HU3545 Literature Across Borders (Summer 2013)  
(Online)

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Course Description and Goals:
If it is somewhat effortless to imagine how cultures across the world can differ from one another, the same doesn’t apply to literatures of other geo-cultural areas. Indeed, it is relatively as easy to encounter cultural difference as it is difficult to come across foreign literatures. We are exposed to cultures from other parts of the world through individual contacts, TV, movies and the internet..., whereas we often have to “go out of our way” to discover world literatures. For these reasons, this course is designed with the primary goal of providing participants with exposure to literary texts that they are likely to be unfamiliar with. The course will primarily focus on novels, and it is through this medium and genre that we will explore the idea of border crossing.

What is literature across borders? How do we read such a literature? How do literary texts from beyond the borders we live in challenge us, appeal to us, speak to us and ultimately enrich us, to the point of deepening our knowledge of ourselves and our understanding of our own history, culture and identity? But also, how do we understand the notion of border? Taking the border as a dynamic notion, this course seeks to explore ways in which besides being artifacts, literary texts also produce valuable knowledge about others, and us. The course brings together acclaimed writers of our time to engage students on what is local, topical or universal in our human condition.

Required:
Internet access  
This syllabus  
Gabriel Garcia Márquez, No One Writes to the Colonel, New York, Perennial Classics, 2005

Additional course materials are posted online (Canvas), along with some recommended readings. Weekly assigned readings are organized into folders in “Files”, while web links may be found in “Pages”.*
Policy & Participation:
This call is taught on Canvas. Because success in this course is based on active engagement with the text and interaction between class participants in an online forum, you are expected to complete all readings and assignments in a timely manner, in order to effectively participate in the class, and contribute to the mutually beneficial virtual learning community that the instructors seek to foster. Please note that late submissions and other participations will affect your performance and your overall grade. If you anticipate not having access to the internet at some point, plan ahead of time, and contact me to discuss arrangements made to insure continue participation in the class.

Homework
Homework is assigned weekly, and will include the primary texts, additional reading as well as materials from other sources relevant to the primary texts, the authors or the topics explored. Homework will include tests or quizzes, essays and short written assignments, interactive assignments such as discussion board, and viewing/listening and comprehension activities, etc. Some of these assignments will be P/N while others will be graded. Always save electronic copies of your works for future reference, or in case you need to resubmit something. Check Canvas regularly for information and updates about the readings and assignments.

Discussion Board
I expect you to read the text reflectively, and demonstrate ability to comprehend or analyze them beyond mere summary or else statements of like/dislike. This means when appropriate, your response must demonstrate an insightful reading, a clear awareness of the issues/questions explored, and of their complexities. Students’ output should show a control of the topic explored, significance, depth and coherence of arguments in their responses.

When participating in the class forum, participants must demonstrate a critical engagement in the course, and are expected to respond to their peers’ posts. Needless to say, such interactions should be respectful and conducted in a spirit of collaboration.

Communication with class
I will read all submitted works, and provide feedback in a timely manner. I will monitor the discussion, and provide feedback or intervene when necessary. I will either respond to the class, or send individual feedback.

Recommendations
Show some enthusiasm and be patient, because literary texts don’t lend themselves to our intellect the same way as other artifacts do. Don’t be afraid to sound stupid. Contact me immediately if you are experiencing difficulties. Appointments may be made to chat or skype with me. Allow a 24-hour response time.
**Course Requirements:**

1. Multiple-choice quiz every week (x5) 50 pts
2. Essays (40+60) 100 pts
3. 4 2-paragraph assignments 50 pts
4. Discussion forum P/N (x4) 50 pts
5. Presentation and Conclusion P/N 25 pts
6. Response to videos P/N 25 pts

**Note:** Points will be deducted for late submissions

**Grading Scale:**

A = 94-100
AB = 88-93
B = 84-87
BC = 78-83
C = 74-77
CD = 68-73
D = 60-67

**Grading Standards for Formal Essays In General:**

Complexity and range of analysis, significance of conclusions, logic and coherence of arguments, etc. are the focus of my grading. However, rhetorical development and writing style are inseparable from these features. Essays should be free of spelling and grammatical errors. Use the spelling and grammar checkers on Microsoft Word before you print your final draft of the essay. Note that the spelling checker will not catch homonyms used out of context. Also note that since the grammar checker is designed for business writing it will suggest that you change some sentences and phrases (because they are long, for instance) that are quite acceptable for academic analysis.

**Academic Integrity**

Taking the work of others and passing it off as your own is academic theft and will be punishable by failing the assignment/course or dismissal from school. Cases of plagiarism will be turned over to the Dean of Students’ Office. See details about Michigan Tech’s Academic Integrity definitions, policies, and enforcement procedures at [http://www.sa.mtu.edu/dean/judicial/airc/](http://www.sa.mtu.edu/dean/judicial/airc/) and [http://www.studentaffairs.mtu.edu/dean/judicial/policies/academic_integrity.html](http://www.studentaffairs.mtu.edu/dean/judicial/policies/academic_integrity.html).

*MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disability Act of 1990 (ADA). If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at MTU, please call Dr. Gloria Melton, Dean of Students, (2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, the department head, or the Affirmative Action Office (3310).*
**Synopsis of course**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Theme and Primary texts</th>
<th>Videos-clips*</th>
<th>Works Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Approaching literature across borders: Literary and historical backgrounds</td>
<td></td>
<td>Quiz 1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-Civil War Colombia: <em>No One Writes to the Colonel</em> pp 3-30</td>
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<td>Assignment 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><em>No One Writes to the Colonel</em> pp 31-End</td>
<td>Garcia Márquez: A Witch Writing</td>
<td>Quiz 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Post-Apartheid South Africa: <em>Disgrace</em> Chapter 1-8</td>
<td>Land Wars – South-Africa</td>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
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<tr>
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<td><em>Disgrace</em> Chapter 9-19</td>
<td>South Africa: The Impact of Apartheid</td>
<td>Discussion Board 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><em>Disgrace</em> Chapter 20-End</td>
<td>Witness To Apartheid</td>
<td>Quiz 3 Mid-term essay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The border within: <em>Identity</em> Chapter 1-30</td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignment 3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Identity</em> Chapter 31-End</td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion Board 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Postcolonial Africa and the European mirage</td>
<td></td>
<td>Quiz 4 Assignment 4</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td><em>The Belly of the Atlantic</em> Chapter 1-5</td>
<td>Surprising Europe - Home Sweet Home</td>
<td>Discussion Board 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><em>The Belly of the Atlantic</em> Chapter 11-End</td>
<td></td>
<td>Quiz 5 Final Essay</td>
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*Note: Assigned readings and other activities are to be covered by the due date. All materials pertaining to the course will be made available online. Verify accessibility ahead of time and notify me about any difficulty.*

*See Files, Pages and Assignments on Canvas for additional course materials*

**This syllabus is subject to change at any time for pedagogical and/or unexpected circumstances. You will be notified of such changes if they take place.**