



AUF

*The American  
University of Florence***SYLLABUS**Rev. 7  
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**SAS – SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES**

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**SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE  
COURSE TITLE: LITERATURE OF MIGRATION  
COURSE CODE: LACLPC335  
3 semester credits****1. DESCRIPTION**

This course explores the theme of migration in contemporary postcolonial literature. The focus will be on both fictional and non-fictional modes of transcribing the experience of dislocation. A special emphasis will be placed on the role played by literary tradition in the writer's shaping of personal identity; the first lessons will provide students with the basic theoretical tools to help them discuss a literary text (especially autobiographical writings). Experimentation of form as well as significant innovations in content will be covered with in detail. Students will also be introduced to the basic historical events and social transformations of such countries as India, Pakistan, South Africa, and Algeria in order to better understand past and contemporary interactions between the ex-colonies of ex-colonial powers such as Britain and France. Readings will include works by J.M. Coetzee, Amara Lakhous, Hanif Kureishi, Jhumpa Lahiri, Azouz Begag, Salman Rushdie, and Edward W. Said.

**2. OBJECTIVES**

Students will be provided with the basic theoretical tools to help them discuss a literary text. They will become familiar with key notions of narrative theory and post-colonial studies. They will be able to determine whether a text is traditional or innovative, and how the immigrant experience proves to be fertile ground for literary experimentation. Students will be encouraged to form their own critical opinion on the works selected.

**3. REQUIREMENTS**

There are no prerequisites for this course

**4. METHOD**

This course consists of lectures, class discussions, and projects. Mediums for instruction used will include, but are not limited to, interactive and hands-on activities which challenge thought processes, academic texts and studies, videos, slides, guided problem solving, and experiential and/or field learning activities where applicable.

**5. TEXTBOOK – FURTHER READINGS – RESOURCES**

TEXTBOOK (Copy available at the university library):

The following books are available at: "Paperback Exchange Bookstore", Via delle  
Oche 4/r

J.M. Coetzee, Youth

Jhumpa Lahiri, Interpreter of Maladies

Amara Lakhous, Clash of Civilizations Over an Elevator in Piazza Vittorio

Hanif Kureishi, The Buddha of Suburbia

Selected chapters (or stories) from the following texts will be available as PDF documents on the Course website:

- Azouz Begag, Ethnicity & Equality
- Jhumpa Lahiri, In Other Words
- Salman Rushdie, East, West

The textbook is mandatory for successful completion of the course.

Where applicable, additional materials, handouts and/or notes will be provided by the instructor.

### **FURTHER READINGS**

Bill Ashcroft, Post-Colonial Transformation, London, Routledge, 2001

Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, Helen Tiffin, Post-Colonial Studies - The Key Concepts, London, Routledge, 2000

Seymour Chatman, Story and discourse: narrative structure in fiction and film, Ithaca, London, 1980

P.J. Eakin, How Our Lives Become Stories - Making Selves, London, Cornell University Press, 1999

Ashcroft, G. Griffiths, H. Tiffin, The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Postcolonial Literature, London and New York, Routledge, 1995

Caroline Brettell & James Frank Hollifield eds., Migration Theory: Talking across the Disciplines, NU, 2000

Alastair Fowler, Kinds of Literature - An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1982

S. Lavie, T. Swedenburg, Displacement, Diaspora, and Geographies of Identity, Durham, London, Duke University Press, 1996

Edward W. Said, Culture and Imperialism, NY, 1994

Edward Said, Orientalism, Penguin, 2003

Justin D. Edwards, Postcolonial Literature (A Readers' Guide to Essential Criticism), Palgrave Macmillan, 2008

### **LIBRARIES IN FLORENCE**

Please consult the posted schedules for official opening times of the university library. Also note that the library is for consultation only and it is not possible to borrow materials. The library is equipped with a scanner and internet access so that you may save or email a digital copy of the pages needed.

Students may also utilize additional libraries and research centers within the local community:

BIBLIOTECA PALAGIO DI PARTE GUELFA

Located in Piazzetta di Parte Guelfa between Piazza della Repubblica and Ponte Vecchio. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

[http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca\\_palagio\\_di\\_parte\\_guelfa/](http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca_palagio_di_parte_guelfa/)

BIBLIOTECA DELLE OBLATE

Located in via dell'Oriuolo 26. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:  
[www.bibliotecadelleoblate.it](http://www.bibliotecadelleoblate.it)

THE HAROLD ACTON LIBRARY AT THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FLORENCE  
Located in Lungarno Guicciardini 9. Please consult the library website for hours of operation. This library requires a fee-based student membership. For information: [www.britishinstitute.it/en](http://www.britishinstitute.it/en)

## **6. FIELD LEARNING**

Please consult your Official Registration for any mandatory field learning dates. Field Learning Activities cited in Official Registrations are an integral part of the course and also include an assignment that counts towards your final grade, details will be provided on the first day of class.

## **7. COURSE MATERIALS**

No additional course materials are necessary.

## **8. COURSE FEES**

Course fees cover course-related field learning activities, visits, and support the instructor's teaching methodologies. Book costs are not included in the course fee. The exact amount will be communicated by the instructor on the first day of class.

## **9. EVALUATION – GRADING SYSTEM**

10% Attendance  
10% Home assignments and class participation  
15% Oral presentation  
15% Final Paper  
25% Midterm Exam  
25% Final Exam

A = 93-100 %, A- = 90-92%, B+= 87-89%, B = 83-86%, B-=80-82%, C+ = 77-79%, C=73-76%, C- =70-72%, D = 60-69%, F= 0-59%, W = Official Withdrawal, W/F = Failure to withdraw by the designated date.

## **10. ATTENDANCE – PARTICIPATION**

Academic integrity and mutual respect between instructor and student are central to the academic policy and reflected in the attendance regulations. Student presence is mandatory and counts toward the final grade.

**Absences** are based on academic hours: 1 absence equals 3 lecture hours.

Two absences: 6 lecture hours, attendance and participation grade will be impacted.

Three absences: 9 lecture hours, the final grade may be lowered by one letter grade.

Four absences: 12 lecture hours, constitutes automatic failure of the course regardless of when absences are incurred.

Please note:

- The above hours refer to lecture hours. Please note that the contact / credit hour policy in the academic catalog includes additional distribution ratios according to delivery category. Ex: 1 absence equals 6 FL/SL/Lab hours or 9 EL hours.

- Hours may be distributed in different formats according to the academic course schedules.

## **LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY DEPARTURE**

Arriving late or departing early from class is not acceptable. Two late arrivals or early departures or a combination will result in an unexcused absence. Travel is not an exceptional circumstance.

TRAVEL (OR DELAYS DUE TO TRAVEL) IS NEVER AN EXCUSE FOR ABSENCE FROM CLASS.

It is the student's responsibility to know how many absences are incurred. If in doubt, speak with your instructor!

**Participation:** Satisfactory participation will be the result of contributing to class discussions by putting forth insightful and constructive questions, comments and observations. Overall effort, cooperation during group work, proper care of work space and tools, responsible behavior, and completion of assignments will be assessed. All of the above criteria also apply to Field Learning and site visits.

## **11. EXAMS – PAPERS – PROJECTS**

### **Attendance and participation**

Satisfactory participation will be the result of contributing to class discussions by putting forth insightful and constructive questions, comments and observations. Overall effort, cooperation during group work and in-class activities, responsible behavior, and completion of assignments will be assessed.

### **Home Assignments**

Home assignments aim at documenting your knowledge and understanding on specific aspects relating to the course topic. Students will be asked to: answer a list of questions or write their personal reflections about the works that will be discussed during the semester.

Students are expected to come to class with their answers and reflections to be shared with the other students during class discussion.

### **Paper**

The instructor will provide you with specific information concerning the paper topic and paper length. Make sure your paper conforms to academic standards in terms of style and register. Your paper must include quotations and/or citations from scholarly books, journals, or articles. Your paper must be properly referenced and must include a bibliography.

### **Presentation**

The instructor will provide you with specific information concerning the presentation topic. Please, read the following information carefully:

#### **Guidelines**

You must support your presentation with carefully selected examples that illustrate, support, and extend your analysis. Make sure your presentation conforms to academic standards in terms of style and register. Your presentation must include citations from scholarly books, journals, and articles.

Additional time provided for questions and answers (NB questions will be asked by both the instructor AND the participants)

Visual aid: PowerPoint slides

#### **What you need to turn in after your presentation**

- The PowerPoint Presentation

- Any notes used at the time of delivering the presentation (notes must be in the form of bullet points and include key words and brief sentences, DO NOT read out entire paragraphs or your presentation will be marked down)

### Evaluation

Your presentation will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- Presentation skills (delivery speed, eye contact, clarity, audibility, tone);
- Content (sets out relevant issues, explains key terms, confident with material, aids understanding);
- Structure (logical, easy to follow, provides headings, each section relates to overall purpose);
- Use of visual aids (uses handout or other visual aids, relevant to content);
- Response to questions (willing to answer questions, actively seeking questions).

### Exams

The Mid-term exam will take place on Lesson 7 whilst the Final Exam will take place on week 15. Note, the date and time of the exams cannot be changed for any reason, so please organize your personal activities accordingly.

Format (for both exams): short definitions and open questions relating to the authors, content and style of the texts discussed in class.

## **12. LESSONS**

Lesson 1	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Course overview, content, structure, assessment and expectations. Basic elements of narrative theory. History of colonialism, key historical information. Overview of postcolonial theory and criticism, definitions and debates. Focus on key thinkers, namely: Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak and Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin.
Critical Reading	Postcolonial Literature (A Readers' Guide to Essential Criticism), Introduction and Chapter 1, "Postcoloniality"

Lesson 2	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Introduction to Jhumpa Lahiri. Key events in the history of India and Pakistan. Discussion of selected short stories from Interpreter of Maladies (first part)
Homework/ Assignments	The instructor will assign homework relevant to this class.
Critical Reading	Postcolonial Literature, Chapter 2, "Difference"

Lesson 3	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Discussion of selected short stories from Interpreter of Maladies (second part)
Homework/ Assignments	The instructor will assign homework relevant to this class.
Critical Reading	Postcolonial Literature, Chapter 3, "Language"

Lesson 4	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Discussion of selected chapters from In Other Words (first part)
Homework/ Assignments	The instructor will assign homework relevant to this class.
Critical Reading	Postcolonial Literature, Chapter 4, "Orality"

Lesson 5	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Discussion of selected chapters from In Other Words (second part)
Homework/ Assignments	The instructor will assign homework relevant to this class.

Critical Reading	Postcolonial Literature, Chapter 5, "Rewriting"
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Lesson 6	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Introduction to J.M. Coetzee. Key events in the history of South Africa. Discussion of the novel Youth
Homework/ Assignments	The instructor will assign homework relevant to this class.
Critical Reading	Postcolonial Literature, Chapter 6, "Violence"

Lesson 7	
	Midterm Exam

Lesson 8	
	Academic break

Lesson 9	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Introduction to Hanif Kureishi. Key concepts of Eastern religions and philosophies. Discussion of the novel The Buddha of Suburbia (first part)
Homework/ Assignments	The instructor will assign homework relevant to this class.
Critical Reading	Postcolonial Literature, Chapter 7, "Travel"

Lesson 10	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Discussion of the novel The Buddha of Suburbia (second part) Screening of some parts of the BBC TV serial The Buddha of Suburbia
Homework/ Assignments	The instructor will assign homework relevant to this class.
Critical Reading	1. Postcolonial Literature, Chapter 8, "Maps"

Lesson 11	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Introduction to Azouz Begag. Key events in the history of Algeria. Discussion of selected chapters from Ethnicity and Equality
Homework/ Assignments	The instructor will assign homework relevant to this class.
Critical Reading	Postcolonial Literature, Chapter 9, "Gender"

Lesson 12	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Introduction to Amara Lakhous and immigration in Italy. Discussion of the novel Clash of Civilizations Over an Elevator in Piazza Vittorio
Homework/ Assignments	The instructor will assign homework relevant to this class.
Critical Reading	Postcolonial Literature, Chapter 10, "Queer"

Lesson 13	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Screening and discussion of the movie "Terraferma" (2011) by Italian director Emanuele Crialese
Homework/ Assignments	The instructor will assign homework relevant to this class.
Critical Reading	Postcolonial Literature, Chapter 12, "Memory"

Lesson 14	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Introduction to Salman Rushdie. Discussion of selected short stories from East, West
Homework/ Assignments	The instructor will assign homework relevant to this class.



Critical Reading	Postcolonial Literature, Chapter 14, "Diaspora"
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Lesson 15	
Meet	In class
	Final exam