

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**
www.mlcs.ualberta.ca

2015-2016 C LIT 460-A1: Fundamentals of Comparative Literature
(Fall Term)

Instructor: Albert Braz
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Personal Website: No

Time: Tuesday 14:00-16:50
Place: Humanities Centre 2-37
Office Hours: Thursday 11:00-13:00,
or by appointment
Course Website: No

Course Prerequisite: None

Course-based Ethics Approval in place regarding all research projects that involve human testing, questionnaires, etc.?

Yes No, not needed, no such projects approved.

Community Service Learning component

Required Optional None

Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material Available

- Exam registry – Students’ Union
<http://www.su.ualberta.ca/services/infolink/exam/>
- See explanations below
- Document distributed in class
- Other (please specify)
- NA

Additional mandatory Instructional fees (approved by Board of Governors)

Yes No

Course Description and Objectives:

“Personally I wish we could simply speak of the study of literature or of literary scholarship and that there were . . . professors of literature just as there are professors of philosophy and of history.”

--René Wellek

This course explores the history and methodology of Comparative Literature. Sometimes called a quixotic discipline, Comparative Literature attempts to cover not only the totality of literary production around the world but also the links between literature and such diverse fields as music, sculpture, painting, theatre, and film, to say nothing of history, sociology, anthropology, folklore, and genetics. In the process of

tracing the evolution of this multifarious discipline, we will examine such issues as the definition(s) of Comparative Literature; the relation between national literatures and world literature, not the least how “national” texts enter world literature; the construction of literary and critical canons; and the role of translation in Comparative Literature. That is, is Comparative Literature’s heterogeneity a sign of the discipline’s utopian overreach or of its vitality? In particular, we will explore the new geographies of literary production in an attempt to incorporate historically excluded literatures and literary histories into Comparative Literature.

Texts:

Required: Yes

Damrosch, David, Natalie Melas, and Mbongiseni Buthelezi, eds. *The Princeton Sourcebook in Comparative Literature: From the European Enlightenment to the Global Present*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2009. (PS)

Saussy, Haun, ed. *Comparative Literature in an Age of Globalization*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2006. (CL)

Hamid, Mohsin. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. 2007. Toronto: Anchor Canada, 2008.

Film (to be shown in class):

The Reluctant Fundamentalist. Dir. Mira Nair. Scr. Mohsin Hamid, Ami Boghani, and William Wheeler. With Riz Ahmed, Kate Hudson, Liev Schreiber, and Kiefer Sutherland. IFC Films, 2012.

Grade Distribution (see “Explanatory Notes”):

Presentation:	20%	To be assigned in the first two weeks of classes.
Written version of Presentation:	20%	Between 1500 and 2500 words.
Essay:	50%	3000 to 4000 words; due December 1, 2015.
Class participation	10%	

Explanatory Notes on Assignments:

Presentation and Essay

Each student will be required to give one presentation, which must focus on a topic distinct from that of the essay. The presentation will be about 20 minutes long (conference style), and will be followed by a response from the class. At least two days before the presentation, the student must provide the instructor with a 200-word abstract

and a 50-word biographical note. Then a week after the presentation, the student must deliver to the instructor a written version of the talk, including a comprehensive list of works cited. In addition, the student must be prepared to initiate the discussion after the next presentation.

The essay will be between 3000 and 4000 words and it may deal with works discussed in the course or with other critical or creative texts that, in some way, address the nature of Comparative Literature. In either case, students must discuss their intentions with the instructor as early as possible to ensure that he considers the topic is feasible.

All essay topics must be discussed in advance with, and be approved by, the instructor.

Required Notes:

“Policy about course outlines can be found in Section 23.4(2) of the University calendar.”

Academic Integrity:

“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at <http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/en/CodesofConductandResidenceCommunityStandards/CodeofStudentBehaviour.aspx>) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.”

Learning and Working Environment:

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring all students; faculty and staff are able to study and work in an environment safe and free of discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The Department urges anyone who feels this policy has been or is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or
- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that directs discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.

For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the student ombudservice (<http://www.ombudservice.ualberta.ca/>).

Information about the University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures is described in UAPPOL at

<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/PoliciesProcedures/Pages/DispPol.aspx?PID=110> .

Academic Honesty:

All students should consult the information provided by the [Office of Judicial Affairs](#) regarding avoiding cheating and plagiarism in particular and academic dishonesty in general (see the [Academic Integrity Undergraduate Handbook](#) and [Information for Students](#)). If in doubt about what is permitted in this class, ask the instructor.

Students involved in language courses and translation courses should be aware that on-line “translation engines” produce very dubious and unreliable “translations.” **Students in languages courses** should be aware that, while seeking the advice of native or expert speakers is often helpful, **excessive editorial and creative help** in assignments is considered a form of “cheating” that violates the code of student conduct with dire consequences.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the [Academic Discipline Process](#).

Recording of Lectures:

Audio or video recording of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Recorded material is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections 23.3(1) and 23.5.6 of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

In this course, especially since it is a seminar, participation entails active and informed engagement with the texts under discussion in each class.

Policy for Late Assignments:

Late assignments will be penalized 2% per day and will receive no comments.

Student Accessibility Services:

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with Specialized Support &

Disability Services, contact their office immediately (2-800 SUB; Email sasrec@ualberta.ca; Email; phone 780-492-3381; WEB www.ssds.ualberta.ca).

Grading:

Marks for assignments, tests, and exams are given in percentages, to which letter grades are also assigned, according to the table below (“**MLCS Undergraduate Grading Scale**”). The percentage mark resulting from the entire term work and examination then produces the final letter grade for the course.

“MLCS Undergraduate Grading Scale”

Letter	%	Pts	Descriptor
A+	95-100%	4.0	Outstanding: Superior performance showing understanding and knowledge of the subject matter far exceeding expectations.
A	90-94%	4.0	Excellent: Superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.
A-	86-89%	3.7	Very good: Clearly above average performance with complete knowledge of subject matter.
B+	82-85%	3.3	Very good
B	75-81%	3.0	Good: average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete.
B-	70-74%	2.7	Good
C+	66-69%	2.3	Satisfactory: Basic understanding of the subject matter
C	61-65%	2.0	Satisfactory
C-	58-60%	1.7	Satisfactory
D+	55-57%	1.3	Minimal Pass: Marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.
D	50-54%	1.0	Minimal Pass: Marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.
F	0-49%	0.0	Fail: Unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.