

## SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

**Discipline: Literature**

**Fall 2008**

**ENSP 255Z: The Nobels**

**Lower Division**

**Instructor: Professor Gustavo Fares, Ph.D.**

This course will examine selected works of the Nobel Prize for Literature awardees from the regions we will visit. From the Caribbean we will examine the works of V.S. Naipaul; from the Americas we will read Gabriela Mistral and Gabriel Garcia Marquez. We will then follow our itinerary and in Africa, we will study works by Nadine Gordimer and J.M. Coetzee, from South Africa. Rabindranath Tagore will be our choice from India, and Gao Xingjian from China. We will then study the works of two Japanese laureates, Yasunari Kawabata and Kenzaburo Oe. In all of these cases we will work with a variety of genres, including short stories, poetry, and novels, and will explore the ways in which the literary traditions of the regions we visit are present in the writers' works. This course is introductory, with no prerequisites.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

This course aims to improve the students' ability to read and to understand literature and to convey that understanding to others through both written and spoken English. The readings and activities are geared to enrich the students' understanding of other cultures by combining classroom discussions, readings, writing exercises, and their field experiences. To achieve this goal, we will examine the best literatures of each region, through the writings of Nobel Prize for Literature awardees, and relate those writings to the ports we visit.

### **TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE**

August 29. Depart Nassau, Bahamas

Class Session 1 - Welcome. Orientation to class. Program for the course: The Nobels. Latin American current issues.

Class Session 2 – García Marquez's short stories (Selections)

Class Session 3 – Gabriela Mistral's *Poems*. (Selections). Guimarães Rosa. *The third bank of the river* (Selections)

2 page essay

September 7-11. Salvador, Brazil

Class Session 4 - Discussion of port visit and journal entries. Introduction to African Nobel awardees.

Class Session 5 - Coetzee. *Waiting for the Barbarians*

Class Session 6 - Coetzee. *Waiting for the Barbarians*

September 19-23. Walvis Bay, Namibia

Class Session 7 - Gordimer. *Six feet of the country* (Selections)

September 26 - October 2. Cape Town, South Africa

Class Session 8 - Discussion of port visit and journal entries. Introduction to Indian Nobel awardees and Indian literatures.

2 page essay

Class Session 9 – Tagore. (Selections)

Class Session 10 – Tagore. (Selections)  
Class Session 11 - Tagore. (Selections)  
Class Session 12 – V.S. Naipaul. *India. A Wounded Civilization*.

October 14-18. Chennai, India

Class Session 13 - Discussion of port visit and journal entries. Introduction to East Asian literatures  
(Malaysia, Vietnam)

2 page essay

Class Session 14 - Introduction to Chinese literature. Gao Xingjian *Buying a fishing rod*.

October 22-26. Penang, Malaysia

Class Session 15 - Discussion of port visit and journal entries. Gao Xingjian *Buying a fishing rod*.

October 30- November 3. Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Class Session 16 – Discussion of port visit and journal entries. Gao Xingjian *Buying a fishing rod*. *City lovers, country lovers* (DVD)

November 6-7. Hong Kong

November 10-11. Shanghai, China

Class Session 17 - Discussion of port visit and journal entries. Introduction to Japanese Nobel awardees.

November 14-15. Kobe, Japan

November 17-18. Yokohama, Japan

Class Session 18 - Kawabata. *Palm-of-the-hand stories* (Selections)

Class Session 19 - Kawabata. *Palm-of-the-hand stories* (Selections). *Snow Country* (DVD)

2 page essay

Class Session 20 - Oe. *A personal matter*

Class Session 21 - Oe. *A personal matter*

November 27. Honolulu, Hawai'i

Class Session 22 - Jack London's short stories: "Aloha Oe," "Koolao the Leper," and "The Water baby."

Class Session 23 - Discussion of overall topics

## FINAL EXAMS

December 7-9 Puntarenas, Costa Rica

December 11, Panama Canal

December 12. Fort Lauderdale, Florida

## FIELD COMPONENT

Field component provides twenty percent of course work. Initial ideas which students draw from readings and from written assignments will be tested against the students' real experiences. The field component will be reflected in the students' journals, and it will also be part of their written assignments and class discussions.

## **Grade Distribution**

The grade will be based on the following components:

40 % of grade based on four 2 page essays over the course of the semester. The papers will have at least 800 words, regardless of formatting. DUE in classes 3, 8, 13, and 19.

20 % will be based on the final exam

20 % class participation

20 % Field component. The field component will be reflected in the students' journals and on their written assignments. Each student will have a reading and traveling journal. The journal will have a summary of the reading for the class, a list of at least 5 words that the student considers relevant to the topic of the course, and two questions, related to each of the readings and to the shore excursions, which will be shared in class. The journal will be checked periodically for completion.

## **ORDER FORM FOR REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

**AUTHOR:** Oe, Kenzaburo  
**TITLE:** *A personal matter*  
**PUBLISHER:** Grove Press  
**ISBN #:** 0-8021-5061-6  
**DATE/EDITION:** 1969  
**COST:** \$11.00

**AUTHOR:** Coetzee, J.M  
**TITLE:** *Waiting for the Barbarians*  
**PUBLISHER:** Penguin  
**ISBN #:** 0140283358  
**DATE/EDITION:** 1980  
**COST:** \$10.00

**AUTHOR:** Dutta, Krishna; Robinson, Andrew  
**TITLE:** *Rabindranath Tagore: an anthology*  
**PUBLISHER:** St. Martin's Press  
**ISBN #:**  
**DATE/EDITION:** 1997  
**COST:** \$15.00

**AUTHOR:** Gao Xingjian  
**TITLE:** *Buying a fishing rod for my grandfather*  
**PUBLISHER:** New York: Harper Collins  
**ISBN #:** 0-06-057555-7  
**DATE/EDITION:** 2004  
**COST:** \$10.00

## **RESERVE LIBRARY LIST**

**AUTHOR:** V.S. Naipaul  
**TITLE:** *India. A Wounded Civilization*  
**PUBLISHER:** Knopf

**ISBN #:** 0-394-40291-x  
**DATE/EDITION:** any  
**COST:** \$11.00

**AUTHOR:** Gao Xingjian  
**TITLE:** *Cold literature: selected works*  
**PUBLISHER:** Eurospan  
**ISBN #:** 9629962454  
**DATE/EDITION:** any  
**COST:** \$32.00

#### ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS

In addition to course texts and reserve library materials, each faculty member will have an electronic course folder housed on the ship's intranet. The University of Virginia library will scan articles and chapters identified by the faculty member as needed supplementary materials for the courses they are teaching. These supplementary materials will be placed in the faculty member's intranet folder for students to access from their own computers or from the computer lab.

**AUTHOR:** Guimarães Rosa, João  
**ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE:** *The third bank of the river, and other stories*  
**JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE:**  
**VOLUME:** New York, Knopf  
**DATE:** 1968  
**PAGES:** 189-212

**AUTHOR:** Mistral, Gabriela  
**ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE:** *Selected poems of Gabriela Mistral*  
**JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE:** Translated by Langston Hughes  
**VOLUME:** Bloomington, Indiana University Press  
**DATE:** 1957  
**PAGES:** 19-24; 34-36, 57-65

**AUTHOR:** Gordimer, Nadine  
**ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE:**  
**JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE:** *Six feet of the country*  
**VOLUME:**  
**DATE:** 1986  
**PAGES:** 7-47

**AUTHOR:** London, Jack.  
**ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE:** "Koolao the Leper" (Volume 2, pgs 1441-1454), "Aloha Oe (Volume 2, pgs 1467-1473), "The Water baby" (Volume 3, pgs 2484-2496)  
**JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE:** *The complete short stories of Jack London*. Stanford University Press  
**VOLUME:** Volumes 2 & 3  
**DATE:** 1993  
**PAGES:** (See above)

**AUTHOR:** García Márquez, Gabriel

**ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE:** “Tuesday Siesta,” “Montiel’s widow,” and “A very old man with enormous wings.”

**JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE:** *Collected stories*

**VOLUME:** Harper and Row, 1984

**PAGES:**

**AUTHOR:** Kawabata, Yasunari

**ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE:**

**JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE:** *Palm-of-the-hand stories*

**VOLUME:** North Point Press, 1988

**PAGES:** 202- 238

#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

DVD/VHS clips from the following titles:

1. *City lovers, country lovers* (DVD)
2. *Snow country* (DVD)