

HUMA2240 Masterpieces of Chinese Literature

Fall, 2017

Instructor: Liu Jianmei

Office hours: Thursday 10:30am-12:00pm, or by appointment

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Course Description

This class will introduce selective classical and modern masterpieces of Chinese literature. In this increasing global and material world where people were obsessed with instrumental rationality, it is very important to pay attention to human values and human feelings that are the central focus of literature. By going back to the masterpieces of Chinese literature, this course will not only usher students to the fantastic Chinese fictional world, but also bring to light the complexity of human nature as represented in those famous novels.

This course emphasizes detailed textual analysis, content and form. Students are to learn not just to summarize but to critique, to have an opinion, about characters, structures, writers with further research. You will practice your skills in your discussion, presentation and critical analysis assignments.

Grading

Participation/discussion	20%
Pop quizzes	10%
Group presentation about novels (15 mins)	20%
Individual paper	20%
Final exam	30%

Class Requirements:

Attendance and in-class participation are weighed heavily in this course. Students are expected to complete the reading assignment PRIOR to coming to class and be ready to discuss and engage in class. If no participation effort is made in class, attendance alone cannot guarantee a high mark for this portion of your grade.

Class participation is expected since talking with fellow students is the best way to learn. So earn your good grade the fun way—start and keep talking in class! Don't be afraid to make mistakes, but you do need to show that you are familiar with the readings and that you have seriously thought about the texts. **Be prepared and read before class.**

Pop quizzes will be given from time to time in class without prior notice. The quiz usually consists of 3--5 questions only and would not take more than 15 minutes to complete.

Group Presentation

Each group is comprised of 3-5 students. Your group presentation will be about 10-15 minutes. You are encouraged to do a PPT presentation.

Your group can focus on one important theme/concept (such as the urban space, gender, sexuality, cultural production, high versus low, modernity, etc.) and see how it is being represented or constructed in the text. Or analyze one character, or compare different characters. You need to make a clear argument/present a reasonable opinion, supported by details from the text and/or your research.

You can NOT just summarize the text(s), except when you are presenting the criticisms. But you are encouraged to ask thoughtful questions.

Individual paper must include critical analysis

* Individual paper: 6-8 pages in Chinese, double-spaced

Things to pay attention to when you write an analysis:

1. Critical analysis means that you must apply thoughtful reasoning to the arguments presented in this course through readings and discussion. It means not only finding what is right with something, but also what is wrong with the argument, and why.
2. You must always have a thesis statement, which must be supported throughout your writing, with reasons or examples. That is, everything in your analysis must be related to your major argument—the thesis statement.
3. You need to keep your reader in mind. Are you giving the reader enough information? Therefore, you will need to pay attention to details so that you will support yourself with detailed and specific examples from the text. And you must explain your examples in a way that makes them related to your arguments.

Remember **Critical analysis is NOT:**

1. A summary.
2. Broad generalizations without further support and analysis
3. Citing long quotes from the readings without analyzing them or explaining their importance to you or to us

Class Rules:

NO plagiarism!!! – This is taken VERY seriously. Violations (including using online device such as Google translation) will result in a ZERO on your grade.

No use of mobile phone – i.e. no talking, texting, emailing, or web browsing on your mobile phone. Please put your phone on silent mode in class. If constant usage is found or a message/ring tone is heard, your phone will be taken away until the class ends.

Listening etiquette – please listen carefully while someone is talking.

Speaking etiquette – please allow others to finish their sentence before you offer yours.

Final Exam will be based on what we have learned during this semester. It will contain multiple choices and essay-like questions.

Class Schedule (Subjected to change):

Week One: Introduction

Week Two: 《红楼梦》

Week Three: 《紅樓夢》

Week Four: 《红楼梦》

Week Five: 《红楼梦》

Week Six: 《红楼梦》

Week Seven: 《红楼梦》

Week Eight: 鲁迅《狂人日记》《阿 Q 正传》《野草》

Week Nine: 沈从文《边城》《丈夫》
汪曾祺《受戒》
废名《桥》

Week Ten: 张爱玲《倾城之恋》，丁玲《我在霞村的时候》
萧红《呼兰河传》

Week Eleven: 莫言《透明的红萝卜》，阎连科《年月日》

Week Twelve: 余华《十八歲出門遠行》，阿城《棋王》《樹王》

Week Thirteen: 高行健《灵山》

Conclusion

Readings: 《红楼梦》，高行健《灵山》，鲁迅《狂人日记》《阿Q正传》《野草》，沈从文《边城》《丈夫》，汪曾祺《受戒》，废名《桥》，张爱玲《倾城之恋》，丁玲《我在霞村的时候》，萧红《呼兰河传》，莫言《透明的红萝卜》，阎连科《年月日》，余华《十八歲出門遠行》，阿城《棋王》《樹王》

延伸阅读

刘再复，《高行健论》《紅樓夢悟》

王德威，《跨世纪风华：当代小说二十家》

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs):

- 1 Comprehend the representative Chinese literary works in different genres (such as poetry, fictional and non-fictional prose, drama and dramatic lyrics).
- 2 Analyze the significance of these works in their respective cultural and historical contexts.
- 3 Recognize the contributions of these masterpieces to the Chinese literary tradition.