



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Masterpieces Of World Literature - II - 10515

Last update 31-08-2025

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: School of Ancient & Modern Literatures

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Prof. Gur Zak

Coordinator Email: amir.engel@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours:

Teaching Staff:

Prof. Gur Zak

Course/Module description:

The purpose of the course is to offer an initial encounter with a list of fundamental literary masterpieces from the Renaissance to the present. In each class we will focus on one literary work, analyze its content and form, and explore how it reflects - and shapes - the historical context in which it was written. Among the themes we will focus on in our analysis are: identity and gender, representation of emotions, trauma and testimony, and the reflection offered by the works themselves on the value of reading and writing literature.

Course/Module aims:

To offer introduction to a variety of literary masterpieces that shaped Western culture from the Renaissance to the twentieth century.

To provide students with basic tools through which to analyze and discuss literary works

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

To discuss in an intelligent and informed fashion central literary masterpieces that shaped the west.

To understand the general line of development of Western literature from the Middle Ages to the modern age.

To offer analysis of literary works based on the main themes that dominate them, their relationship to the historical contexts in which they were shaped, and their dialogue with the literary tradition from which they developed.

Attendance requirements(%):

100

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Frontal lectures

Course/Module Content:

1. Autobiography and the Emergence of the Modern Self: Petrarch
2. Reformation and Women-Writing: Marguerite de Navarre

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3. *Shakespeare's Hamlet*
 4. *Hamlet - Cont.*
 5. *The Perils of Reading: Cervantes's Don Quixote*
 6. *The Limits of Enlightenment: Voltaire and Rousseau*
 7. *The Sublime and the Uncanny: Goethe and Hoffman*
 8. *The Russian Novel: Dostoevsky*
 9. *The Russian Novel: Tolstoy*
 10. *Art as Tragedy: Mann*
 11. *The Consciousness of Modernism: Woolf*
 11. *Trauma, Testimony, and the Post-Modern Novel: Tony Morrison*

Required Reading:

1. *Petrarch, Canzoniere and the Ascent of Mount Ventoux*
2. *Marguerite de Navarre, Heptameron*
3. *Shakespeare, Hamlet*
4. *Shakespeare, Hamlet*
5. *Cervantes, Don Quixote*
6. *Voltaire, Candide*
- Rousseau, Confessions*
7. *Goethe, The Sorrows of Young Werther*
- Hoffman, The Sandman*
8. *Dostoevsky, Brothers Karamazov*
9. *Tolstoy, Death of Ivan Illich*
10. *Thomas Mann, Death in Venice*
11. *Virginia Woolf, To the Lighthouse*
12. *Tony Morrison, Beloved*

Additional Reading Material:

Grading Scheme:

Written Exam % 70

Submission assignments during the semester: Exercises / Essays / Audits / Reports

/ Forum / Simulation / others 20 %
Attendance / Participation in Field Excursion 10 %

Additional information: