10.06 Text/Context: Special Topics
3 hours; 3 credits

Study of a text in its literary, historical, and cultural contexts across time. Focus on textual analysis; literary, historical, and cultural influences on the production of the text; and responses to the text across time. Reactions to the text in different media.

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

Common Goals Addressed by Core Course:
1. To understand the literature 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, and to express one’s thoughts orally and in writing with clarity and precision (9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 21).
3. To be capable of integrating knowledge from diverse sources (28).
4. To understand the necessity for tolerance and to appreciate individual and social diversity, as well as differences of race, class, and gender (19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 31).

Objectives of Core Course:
1. Students will become acquainted with literature of the past and present (3)
2. Students will achieve an understanding of the major forms and conventions of literary expression, past and present, and gain a critical appreciation of the contribution of literature to the life of the individual and society (4)
3. Students will be able to analyze difficult concepts (9)
4. Students will be able to express ideas clearly in writing (10)
5. Students will be able to communicate thought orally (12)
6. Because the aesthetics of reading to appreciate a well-written work adds lifelong value and gives pleasure in ways that mark an educated citizen, students will be able to develop a basis for evaluating texts. (13)
7. Students will be able to demonstrate conceptual knowledge of the diversity of U. S. society (24)
8. Students will be able to demonstrate integrating knowledge from diverse sources (28)

Outcomes for Core Course:
1. Students can intelligently discuss and write about important literary works, historical sources, and other cultural artifacts, (3, 4, 9, 10, 12, 13, 24, 28)
2. Students can orally explain, use writing, and develop their analytical skills to reflect upon and critically examine the techniques and forms of important literary works and other cultural artifacts (3, 4, 9, 10, 12, 13, 24, 28)
3. Students can demonstrate orally and through writing their familiarity and understanding of major American historical and cultural trends, based on their analysis of diverse sources (3, 4, 9, 10, 12, 13, 24, 28)
4. Students can demonstrate orally and through writing their understanding of the
connections between literature and other artifacts and the cultures in which they are produced and later understood. (3, 4, 9, 10, 12, 13, 24, 28)

Course Schedule:
Week 1: Introduction

Week 2-4: *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*
Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin, or Life Among the Lowly*, Chapters 1-30
Frederick Douglas, “The Heroic Slave”
George Sand, review

Week 5: The Literary Context: sentimentalism, slave narratives
Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin, or Life Among the Lowly*, Chapters 31-45
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, “Evangeline”
Harriet Jacobs, “The Loophole of Retreat” from *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

Week 6: The Historical Context: slavery, abolition, religion, minstrelsy
Nathan Huggins, “Master and Slave” from *Black Odyssey*
Rev. E. J. Stearns, *Notes on Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, 1853;
David Walker, *Appeal*
Lydia Maria Child, “An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans”
Biblical selections
*Dark Town* series (Currier & Ives)

Literary Responses
Week 7: Children’s Books
*Pictures and Stories from Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1853)
*A Peep into Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1853)
*Topsy* (1890)

Week 8: The Plantation Tradition
Joel Chandler Harris, selections, *Legend of the Old Plantation*
Thomas Nelson Page, selections, *In Ole Virginia*

Week 9: Harlem Renaissance Criticism
Benjamin Brawley, “The Negro in American Fiction”
Alain Locke, “The Negro in American Literature”
Sterling Brown, *The Negro in American Fiction*,

Week 10: Wright and Baldwin
Richard Wright, selections, *Uncle Tom’s Children*
James Baldwin “Everybody’s Protest Novel”

Week 11: Rewriting Slavery:
Ishmael Reed, *Flight to Canada*

Visual Responses
Week 12: Advertising
Tomitudes (memorabilia and collectibles)
Advertising

Week 13: Visual Art
Hammatt Billings, E. W. Kemble, Miguel Covarrubias, illustrations
Kara Walker, “The End of Uncle Tom”

Week 14: Film
*Dimples*
“Uncle Tom and Little Eva” “Uncle Tom’s Cabana”
*The King and I*, selections

Bibliography

Required
A packet of materials

Secondary
Robert S. Levine · *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* in *Frederick Douglass’ Paper*: An Analysis of Reception in Ammons, ed. Norton Critical Edition of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*
Hortense J. Spillers · Changing the Letter: The Yokes, the Jokes of Discourse, or, Mrs. Stowe, Mr. Reed in Ammons, ed. Norton Critical Edition of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*
Jane P. Tompkins · Sentimental Power: *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the Politics of Literary History in Ammons, ed. Norton Critical Edition of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*
Christina Zwarg · Fathering and Blackface in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in Ammons, ed. Norton Critical Edition of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*

Methods of Evaluation: weekly (low-stakes) e-mails (0%); class participation (20%); 6
response papers of 1-2 pages (15%); 2, 3-page papers (35%); final examination (30%)

Methods of Assessment:
1. Each student must e-mail the student below him/her on the class e-mail tree with a question or statement and answer the student above about the work under discussion for the week. This “correspondence” must take place before the first class meeting of the week. (3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 13)
2. Students must attend regularly, arrive on time, and contribute to the discussion. (12)
3. Students will write 6 directed “response” papers: they will pick out a small aspect of a work and analyze it in order to demonstrate their close-reading skills or they will compare small details from works in different media in order to demonstrate their ability to analyze diverse sources or they will relate a small detail of a work to larger historical or cultural issues. (3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 13, 24, 28)
4. Students will write 2 three-page papers in which they will be asked to analyze the literary or visual aspects of a work or relate a work to larger historical issues or compare works from different media. (3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 13, 24, 28)
5. Students will write a final exam in which they demonstrate their comprehensive knowledge of the materials in the course. (3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 13, 24, 28)