

## EN 3420 6.0: African Literature

Session: F/W 2019-2020

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Office Hours: Mondays 3:00 – 4:00 pm; Wednesdays 5:00 – 6:00

Lecture Venue: FC 105; Time: 11:30 am – 2:30 pm

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course surveys the literature from Africa, with a focus on works written in English and some influential translations. The texts are chosen to show the regional particularities, as well as the social, historical, and aesthetic contexts that shape the literature and its reception. These contexts include colonialism, anti-colonial struggles, globalization, population dispersals, the emergence of Afropolitanism, and contemporary articulations of identity. Poetry, fiction and drama are analyzed to reveal the consequences of the writers' choices of form, style and theme. The course sensitizes students to the extrinsic and intrinsic dimensions of literature that inform critical response.

The class format is a combination of lectures and discussion. Sixty- to ninety-minute lectures introduce and demonstrate the contextual, critical, formal and interpretive frameworks that are applied to the course material. Students have an opportunity to test their ideas through written and oral responses to the various texts.

### REQUIRED READING

**\*Please note the required editions—in bold and brackets.**

- 1) Wole Soyinka (ed.), *Poems of Black Africa* (**Heinemann; alternatively, York University Bookstore Course Kit**)
- 2) Niyi Osundare, "Hole in the Sky," a choreo-poem (**online, <https://www.worldliteraturetoday.org/2014/may-august/two-poems-niyi-osundare>**)
- 3) Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (**Norton**)
- 4) Taiye Selasie, *Ghana Must Go* (**Penguin**)
- 5) Ama Ata Aidoo (ed): *African Love Stories: An Anthology*—**selections:** stories by Leila Aboulela, Chimamanda Adichie, Sefi Atta, Sindiwe Magona (**Ayebia**)
- 6) David Graver (ed), *Plays for a New South Africa*—**selections:** Reza de Wet, *Crossing*; Ismail Mahomed, *Purdah* (**Indiana University Press**)
- 7) Biodun Jeyifo (ed), *Modern African Drama*—**selection:** Femi Osofisan, *Esu and the Vagabond Minstrels* (**Norton**)

## Requirements

	TYPE OF ASSIGNMENT	DATE GIVEN	DATE DUE	GRADED BY
1	Reading Response (10%)	September 16 <sup>th</sup>	October 7 <sup>th</sup>	October 14 <sup>th</sup>
2	Analytical essay (15%)	October 14 <sup>th</sup>	November 18 <sup>th</sup>	November 25 <sup>th</sup>
3	Test 1 in-class (20%)	December 2 <sup>nd</sup>	December 2 <sup>nd</sup>	December 10 <sup>th</sup>
4	Research Paper (25%)	January 20 <sup>th</sup>	April 6 <sup>th</sup>	April 13 <sup>th</sup>
5	Test 2 in-class (20%)	March 30 <sup>th</sup>	March 30 <sup>th</sup>	April 6 <sup>th</sup>
6	Class Participation (10%)			End of Term

### Submission of Assignments

With the exceptions of in-class tests, all the course assignments must be submitted **online (Course Moodle site) through Turnitin by 11:59 pm on due date.**

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism takes place when an individual appropriates or uses somebody else's work and ideas without due acknowledgement. It also includes practices like paying someone to write an essay for you or purchasing an essay in part or whole that you can customize and pass off as your own. York University's Policy on Academic Honesty abjures and punishes all forms of plagiarism. For steps you can take to avoid committing plagiarism, such as completing an Academic Integrity Checklist and an Academic Integrity Tutorial, please visit <https://www.library.yorku.ca/web/research-learn/academic-integrity/>

### Important sessional dates for Fall Term:

Last date to add a course **without permission** of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines) Sept. 17

Last date to add a course **with permission** of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines) Oct 22

Drop deadline: Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines) Feb 3

Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of "W" on transcript) Feb 4 – April 5

**For more details and additional sessional dates, such as Financial Deadlines, please visit <https://registrar.yorku.ca/enrol/dates/fw19>**

### Class Schedule

**Week 1: September 9<sup>th</sup>** Introduction to African Literature

**Week 2: September 16<sup>th</sup>** Poetry: *Poems of Black Africa*: Read sections “Ancestors and Gods” and “Animistic Phases”

**Week 3: September 23<sup>rd</sup>** *Poems of Black Africa*: Selections from “Alien Perspectives” and “Black Thoughts”

**Week 4: September 30<sup>th</sup>** *Poems of Black Africa*: Selections from “Captivity” and “Land and Liberty”

**Week 5: October 7<sup>th</sup>** *Poems of Black Africa*: Selections from “Poet’s Passage” and “Mating Cry”

**Week 6: October 14<sup>th</sup>** **FALL TERM READING WEEK**

**Week 7: October 21<sup>st</sup>** Osundare, “Hole in the Sky—A Choreo-Poem”

**Week 8: October 28<sup>th</sup>** Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*

**Week 9: November 4<sup>th</sup>** *Things Fall Apart*

**Week 10: November 11<sup>th</sup>** *Things Fall Apart*

**Week 11: November 18<sup>th</sup>** *African Love Stories: An Anthology*—Aboulela, “Something old, something new”

**Week 12: November 25<sup>th</sup>** *African Love Stories: An Anthology*—Chimamanda Adichie, “Transition to glory”

**Week 13: December 2<sup>nd</sup>** **TEST 1**

**Week 14: January 6<sup>th</sup>** *African Love Stories: An Anthology*—Sefi Atta, “The Lawless”

**Week 15: January 13<sup>th</sup>** *African Love Stories: An Anthology*—Monica Nyeko, “Jambula Tree”

**Week 16: January 20<sup>th</sup>** *African Love Stories: An Anthology*—Sindiwe Magona, “Modi’s Bride”

**Week 17: January 27<sup>th</sup>** Taiye Selasie, *Ghana Must Go*

**Week 18: February 3<sup>rd</sup>** Selasie, *Ghana Must Go*

**Week 19: February 10<sup>th</sup>** Femi Osofisan, *Esu and the Vagabond Minstrels*, in Biodun Jeyifo (ed), *Modern African Drama*

**Week 20: February 17<sup>th</sup>** **WINTER TERM READING WEEK**

**Week 21: February 24<sup>th</sup>** Osofisan, *Esu and the Vagabond Minstrels*

**Week 22: March 2<sup>nd</sup>** Reza de Wet, *Crossing*, in David Graver (ed), *Plays for a New South Africa*

**Week 23: March 9<sup>th</sup>** de Wet, *Crossing*

**Week 24: March 16<sup>th</sup>** Ismail Mahomed, *Purdah*, in David Graver (ed), *Plays for a New South Africa*

**Week 25: March 23<sup>rd</sup>** Mahomed, *Purdah*

**Week 26: March 30<sup>th</sup>** TEST 2

### Grading Scheme

Letter grade	Numerical grade	Qualitative description
A+	90-100%	Exceptional: Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques and exceptional skill or originality in the use of those concepts/techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment (or course).
A	80-89%	Excellent: Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with a high degree of skill and/or some elements of originality in satisfying the requirements of an assignment (or course).
B+	75-79.99%	Very Good: Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with a fairly high degree of skill in the use of those concepts in satisfying the requirements of an assignment (or course).
B	70-74.99%	Good: Good level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment (or course).
C+	65-69.99%	Competent: Acceptable level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment (or course).
C	60-64.99%	Fairly Competent: Acceptable level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with some skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment (or course).
D+	55-59.99%	Passing: Slightly better than minimal knowledge of required concepts and/or techniques together with some ability to use them in satisfying the requirements of an assignment (or a course).
D	50-54.99%	Barely Passing: Minimum knowledge of concepts and/or techniques needed to satisfy the requirements of an assignment (or a course).
E	40-49.99%	Failing—Marginal Failure
F	0-39.99%	Failing—Failure