
- ♦ Public Duties Leave: documentary evidence is required to prove the legitimacy of the leave request.
- ♦ Personal Leave: documentary evidence is required to prove the legitimacy of the leave request.

☆NOTE: Emails containing no documentary evidence proving the legitimacy of the leave request have no function and therefore will be ignored.

1-B: Attendance may be taken anytime during the class meeting. Students found absent at roll

call will be marked absent for the day.

1-C: Three unexcused absences will incur a half letter grade reduction in semester grade.

That means your semester grade will go, for example, from an original A to A-. Four unexcused absences will lead to a full letter grade reduction for the entire semester, which means your semester grade will turn, for example, from an original B into C.

2. Examinations

2-A: Failure to be present for an exam will result in receiving zero points for the exam.

2-B: Make-up exams are given only in case of absence due to force majeure events.

◆ **DEFINITION** of a force majeure event: the event must be unforeseeable, external, and irresistible.

◆ **EXAMPLES** of force majeure events: earthquake disasters, traffic accidents, emergency hospitalization, armed conflicts (war), and civil unrest (riots).

3. AI Policies

- Generative AI tools are prohibited in in-class exams.
- Generative AI tools are permitted in the term project on the condition of full disclosure.

4. Other Policies

- Course materials (including the syllabus, handouts, and remote class images, audios, and videos) should not be sold to or shared with anyone outside of the class.
- How to do well in this course? Take an active role in class and have a positive attitude to the world.

Schedule

Note: Schedule is subject to **change** according to lesson progress.

Week 1	Sept. 3	Overview
Week 2	Sept. 10	Humor: An Introduction Sedaris: “Keeping Up”
Week 3	Sept. 17	Holiday. No class.
Week 4	Sept. 24	Sedaris: “Adult Figures Charging Toward a Concrete Toadstool”
Week 5	Oct. 1	Barthelme: “The School”
Week 6	Oct. 8	Barthelme: “Rebecca”
Week 7	Oct. 15	Mid-term Exam
Week 8	Oct. 22	Screening of <i>The Art of Self-Defense</i>
Week 9	Oct. 29	Satire: An Introduction
Week 10	Nov. 5	Saunders: “My Amendment”

Week 11	Nov. 12	O'Connor: "Everything That Rises Must Converge"
Week 12	Nov. 19	Eggers: An excerpt from <i>The Every</i>
Week 13	Nov. 26	Term Project Presentation
Week 14	Dec. 3	Saunders: "Liberation Day"
Week 15	Dec. 10	Saunders: "Liberation Day"
Week 16	Dec. 17	Final Exam