

NYU DC

CFII—UF 9102 Sections DC1 & DC2 Arts and Cultures Towards the Crossroads

Spring 2020

Instructor Information

- Mrs. Nancy Michael, Ph.D. Candidate
- Office Hours: Before and after class by appointment

Course Information

- CFII—UF9102
- Arts and Cultures Towards the Crossroads
- Course Description: In the second part of the three-semester Cultural Foundations series, we will be examining texts from the seventh through the eighteenth centuries. The goal is to continue to familiarize students with a range of significant writing, music, and visual art from across various cultures and traditions. Over the course of the semester, we will trace the cultural legacy of these cultures as we analyze their lasting artistic contributions. Considering both the vast span of years and the diversity of cultures represented, we will naturally discuss the differences between the works covered in the course. However, through in-class discussion and writing, students will also be asked to trace points of connection in spite of time and distance
- Prerequisites: CF I
- Meeting Times: Tuesday/Thursday 2:45-4:00 (Section 1), 4:15-5:30 (Section 2)
 - Room: B205

Course Overview and Goals

Our course will be shaped around a common theme: that of the Other. Every culture creates its own monsters, and like the texts themselves, these monsters are frighteningly different yet strangely familiar at the same time, and they can be examined for how they reflect on their world and its values. We will discuss what it is that makes a monster, and we will encounter various types of monsters—dragons, ghouls, racial “monsters”—that serve as the Other against which a society can judge itself. While not every text or work of art we encounter will necessarily contain the monstrous, this general theme will carry through the course in order to help unify roughly a

millennium of global art. To that end, we will break the course reading into (roughly) four groupings: Monstrous Monsters, The Monster Within, Monstrous Others, and Putting It Together: Towards the Modern World.

We will also focus on reading excerpts of longer works. While we are growing more and more accustomed to reading short pieces quickly, this class will focus on tackling longer pieces and learning how to analyze critical sections within these texts. I will discuss with you, early in the semester, strategies for reading longer pieces of literature—when to skim versus when to read closely, what to look for in a longer text, etc., so that you develop this skill and do not need to rely on online guides (such as Spark Notes) to wrestle with a longer piece of literature.

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:

- identify cultural and literary contributions, in translation, of the medieval and Early Modern periods across a wide range of global cultures
- continue to develop their critical reading and writing skills by engaging with these texts and artwork
- acquire the necessary skills and background to discuss and write about works from this time period in a scholarly manner, and they will be expected to develop the skill necessary to conduct individual research in the field
- analyze some of the historical contributions and complications with works from this era and their transmission, as well as identify how cultural production from varying cultures is both unique and part of larger traditions in a pre-global world

Course Requirements

Class Participation

This is a discussion-based course, and your input and attentiveness in class is essential for our time together to be productive and successful. To that end, I expect you to participate regularly. If you use a laptop in class—for example, as a way to reference the class blog—I further expect you to use it exclusively for the purposes of the class and to avoid distractions such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. **10 points**

Quizzes

4-5 unannounced reading quizzes will be given through the course of the semester. These will be multiple choice, and ensure you're keeping up with the readings. **5 points**

Lead Reader

Each student will serve as a lead reader once during the semester. As lead reader, the student will email me suggested questions for discussion at least **3** days prior to the class. These will be distributed to the rest of the class to help focus in-class discussion. In addition, the lead reader is expected to be the in-class “expert” on the text for their given day. **10 points**

Group Presentation

Work in groups of 3-5 to coordinate an in-class presentation of 10-15 minutes on a pre-assigned topic about art or culture. Short write-up of approximately 250 words to be turned in on the day of presentation. **10 points**

Reaction/Response: *Mother Road* (approx. 350 words)

After attending *Mother Road*, you will be asked to write a short response. **5 points**

Short Essay: Close Reading (approx. 1000 words)

Using close reading techniques, analyze one passage of literature in relation to the larger meaning of the text. **15 points**

Theme Essay: Literary/Art Analysis and Comparison (approx. 2500 words)

Write an interpretive essay comparing how two artworks from different cultures (either literary or visual) approach a similar theme. Then use this analysis to speculate about the cultural values these works reflect. **30 points**

Final Exam

The final exam will be given at the assigned time. Details will be forthcoming as the exam approaches. **15 points**

Assigned Readings

- *Beowulf* [Anonymous, trans. Seamus Heaney] WW Norton ISBN: 978-0393320978
- *Lais of Marie de France* [trans. Glyn S. Burgess and Keith Busby] Penguin, ISBN: 978-0140447590
- *The Arabian Nights* [trans. Husain Haddawy] WW Norton, ISBN: 978-0393331660
- *The Inferno* [Dante, trans. Mark Musa] Penguin, ISBN: 978-0142437223
- *Monkey* [Wu Ch'eng-en, trans. Arthur Waley] Evergreen Books, ISBN: 978-0802130860
- *The Tempest* [Shakespeare, any edition]
- *Candide* [Voltaire, trans. Theo Cuffe] Penguin, ISBN: 978-0143039426
- *Art Through the Ages* [Gardner, Cengage e-text]
- All other readings provided on NYU Classes or as handouts

Grading of Assignments

The grade for this course will be determined according to the following formula:

Assignments/Activities	% of Final Grade
Class participation	10%
Quizzes	5%
Lead Reader	10%
Group Presentation	10%
<i>Mother Road</i> Reaction	5%
Short Essay: Close Reading	15%
Theme Essay: Literary/Art Analysis	30%
Final Exam	15%

Letter Grades

Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

Letter Grade	Points	Percent
A	4.00	94-100
A-	3.67	90-93
B+	3.33	87-89
B	3.00	84-86
B-	2.67	80-83

Letter Grade	Points	Percent
C+	2.33	77-79
C	2.00	74-76
C-	1.67	70-73
D+	1.33	67-69
D	1.00	65-66
F	.00	Below 65

View Grades

Grades are posted on Albert. In addition, you can always check with me to see how you're doing throughout the semester.

Topics and Assignments

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due/ Lead Reader
Session 1 4-Feb-20	Introduction: Syllabus, how to discuss the past with an eye to the present, what is a monster?	None	None
Session 2 6- Feb-20	What is a Monster?	Cohen, "Monster Culture: Seven Theses"	None
Session 3 11-Feb-20	Part I: Grr! Monstrous Monsters Monsters of the Far North	<i>Gylfaginning</i>	
Session 4 13- Feb-20	Monsters in Anglo-Saxon England	<i>Beowulf</i> , ll. 64-93, 780-851, 1251-1631	

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due/ Lead Reader
		Felton, "Rejecting and Embracing the Monstrous in Ancient Greece and Rome"	
Session 5 18-Feb-20	Continued	<i>Beowulf</i> , ll. 2207-2220, 2247-2354, 2397-2424, 2510-3180	
Session 6 20- Feb-20	Alternative Perspectives	<i>Ibn Fadlan and the Land of Darkness</i> <i>The Dream of the Rood</i>	
Session 7 25-Feb-20	Transition from Part I to Part II	<i>Monkey/Journey to the West</i> , Chapters 1-7	Group Presentation 1: The Art of Ancient China
Session 8 27- Feb-20	Religions of the East in competition	<i>Monkey/Journey to the West</i> , Chapters 14, 22-24	
Session 9 3-Mar-20	NO REGULAR MEETING	Performance: <i>Mother Road</i> at Arena Stage	
Session 10 5- Mar-20	Who's really a monster here?	<i>Monkey/Journey to the West</i> , Chapters	
Session 11 10-Mar-20	Part II: The Monster Within No, really, who's really the monster?	Marie de France, <i>Bisclavret</i> Friedman, <i>The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought</i> (Ch. 2)	
Session 12 12- Mar-20	Otherworlds and Institutions	Marie de France, <i>Lanval</i>	Group Presentation 2: The Art of Medieval Europe <u>SHORT ESSAY DUE</u>
17-Mar-20& 19- Mar-20	Spring Break - No Class		
Session 13 24-Mar-20	Encounters with the Spirit World	Pu Songling, <i>The Magic Sword</i>	
Session 14 26- Mar-20	Going to Hell in a Handbasket	<i>Inferno</i> , Cantos I-IV	
Session 15 31- Mar-20	Damnation and Redemption	<i>Inferno</i> , Cantos V & XIX, plus Lead Reader's Choice	

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due/ Lead Reader
Session 16 2-Apr-20	The depths of Hell	<i>Inferno</i> , Canto XXXIV, plus Lead Reader's Choice	
Session 17 7-Apr-20	Transition from Part II to Part III	<i>Arabian Nights</i> : The Tale of King Shahrayar and Shahrazad; Ox & Donkey; Merchant & Wife	Group Presentation 3: Islamic Art and Culture
Session 18 9- Apr-20	Stories and Storytellers	<i>Arabian Nights</i> : Fish & Demon; Yunan & Duban; Sage & Parrot; She-Ghoul & King; Final Night	
Session 19 14-Apr-20	Part III: Monstrous Others	<i>The King of Tars</i> Strickland, "Monstrosity and Race in the Late Middle Ages"	
Session 20 16- Apr-20	Strange Crossovers	<i>The Prioress's Tale</i>	Group Presentation 4: Saracens, Ethiopians, and Jews
Session 21 21-Apr-20	Toward a New World	<i>The Tempest</i>	
Session 22 23- Apr-20	Continued	<i>The Tempest</i> Friedman, <i>The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought</i> (Epilogue)	
Session 23 28-Apr-20	Lyric Poetry East and West	Selections from Rumi	
Session 24 30- Apr-20	Lyric Poetry East and West, Part 2	Renaissance Lyric	
Session 25 5-May-20	Lyric Poetry East and West, Part 3	Tang Poetry	
Session 26 7- May-20	Part IV: Putting It Together: Towards a Modern World	Mandeville, "The Fable of the Bees" Addison and Steele, <i>The Spectator</i> , no. 58, 61, 62	Group Presentation 5: The Art of the Renaissance

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due/ Lead Reader
Session 27 12-May-20	Satire as a force for...change? thought? venting?	<i>Candide</i>	
Session 28 14- May-20	Tragedy from the tabloids	<i>The Love Suicides at Amijima</i>	<u>THEME ESSAY DUE</u>
Session 29 19-May-20& 21-May-20	Finals Week		

Tests and Quizzes

- See “Course Requirements” above

Course Materials

Required Textbooks & Materials

- See “Assigned Readings” above

Optional Textbooks & Materials

- Andy Orchard: *Pride and Prodigies: Studies in the Monsters of the Beowulf Manuscript*
- Jan Bloch Friedman: *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought*
- Jeffrey Jerome Cohen: *Monster Theory*
- Jeffrey Jerome Cohen: *Of Giants: Sex, Monsters, and the Middle Ages*
- Bettina Bildhauer and Robert Mills, Eds.: *The Monstrous Middle Ages*
- Asa Simon Mittman and Peter Dindle, Eds.: *The Ashgate Companion to Monsters and the Monstrous*
- Dana Oswald: *Monsters, Gender, and Sexuality in Medieval English Literature*
- Debra Higgs Strickland: *Saracens, Demons, and Jews: Making Monsters in Medieval Art*
- David Williams: *Deformed Discourse: The Function of the Monster in Medieval Thought and Literature*
- Albrecht Classen, Ed.: *Meeting the Foreign in the Middle Ages*
- Mary Douglas: *Purity and Danger: An analysis of concepts of pollution and taboo*

Resources

- **Access your course materials:** [NYU Classes](http://nyu.edu/its/classes) (nyu.edu/its/classes)
- **Databases, journal articles, and more:** [Bobst Library](http://library.nyu.edu) (library.nyu.edu)
- **Assistance with strengthening your writing:** [NYU Writing Center](http://nyu.mywconline.com) (nyu.mywconline.com)
- **Obtain 24/7 technology assistance:** [IT Help Desk](http://nyu.edu/it/servicedesk) (nyu.edu/it/servicedesk)

Course Policies

Attendance and Tardiness

Study abroad at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. **To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers is mandatory, and unexcused absences will affect students' semester grades.** Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure. At all Global Academic Centers, unexcused absences will be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade (for courses that meet once per week; for courses that meet twice per week, it is a one percent reduction per missed class).

To seek an excused absence for medical reasons, students must use the online absence reporting form within 24 hours of their first missed class. Students may be required to produce a doctor's note with that day's date, especially if the student has missed any classes already that semester or if exams/presentations/papers occurred in the missed class.

Non-medical absences must be discussed with the Academic Staff at least 7 days before the missed date(s) in question. If faculty members do not receive notification of an excused absence, the student has not procured an excused absence.

NYU Washington, DC expects students to arrive to class promptly (both at the beginning and after any breaks), to be attentive, and to remain for the duration of the class. If full class attendance and participation becomes a problem, it is the prerogative of each lecturer to apply the rule for unexcused absences, which may include a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade.

Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. This means they should initiate email and/ or office hour discussions to discuss any missed lectures and assignments and arrange a timeline for submitting missed work.

Final exams must be taken at their designated times. Final exams may not be taken early, and students should not plan to leave Washington, DC before the end of the finals week.

Please note that for classes involving a field trip or other external visit, transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the student's responsibility to arrive at the announced meeting point in a punctual and timely fashion. Staff members may always be reached by cell phone for advice regarding public transportation.

Late Assignment

- 1) Written work due in class must be submitted during the class time to the professor.
- 2) Late work should be emailed to the faculty as soon as it is completed.
- 3) Late work will be reduced for a fraction of a letter grade (e.g., A to A-, A- to B+, etc.) for every day it is late, including weekends.

- 4) Written work during the semester that is submitted 5 days after the submission date (including weekends) without an agreed extension fails and is given a zero.
- 5) Students who arrive to class late for an exam do not have automatic approval to take extra time to complete the exam.
- 6) Students who miss an exam (including the final) without previously arranged permission will receive a zero on that exam.
- 7) Assignments due during finals week that are submitted more than 3 days without previously arranged extensions will not be accepted and will receive a zero. Any exceptions or extensions for work during finals week must be discussed with the Site Director.

Incomplete Grade Policy

An “incomplete” is a temporary grade that indicates that the student has, for good reason, not completed all of the course work. This grade is not awarded automatically nor is it guaranteed; rather, the student must ask the instructor for a grade of “incomplete,” present documented evidence of illness, an emergency, or other compelling circumstances, and clarify the remaining course requirements with the instructor.

In order for a grade of “incomplete” to be registered on the transcript, the student must fill out a form, in collaboration with the course instructor and the academic administration at the site; it should then be submitted to the site’s academic office. The submitted form must include a deadline by which the missing work will be completed. This deadline may not be later than the end of the following semester.

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism

As the University’s policy on "[Academic Integrity for Students at NYU](#)" states: "At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others." **Students at Global Academic Centers must follow the University and school policies.**

The presentation of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images, or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

NYU Washington, DC takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. All your written work must be submitted as a hard copy AND in electronic form to the lecturer. Your lecturer may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form.

It is also an offense to submit work for assignments from two different courses that is substantially the same (be it oral presentations or written work). If there is an overlap of the subject of your assignment with one that you produced for another course (either in the current or any previous semester), you **MUST** inform your professor.

For guidelines on academic honesty, clarification of the definition of plagiarism, examples of procedures and sanctions, and resources to support proper citation, please see:

[NYU Academic Integrity Policies and Guidelines](#)

[NYU Library Guides](#)

Disability Disclosure Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

Religious Observances

Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday.

Students must notify their professor and the Washington, DC Academics team in writing via email at least 7 days before being absent for this purpose.

About Your Lecturer

Mrs. Michael is currently a PhD Candidate at The Catholic University of America, where she specializes in medieval literature. Her dissertation, which she will defend this April, is titled “Motherhood and Power in Middle English Romance”. In 2016, she took part in the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute “Teaching *Beowulf* in the Context of Old Norse-Icelandic Literature” at the Medieval Institute in Kalamazoo, MI. She is a contributing author to the anthology *How to Teach a Play*, and she has written a chapter for the forthcoming volume *Teaching Beowulf: Practical Approaches*, to be published later this year. In addition to her doctoral work in English, she holds an MA in Theatre from Villanova University. She has taught at Northern Virginia Community College, Catholic University, University of Maryland Baltimore County, the United States Naval Academy, and Villanova University. Her research interests include Anglo-Saxon poetry, Old Norse-Icelandic literature, romance, monster theory, and representations of maternity in medieval literature. When she is not teaching or writing, she is a theater practitioner: Mrs. Michael has worked professionally as a costume designer, stage manager, actor, and musician. These days, however, theatre work has taken a back seat to her other full-time job as mother to her six-year-old son.