

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**

<https://uofa.ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies>

2019-2020 MLCS 630, X01: The Disciplines of Literature
(Fall Term)

Instructor: Daniel Fried
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Personal Website: n/a

Time: W 5-8pm
Place: A309B
Office Hours: W 3-5,
or by appointment
Course Website: eClass

Course Prerequisite: consent of department

It is your responsibility as a student to ensure that you have the appropriate prerequisites for the course.

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

Course Description, Objectives, and Expected Learning Outcomes:

This course will use oral epics (as well as prose sagas and other related folkloric materials) to illuminate the development of national literatures, world literature, and comparative literature, and to explore how these concepts became central to the discipline of literature as an object of research. We will also probe the theoretical problems raised by two special cases: the Chinese poetic tradition, which has long been said to be “missing” epic; and the Thousand and One Nights, which combines radical textual instability with a history of orientalist construction in a way perhaps unmatched in world literature. These readings will be contextualized, at the beginning and ending of the course, within debates over alternatives to “literature” as a way of conceiving what the object of our study actually is. By the end of this course, students will be able to analyze how “literature” as a discipline has interacted with conceptions of national

identity, and to use their understanding of the limitations of that discipline to hone their own research interests.

Course Format: This course will be run as a traditional graduate seminar, in which participants are expected to learn primarily through discussion of assigned texts, and through a major research paper due at the end of the course.

Texts:

See “Reading Schedule”, appended.

Additional Course Fees

Yes No

Important Dates: [See Academic Schedule in current Calendar](#)

First Day of Class: September 4, 2019

Add/Delete Date: September 16, 2019

50% Withdrawal Date: October 3, 2019

Withdrawal Date: November 29, 2019

Last Day of Class: December 4, 2019

Final Exam Date (if applicable): n/a

Grade Distribution (see “Explanatory Notes”):

General Class Participation 40% (no due date)

Bibliographical Presentation 10% (different students will present each week)

Initial Research Report 10% (due December 4, in class)

Final Research Paper 40% (due December 18, by email to Prof. Fried)

Explanatory Notes on Assignments:

General Class Participation 40%

You will be expected to read thoroughly all assigned materials and to discuss them with the insight and attention to detail which is appropriate to a graduate seminar.

Bibliographical Presentation 10%

Each week, I will ask one student to present an annotated bibliography of scholarly materials relevant either to the assigned readings for that week, or else to her/his major literature. In addition to distributing a written bibliography (20 journal articles or 5 books, with a few sentences of analysis for each entry), the student should also give a semi-formal presentation (20 minutes) describing the state of research in the field. I will also ask you to save your bibliography in a RefWorks account which we will use in common for the course.

Initial Research Report 10%

On the last day of class, all students will give formal 15-minute presentations on the research topic about which they intend to write their final research paper. This means, of course, that

you will need to begin research considerably earlier than the end of the semester. You should aim to give this presentation at the same level that you would expect to give at a grad student conference.

Final Research Paper 40%

You are required to turn in a scholarly research paper on a topic of your choosing with clear, direct, and obvious relevance to the course; ordinarily, this will mean a paper actually on one of the works assigned. I may approve other paper topics if they address the subject of national epic in regard to a given work in the student's primary research language. I strongly encourage you to consult me when choosing a paper topic and constructing a thesis if you feel unsure about the proper scope of your research. Because it is important for your professional development to learn how to write publishable scholarship, your paper must be close to journal-article length (5000-6500 words) though I will grade you by an easier standard than that used by journals. You will be penalized if the paper is too short, but you will be penalized more for being repetitive or lacking substance: the idea is not to write as much as possible, but to do such thorough research and analysis that you have no option but to write a lot. Hence, this should be conceived as a semester-long project, not something to be strung together during finals week.

Required Notes:

“Policy about course outlines can be found in the [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#) of the University Calendar.”

Student Responsibilities:

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](#) and avoid any behaviour that 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.

All students should consult [the Academic Integrity website](#). If you have any questions, ask your instructor.

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](#).

Students involved in language courses and translation courses should be aware that the use of on-line translation to complete assignments constitutes a form of

cheating as the student's own understanding and work is therefore not reflected. Also, students in language 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 Behaviour.

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 that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The Department urges anyone who feels that this policy 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 direct 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 [Office of the Student Ombuds](#). Information about the [University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures](#) is described in [UAPPOL](#).

It is the policy of the University of Alberta that sexual violence committed by any member of the University community is prohibited and constitutes misconduct. Resources and more information can be found at <https://www.ualberta.ca/campus-life/sexual-violence>

Territorial Statement:

“The University of Alberta acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, and respects the histories, languages, and cultures of the First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and all First Peoples of Canada, whose presence continues to enrich our vibrant community.” (*from the beginning of the Calendar*).

Recording of Lectures:

Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, 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. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course 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 [Attendance](#) and [Examinations](#) 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.

Deferral of term work is a privilege and not a right; there is no guarantee that a deferral will be granted. Misrepresentation of facts to gain a deferral is a serious breach of the Code of Student Behaviour.

In this course, participation will be graded at 40% of the course grade, as stated above.

Policy for Late Assignments:

Late work which has not been granted an extension will be penalized at the rate of one grade-step per day. For example, a paper which earns an A-, but which is turned in two days late, will be given a grade of B.

Extensions will be granted only for illness or domestic affliction. It is expected that all students have other term work due at the end of the semester, and that this is a normal part of university life—the solution to this is to plan ahead, and begin work early, as extensions will not be granted because students have other papers due.

Disclaimer:

Any typographical errors in this syllabus are subject to change and will be announced in class and posted on eClass. The date of the final examination is set by the Registrar and takes precedence over the final examination date reported in this syllabus.

Student Resources:

The best all-purpose website for student services is: <https://www.ualberta.ca/current-students>.

Accessibility Resources: (1 – 80 SUB)

The University of Alberta is committed to creating work and learning communities that inspire and enable all people to reach their full potential. Accessibility Resources promotes an accessible, inclusive, and universally designed environment. For general information to register for services visit the [Accessibility Resources](#) webpage.

The Academic Success Centre: (1-80 SUB)

[The Academic Success Centre](#) offers a variety of workshops on effective study and exam strategies. There are in-person and online sessions available for a modest fee.

The Centre for Writers: (1-42 Assiniboia Hall)

The [Centre for Writers](#) offers free one-on-one writing support to students, faculty, and staff. Students can request consultation for a writing project at any stage of development. Instructors can request class visits and presentations.

Health and Wellness Support: There are many health and community services available to current students. For more information visit the [Health and Wellness Support](#) webpage.

Office of the Student Ombuds:

The [Office of the Student Ombuds](#) offers confidential interviews, advice and support to students facing academic, discipline, interpersonal and financial difficulties.

Grading:

Assessment of the individual course components may be in the form of numerical marks or letter grades. The final letter grade will be based on "a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in a class" (University Calendar, [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#)). The University Grading Procedure mandates that "a student's level of achievement of the goals/outcomes of a course, their grade, and the descriptor of that grade must be aligned" (<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/>). The following guidelines have been adopted by the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:

“MLCS Graduate Grading Scale”

A+	97-100	Excellent
A	93-96	Excellent
A-	90-92	Excellent
B+	87-89	Good
B	79-86	Good
B-	74-78	Satisfactory
C+	68-73	Satisfactory
C	63-67	Failure
C-	58-62	Failure
D+	54-57	Failure
D-	50-53	Failure
F	00-49	Failure

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READING SCHEDULE

INTRODUCTION: BEFORE "LITERATURE"

- Sept. 4 Introduction
- Sept. 11 Philip Sidney, *The Defence of Poesy*
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/articles/69375/the-defence-of-poesy>

FOLK/EPIC/NATION/WORLD

- Sept. 18 Hugh Blair, "Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian"
(Eighteenth Century Collections Online)
James Macpherson, *Fingal*, Book I
(Eighteenth Century Collections Online)
James Porter, "Bring Me the Head of James Macpherson" (JSTOR)
- Sept. 25 John Stuart Mill, "Of Nationality"
<https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/mill-the-collected-works-of-john-stuart-mill-volume-xix-essays-on-politics-and-society-part-2>
Ernest Renan, "What is a Nation?"
https://web.archive.org/web/20110827065548/http://www.cooper.edu/humanities/core/hss3/e_renan.html
Hobsbawm & Ranger, *Invention of Tradition* Ch. 1, 2 (Proquest ebook)
Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* Ch. 1-6 (ALCS ebook)
- Oct. 9 Elias Lönnrot, *Kalevala*, proem & "runes" 1-10, 16-25, 39-50
<http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/5186/pg5186-images.html>
W.R. Mead, "Kalevala and the Rise of Finnish Nationality" (JSTOR)
Adriaan van der Hoeven, "The Discovery of Finland" in *Battles and Borders* (EBSCOhost)
- Oct. 16 Goethe, "On World Literature" in *The Essential Goethe*
(EBSCOhost)
Hegel, *Aesthetics*, Vol. II "Epic Poetry" pp 1040-1110 G.W.F. Hegel:
the Oxford translations (Intelix Past Masters database)
Hutcheson Macaulay Posnett, *Comparative Literature*, Book 1
<https://archive-org.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/details/comparativeliterooposnuoft/page/n17>
- Oct. 23 Albert Lord, *Singer of Tales*, Part I: The Theory

<https://chs.harvard.edu/CHS/article/display/5600.part-i-the-theory-1-introduction-pp-3%E2%80%99312>

- Oct. 30 Book of Poetry “Greater Odes”
https://ctext.org/book-of-poetry/greater-odes-of-the-kingdom
C.M. Bowra, Heroic Poetry pp. 10-14
https://archive.org/details/heroicpoetry030625mbp/page/n29
C.H. Wang, “Towards Defining a Chinese Heroism” (JSTOR)
Lin Gang, “20th Century exploration of the ‘Issue of the Chinese Epic’” (Springer/Brill)
Stephen Owen, “Genres in Motion,” (PMLA, Oct 2007)
- Nov. 6 Arabian Nights selections (Rutherford reserve)
Ulrich Marzolph, “In the Studio of the Nights” (Taylor & Francis)
Heinz Grotzfeld, “Creativity, Random Selection, and pia fraus.”
(Project Muse)
Sylvette Larzul, “Further Considerations on Galland’s &c.” (Project Muse)

Nov. 13 READING WEEK—CLASS CANCELLED

EPILOGUE: LITERATURE VS. HISTORY, LITERATURE VS. MEDIA

Nov. 20 Wellek and Warren, Theory of Literature (Rutherford reserve)

Nov. 27 McLuhan, Understanding Media (Rutherford reserve)

Dec. 4 IN-CLASS PRESENTATIONS