

Australian, Asian, & Pacific Literatures

Course Details

Course Designator & Number: SDNY 3016

Number of Credits: 3

Language of Instruction: English

Course Description

This course covers a wealth of literature from the Australian, Asian and South Pacific region, from Australia's earliest colonial outback and horsemen stories to the city-focused cosmopolitanism of the 1980s, to the aboriginal literature of the 1990s, and in the 2000s, the contemporary Torres Strait and Polynesian literatures' reformulations of place that respond to both contemporary and traditional understandings of islands, archipelagoes, and identity.

The course is divided into two 'modules', or sections. These modules broadly reflect the shift in theoretical and thematic emphases of literature from the nineteenth century to mid-twentieth century, to the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. In this way the course modules cover a full range of Australian and Asian texts from several centuries, and make explicit the key concerns of the changing time periods. Interweaved across both of these modules is discussion of the relevant political and social issues of the region and their representation in literature, from the past to the present. Students will examine the ways in which national and ethnic identity, gender, sexuality and class are depicted in the set texts.

The texts chosen for study are from a range of literary genres, allowing students to study the ways that literary ideas and depictions of the world are informed by parameters of genre. The genres represented here include: traditional poetic forms such as the ballad; short stories, both stand-alone and 'themed'; contemporary experimental poetry; and the novel. Students will be encouraged to consider the issues of 'now', namely the anxieties shared by many nations and ethnicities in the Asia-Pacific region concerning the environment and globalization, as they are depicted in literature from across the region.

This course gives students experience in writing and completing assessments in a range of styles and genres, from the formal scholarly essay to exams and will even give students the opportunity to do a small amount of their own creative fiction writing.

Course Objectives

This course aims to introduce students to Australian and Asian literature, and to develop each student's ability to read and understand the set texts. This aim is connected to another of the course aims: that students will develop their understanding of, and ability to analyse, the operations of poetic techniques and devices for literary analysis. The course aims to teach students to use scholarly language to discuss the ways that literature creates its representations of the world. The devices and techniques with which students will become familiar through this course include imagery, symbolism, structure, and rhetorical and poetic forms. Tied to the two aims above, the broader objective of this course is that students will develop knowledge of the key regional issues that have motivated Australian and Asian writers in the production of their texts. This last objective involves engagement with the significant literary and philosophical theories that have informed our understanding of literature and life across the last several centuries. As a result, this course aims also to introduce students to some of the key thinkers of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, and their ideas that explain the region and its literature.

Methodology

This course is a lecture course in which class participation and discussion is encouraged. The course has compulsory readings and students will be given copies of these readings at the commencement of the course. In addition to these readings students participate in class discussions, film viewings, lectures, and other structured activities.

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course, however students should enjoy reading. A basic knowledge of poetry analysis would be an advantage. Students are asked to take notes during lectures, as the lecture material is the basis of the course content and the specific assessment tasks.

Required Reading / Materials

Kim Scott, *That Deadman Dance*, Sydney: Picador, 2010.

All other poems and short stories set for study will be made available to students either as hardcopy printouts at the beginning of the course, or as electronic files.

Grading

Grading Rubric

Letter Grade	Score or Percentage	Description
A	93–100	Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
A-	90–92	Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
B+	87–89	
B	83–86	
B-	80–82	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
C+	77–79	
C	73–76	
C-	70–72	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to fully meet the course requirements.
D+	67–69	
D	60–66	
F	0–59	Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.

Summary of How Grades Are Weighted

Assessment 1	Key Issues - 15%
Assessment 2	Exam - 25%
Assessment 3	Tutorial Participation and MyEducation Written Report - 15%
Assessment 4	Major - 35%
Assessment 5	Tutorial Question and Answer Sheets - 10%
Overall grade	100%

Penalties for Work Submitted Late

Assignments received after the due date will be reduced by five percent (5%) of the possible grade for the piece of work being assessed per day, up to seven (7) days after the due date. Work submitted more than seven (7) days after the due date will not be marked, unless arrangements have been made prior to the due date for an extension.

Class Participation

Your participation mark is based on your preparation for class and your input into group discussion in all classes (excluding the class of your presentation - for which you will get a separate mark). You will need to demonstrate that you have read and thought about the set material for each week. Participation in class discussion will be marked on the constructiveness of your input to the class discussion and debate.

Course Content

Module 1: Colonialism, Tradition, Place, and Identity in Australia and Asia

Unit 1

Introduction to Australian and Asia literature, and Colonial and Postcolonial Poetry – politics and humor

- The lecture will first address the question of how/if we can define these literatures, and will discuss the ways in which categorization works by exclusion of difference. The lecture will then introduce the Australian poetry and prose that was and continues to be central to the formation of white Australian national identity, and to the Indigenous identities formed under conditions of oppression and resistance. The popularity of specific forms, such as the comic ballad of the late nineteenth century, will be discussed, as will the subsequent development and subversion of these forms including the late-twentieth-century Aboriginal poetry that satirizes and critiques the white Australian poetry canon. Banjo Paterson's ballad 'Mulga Bill's Bicycle' (1896), and Norman Rosas' contemporary poem 'The Fishing Trip' (2011) will be analysed in detail in this lecture. The colonialism that is represented in this fiction, and its equally significant post-colonial critiques, will be explained and contextualized. Other texts that may be discussed in class (students will be given copies): Henry Lawson, 'The Loaded Dog' (1901), Lionel Fogarty, 'untitled' (2011), Natalie Harkin, 'White Picket Fence' (2011), Jeanine Leanne, 'Snake Children' (2011).
- **Set texts:** Banjo Paterson, 'Mulga Bill's Bicycle' (1896), Norman Rosas 'The Fishing Trip' (2011).
- **Tutorial Discussion:** Lecture material and detailed discussion of set texts, as well as general discussion and questions such as: what do you already know about the AsiaPacific region and its literature? What kinds of literature do you usually read? What are you expecting Asian and Australian literature to be like?
- **Extended Reading:** [Fiction] Henry Lawson, 'The Loaded Dog' (1901); Lionel Fogarty, 'untitled' (2011); Natalie Harkin, 'White Picket Fence' (2011); Jeanine Leanne, 'Snake Children' (2011).

Unit 2

Late-twentieth-century multicultural literature in Australia

- The post-World War II immigrant literature of Australia and its importance to twentiethcentury national identity will be discussed in this lecture. A range of poems by GreekAustralian, Arab-Australian and Italian-Australian writers and their works will be considered, and the 'double-adjective' identity will be theorized in relation to

postcolonial theory and the explicit 'project' of Multiculturalism in 1980s and 1990s Australia. Ania Walwicz's poem 'Australia' (1981) will be analysed in detail in this lecture. Additional prose and poems by Angelo Loukakis, Antigone Kefala, Mena Abdullah, Dimitris Tsaloumas, Yasmine Gooneratne may be discussed in tutorials (students will be provided with copies in class).

- **Set text:** Ania Walwicz, 'Australia' (1981).
- **Tutorial discussion:** Lecture material and detailed discussion of set text. If there is time we will watch Tracy Moffatt's short film, *Nice Coloured Girls* (1987).
- **Optional extended reading:** Gunew, Sneja. "Ania Walwicz and Antigone Kefala: Varieties of Migrant Dreaming." *Arena* 76 (1986): 65-80. Nolan, Maggie. "Mistaking Multiculturalism: Culotta, Demidenko and Khouri." *New Literatures Review* 45/46 (2009): 95-112.

Unit 3

Field Trip and Guest Speaker: Being an Australian Writer - the Publishing Industry in Australia

- Visit to Australian Society of Authors (ASA) head office in Ultimo, and Guest Lecture by Executive Director of the ASA, and respected Australian author, Angelo Loukakis
- **Set text:** None. Please read ahead with the texts for upcoming weeks.
- **Tutorial discussion:** We will discuss the issues covered by the Guest Speaker, and any questions students have arising from this material.
- **Assessment 1:** This task is designed to allow you to demonstrate what you have learnt from the first weeks of the course. You will be asked to choose ONE 'key issue' of Australian and/or Asian literature that has been discussed in lectures and tutorials, and examine the way it is represented in AT LEAST TWO of the poems studied in the first weeks of the course. Your response should be in the form of structured paragraphs, in formal language, and should consider poetic devices and techniques used by the poets, such as metaphors and similes, rhyme, rhythm and meter, and word choice. 500-750 words.

Unit 4

Chinese Poetry - cultural traditions and self in translation

- The long tradition of Chinese poetry will be introduced in this lecture. Both traditional and modern forms of poetry will be discussed, including the major Shijing, Chu Ci and Qing dynasty poetry. The poems 'Alone and Drinking Under the Moon' (8th century), by Li Po, Ye You Si Jun (Zhou Dynasty), and 'For the Heck of It' by Li Wei (2012), will be analysed in detail. The impact of cultural and historical events and periods upon Chinese poetry will be examined, and students will be brought up to date with the most

recent developments in Chinese poetry, including the many literary ties between China and Australia, and the issues that arise when translating Chinese poetry into English. The issue of translation will be extended to consider the twentieth-century language theory that has been crucial to literary analysis. The difficulties inherent in translating one language into another formed the proof used by language theorists in the early twentieth century to overturn the traditional reality/language relationship, leading to the Linguistic Turn, which has had a profound impact on all of western culture.

- **Set texts:** Li Po 'Alone and Drinking Under the Moon' (8th century), Ye You Si Jun (Zhou Dynasty), and Li Wei 'For the Heck of It' (2012).
- **Tutorial discussion:** Lecture material and detailed discussion of set text AND Essay questions for major essay will be handed out in this lecture.
- **Optional extended reading:**
 - Hockx, Michel. "Virtual Chinese Literature: A Comparative Case Study of Online Poetry Communities." *The China Quarterly* 183 (2005): 670-691.
 - Yu, Ouyang. *Bias: Offensively Chinese/Australian; A Collection of Essays on China and Australia*. Melbourne: Otherland, 2007.
 - Wong, Lisa Lai-Ming. "Voices from a Room of One's Own: Examples from Contemporary Chinese Women's Poetry." *Modern China* 32.3 (2006): 385-408.
 - Yip, Wai-Lim. "Classical Chinese and Modern Anglo-American Poetry: Convergence of Languages and Poetry." *Comparative Literature Studies* 11.1 (1974): 21-47.

Unit 5

Singaporean ethnicities and the ancient/modern transition

- The old and new cultures of Singapore – its pre-western colonial days and its twentieth-century city sprawl – are interwoven in complex ways, in the short stories of Singaporean writers. This lecture outlines these complexities and introduces students to the multiple ethnic groups that make up Singaporean culture and society. The short story genre will be considered in terms of its seemingly preferred form for expression of the ways in which competing culture forces have shaped identity in postmodern, late-twentieth-century Singaporean society. The representation of political and ethnic concerns will be considered specifically in relation to Yong Shu Hoong's short story, 'The Handover' (2006).
- **Set text:** Yong Shu Hoong, 'The Handover' (2006).
- **Tutorial discussion:** Lecture material and detailed discussion of set text AND some revision discussion of all texts in Module One, AND exam-writing techniques
- **Optional extended reading:**

- Leong, Liew Geok. "Dissenting Voices: Political Engagements in the Singaporean Novel in English." *World Literature Today* 74.2 (2000): 285-292.
- Means, Laurel. "The Role of the Writer in Today's Singapore: Voice of the Nation?" *Asian Survey* 34.11 (1994): 962-973.

Unit 6

- Assessment 2: A choice of questions on the texts in Module Two will be handed out in class, and students will have 2 hours to write short essays answering TWO of the questions.
- Primary texts ONLY may be taken into the exam. These primary texts must be UNANNOTATED – that is, no handwritten or typed notes may be marked on the pages or stuck into the primary texts. All students' texts will be checked before the start of the exam to ensure there are no annotations. Annotated texts will not be allowed into the exam. If annotations are found in the text during the course of the exam, the text will be confiscated on the spot, and the student's exam paper may be deemed ineligible for marking. A mark of FAIL may be recorded for the student. The primary texts allowed into the exam, **unannotated**, are as follows:
 - Banjo Paterson, 'Mulga Bill's Bicycle' (1896)
 - Norman Rosas 'The Fishing Trip' (2011)
 - Ania Walwicz, 'Australia' (1981)
 - Li Po 'Alone and Drinking Under the Moon' (8th century)
 - Ye You Si Jun (Zhou Dynasty)
 - Li Wei 'For the Heck of It' (2012)
 - Yong Shu Hoong, 'The Handover' (2006)
- You must write your exam paper on a DIFFERENT issue and text/s than those you wrote on in your 'key issues' assessment. Your assessments will be cross-checked to ensure you have NOT used the same issue and text/s twice.
- The criteria for this assessment will include: ability to write coherently and accurately in a formal academic style; knowledge of the texts set for study and the main issues presented in them as discussed in course material and additional research material; ability to correctly identify and discuss poetic techniques, devices and forms; ability to structure an argument and address the question; appropriate use of quotation from texts to support argument.
- Primary texts may be taken into the exam. These primary texts must be UNANNOTATED – that is, no handwritten or typed notes may be marked on the pages or stuck into the primary texts.

- You must write your exam paper on a DIFFERENT issue and text/s than those you wrote on in your 'key issues' assessment. Your assessments will be cross-checked to ensure you have NOT used the same issue and text/s twice.

Module 2: Islands, Continents, and Transnational Identities

Unit 7

Masculinity, Islands, and the Self in Australian and Polynesian Literature

- The first lecture in the second module of this course will introduce contemporary literature and its historical, cultural and theoretical contexts. The shift from postcolonial to transnational ideas of identity will be outlined, and the geographical figures of islands and continents and their significance to contemporary literature will be discussed. Albert Wendt's poem, 'Inside Us the Dead' (1976), Jared Thomas 'Distraction Focus Dream' (2011), and Brenda Saunders, 'Deadly' (2011) will all be examined in detail during the lecture. The representations of masculinity in these texts will be a particular focus.
- **Set text:** Albert Wendt 'Inside Us the Dead' (1976).
- **Tutorial discussion:** Lecture material and detailed discussion of set text AND viewing of episode from: The Straits t.v. series (2011).
- **Optional extended reading:**
 - Ellis, Junniper. "'Tatau' and 'Malu': Vital Signs in Contemporary Samoan Literature." PMLA 121.3 (2006): 687-701.
 - Sharrad, Paul. "Albert Wendt and the Problem of History." The Journal of Pacific History 37.1 (2002): 109-116.

Unit 8

Vietnam and diaspora – Parents & children, 'asylum'-seeking, generational change, and transnational identity

- This lecture will discuss literature produced in Vietnam and written in Vietnamese, as well as the strong Vietnamese diaspora in Australia, and the representation of diasporic experience in literature by young Vietnamese-Australians such as Nam Le. The first short-story, 'Love and Honor and Pity and Pride and Compassion and Sacrifice', in Le's multi-award-winning collection, *The Boat* (2008), will be discussed in detail in this lecture, in terms of genre, style, setting and relationship to other contemporary literatures. The parent-child relationship and the additional tensions caused by immigration and cultural difference are central to Le's short story.

- **Set text:** Nam Le, 'Love and Honor and Pity and Pride and Compassion and Sacrifice' (2008).
- **Tutorial discussion:** Lecture material and detailed discussion of set text
- **Optional extended reading:**
 - Ommundsen, Wenche. 'This Story Does Not Begin on a Boat': What Is Australian about Asian Australian Writing?" *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies* 25.4 (2011): 503–513.
 - Pham, Hoa. "Finding a Place in the World – Vietnamese-Australian Diasporic Writing." *Southerly (Long Paddock)* vol.71.1 (2011): online.

Unit 9

Tectonic shifts and the reformulation of identities in Japanese Literature in the climatechange era

- Haruki Murakami's short story 'Honey Pie' comes from his collection, *After the Quake* (2003), which was published before the most recent earthquakes that devastated Japan. The collection is set in the 1995 earthquakes, and the short story 'Honey Pie' is engaged with the issue of instabilities in the 21st century: instability of the personal sense of self, of the changing culture of Japan, of the geographical environment, of people's lives over time, and of language itself. This lecture will discuss these representations of interconnected destabilization, in the face of contemporary experiences of shock environmental disaster and broader anxieties of future world collapse. Murakami's ongoing interest in exploring the relations between the categories of 'human' and 'animal', will be considered. There will be discussion of the long tradition in Japanese (and Western) literature of the use of animals as allegorical figures for the moral and ethical instruction of humans and the delineation and challenging of social boundaries.
- **Set text:** Haruki Murakami, 'Honey Pie' (2003).
- **Tutorial Discussion:** Lecture material and detailed discussion of set text
- **Optional extended reading:**
 - Welch, Patricia. "Haruki Murakami's Storytelling World." *World Literature Today* 79.1 (2005): 55-59.
 - Strecher, Matthew. *Dances with Sheep: the Quest for Identity in the Fiction of Murakami Haruki*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2002.
 - Okada, Sumie. *Japanese Writers and the West*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

- Hirata, Hosea. *Discourses of Seduction: History, Evil, Desire, and Modern Japanese Literature*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U P, 2005.

Unit 10

The islands of the Self and literature as littoral space –Aboriginal and White Australia in reconciliation.

- This lecture will consider contemporary Australian debates around the relationship between Aboriginal and white Australia, and will examine the representation of the issues in literature, specifically in Kim Scott’s novel *That Deadman Dance* (2010). The genre of the novel will be introduced, and the Australian literary canon and its inclusions and exclusions will be discussed. Postcolonial reading practices and the new theoretical figure of transnationality will be explained and discussed in relation to Scott’s novel.
- **Set text:** Kim Scott, *That Deadman Dance* (2010).
- **Tutorial discussion:** Lecture material and detailed discussion of set text
- **Optional extended reading:**
 - Brewster, Anne. “Can You Anchor a Shimmering Nation State via Regional Indigenous Roots? Kim Scott talks to Anne Brewster about *That Deadman Dance*.” Interview. *Cultural Studies Review* 18.1 (2012): 228-246.
 - Zable, Arnold and John Bradley and Kim Scott and Marie Munkara. “Language and Politics in Indigenous Writing.” *Overland* 205 (2011): 55-60.

Unit 11

The islands of the Self and literature as littoral space –Aboriginal and White Australia in reconciliation, PART TWO.

- Continuing the discussion from Week 9’s lecture and tutorial, this week’s lecture will outline key features of the novel structure, as well as the particular parameters of the subgenre of ‘historical fiction’. The idea of ‘utopian fiction’ will be theorized, and *That Deadman Dance* will be analysed in further detail in relation to the potentialities of literature for imagining cultural reconciliation in Australia. This lecture will also include revision and synthesis of all Module Two texts, in preparation for your oral presentation assessments in Weeks 11 and 12.
- **Set text:** Kim Scott, *That Deadman Dance* (2010), continued.
- **Tutorial Discussion:** Lecture material and detailed discussion of set text AND discussion of all Module Two texts as revision for essay.
- **Optional extended reading:**

- Scott, Kim. "A Noongar Voice, An Anomalous History." *Westerly* 53 (2008): 93-106.
- Colomba, Caterina. "History as Sharing Stories: Crossing the Cultural Divide through Kim Scott's Fiction." *Journal of Commonwealth and Postcolonial Studies* 17.2 (2011): 39-56.
- **Assessment 3:** This assessment will be graded at the end of the course, and your overall participation in tutorials will be accorded a mark. The quality and quantity of your contributions will be the criteria, and students who balance quality contributions to the tutorial discussion, with respect for and ability to give space to, the contributions of others, will receive the highest marks.
 - This assessment includes your MyEducation activity attendance.

Unit 12

Australian and Asian Literature General Discussion

- Have you enjoyed the literature of the region? Has any particular text or literary issue covered in the course really captured your imagination? Could you explain to friends the main concerns of the literature of contemporary Japan? In today's class we will have a general discussion in which you will be invited to answer such questions. The lecturer will summarize the course topics, and we will discuss any remaining questions about the texts on the course, or the literature of the region in general. A list of Australian and Asian fiction for interested students to read in the future for their own interest will be provided.
- **Assessment 4:** This is the assessment task with the greatest value of any of the tasks in the course. It is worth 35% of your total course mark. This is because the formal essay is the most recognized and respected mode of scholarly engagement with literature, and it is therefore important for students to practice the skills involved in this form of writing.
- Detailed essay writing guidelines will be discussed in the lectures in the weeks before the essay is due, and the expectations for the essay will also be made very clear at the time when the questions are handed out. You will be given a choice from a range of essay questions on the texts from the first Module of the course. You must answer only ONE of the questions.
- You should include at least two scholarly sources in your argument, and these should be professionally referenced in a 'Works Cited' at the end of your essay. Please use the MLA (intext) referencing system. Pages should be numbered, and stapled together. Essays should be typed and DOUBLE-SPACED, with a wide margin at the left hand side of the page to allow room for marker's comments.

Due weekly throughout the semester

- **Assessment 5:** The collected tutorial Q & A sheets that you hand in each week at the tutorials will be marked and a grade given to you for the quality of your responses over the total 12 weeks of the course. This is an excellent assessment task from the student's perspective, as it simultaneously allows you to 1) prepare for the tutorials, and 2) receive a mark that reflects the combination of the consistency of your efforts over the duration of the course, and the individual quality of your engagements with particular texts. All you have to do for this Assessment task is answer the questions on the sheet each week, and submit a **HARDCOPY** of your answers to the tutor at the beginning of that week's lesson. **IMPORTANT:** Be aware that the important aspect of this task is **COMPLETION IN ADVANCE OF THE CLASS** – Q & A sheets will **NOT** be accepted once the tutorial for that week has begun. This is to ensure fairness for all students. If you only submit 8 out of 10 Q & A sheets, 20% will automatically be deducted from the overall mark you achieve for the 8 you did submit. (Similarly, if you only submit 7 out of 10 sheets, 30% will automatically be deducted etc.)

Policies

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be on time and attend all classes while abroad. Many instructors assess both attendance and participation when assigning a final course grade. Attendance alone does not guarantee a positive participation grade; the student should be prepared for class and engage in class discussion. See the on-site syllabus for specific class requirements.

University of Minnesota Policies & Procedures

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

Scholastic Dishonesty

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

Student Conduct

The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct. This information can be found [on the Learning Abroad Center website](#).