ENGLISH 374—Postcolonial Literature in English
Fall 2020

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Zoom Office Hours: M 10AM-12PM, T 12PM-2PM, by appointment
Optional Synchronous Sessions: TH 12:30-1:45PM

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

"If you don't like someone else's story, write your own." -Chinua Achebe

As the British Empire began its steady decline in the wake of World War II, an outpouring of literature emerged from its former colonies. Referred to variously as Commonwealth Literature, Post-Colonial Literature, Postcolonial Literature, and sometimes (Post)Colonial Literature, this body of work heralded an epochal shift in global relations and the literary canon. As Indian novelist Salman Rushdie explained, the empire was writing back "with a vengeance."

In this course, we'll analyze contemporary works by writers from Africa, the Caribbean, and Southeast Asia. We'll examine how these authors negotiate the violent legacies of empire, ongoing processes of de-colonization, and evolving forms of neo-colonialism that impact that Global South. Additionally, we'll think through issues of identity, nationalism, language, diaspora, race, gender, and sexuality as they arise within individual works. Finally, we'll also consider the ways that these texts circulate in the West: as "exotic" commodities, as sites of resistance and critique, or as "proof" of irreconcilable Otherness. By the end of the course, students will understand the fundamentals of postcolonial critique and gain a broader perspective on global literatures.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course fulfills the Global Awareness requirement of the GEP. Global Awareness courses examine the unique cultural, political, economic, intellectual, and/or religious components of societies, countries, regions, and peoples that are distinct from those found within the United States. By learning about these cultures, you can appreciate the key differences and similarities between diverse modes of human life and reach a better understanding of the human condition on a global scale. Moreover, this understanding will prepare you to act thoughtfully and responsibly in a global society. Upon completing this requirement, you will be able to:

- Identify the key components found within one or more cultures that are distinct from those found in predominantly English-speaking cultures.

- Analyze key forces or processes that contribute to global interconnectedness, and their implications.
- Demonstrate curiosity and empathetic insight about diverse cultural perspectives.

This course also fulfills the Humanities requirement of the GEP. The humanities explore the fundamental ideas and values shaping cultures and civilization, in life and as represented in the written word, using scholarly approaches that are primarily analytical, critical, or interpretive. By introducing students to concepts and beliefs within and outside their own perspectives, courses in the humanities help students to understand and critically engage a variety of worldviews and the ideas that give them meaning. Upon completing this requirement, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an ability to read carefully, speak clearly, think critically, or write persuasively about cultures and cultural works/artifacts (including texts, images, performances, and technologies, as well as other expressions of the human condition).
- Identify and analyze how beliefs, values, languages, theories, or laws shape cultures and cultural works/artifacts.
- Engage a variety of ideas and worldviews critically by formulating reflective and informed moral, ethical, or aesthetic evaluations of cultures and cultural works/artifacts.

TEXTS

You are not required to purchase from the University Store. Used copies, photocopies, digital copies, and library copies are perfectly acceptable, provided that you read the same assigned sections of text as everyone else. If purchasing our required books will cause you insurmountable financial difficulty, please reach out to me so that I can get you access to our readings.

Purchase:
Things Fall Apart, by Chinua Achebe
No Telephone to Heaven, by Michelle Cliff
A Small Place, by Jamaica Kincaid
Shame, by Salman Rushdie

Available on Canvas:

Additional poems, stories, and plays; secondary readings on the historical and cultural context of each work; works on postcolonial theory (these will be uploaded and announced throughout the semester)

COURSE STRUCTURE AND TECHNOLOGY

This class will be delivered entirely online through the course management system

Canvas and the videoconferencing platform Zoom. If you have not activated your UWSP e-mail account, please visit the Manage Your Account page to do so. You will use your UWSP account to log in to the course from the Canvas Login Page, and you will use it to activate your UWSP Zoom account.

If you would like, you can get training on Canvas through the Self-enrolling/paced Canvas training course. Zoom also offers live trainings every day, as well as video tutorials.

View this website to see minimum recommended computer and internet configurations for Canvas. View this website to see minimum recommended computer and internet configurations for Zoom.

You will also need access to the following tools to participate in this course. If you do not have access to these items, please let me know ASAP.

- Webcam (optional)
- Microphone for Zoom meetings
- Laptop or desktop computer (some Canvas features aren't accessible on tablets or mobile devices)
- A stable internet connection (don't rely on cellular)
- A scanner, smartphone, or digital camera for digitizing/photographing handwritten documents for upload to Canvas

TECH SUPPORT

UWSP Technology Support

- Visit with a Student Technology Tutor
- Seek assistance from the IT Service Desk (Formerly HELP Desk)
- IT Service Desk Phone: 715-346-4357 (HELP)
- IT Service Desk Email: techhelp@uwsp.edu

Canvas Support

Click on the [Help] button in the global (left) navigation menu and note the options that appear:

Support Options	Explanations
Ask Your Instructor a Question Submit a question to your instructor	Use **Ask Your Instructor a Question** sparingly; technical questions are best reserved for Canvas personnel and help as detailed below.

Chat with Canvas Support (Student) Live Chat with Canvas Support 24x7!	**Chatting with Canvas Support (Student)** will initiate a *text chat* with Canvas support. Response can be qualified with severity level.
Contact Canvas Support via email Canvas support will email a response	**Contact**ing **Canvas Support via email** will allow you to explain in detail or even upload a screenshot to show your particular difficulty.
Contact Canvas Support via phone Find the phone number for your institution	Calling the Canvas number will let Canvas know that you're from UWSP; phone option is available 24/7.
Search the Canvas Guides Find answers to common questions	**Searching the Canvas guides** connects you to documents that are searchable by issue. You may also opt for **Canvas video guides.**

All options are available 24/7; however, if you opt for "ask your instructor a question," I may not be available immediately.

Zoom Support

Zoom operates a 24/7 Support Center with video tutorials and a virtual assistant.

EMAIL AND INSTRUCTOR RESPONSE TIMES

Your UWSP email account is the university's standard method of communication with you, and you should check it daily. I will use email to communicate with you at least twice a week about course materials, assignments, and upcoming deadlines.

If you want to reach me, it is best to do so by email, as I do not always see Canvas messages in a timely fashion. **Be advised that I only read and respond to email messages between 7AM-7PM Monday through Friday.** Please contact me during those hours, unless it's an emergency.

I will respond to student emails within 24 hours of receiving them, except on weekends. If you haven't heard from me within that time frame, please re-send your message.

If you have a question about the course that isn't confidential or personal in nature, please post it in the Course Q & A Discussion forum. I will post answers there so that all students can view them. Students are encouraged to respond to each other's questions, too.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS AND NETIQUETTE

In this course you will be expected to complete the following types of tasks.
- communicate via email
- complete internet and library database searches
- download course materials from the LMS

- read documents online
- view online videos
- record online videos
- participate in online discussions
- complete peer reviews in Canvas
- upload documents to Canvas to submit an assignment
- participate in synchronous online discussions (optional)

You will also be expected to abide by basic netiquette. Netiquette is a set of rules for behaving properly online. Working as a community of learners, we can build a polite and respectful course community.

The following netiquette tips will enhance the learning experience for everyone in the course:

- Do not dominate any discussion.
- Be cautious in using Internet language. For example, do not capitalize all letters since this suggests shouting.
- Popular emoticons such as ☺ or ☹ can be helpful to convey your tone but do not overdo or overuse them.
- Avoid using vernacular and/or slang language. This could possibly lead to misinterpretation.
- Share tips with other students.
- Think and edit before you push the "Send" button.
- Do not hesitate to ask for feedback.
- Use proper salutations and sign-offs in email messages.
- If using virtual backgrounds in Zoom, make sure they're appropriate.
- If not using virtual backgrounds in Zoom, make sure that there is nothing in your environment that is inappropriate or would make others uncomfortable.
- Dress appropriately if you plan to be on camera during a Zoom meeting (in other words, please wear clothing that would be okay for going out in public).
- Mute your microphone when you are not speaking in Zoom.
- If you live with others, be respectful of their privacy and consider disabling your camera if they are home during a Zoom session.

COURSE POLICIES

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a documented disability and verification from the Disability and Assistive Technology Center and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact your instructor as soon as possible. It is the student's responsibility to provide documentation of disability to Disability Services and meet with a Disability Services counselor to request special accommodation *before* classes start.

The Disability and Assistive Technology Center is located in 609 Albertson Hall and can be contacted by phone at (715) 346-3365 (Voice) (715) 346-3362 (TDD only) or via email at datctr@uwsp.edu.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

Some of the assignments in this class will require the use of sources. When you use sources, you must cite them. MLA citation style is preferable but use any format with which you are familiar. The use of an unacknowledged source will result, *at minimum*, in your being required to redo the assignment for reduced credit. Depending on the nature and extent of the misuse, such behavior may result in a zero for the assignment or an F for the course. If you are unsure how to cite a source properly, please ask me. Other forms of academic dishonesty, such as purchasing work, copying the work of classmates, etc., will also result in a major course penalty, including possible failure of the course. A report may also be submitted to the Dean of Students. For more information about UWSP's policies regarding academic misconduct, see the Academic Integrity Brochure.

SAFE SPACE POLICY

We're all required to be respectful of each other's identities and opinions. There will be zero tolerance for slurs, derogatory language, harassment, belittlement of ideas, or belittlement of others' work. If you need clarification, please refer to UWSP's Community Rights and Responsibilities Handbook. As a general rule, use common sense and treat others as you wish to be treated. If you feel unsafe in any class discussion, please speak to me immediately so that we can resolve the problem.

Some of the material that we cover may be triggering. I will always offer content warnings for such readings and/or viewings. If you know that a particular assignment will be triggering to you, then you and I should discuss how you would like to approach the material. I am happy to offer options including: submitting your discussion post to me privately rather than posting it publicly, completing an alternate assignment, etc.

If you have any concerns about the class or the material, please come and talk to me so we can try to work out a solution as quickly as possible.

PERSONAL EMERGENCIES

Any student facing challenges that may affect their academic performance is encouraged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Such challenges may include but are not limited to: mental or physical health crises, family crises, food insecurity, housing insecurity, financial insecurity, incidents of hate/bias, interpersonal violence, or sexual assault/harassment. Furthermore, please notify me if you feel comfortable doing so. That will enable me to provide any resources that I possess, including flexibility on assignment deadlines, taking an incomplete in the course, or withdrawing from the course.

Be advised: **I am a mandatory reporter**. If you disclose to me that you have been a victim of sexual assault/harassment, hate/bias, or any crime, **I am required to inform the university**. Likewise, if you disclose to me that you are experiencing thoughts of self-harm, or have engaged in self-harm, **I must inform the university**. Think carefully about whether or not you would like to make a report before disclosing to me, or to any UWSP employee. If you do not want to report, but still want to let me know that you're dealing with a personal issue, you should speak in generalized terms.

If you've experienced any of the aforementioned issues, please check out the Campus and Community Resources page on Canvas. I've compiled a list of organizations and agencies you can turn to for help—both on-campus and off.

ASSESSMENT

UWSP regularly assesses the General Education Program (including this course) to ensure that we are providing you with the best education we can. As part of this effort, samples of student work may be shared, anonymously, with a small group of faculty members. If you have any questions about the assessment process or concerns about how your work may be used, please come talk with me.

GRADING AND REQUIREMENTS

Reading and preparation for class: Each week, there will be assigned readings with specific suggestions of things to look for or to think about as you read. Doing the reading thoughtfully is necessary preparation for you to be able to participate fully in, and benefit from, the class. You should also take some notes on your observations and reactions.

Participation: You should visit our Canvas page regularly (ideally several times a week) and complete all required discussion forum posts. Attendance at our optional synchronous meetings will earn you extra participation credit. See pages 8-9 for criteria.

Group Presentations: Throughout the semester, you will take turns working in small groups to develop short (5-10 minute) video recordings related to one of our readings. They may include: biographical information about an author, historical context for one of our primary texts, or an explanation of a relevant secondary text.

Essays: You'll write two short essays (2-4 pages). Details about these assignments, including grading criteria, will be provided in handouts, posted on Canvas, and discussed in class. The rough and final draft of each essay should be submitted to Canvas.

Self-Designed Final Research Project: You'll complete a final research project that you design on your own. This project can take a variety of forms—from a traditional essay, to a creative work, to a multimedia project. It can also tackle a variety of topics

and texts, ranging from those we've discussed in class to those we haven't discussed, but in which you are personally interested. I'll provide you with a few possible subjects to get you started, but you'll need to conduct your own research and develop the parameters of your project.

Peer review: All major assignments must go through the peer review process—**I will not accept projects that haven't been peer reviewed.** Peer reviews will be completed on Canvas. If you do not have a completed draft by the deadline, you will need to contact me about finding a partner.

Revision: You will have the opportunity to revise one of your short essays. Your original grade and your revision grade will be averaged in order to determine your final score for that project.

Your grades will be determined using the following rubric:

Presentations	20%
Two short papers	40%
Final project	30D%
Participation	10%

I will be using the plus/minus system for final grades. Please note: to ensure fairness, all numbers are absolute, and will not be rounded up or down at any stage. Thus a B- will be inclusive of all scores of 80.000 through 83.999.

A = 93-100   A- = 90-92   B+ = 87-89   B = 84-86   B- = 80-83   C+ = 77-79 C = 74-76 C- = 70-73   D+ = 67-69   D = 64-66   D- =   60-63 F =   0-60

Criteria for Participation

	Ideal	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Completion	Submits responses to all required discussion forums, or (rarely) misses one for a compelling reason, which is shared with the instructor promptly.	Posts in required discussion forums consistently (at least 85% of the time). Occasional missing posts are mostly for a valid reason.	Misses more than 15% of the required discussion posts, or less often but without explanation.
Preparation	Always gives evidence of having done the required readings or pre-writing work needed for discussion posts.	Gives evidence of preparation for discussion posts at least 85% of the time.	Gives evidence of waiting until the last minute to post or failing to complete pre-writing work more than 15% of the time.

Quality of Contributions	Makes comments that stand out for the level of careful thought they demonstrate about the material and the unfolding conversation.		Makes comments that reflect inattentiveness to others' contributions, are irrelevant, or otherwise tend to derail the conversation.
Class Community	Improves the conversation in a significant way. (E.g. helps draw others out, asks good questions, etc.)		Impairs the conversation in a significant way. (E.g. dominates discussion, treats other students or their ideas with disrespect.)

Extra Credit Opportunities

Attending optional synchronous Zoom sessions and/or replying to more than one classmate's discussion post will earn you one extra credit point each, applied toward either your participation grade or your quiz grades. I will also keep an eye out for relevant events on campus or online that you may attend for additional extra credit points.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS, LATE WORK, FALLING BEHIND:

In order to pass the course, you must complete every assignment. **Late assignments will lose a letter grade for each calendar day they are late**. Extensions are negotiable if, knowing your own academic schedule and obligations, you anticipate needing more time for an assignment. **To request an extension, you must contact me at least two calendar days before the assignment is due.** Together we will arrive on a later due date that must fit into the syllabus (i.e., the new due date must precede any other due dates for the unit). I will hold you to that new due date and deduct points if you miss it**. Do not e-mail me the night before something is due to ask for an extension; I will refuse. Plan ahead**.

You must build in time for possible technological failure ("my computer crashed") or contingency ("I left my flash drive with my paper on it at home"). **Late work is late, regardless of circumstance.**

If you find that you have any trouble keeping up with assignments or other aspects of the course, make sure you let me know as early as possible. Make sure that you are proactive in informing me when difficulties arise during the semester so that I can help you find a solution. That said, it is your responsibility to understand when you need to consider dropping the course or requesting an incomplete.

OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

The Tutoring-Learning Center, located in the basement of the library (Room 018), can provide help with writing and many other skills you will need to succeed in college. Their regular hours are Monday – Thursday 9:00am – 8:00pm, Friday 9:00AM – 1:00PM. Appointments are recommended but not required. Phone 715-346-3568 or email tlctutor@uwsp.edu.

The TLC now offers an Online Writing Lab in addition to face-to-face tutoring. I strongly encourage you to use their services.

COURSE SCHEDULE
Subject to change at instructor's discretion

	TO READ/TO VIEW	TO DO/SUBMIT BY MIDNIGHT SATURDAY

WEEK 1
Sept. 2 - 5
	• Read/View all items in the "Start Here" Module on Canvas
	• Read/View all items in the "Learning Outcomes and Student Expectations" Module on Canvas
	• Read the following items on Canvas:
	  o Salman Rushdie, "The Empire Strikes Back with a Vengeance"
	  o Ania Loomba, "Defining the Terms"
	• Watch the following videos:
	  o Overview of British Empire
	  o Key terms and issues in Postcolonial Studies
	  o Example Presentation:
		• Introduce Yourself Post
		• Pre-Course Survey
		• Sign up for group presentation
		• Discussion board post: introduction to postcolonial literature and criticism
		• Submit any questions about the syllabus or course to the General Q & A

	Albert Memmi's "The Mythical Portrait of the Colonized"	

WEEK 2
Sept. 8 - 12
	• Read chs. 1-8 of *Things Fall Apart*. <u>Make sure to read the Ibo language glossary in the back</u>.
	• Read the following items on Canvas:
	   o Vladimir Nabokov's "Good Readers and Good Writers"
	   o Modes of Reading worksheet
	• Watch the following videos:
	   o Biography of Achebe
	   o Context: *Heart of Darkness* and Achebe
	   o Close Reading Practices
		• Discussion board post: close reading Achebe

WEEK 3
Sept. 14 - 19
	• Read chs. 9-16 of *Things Fall Apart*
	• Read assignment sheet/rubric for Short Essay #1
	• Watch the following videos:
	   o Explanation of short essay #1
	   o Context: Culture groups of Nigeria
	   o Group presentation on Achebe's: "Colonialist Criticism"
		• Discussion board post: applying "Colonialist Criticism" to *Things Fall Apart*

WEEK 4
Sept. 21 - 26
	• Finish *Things Fall Apart*
	• Watch the following videos:
	   ○ Context: The British in Nigeria
	   ○ Group Presentation on Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's "The Language of African Literature"
		• Discussion board post: Applying Thiong'o to *Things Fall Apart*
		• Topic proposal for short essay one

WEEK 5
Sept. 28 – Oct. 3
	• Read example thesis statements and body paragraphs
	• Watch the following videos:
	   ○ Successful vs. unsuccessful literary analysis essays
	   ○ Outlining a literary analysis essay
		• Rough Draft of short essay one

WEEK 6
Oct. 5 - 10
	• Read chs. 1- 4 of *Shame*
	• Watch the following videos:
	   ○ Salman Rushdie biography
	   ○ Magical realism
	   ○ Group presentation on Edward Said's "Orientalism"
		• Complete peer review of short essay one
		• Discussion board post: applying Said to *Shame*

WEEK 7
Oct. 12 - 17
	• Read chs. 5 – 7 of *Shame*
	• Read peer and instructor feedback on short essay one
	• Watch the following videos:
	   ○ De-brief on short essay one
	   ○ Context: Partition and
		• Revised draft of short essay one
		• Discussion board post: emerging motifs in *Shame*

	post-Independence Pakistan	
WEEK 8 Oct. 19 - 24	• Read chs. 8 – 10 of *Shame* • Read assignment sheet/rubric for short essay #2 • Watch the following videos: ○ Explanation of short essay two ○ Context: Allusions in *Shame* ○ Group presentation on Chandra Mohanty's "Under Western Eyes"	• Discussion board post: applying "Under Western Eyes" to *Shame*
WEEK 9 Oct. 26 - 31	• Finish *Shame* • Watch the following videos: ○ Post-colonial nationalism ○ Group presentation: Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*	• Discussion board post: applying Anderson to *Shame* • Topic Proposal for short essay two
WEEK 10 Nov. 2 - 7	• Read chs. 1 – 3 of *No Telephone to Heaven*. <u>Make sure to take a look at the glossary of Jamaican patois in the back of the book</u>. • Watch the following videos: ○ Michelle Cliff biography ○ The British West Indies ○ Group presentation on	• Rough draft of short essay two • Discussion board post: applying Fanon to *No Telephone*

	Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*	

WEEK 11
Nov. 9 - 14
	• Read chs. 4 – 6
	• Watch the following videos:
	   o West Indians in Britain
	   o Group presentation on Stuart Hall's "Cultural Identity and Diaspora"
		• Complete peer review of short essay two
		• Discussion board post: applying Hall to *Abeng*

WEEK 12
Nov. 16 - 21
	• Finish *Abeng*
	• Read instructor and peer feedback on short essay two
	• Watch the following videos:
	   o De-brief on short essay two
	   o Gender and Sexuality in *Abeng*
		• Revised draft of short essay two

WEEK 13
Nov. 23 – 25
Thanksgiving Week
	• Read sections 1 and 2 of *A Small Place* (pgs. 3-40)
	• Read assignment sheet and rubric for final project
	• Watch the following videos:
	   o Jamaica Kincaid Biography
	   o Explanation of final project
	   o Group presentation on Reiner Jaakson's "Globalisation and Neocolonialist Tourism"
		• Discussion board post: applying Jaakson to *A Small Place*

WEEK 14 Nov. 30 - Dec. 5	• Finish *A Small Place* • Watch the following video: ○ Library Instruction video for final project	• Discussion board post: reflection on the semester • Final project proposal/bibliograpy
WEEK 15 Dec. 7 - 12	• Take a look at example projects • Watch the following video: ○ Successful and unsuccessful final projects	• Rough Draft of Final project • Complete peer reviews by **Monday** of finals week
FINALS WEEK	• Read instructor and peer feedback on final project draft	• Revised draft of final project • Short essay revision (optional)