

## GLOBAL LITERATURES I

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In the coming years, many of us will wonder whether AI will ever be sentient like humans. This question cannot really be answered until we return to the question that preoccupied people from the dawn of humanity: what does it mean to be human in the first place? This course invites you to read and discuss such notable ancient texts as the Bible (the Middle East), the Qur'an (Arabia), The Bhagavad Gita (India), Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Ancient Rome), and Apuleius's novel *The Golden Ass* (Africa), as well as Yuval Noah Harari's *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*.

**Principles of Tolerance** | Your enrollment in this course assumes that you are willing and able to discuss the assigned materials and operate in an environment in which others do not always share your views. Some assigned texts contain controversial ideas, imagery, and word choice. Although you are not required to accept ideas expressed in our readings, you will be asked to make an effort to understand their origin and significance. If you cannot read such works for any reason (religious, personal, or any other) you should not join this course.

**Work Ethic** | Education requires time, effort, and patience. This course does not work for students who are easily frustrated or dwell on the reasons why they cannot work or attend classes.

**Our Department** | We train students for rewarding careers in many fields, including business, medicine, education, law, and publishing. By discussing literary works in relation to political, historical, and artistic developments, we help students become well equipped for many professions. If you add Comparative Literature as your second major or minor, you can enhance the value of your education by highlighting your intellectual versatility and the range of your interests, which is essential for your success in any field.

**About Your Professor** | Alexander Moudrov is a researcher in American culture and transatlantic studies. He received a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from The Graduate Center of the City University of New York. He is the author of [The Rise of Sensationalism in American Literature and Culture](#) (Routledge, 2025) as well as essays on such authors as George Thompson, Oscar Wilde, Plato, and Vladimir Nabokov. He holds teaching appointments at Queens College, Fashion Institute of Technology, and The College of Staten Island.

**Writing Intensive Courses** | This course is a Writing Intensive (W) course and fulfills one Writing Intensive requirement. W classes include a significant portion of time devoted to writing instruction. This may include things such as revision workshops, discussions of rhetorical strategies, or reflective writing about writing assignments.

**Course Objectives:** 1) Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring world cultures or global issues, including, but not limited to, anthropology, communications, cultural studies, economics, ethnic studies, foreign languages (building upon previous language acquisition), geography, history, political science, sociology, and world literature. 2) Analyze culture, globalization, or global cultural diversity, and describe an event or process from more than one point of view. 3) Analyze the historical development of one or more non-U.S. societies. 4) Analyze the significance of one or more major movements that have shaped the world's societies.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**ATTENDANCE & STAYING ENGAGED** | The course typically meets in person on Mondays for essential activities. Later each week (Thursdays), you are expected to complete additional assignments independently. This course cannot accommodate those who miss classes or fall behind for any reason.

**OFFICE HOURS** | You can find me in the office (Queens Hall 270D) on the days our class meets in person (typically Mondays) from 12:30 to 2 p.m. I can also be reached there by phone at 718-997-5693 or virtually. In addition, I am available on Thursdays 3 - 3:30 p.m. (virtually).

**TECHNOLOGY** | You are expected to have a computer with reliable internet connection and ability to create Microsoft Office documents. You must also have access to Brightspace and your QC webmail, which has to be listed on Brightspace in order to receive important messages. The QC Help Desk offers technical assistance to those who require it (718-997-4444).

**REQUIRED BOOKS** | You must have and bring to class paper copies of [Yuval Noah Harari's \*Sapiens\*](#) (ISBN: 9780062316110), [Ovid's \*Metamorphoses\*](#) (ISBN: 9780140447897), and [Apuleius's \*Golden Ass\*](#) (ISBN: 9780140435900).

**CLASS DECORUM** | You cannot use any electronic devices during meetings. If you are entitled to accommodations that include use of electronic devices, bring it to my attention in the first week of classes. Please avoid wearing perfume on the days we have classes or smoking right before class, because some people have allergies. Avoid arriving late, whispering, eating, sighing deeply, looking sad, etc. Video and audio recording of our class activities is not allowed.

**POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE** | Every submission in this course must be your own original work. If your submission was created by relying on AI or paraphrased from the text created by someone else without proper citations, it will be treated as a case of academic dishonesty. Your professor reserves the right to ask follow up questions about any of your submissions in order to grade your work accurately. Students who violate the university's academic integrity policy are typically prevented from passing the course.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES** | Contact the Office of Students with Disabilities (Frese Hall 111 or 718.997.5870) in the beginning of the semester or when your medical condition demands it. Please refrain from talking about your medical issues directly to your professor, who is neither trained nor authorized to discuss your medical condition and review your medical records (including notes from your doctor). The only documentation your professor will review is the formal request from the Office of Students with Disabilities. Such requests apply only to future assignments.

**ATHLETES & RELIGIOUS STUDENTS** | If you are likely to miss classes for religious or other reasons, you have to email me during the first week of classes with a detailed explanation of how many classes you might miss. I will respond to tell you what, if anything, I can do to accommodate you.

## GRADING

Your course grade will be based only on the quality of your work submitted by the nonnegotiable deadlines. Out of fairness to other students who complete their work on time, late assignments will not be accepted for any reason. Your assignments, which are described in more detail on Brightspace and are subject to minor changes, fall under the following categories:

**TESTS & IN-CLASS WRITING | 25% |** Some tests are conducted online (marked **T** on the schedule) and others in class (unannounced). Tests cannot be made up if missed or failed. You are, however, allowed to miss or fail three tests without penalty. If you complete all or almost all tests with passing grades (over 75), you will receive extra credit.

**DB (DISCUSSION BOARD) POSTS | 25% |** On some days, you are expected to complete an online discussion assignment (marked **Db** on the schedule). First, you post an original submission based on an assigned text. Second, you respond to at least one student. These assignments have to be completed by 11:59 p.m. on the days they are due. You are allowed to miss or fail two DB assignments without penalty. If you complete all or almost all Db assignments with passing grades (over 75), you will receive extra credit.

**EXAMINATIONS | 20% |** One examination is in-class writing: you are expected to recognize and analyze quotations from the assigned texts. The second examination is oral: you are expected to engage in a conversation about any topic studied in the course.

**ESSAYS | 30% |** You will write two essays. The first one (900 - 1000 words) is due on October 16. It is based on one of your previous DB submissions. The second essay has to be written in class on November 17, based on a text randomly selected on that day.

There are no specific extra credit assignments for students who want to boost their grades at the end of the semester. Students who complete all or most tests or Discussion Board assignments with passing grades will have their course grades increased by a few points.

## COURSE OUTLINE

We typically meet in person on Mondays with additional assignments due on Thursdays. Sometimes we may be forced to modify the course schedule, methods of instruction, and assignments during the semester. Monitor your email for announcements.

MONDAYS (IN PERSON)	THURSDAYS (INDEPENDENT STUDY)
	<b>08.28</b>  Course Introduction <b>T, Db</b>
<b>09.01</b>  No Class	<b>09.04</b>  Harari's <i>Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind</i> (Chapters 1,2) <b>T, Db</b>
<b>09.08</b>  Harari's <i>Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind</i> (Chapter 5, 7, 12) <b>T</b>	<b>09.11</b>  Terminology, The Book of Genesis (Chapter 1 - 4) <b>T</b>

09.15 Essay Writing Techniques	09.18 Genesis (6 – 11) and The Qur'an (Sura 2 & 71) T, Db
09.22 No Class	09.25 The Book of Genesis (Chapters 12 – 22) T, Db
09.29 The Book of Exodus (Chapters 1 – 19)	10.05 [SUNDAY] The Book of Exodus (Chapters 20-21, 32) T, Db
10.06 The Gospel According to Matthew	10.09 The Gospel According to Matthew and The Qur'an (Sura 5) T, Db
10.14 [Tuesday] Essay Workshop	10.16  First Essay Due
10.20 No Class	10.24 [Friday - In Person] Hamilton's <i>Mythology</i> T
10.27  In-Class Midterm	10.30 Ovid's <i>Metamorphoses</i> (Book I) T
11.03 Ovid's <i>Metamorphoses</i> (Book I) T,T	11.06 Ovid's <i>Metamorphoses</i> , "Procne and Philomela" and "Arachne" Db, T
11.10 Ovid's <i>Metamorphoses</i> , "Narcissus" and "Orpheus"	11.13 Ovid's <i>Metamorphoses</i> , "Orpheus" Db, T
11.17 Oral Examination (Cohort A)	11.20 Second Essay Preparation
11.24  Second Essay (In-Class Writing)	11.27 No Activities
12.01 Apuleius's <i>The Golden Ass</i> , Books 1 - 4 T	12.04 Apuleius's <i>The Golden Ass</i> , Books 5 - 6 Db
12.08 Oral Examination (Cohort B)	12.11 Examination Preparation
12.15 Oral Examination (Cohort C)	12.18 No Activities