

Intro to Literary Studies—Methods to Read Well & Make Meaning

Last Updated: Thu, 01/08/2026

Course prefix: LMC

Course number: 2060

Section: B

CRN (you may add up to five):
35143

Instructor First Name: Randall

Instructor Last Name: Harrell

Semester: Spring

Academic year: 2026

Course description:

This course introduces students to the study of literature through close reading, thoughtful discussion, and engagement with diverse texts from a variety of cultural, historical, and spatial contexts. We will explore how literature shapes and reflects the world, considering questions of identity, society, and human experience. Students will encounter various forms of literature, which might include poetry, fiction, drama, and hybrid texts that challenge conventions and invite multiple interpretations.

In addition to reading and discussion, students will experiment with different theoretical perspectives—social, historical, and literary—while making critical ideas accessible. Through writing, reflection, and creativity, students will develop skills in reading, thinking, and engaging with literature thoughtfully, considering both artistic form and broader social significance. This course emphasizes curiosity, critical thinking, and how literature can open new ways of seeing and understanding the world.

Course learning outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to

1. Analyze Literature in Context

Interpret literary texts and examine how they reflect and shape historical, cultural, and social contexts.

2. Explore Multiple Critical Perspectives

Apply different interpretive lenses to literature in order to examine questions of identity, power, and culture.

3. **Understand Literary Forms and Movements**

Identify key features of major literary genres and movements and connect them to broader cultural and historical developments.

4. **Communicate Critically**

Write clear, evidence-based analyses and participate thoughtfully in class discussions.

5. **Connect Past and Present**

Relate literary study to contemporary social, ethical, and civic questions.

6. **Engage Creatively and Reflectively**

Produce original interpretations and projects that demonstrate critical thinking, curiosity, and engagement with course materials.

Required course materials:

- **Primary Texts**

Selected literary texts representing multiple genres, including poetry, drama, short fiction, and narrative prose.

- **Theoretical and Critical Readings**

Short excerpts introducing foundational approaches to literary analysis (such as formalist, structural, feminist, and postcolonial perspectives). All theoretical readings will be provided via Canvas.

- **Additional Materials**

Supplemental readings, media, and contextual materials will be made available through Canvas as needed.

Grading policy:

Grades in this course will be based on a combination of assessment methods, which may include short written responses, analytical essays, synthesis assignments, quizzes or exams, presentations, collaborative work, and participation. Not all components listed may be used in every section or semester. Detailed grading criteria, point values, and expectations for each assignment will be provided during the semester.

Georgia Tech Letter Grade Scale:

A: 90–100%

B: 80–89%

C: 70–79%

D: 60–69%

F: <60%

Attendance policy:

Active presence and engagement are essential. Attendance and participation together count for 20 points. More than three absences may lower your final grade. Participate actively during sessions and in small group discussions. All major assignments must be completed to receive a passing grade. Late work is generally not accepted. If you

experience illness or emergency, communicate promptly to make arrangements. Although some exceptions may be made for certain situations, I reserve the right to determine what constitutes any extenuating circumstance. If you are physically present but wholly unprepared or blatantly disengage, your grade will be affected and you may be counted absent. Attendance exceptions are allowed for institute-approved absences (for example, those documented by the Registrar) and situations such as hospitalization or family emergencies (documented by the Office of the Dean of Students). Some assignments and activities cannot be made up. I reserve the right to determine what can and cannot be made up after an absence. **NOTE:** Excessive tardiness will begin to accrue absences.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

If you engage in plagiarism or any other form of academic misconduct, you will fail the assignment and possibly be referred to the Office of Student Integrity. You should be familiar with these Georgia Tech sites:

- Honor Challenge — <https://osi.gatech.edu/students/honor-code>
- Office of Student Integrity — <https://osi.gatech.edu/index.php/>

A Note Addressing Artificial Intelligence:

This course is about growing in your ability to write, communicate, and think critically. Generative AI agents should only be used as tools. Tools cannot learn or communicate for you, and they cannot meet the course requirements for you. AI cannot stand in for your voice and your ideas. Work generated with AI and submitted will be treated as if it is plagiarized work—which leads the student to fail the assignment and possibly be referred to the Office of Student Integrity.

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

This is a **Core IMPACTS** course that is part of the **Arts, Humanities & Ethics** area. Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with **essential knowledge in foundational academic areas**. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I interpret the human experience through creative, linguistic, and philosophical works?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze and interpret the meaning, cultural significance and ethical implications of literary/philosophical texts in English or other languages, or of works in the visual/performing arts.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Ethical Reasoning
- Information Literacy
- Intercultural Competence