

ENGL 226.001
 Fall 2014
 MWF 12:30-1:20
 BKH-D G25
 E-mail: kopokuag@mix.wvu.edu

Kwabena Opoku-Agyemang
 Office: G20 Colson Hall
 Office Hours: MW 1:30-2:30
 (and by appointment)
 Mailbox: 107 Colson Hall

ENGL 226: Non-Western World Literature

The recurring principle for this course is the ideal of all literature: the paradox housed in the humanities which claims that we understand ourselves better when we learn about others; that our individual identities are challenged, and our own cultures more fully illuminated in examining issues from the perspectives of others.

English 226 examines a selection of imaginative literature labeled “Non-Western.” This course is thematically and stylistically predicated on the ways in which perception, particularly in a time of globalization, interrogates access in novel ways. As the theoretical space between countries becomes smaller, it is important to understand the logic that informs geo-political labels while analyzing these implications on socio-cultural life. This class will therefore explore perceptions of the “Non-West” in the context of Western/Non-Western relations. We will do this by sampling works – literature including prose, poetry, non-fiction, film/graphic novel and drama –from Africa, Latin America, Asia and the Middle East.

Course Aims/Goals

The course aims to inspire in students the confidence to critically engage literary texts and genres through close reading and writing exercises, as well as extensive discussions. The single most important currency in this class is what the student thinks, and the open-ness to test it.

Required Texts – Available at the WVU Bookstore and the Book Exchange

- *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- *Interpreter of Maladies* by Jhumpa Lahiri
- *Twentieth-Century Latin American Poetry: A Bilingual Anthology* edited by Stephen Tapscott
- *Modern African Drama* edited by Biodun Jeyifo
- *The Ecco Anthology of International Poetry* edited by Ilya Kaminsky and Susan Harris
- *Tales from the One Thousand Nights* translated by N. J. Dawood
- As well as short excerpts from sundry texts available on ecampus

Course Requirements

- **Participation in class discussion (15%)** – Your participation grade will be based in part on both the thoughtfulness of your responses, respect for others’ submissions (even if you don’t agree with them) and your **overall engagement in class activities**. Note that respectful, engaged participation in class discussion will boost your final grade, while a lack of positive

participation may lower it. Everyone will be expected to contribute to proceedings in class; your opinion counts!

Note that more than five absences will result in an “F” for attendance and participation, which will make this portion of your grade, at best, 5 out of the possible 15 points

- **Multiple quizzes (15% total)** – These will be unannounced short-answer questions that focus on textual details and close reading, typically with a specific question.
- **Midterm exam (25%)** – You will have a midterm exam that will encompass material that we would have covered in class up until that point. You will have strong input concerning what constitutes this exam, after which a study guide will be provided.
- **Final exam (30%)** – This exam will end the semester and, similar to the midterm, will involve your suggestions. A study guide will be provided.
- **First Word (5%)** – At the beginning of each class starting August 20, at least one student will give a brief presentation (no more than 5 minutes) about the text/author for the day. In your presentation, you can say a few words about the author, time-period, text, a contemporary to the author, and/or why you think the author/text should be (or not be) included in the syllabus. (Almost) anything goes!
- **“How I would teach...” (10%)** – In small groups, you will present (for less than 10 minutes) to the class your preferred method of teaching a particular text or genre, considering questions such as context, audience and purpose. Alternatively, you can render a portion of the text in a different genre (e.g. turn a scene from a novel into a short story, a play into a poem, etc.) Again, (almost) anything goes!

Course Policies

- **Attendance:** This is a participatory class. **You may miss three classes without penalty. Missing more could diminish your class participation grade by as much as a full grade. If you miss seven classes, you risk an F for the course.** Lateness is rude and disrupts discussion and small group work. If you are more than 10 minutes late, your lateness will count as half of an absence (two times being late = one absence). The only excused absences are for University-sponsored activities (e.g. class fieldtrips and sports related events).
- **Late Coursework:** There are no make-up opportunities for missed quizzes. I will, however, allow you to drop your lowest quiz grade from your total grade for the quizzes. A missed midterm exam may be taken later, provided Student Affairs writes you a note for certain emergencies. If it passes by them, then we can reschedule. Missed final exams may not be taken later. Exams missed and not made up will result in failure of the class.
- **Inclusivity Statement:** The West Virginia University community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Accessibility Services (293-6700). For more

information on West Virginia University's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives, please check <http://diversity.wvu.edu>

- **Plagiarism:** WVU's policy regarding plagiarized work can be found online at: <http://studentlife.wvu.edu/studentconductcode.html> (see Section B of Article III). We will discuss plagiarism in class, but it is your responsibility to be familiar with the WVU policy.
- **Conduct:** I expect all members of the class to be respectful of each other and me, regardless of religious, social, or political differences. I will not condone discriminatory remarks regarding race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, health, economic status, etc. Disruptive behavior may negatively impact your class participation grade and, if egregious enough, result in your expulsion from the class. Be mindful that the best way to participate in class is to both talk and listen to what others have to say. I don't expect class members to agree, but I do expect that you will acknowledge other points of view.

SCHEDULE (Subject to slight changes, which will be announced)

Perception and Setting

Week 1

M. Aug 18 (**Late Registration Fee in Effect for All Students**) Introduction to the Course and to Ourselves; Perception and Stereotype

W. Aug 20 Adichie, “The Danger of a Single Story” (available on ecampus)

http://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story

F. Aug 22 (**Last day to Register, Add New Courses, Make Section Changes, Change Pass/Fail and Audit**) Ngugi, Decolonizing the African Mind (Chapter 4 – I-VI) – (available on ecampus)
https://www.humanities.uci.edu/critical/Wellek_Readings_Ngugi_Quest_for_Relevance.pdf;
Americanah (Chapters 1-2)

Week 2

M. Aug 25 *Americanah* (Chapters 3-9)

W. Aug 27 *Americanah* (Chapters 10-15)

F. Aug 29 *Americanah* (Chapters 16-22)

Week 3

M. Sep 1 **LABOR DAY (No Class)**

W. Sep 3 *Americanah* (Chapters 23-41)

F. Sep 5 *Americanah* (Chapters 42-49)

Week 4

M. Sep 8 *Americanah* (Chapters 50-55)

W. Sep 10 *Twentieth-Century Latin American Poetry: A Bilingual Anthology* (Jorge Luis Borges; Sara de Ibáñez)

F. Sep 12 *Twentieth-Century Latin American Poetry: A Bilingual Anthology* (Pablo Neruda); *The Ecco Anthology of International Poetry* (Pablo Neruda; Vénus Khoury-Ghata; Adonis)

Week 5

M. Sep 15 How I Would Teach... *Americanah* or Poetry

W. Sep 17 *Interpreter of Maladies* (“A Temporary Matter”)

F. Sep 19 *Interpreter of Maladies* (“When Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine”)

Perception and Imagery

Week 6

M. Sep 22 *Modern African Drama: Death and the King’s Horseman* (Author’s Note, Act 1)

W. Sep 24 *Modern African Drama: Death and the King’s Horseman* (Acts 4-5)

F. Sep 26 *Modern African Drama: Dilemma of a Ghost* (Prelude to Act 1)

Week 7

M. Sep 29 *Modern African Drama: Dilemma of a Ghost* (Acts 4-5)

W. Oct 1 *The Ecco Anthology of International Poetry* (Rabindranath Tagore; Ahmad Shamlou; Kazuko Shiraishi; Ho Ch’i-Fang; Kim Nam-Jo)

F. Oct 3 **Mid-Semester Exam**

Week 8

M. Oct 6 How I Would Teach... *Modern African Drama* or Poetry

W. Oct 8 *The Ecco Anthology of International Poetry* (Léopold Sédar Senghor; Aimé Césaire; Augustinho Neto)

F. Oct 10 Wainana “How to Write About Africa” <http://www.granta.com/Archive/92/How-to-Write-about-Africa/Page-1>

Week 9

M. Oct 13 **FALL BREAK (No Class)**

W. Oct 15 *The Ecco Anthology of International Poetry* (Yehuda Amichai; Taha Muhammad Ali; Mahmoud Darwish)

F. Oct 17 *Tales from the One Thousand Nights: "Prologue"* (pages 15-23)

Week 10

M. Oct 20 *Tales from the One Thousand Nights: Selections from "The Tale of the Hunchback"* (pages 24-76); "The Historic Fart" (pages 163-164)

W. Oct 22 *The Ecco Anthology of International Poetry* (Salah Niazzi; Chairil Anwar; Bernard Dadié) and *Tales from the One Thousand Nights "Sinbad the Sailor and Sinbad the Porter"* (pages 113-121)

F. Oct 24 (**Last Day to Drop a Class**) *Tales from the One Thousand Nights "Sinbad the Sailor and Sinbad the Porter"* (pages 122-144)

Perception and the Political

Week 11

M. Oct 27 "Orientalism" Excerpt <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLmAqdEafcQ> (available on ecampus); *Interpreter of Maladies: ("Interpreter of Maladies")*

W. Oct 29 *Interpreter of Maladies: ("A Real Durwan")*

F. Oct 31 *Interpreter of Maladies: ("Sexy"; "The Blessed House")*

Week 12

M. Nov 3 *Modern African Drama: Sizwe Bansi is Dead* (Part 1-2)

W. Nov 5 *Modern African Drama: Sizwe Bansi is Dead* (3-4)

F. Nov 7 *Modern African Drama: Sizwe Bansi is Dead* (Part 5)

Week 13

M. Nov 10 *Tales from the One Thousand Nights* (portion of “Aladdin and the Enchanted Lamp”); Aladdin Clip <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEryAoLfnAA> (available on ecampus)

W. Nov 12 How I Would Teach... *Interpreter of Maladies/Tales from the One Thousand Nights* (the short story)

F. Nov 14 *Tales from the One Thousand Nights*: “The Fisherman and the Jinnee” (pages 79-105)

Week 14

M. Nov 17 *Twentieth-Century Latin American Poetry: A Bilingual Anthology* (Juana de Ibarbourou; Gabriela Mistral) and *Interpreter of Maladies*: (“Mrs. Sen’s”)

W. Nov 19 *Twentieth-Century Latin American Poetry: A Bilingual Anthology* (José Martí) and *Interpreter of Maladies*: (“The Treatment of Bibi Haldar”)

F. Nov 21 *Twentieth-Century Latin American Poetry: A Bilingual Anthology* (Nicolás Guillén; Nancy Morejón) and *Interpreter of Maladies*: (“The Third and Final Continent”)

November 24 – 28 THANKSGIVING BREAK (No Class)

Week 15

M. Dec 1 Who Told the Most Incredible Story? And other Short Stories (available on ecampus)

W. Dec 3 Marjane Satrapi *Persepolis* (available on ecampus)

F. Dec 5 Ghanaian Children’s Short Stories (available on ecampus)

Week 16

M. Dec 8 (**Last Day to Withdraw from the University**) Bring your favorite five lines of the course to class

F. Dec 12 **Final Exam (8:00 - 10:00 am)**