

COLONNADE PROGRAM COURSE PROPOSAL

FOUNDATIONS CATEGORY (LS)

Literary Studies

ENG 200 or other approved courses. (3 hours)

Literary Studies courses provide an introduction to a variety of literature at the college level. Assignments encourage critique and analysis and give students introductory knowledge of key literary terms, concepts, and reading strategies. Students apply this knowledge in discussing and writing about literary texts and consider how literature inscribes the human experience. Because these classes emphasize the reading of primary texts, instructors will focus on literacy skills to supplement content course work.

Students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Utilize basic formal elements, techniques, concepts and vocabulary of specific disciplines within the Arts and Humanities.
2. Distinguish among various kinds of evidence by identifying reliable sources and valid arguments.
3. Demonstrate how social, cultural, and historical contexts influence creative expression in the Arts and Humanities.
4. Evaluate the significance of human expression and experience in shaping larger social, cultural, and historical contexts.
5. Evaluate enduring and contemporary issues of human experience.
6. Read, comprehend, and analyze primary texts independently and proficiently.

NOTE: *Literary Studies* courses must fulfill the **Humanities** requirement per the state transfer agreement. Courses are intended to provide an introduction to the reading and analysis of literary prose, poetry, and drama. Moreover, these courses are intended to be writing-intensive.

- Courses should give students introductory knowledge of key literary concepts and reading strategies.
- Students should read and discuss at least three different literary genres. (This is not an introduction to the literature of a discipline.)
- Written literary analyses with a total word count of at least 3600 for all formal writing in the course. Essays should demonstrate the ability to apply appropriate terms, strategies, and textual evidence, and use appropriate professional style guidelines (e.g., MLA, *Chicago*, APA).

Please complete the following and return electronically to colonnadeplan@wku.edu.

1. What course does the department plan to offer in *Foundations: Literary Studies*?
RELS 200: World Religious Literature
2. How will this course meet the specific learning objectives for this category? Please address **all** of the learning outcomes listed for the appropriate subcategory.

Learning Objective	RELS 200
1. Utilize basic formal elements, techniques, concepts and vocabulary of specific disciplines within the Arts and Humanities.	This course will utilize basic formal elements, techniques, concepts and vocabulary of Biblical Studies and/or Religious Studies, in addition to introducing students to the knowledge of key literary terms, concepts, and reading strategies.
2. Distinguish among various kinds of evidence by identifying reliable sources and valid arguments.	Students will distinguish among various kinds of evidence by identifying reliable sources and valid arguments in the interpretation and analysis of the various pieces of literature.
3. Demonstrate how social, cultural, and historical contexts influence creative expression in the Arts and Humanities.	The texts for this course are shaped by their social, cultural, and historical contexts. Students will explore how the social, cultural, and historical contexts shape the composition of and find expression in religious texts or other literary texts with strong religious themes.
4. Evaluate the significance of human expression and experience in shaping larger social, cultural, and historical contexts.	The texts studied in this course raise some of the most important of human questions and often offer answers: What is the purpose of human life? How should we conduct our lives? How might we live in community? Is there a transcendent spiritual reality, and if so, how do we live in relation to it? Whether foundational religious texts or great literary texts focused on religious themes, these texts have had a great impact on shaping larger social, cultural, and historical contexts. Much of world history is incomprehensible without understanding the role that many religious texts, narratives, and hagiographies play in expressing the human condition and shaping our experience of the world. Students will learn these connections in this course.
5. Evaluate enduring and contemporary issues of human experience.	World religious literature is a central resource in thinking about the human condition both past and present. Students will engage in

	reflection about enduring and contemporary issues of human existence through the reading of these texts and writing about them.
6. Read, comprehend, and analyze primary texts independently and proficiently.	Though the course will include secondary sources, the focus will be on the independent reading of key texts. Students will be assessed on their ability to read, comprehend, and analyze the texts.

3. In addition to meeting the posted learning outcomes, how does this course contribute uniquely to the *Foundations* category (i.e., why should this course be in Colonnade)? Discuss in detail.

As with ENG 200, this course will introduce students to three or more literary genres. And just as instructors in ENG 200 may focus on specific kinds of literature (20th century, French, Southern, etc.), this course will focus on world religious literature—providing students with a different and for some appealing option. In other words, this course will provide students with an introduction to literature that they most likely would not encounter in ENG 200. Possible texts or selections might include (but not limited to):

GENRE	LITERATURE
Poetry	Zen haiku (Buddhism) Zhou poetry (Chinese) Shijing (Chinese) T'ang poetry (Chinese) The Qur'an (Islam) Bhagavad Gita (Hinduism) Dhammapada (Buddhism) Bible (Judaism/Christianity)
Literary prose	Hadith (Islam) Jataka Tales (Buddhism) Bible (Judaism/Christianity) Sou Shen Ji (Chinese) Reflections on Things at Hand (Chinese) The Plum in the Golden Vase (Jin Ping Mei) (Chinese) The Grand Inquisitor (Dostoyevsky) Diary of a Seducer (Kierkegaard) The Plague (Camus) Pilgrim's Progress (Bunyan) Night (Wiesel) Wise Blood (O'Connor)
Drama	Ramayana (Hinduism) Mahabharata (Hinduism) Yuan dramas (Chinese)

	Aeschylus' <i>The Oresteia</i> (Greek) Aeschylus' <i>Prometheus Bound</i> (Greek) Euripides' <i>The Bacchae</i> (Greek) Euripides' <i>Hippolytus</i> (Greek)
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Besides these primary texts in English translation, the course may also rely upon readers and secondary sources such as:

An Introduction to Religion and Literature by Mark Knight (Continuum, 2009)
Chinese Literature, Ancient and Classical by Andre Levy (translated by William H. Nienhauser (Indiana University Press, 2007)
Religion and Literature: A Reader by Robert Detweiler, David Jasper, Heidi Nordberg, and S. Brent Plate (Westminster/John Knox Press, 2000)
The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms by Ross Murfin and Supryia Ray (Bedford/St. Martin's, 2008)
The Bible as Literature: An Introduction by John B. Gabel et. al. (Oxford University Press, 2005)

4. Syllabus statement of learning outcomes for the course. NOTE: In multi-section courses, the same statement of learning outcomes must appear on every section's syllabus.

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

- Utilize basic formal elements, techniques, concepts and vocabulary in Biblical Studies and/or Religious Studies, in addition to introducing students to the knowledge of key literary terms, concepts, and reading strategies.
 - Distinguish among various kinds of evidence by identifying reliable sources and valid arguments.
 - Demonstrate how social, cultural, and historical contexts influence the construction of literary works.
 - Evaluate the significance of certain literary works in shaping larger social, cultural, and historical contexts.
 - Read, comprehend, and analyze literary works independently and proficiently.
5. Give a brief description of how the department will assess the course beyond student grades for these Colonnade learning objectives.

At least one member of the Department of Philosophy and Religion (including the Department Head) will join faculty in the English Department (led by Dr. Chris Ervin) in the assessment of all Literary Studies courses. The assessment will include sampled student materials from both ENG 200 and RELS 200.

A random sample of student papers from both departments will be evaluated by inter-departmental teams that will read a mix of RELS 200 and ENG 200 papers. Student papers will be rated using a Literary Studies rubric modeled on the AAC&U's VALUE

rubrics. The results of the evaluations will be discussed by the Literary Studies assessment committee, shared with the relevant faculty and both Department Heads, and forwarded to the Colonnade Committee.

This course has not been taught yet, but the attached is a good example of how it might be approached.

Religious Studies 200: World Religious Literature

Course Description:

This course serves as an introduction to reading literary prose, poetry, and drama at the college level by focusing on literature that is foundational to world religious traditions or that has strong religious themes in it. This course is designed to help students read, analyze, and write about a variety of religious texts and/or texts with strong religious themes. Throughout the semester, our focus will be on how literature inscribes as well as is inscribed by the human experience, particularly the many *different* ways in which a range of religious adherents and non-religious critics have understood life and death, the purpose and goal of human existence and society, as well as the nature of the world.

In exploring religious literature that may seem wholly foreign from our own, our emphasis will be on the internal logic of each as well as on the resources that each provides for the construction of meaning, value, and morality. In providing students with strategies for reading and understanding religious literature, it will also provide students with a basic vocabulary of key terms and concepts of literary studies as well as religious studies. Reading assignments in the course are designed to encourage critique and analysis and to increase discernment about the nuances of language use.

Prerequisite:

ENG100: Introduction to College Writing.

Catalogue Description:

Introductory study of multiple genres of religious literature or literature with strong religious themes. Texts come from various religions, cultures, and time periods.

General Goals and Objectives for Religious Studies 200:

By the end of the semester, students will:

- demonstrate an introductory knowledge of key literary terms and reading strategies in their discussion of and writing on religious literary texts;
- utilize basic formal elements, techniques, concepts and vocabulary in Religious Studies;
- distinguish among various kinds of evidence by identifying reliable sources and valid arguments;
- demonstrate how social, cultural, and historical contexts influence the construction of texts selected for the course;
- evaluate the significance of religious literature in shaping larger social, cultural, and historical

contexts;

- write literary analyses that utilize at least three different genres, with a total word count of at least 4000 for all formal writing in the course; these essays should demonstrate their ability to apply appropriate terms, strategies, and textual evidence;
- be able to utilize an appropriate academic style guide to document their use of primary texts and, if required in the course, secondary source material.

Grading:

Given the heavy reading list and the nature of the assignments and exams, it is very unlikely that students who show up to class irregularly as well as students who fail to do the assigned readings will pass the course. You are expected to have completed the readings prior to the week for which they are assigned. As a student, you are also encouraged to read ahead in order to help balance the “heavy-reading” days with lighter ones.

There will be four writing assignments throughout the semester requiring a total word count of at least 4000 words. The assignments (each worth 20%) will focus on the three genres examined in class: prose, poetry, and drama. The RELS 200 writing rubric should be consulted when completing the writing assignments.

In addition to the four papers, there will also be regular reading quizzes. The reading quizzes will be composed of short answer, multiple choice, and true/false questions. Reading quizzes will make up 10% of your grade. There will be 12 reading quizzes during the semester, and students will be allowed to drop their two lowest grades. **There are no make-up reading quizzes.**

The final 10% of your final grade will be based on your attendance and class participation throughout the semester. Students who miss more than xxx classes/discussion sections will receive a 0 for their attendance grade.

Computer Use:

The use of laptops and cell phones are not permitted in class without prior instructor approval.

Academic Dishonesty:

Students who commit any act of academic dishonesty (plagiarism (i.e., not citing sources used), cheating on the exam, and so on) will not be given the option of withdrawing. They will receive a failing grade for the course. Please note that student work may be checked using plagiarism detection software.

Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services, Room 445, Potter Hall. The OFSDS telephone number is (270)745-5004 v/tty.

Per University Policy, please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

The Buddha is purported to have said that all compound things are impermanent. As something that is compound, this syllabus is no exception. The professor reserves the right to make changes in the reading assignments and dates listed below.

Course Schedule

Conceptualizing the Ideal Life through Sacred Biography: Sanskrit Poetry and Narratives on the Life/Lives of the Buddha

Week 1	Hagiography as Literature Readings: Reynolds and Capps, <i>The Biographical Process</i> , pp. 1-62
Week 2	Life of the Buddha: Stories of the Buddha's present life, selections from Ashvaghosha's <i>Buddhacarita</i> (poetry) pp. 1-43; 61-80; and 188-217.
Week 3	Mythologizing the Buddha's Life; selections from the Pali Nidanakatha pp. 63-101
Week 4	Past Lives of the Buddha: The Vessantara Jataka (from the Pali Jataka collection), pp. 246-305 (literary prose and poetry)

Professing the Ideal Life: Chinese Narratives and Poetry During the Zhou Dynasty

Week 5	Epigrams and Conversations: The Analects of Confucius Selection from <i>The Analects</i>
Week 6	Returning to our Primal State: Selections from <i>The Daodejing</i> (poetry)
Week 7	Going with the Flow: Selections from the Zhuangzi, <i>The Inner Chapters</i> (literary prose)

The Good Life With(out) God—Kierkegaard and Dostoyevky

Week 8	Preparatory reading from Soren Kierkegaard's <i>Fear and Trembling</i> "The Grand Inquisitor" from Fyodor Dostoyevsky's <i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> (literary prose)
Week 9	Fyodor Dostoyevsky's <i>Notes from the Underground</i> (literary prose)

Week 10	Fyodor Dostoyevsky's <i>Notes from the Underground</i> (literary prose)
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The Good Life With(out) God—Camus

Week 11	Albert Camus' <i>The Possessed: A Play</i> (drama)
Week 12	Albert Camus' <i>The Possessed: A Play</i> (drama)
Week 13	Albert Camus' <i>The Plague</i> (literary prose)
Week 14	Albert Camus' <i>The Plague</i> (literary prose)

In addition to the texts listed in the schedule, regular use will be made of the *Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*. Students should make sure to purchase or rent this book as well.

Proposal Date: January 5, 2015

**Potter College of Arts and Letters
Department of Philosophy and Religion
Proposal to Revise Course Catalog Listing
(Consent Item)**

Contact Person: Eric Bain-Selbo, eric.bain-selbo@wku.edu, 5-5744

1. Identification of course:

- 1.1 Course prefix (subject area) and number: RELS 200
- 1.2 Course title: World Religious Literature

2. Current course catalog listing: Introductory study of multiple genres of foundational religious texts from various regions and cultures.

3. Proposed course catalog listing: Introductory study of multiple genres of religious literature or literature with strong religious themes. Texts come from various religions, cultures, and time periods.
(aim for 25 words or less)

4. Rationale for revision of the course catalog listing: The change in the catalog listing is a result of many months of conversation with the faculty and the Department Head in English. That conversation was precipitated by the Department of Philosophy and Religion's interest in proposing RELS 200 for the Literary Studies category in the Foundations column of the new Colonnade program (an interest that was critical to our development of the course in the first place). The change in the catalog listing reflects the fact that we want to move beyond simply the foundational religious texts to other texts that nevertheless deal significantly with religious themes. As a consequence, we will increase the amount of literature that could be used for the course, ensuring that we have plenty of options in the required genres of poetry, fiction, and drama.

5. Proposed term for implementation: Fall 2015

6. Dates of prior committee approvals:

Religious Studies Program	February 2, 2015
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Department of Philosophy and Religion	February 4, 2015
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Potter College Curriculum Committee

Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

University Senate