

Syllabus: PACS 312 Quest for Peace in Literature and Film

Contact Information

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WebEx Office Hours: Thurs. 1:30 – 3:00 PM

(Click the WebEx widget to get to my virtual office; you can email me to schedule a time or just click and "stop by")

Announcements

I use the **Announcements** widget on the Course Home page during the term to communicate new or changing information regarding due dates, instructor absence, etc., as needed. You are expected to read the announcements on a regular basis.

To ensure you are viewing the complete list of announcements, you may need to click **Show All Announcements**.

Course Description and Learning Outcomes

Course Description

“A study of works of literature and film which express a resistance to war. The course examines how the desire to articulate an anti-war position has engaged the artistic sensibilities and shaped the visions and modes of expression of selected writers and filmmakers.” Course Catalogue Description

Updated Description

Stories, narratives and images possess a power to intimately engage the experience of violent conflict, structural injustice and the pursuit of peace. This course explores a wide variety of works, from poems to short stories, novels to films, and asks: how do works of literature and film tell stories of the quest for peace? In what ways do they shape our understanding of the world, and what is necessary or possible on this quest for peace?

Some of the works speak to the pain, suffering, and violence experienced in the midst of war, some offer direct anti-war statements, others reflect and engage with the themes of trauma and difficult questions of how to heal and recover as part of a very long quest for peace. We will read a wide variety of works: poems, short stories and novels; we will view short films and longer films.

Each of these works will be examined in terms of the issues they raise as well as how they raise them, and how the stories, words and images affect us the reader/viewer/audience. In our discussions, we will explore themes, allusions and meanings within the works; we will also look to understand elements of the artists' intentions, stylistic devices that are used, and our responses to the works. The format of the course will involve mini-lectures, films, presentations, and discussion-led exploration.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Understand how literature and film engage and transform audiences;
- Identify and articulate a variety of ways that literature and film can resist war and violence;
- Explore ways in which stories contribute to building peace;
- Analyze film and literature using key categories (intention, audience, context, stylistic devices)
- Participate in an exchange of ideas interpreting literature and film both orally and in writing.

Grade Breakdown

The following table represents the grade breakdown of this course.

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Activities and Assignments	Weight (%)
<i>Introduce Yourself</i>	<i>Ungraded</i>
<i>Discussion Tasks</i> <i>(7 weeks, best 6)</i>	<i>30%</i>
<i>Major Project</i> <i>Project Idea and Workshop 6% (Wk 8)</i> <i>Final Delivery 28% (Exam period)</i>	<i>34%</i>
<i>Reflective Essays (due at the end of each module, Wks 3, 7 and 12)</i>	<i>36%</i>

EXPECTATIONS

Because of the nature and structure of the course, it is imperative that students participate regularly in class, watch all films, and complete ALL the reading for the week unless otherwise advised. The course outline below indicates required reading for each week.

In this class we explore stories. This enterprise involves each of our interpretive skills and a willingness to openly engage to explore themes and meanings nested within the films, poetry and prose. Students are therefore expected to discuss and explore the works in conversation during the weekly café and/or in the on-line discussion forums.

We will do so in a respectful fashion with the understanding that each person brings particular insights and valuable differences to the context of the classroom and how we read, view and react to a work.

Responding constructively to the observations and comments of peers will further enhance the quality of our seminar.

Materials and Resources

Textbooks

Required

Elie Wiesel. 2006. *Night*. Originally published in 1958, published with a new preface and translation in 2006. New York: Hill and Wang. ISBN: 978-0374500016.

Phil Klay. 2014. *Redeployment*. New York: Penguin Books. ISBN 9781594204999

Mark Sakamoto. 2014. *Forgiveness: A Gift from my Grandparents*. Toronto: Harper Perennial. ISBN 9781443417976

Brit Bennett. 2020. *The Vanishing Half*. New York: Riverhead Books. ISBN 9780525536291

Detailed Course Schedule

IMPORTANT: ALL TIMES EASTERN - All due times are 11:30 PM unless otherwise specified.

Wk	Date	Topic	Listening and Viewing	Reading	Assignments and Activities	Due Date	
1	Jan 11-17	MODULE 0: Introduction, Course Info and Overview	Welcome Video	N/A	1) Post self-introduction 2) Review course structure, syllabus 3) listen to T. King podcast 1 (optional)	F Jan 16	
2	Jan 18-24	MODULE 1A: Quest for peace amidst war – war stories	See Module 1A on LEARN	Stories by Borden, Pirandello, Achebe, Manto	Initial Posts WebEx Café (optional) Final Reply Posts	Tu Jan 20 W Jan 21 @ 10:15 AM F Jan 23	
3	Jan 25-31	MODULE 1B: Quest for peace amidst war – soldier stories	See Module 1B on LEARN	Klay's <i>Redeployment</i> (selected short stories)	Initial Posts WebEx Café (optional) Final Reply Posts Reflective Essay 1*	Tu Jan 26 W Jan 27 @ 10:15AM F Jan 29 F Jan 29	
4	Feb 1-7	MODULE 2A: Surviving and witnessing war – death camps	See Module 2A on LEARN	Wiesel's <i>Night</i>	Initial Posts WebEx Café (optional) Final Reply Posts	Tu Feb 2 W Feb 3 @ 10:15 AM F Feb 5	
5	Feb 8-14	MODULE 2B: Surviving and witnessing war – nuclear weapons	See Module 2B on LEARN	Selected poems (see Module 2B on LEARN)	Initial Posts WebEx Café (optional) Final Reply Posts	Tu Feb 9 W Feb 10 @ 10:15 AM F Feb 12	
6	Feb 16-21	READING WEEK					
7	Feb 22-28	MODULE 2C: War legacies and finding forgiveness at home	See Module 2C on LEARN	Sakamoto's <i>Forgiveness</i>	Initial Posts WebEx Café (optional) Final Reply Posts Reflective Essay 2*	Tu Feb 23 W Feb 24 @ 10:15AM F Feb 26 F Feb 26	
8	Mar 1-7	MAJOR PROJECT WORKSHOP			Participate in workshop Submit topic idea*	TBA Mar 7	
9	Mar 8-14	MODULE 3A: Quest for peace amidst structures of violence – racism	See Module 3A on LEARN	Bennet's <i>The Vanishing Half</i>	WebEx Café (optional) Initial Posts	W Mar 11 F Mar 13	
10	Mar 17-23	MODULE 3A <i>Continued</i>	See Module 3A on LEARN	Bennet's <i>The Vanishing Half</i>	WebEx Café (optional) Final Reply Posts	W Mar 17 F Mar 19	
11	Mar 24-30	MODULE 3B	See Module 3B on LEARN	King's CBC Massey	WebEx Café (optional) Initial Posts	W Mar 24 F Mar 26	

				Lectures <i>The Truth About Stories</i> (listen or read)		
12	Mar 31 - Apr 6	MODULE 3B <i>Continued</i>	See Module 3B on LEARN	King's <i>The Truth About Stories</i>	WebEx Café (optional) Final Reply Posts Reflective Essay 3*	W Mar 31 F Apr 2 M Apr 5
13	Apr 7 – 13 + Exam Period	MODULE 4			Major Project*	Tu Apr 20

* Items marked by an asterisk are automatically eligible for a 2-day “slip day” extension. Just let me know when you submit your assignment you are applying a “slip day.” Each of you has two slip days this term to use when they are helpful.

Resources

[Library COVID-19: Updates on library services and operations.](#)

Course and Department Policies

Course Policies

Cite ALL sources (including internet sources) consulted for written and/or orally-presented work. Because of the seriousness of plagiarism and cheating students MUST familiarize themselves with the definitions of cheating and plagiarism and the related penalties. Students at the University of Waterloo are expected to be familiar with the University’s standards regarding academic honesty, and to avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an academic offence. See further notes below.

Assignment Late Penalties:

Please note that late assignments will be automatically assessed a penalty of 5% (same penalty for the first 24 hour period) with an additional 1% penalty assessed for every additional day the assignment is late. Everyone has two "slip days" this term, which means you can hand an assignment in up to 48 hours late without asking me in advance -- just let me know when you submit your assignment that you are applying your slip day. More generally, if you are concerned about an assignment, please do communicate with me in advance of the deadline. Deadlines are important, but I am willing to work with those who take the initiative in their communications and demonstrate commitment to getting the job done.

University Policies

Academic integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check the [Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.]

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4](#). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. [Check the [Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.] A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties, check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances](#) (other than a petition) or [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72, Student Appeals](#).

Note for students with disabilities: [AccessAbility Services](#), located in Needles Hall, Room 1401, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term.

Turnitin.com: Text matching software (Turnitin®) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students' submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be given due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin in this course.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if they, in the first week of term or at the time assignment details are provided, wish to submit alternate assignment.

University policies are from the course outline template: June 15, 2009 (updated March 2018)

Coronavirus Information

[Coronavirus Information for Students](#)

This resource provides updated information on COVID-19 and guidance for accommodations due to COVID-19.

Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system. We encourage you to seek out mental health supports and resources when they are needed. You can reach out to [Campus Wellness](#) and learn about the variety of services available to promote your mental health and wellbeing.

Territorial Acknowledgement

Many of us live and work on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples. Conrad Grebel University College and the University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River. PACS as a discipline is committed to pursuing peace with justice; the territorial acknowledgement is part of that as it acknowledges Indigenous peoples' presence and land, it helps to name that we have benefited from the land, and prompts reflection in the spirit of truth and reconciliation. For more on the hard work needed for reconciliation see the [Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#), and the [National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two Spirits](#).

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