10.08 The Quest for Ethnic, Cultural, and National Identities in Literature
3 hours; 3 credits

A thematic approach to literature. Themes to be chosen range from the global to the local, from the abstract to the concrete. Focus on fostering connections with other disciplines in a manner that enhances students’ understanding of the diverse strands that make up communities, traditions, and values. Exploration of how East European, Latin American, and Indian novels from the late 1960s to the present interpret the question of ethnic, cultural, and national identities.

Prerequisite: Junior standing and satisfaction of all lower-tier requirements in Arts and Literatures.

Common Goals Addressed by Core course:
1. To understand the arts, histories and cultures of the past as a foundation for those of the present. (3, 4)
2. To develop the ability to think critically and creatively, to reason logically, to reason quantitatively, and to express one’s thoughts orally and in writing with clarity and precision. (9, 11, 13)
   \[ ? \text{ To understand the necessity for tolerance and to appreciate individual and social diversity, as well as differences of race, class, and gender.} \ (22, \ 23, \ 25, \ 31) \]

Objectives of Core Course:
1. Students will become acquainted with literatures of the past and present, and with significant ideas and real life issues presented in these literary works. (3)
2. Students will understand literature, past and present, and will acquire a critical appreciation of its contribution to the life of the individual and society. (4)
3. Students will be able to analyze, explain, produce, and respond to arguments. (9)
4. Students will be able to express ideas clearly in writing. (11)
5. Because making connections across genres and to real life experiences promotes deeper understanding, analysis, and logical inferences, students will be able to predict outcomes and conclusions while reading. (13)
6. Students will be able to demonstrate understanding of the characteristics of diversity and difference in the areas of gender, race, class, and ethnicity and demonstrate in their behavior respect for this diversity. (22)
7. Students will be able to explain and use a theoretical framework for understanding intercultural interactions. (23)
8. Students will be able to and demonstrate conceptual knowledge of other cultures and of globalization. (25)
9. Students will be able to work effectively in diverse teams. (31)

Outcomes for Core Course:
1. Students can identify, engage with, and discuss important literary works and significant cultural and historical issues presented in these works. (3)
2. Students can reflect upon and critically examine fundamental themes and issues of important literary works, and can assess their significance to past and to contemporary human life. (4)
3. Students can identify premises and conclusion of arguments. (9)
4. Students can produce arguments to support a position. (9)
5. Students can use writing to reflect on their learning and to understand difficult material. (11)
6. Students can move from “low stakes” writing to more formal pieces. (11)
7. Students can draft and revise written material. (11)
8. Students can develop ideas by using supportive evidence appropriate to the discipline. (11)
9. Students can analyze the relative difficulty of the text and apply appropriate strategies for enhancing comprehension. (13)
10. Students can use the conventions of specific genres to anticipate the logic of an argument, the explanation of a concept, or the flow of a narrative. (13)
11. Students can analyze text to find connections between the ideas in the selection they are reading and those from other texts or life experiences. (13)
12. Students can analyze relevant aspects of the text, construct meaning, and understand the validity of multiple interpretations. (13)
13. Students can participate in a debate on a controversial subject regarding such issues as race, gender, sexual orientation, class and ethnicity that involve strongly held beliefs and demonstrate respectful listening, lack of acrimony, and openness. (22)
14. Students can cite principal theoretical explanations of cultural differences and describe their likely effects on communication. (23)
15. Student can select a historical period and demonstrate how political events impacted upon different ethnic, class or racial groups in the regions that we study. (25)
16. Students can articulate the opinions, feelings, and values of group members whose background, ethnicity, or gender is different from their own. (31)
**Course Outline:**

**WEEK 1**
Ivo Andric, *The Bridge on the Drina* (Chapters I-VI)

Andrew Wachtel, “Imagining Yugoslavia: The Historical Archeology of Ivo Andric”

**WEEK 2**
Ivo Andric, *The Bridge on the Drina* (Chapters VII-XII)

Excerpts from *Ivo Andric Revisited: The Bridge Still Stands* (ed. Wayne Vucinich)

Tomislav Longinovic, “East Within the West: Bosnian Cultural Identity in the Works of Ivo Andric”

**WEEK 3**
Ivo Andric, *The Bridge on the Drina* (Chapters XIII-XX)

Excerpts from *Balkan Identities: Nation and Memory* (Ed. M. Todorova)

**WEEK 4**
Ivo Andric, *The Bridge on the Drina* (Chapters XX-XXIV)

*Before the Rain* (1994, France/U.K./Macedonia; dir. Milko Manchevski)

Milko Manchevski, "Rainmaking and Personal Truth"

**WEEK 5**
Carlos Fuentes, *Christopher Unborn*, parts 1 & 2

**WEEK 6**
Carlos Fuentes, *Christopher Unborn*: parts 3 & 4

**WEEK 7**
Carlos Fuentes, *Christopher Unborn*: parts 5 & 6

**WEEK 8**
Carlos Fuentes, *Christopher Unborn*: parts 7, 8 & 9

**WEEK 9**
Maarten van Delden, “Carlos Fuentes: From Identity to Alternativity”

**WEEKS 10 & 11**

**WEEK 12**

**WEEKS 13 & 14**
Mario Vargas Llosa, *The Storyteller*

**Method of evaluation:**
- Tests 30%
- Midterm paper 20%
- Final paper 30%
- Class participation and group discussions 10%
- Reaction papers and in-class writing assignments 10%

**Method of assessment:** Students will be asked to:

1. Summarize sections from important literary works and explain some significant issues presented in these works. (3)
2. Interpret, in reaction paper, a theme or issue of a literary work, and assess its significance to past and to contemporary human life. (4)
3. Identify the premises and conclusion in a selected text and explain how the premises support the author’s conclusion. (9)
4. Present an argument in support of or in opposition to a certain statement. (9)
5. Write response essays, take-home papers, “writing to read” exercises, and a number of “low-stake” assignments. (11)
6. Participate in group work to clarify their interpretation of the text, keep reading logs or reading journal notes to enhance their comprehension. (13)
7. Annotate the logic of an argument, the explanation of a concept, or the flow of a narrative. (13)
8. Use knowledge derived from ideas in other texts and from life experiences to posit theories that explain how the ideas from the text they are reading fit in a larger context. (13)
9. Present aspects of the text, formulate theories or ideas from their analyses, and compare multiple interpretations of the text. (13)
10. Take three tests and demonstrate the knowledge they have acquired of ethnic, cultural, and national identities. (22)
11. Participate in a debate on a controversial subject regarding the issue of identity. (22)
12. Write a final critical paper, in which they use a theoretical framework for analyzing intercultural interactions and discussing the ethnic, national, or cultural conflicts depicted in the novels. (9, 11, 13, 23)
13. Write a mid-term paper on the issue of cultural diversity and discuss the fictional realities of the works that we study in view of the history and culture of the Balkans, Mexico, the Peruvian Amazon, and India. (9, 11, 13, 25)
14. Discuss in groups the process of identity formation in the context of post-colonial society and foreign domination in order to demonstrate their ability to work effectively in diverse teams. (31)

Bibliography:


Secondary Bibliography:


