

**ENGLISH 202-01: EUROPEAN LITERARY CLASSICS:  
ENLIGHTENMENT TO MODERN (3 CR.)**

Instructor: Christian Moraru  
Spring 2001

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McIver 140: MWF 8:00-8:50  
Office: McIver 112. Office Hours: MWF 9:00-10:00, and by appt.  
Office Phone: (336) 334-3564  
Dept. of English Phone: (336) 334-5311  
Home Phone: (336) 834-9866  
c\_moraru@uncg.edu

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:** This course surveys representative works of European literature from the late 17th-century to the present, covering a whole range of genres and national traditions. On the one hand, we will place these works in culturally and historically specific contexts, seeking to discern the interactions between literary developments and changes in the arts, religion, and various areas of social life. On the other hand, we will approach these texts as illustrations of major cultural and aesthetic moments and movements in the West over the last two centuries: neoclassicism, romanticism, realism, and certain trends of modernism and postmodernism.

**FOCUS AND FORMAT:** While maintaining its survey character, the focus of this particular class will be the motif of the labyrinth and its multiple meanings (physical, spiritual, literary, and so on). Authors discussed include Madame de Lafayette, Novalis, Balzac, Kafka, Arrabal, and Robbe-Grillet among others. We will see how this motif plays a role in the representation of the human subject and selfhood in modern European literature, in different countries, styles, and genres, with particular emphasis on narrative. The course will combine introductory lectures, discussion, and group work.

**REQUIREMENTS:**

1. **Examinations:** There will be a midterm (50-min.) and a longer, final examination (both in-class). In all likelihood, the latter will be more comprehensive and consequently will carry more weight. We will prepare both carefully--the entire class is required to participate in the midterm and final review of the course, selection of topics, and rehearsals. We will talk about exam format and grading in larger detail before the midterm. Exam schedule: **Midterm:** Fri., Feb. 23. **Final:** Wed., May 9, 8:00 AM-11:00 AM, McIver 140
2. **Term Paper:** Students turn in a 5-7-p., double-spaced final essay, due in class, Mon., April 30. They must submit a 1-p., single-spaced proposal by Wed., April 18. We will then meet to discuss your proposal individually.

3. Quizzes and Brief Responses: Occasionally, you will be given quizzes and brief in-class responses testing reading comprehension and requiring answers to questions we will find particularly relevant.

4. Attendance and Participation: Both are expected and will be reflected in the final grade (see below). I expect you to come to class with the assignments for the day completed and ready to participate orally, individually or in your group.

5. Group Activities: You will be assigned to groups of 4-5 members, which will complete various brief assignments. Usually, groups discuss a specific material or problem and then designate a member to report their conclusions back to the rest of the class. Reports will be oral and rather informal, about 10 minutes long, and their main role is to help us speed up debates. Group work will be graded, too. Students in one group will get the same grade regardless of who gives the presentation.

CONFERENCES: Please meet with me during my office hours or make an appointment to discuss your work or any aspect of the course. I plan to have at least one round of “formal” conferences during the semester. I urge you to make a first appointment early on to talk about the course and what you hope to accomplish in it; you must make an appointment around mid-April to discuss your final paper project.

#### COURSE POLICIES:

1. Late Papers: No late papers accepted. Please come to see me ahead of time if you foresee any deadline problems.

2. Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of others’ materials both in form (wording) and substance (ideas). Any paper bearing your name signifies that you are the author, namely, that the words and the ideas are yours, with exceptions indicated by quotations marks and paraphrases. Evidence of plagiarism will result in one or more of the following: a failing grade for the assignment, an “F” for the whole course, and/or a report filed with the dean. Also, consult the UNCG policies on plagiarism.

3. Absences: You are allowed no more than 3 absences during the semester (which you must document afterwards), for illnesses, religious holidays and emergencies preventing you from attending. Any unjustified absences will seriously affect your grade; 3 undocumented absences may result in your being asked to drop the course. If you are the victim of an emergency or serious illness, please stay in touch with me by e-mail or phone. Do not hesitate to call me at my home number. In addition, because tardiness disrupts class, too, be aware that coming in late 3 times will count as an absence.

GRADING: No incompletes. To pass the course, you must submit all assigned work, come to class regularly and participate in discussion. The final grade breakdown is as follows:

Participation (including presentations, group work, quizzes and in-class responses) 15%

Midterm	25%
Final	35%
Term Paper	25%

Please note the high percentage rewarding consistent and articulated class participation. Also, this is the instructor's view of the final grade; on the first class, I would like to discuss these percentages with you in greater detail and possibly make some adjustments depending on your input.

#### REQUIRED READINGS:

1. Novalis, Heinrich von Ofterdingen [1802]. Waveland P., 1990. ISBN: 0881335746 (pbk.)
2. Kafka, Franz. The Trial [1925]. A New Translation by Breon Mitchell. New York: Schocken Books, 1999. ISBN: 0805209999 (pbk.)
3. Borges, Jorge Luis. Labyrinths. New York: New Directions, 1976. ISBN: 0811200124 (pbk.)
4. Robbe-Grillet, Alain. In the Labyrinth [1959]. In Two Novels: Jealousy and In the Labyrinth. New York: Grove/Atlantic, 1976. ISBN 080215106X (pbk.)
5. Arrabal, Fernando. The Labyrinth. In Guernica and Other Plays. New York: Grove/Atlantic, 1994. ISBN 0802151221 (pbk.)
6. Balzac, Honoré de. Father Goriot [1835]. New York: Norton, 1997. ISBN039397166X (pbk.)
7. Joyce, James. A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man [1916]. New York: Penguin, 1993. ISBN: 0140186832 (pbk.)
8. Lafayette, Madame de. The Princess of Clèves [1678]. New York: Viking Penguin, 1992. ISBN: 0140445870 (pbk.)

Note: Do not purchase other editions.

#### COURSE SYLLABUS:

##### **Week 1**

Mon. Jan 8 Introduction to the course: goals, requirements, policies, and evaluation of student work.  
Our class: the survey and the focus - modern literature and its definition(s) the labyrinth.

I. COURTLY LIFE AS LABYRINTH. A NEOCLASSICAL ROMAN-À-CLEF ("KEY NOVEL")

Wed. Jan 10 Madame de Lafayette, The Princesse de Clèves, Book One

Fri. Jan 12 The Princesse de Clèves, Book Two and Three

**Week 2**

Mon. Jan 15 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday - no class  
Start reading Novalis (due Jan. 19)

Wed. Jan 17 The Princesse de Clèves, Books Four

II. ROMANTICISM AND THE LABYRINTHINE IMAGINATION

Fri. Jan 19 Novalis 1-35

**Week 3**

Mon. Jan 22 Novalis 36-92

Wed. Jan 24 Novalis 93-119

Fri. Jan 26 Novalis 120-169

III. THE RISE OF REALISM AND THE URBAN MAZE

**Week 4**

Mon. Jan 29 Balzac, Père Goriot 5-71

Wed. Jan 31 Père Goriot 73-126

Fri. Feb 2 Père Goriot 127-171

**Week 5**

Mon. Feb 5 Père Goriot 173-217

IV. MODERN LABYRINTHS: AESTHETIC MYTH, PARABLE, AND TOTALITARIAN NIGHTMARE

Wed. Feb 7 Joyce, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man 1-61

Fri. Feb 9 A Portrait 62-108

**Week 6**

Mon. Feb 12 A Portrait 109-158

Wed. Feb 14 A Portrait 159-187

Fri. Feb 16 A Portrait 188-276

**Week 7**

Mon. Feb 19 Preparing the midterm examination (I): suggestions for exam topics due in class

Wed. Feb 21 Preparing the midterm examination (II)  
Midterm evaluations

Fri. Feb 23 **Midterm examination**  
Start reading Kafka (due Feb. 28)

**Week 8**

Mon. Feb 26 Discussing the midterm

Wed. Feb 28 Kafka, The Trial. Introduction  
Short movie screening

Fri. Mar 2 The Trial 2-53

**Week 9**

Mon. Mar 5 Spring Break: no class

Wed. Mar 7 Spring Break: no class

Fri. Mar 9 Spring Break: no class

**Week 10**

Mon. Mar 12 The Trial 54-110

Wed. Mar 14 The Trial 111-165

Fri. Mar 16 The Trial 166-231

**Week 11**

Mon. Mar 19 Arrabal, The Labyrinth (I)

Wed. Mar 21 The Labyrinth (II)

V: LATE MODERNISM AND AFTER: POSTMODERN MAZES OF WRITING AND READING

Fri. Mar 23 Alain Robbe-Grillet: In the Labyrinth 141-192

**Week 12**

Mon. Mar 26 In the Labyrinth 193-234

Wed. Mar 28 In the Labyrinth 234-272

Fri. Mar 30 Borges, Labyrinths, “The Garden of Forking Paths”

### **Week 13**

Mon. Apr 2 Borges, “Death and the Compass”

Wed. Apr 4 Borges, “The Circular Ruins,” “The Lottery in Babylon,” “Borges and I” (p. 246)

Fri. Apr 6 “Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote”

### **Week 14**

Mon. Apr 9 “The Library of Babel”

Wed. Apr 11 “Funes the Memorious,” “The Zahir,” “The God’s Script”

Fri. Apr 13 Spring Holiday: No Class

### **Week 15**

Mon. Apr 16 The final project: substance, format, expectations

Wed. Apr 18 Discussing your final project (1-p. proposal due in my mailbox by 8:00 AM): individual conferences in my office

Fri. Apr 20 Discussing your final project: individual conferences in my office

### **Week 16**

Mon. Apr 23 The term project: writing workshop (thesis, argument, research)

Wed. Apr 25 Preparing the final examination (suggestions for the exam due in class)

Fri. Apr 27 Preparing the final examination

### **Week 17**

Mon. April 30 Last meeting  
 Course overview  
**Final paper due (in class)**  
 Final evaluations

Wed. May 9, 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM (McIver 140): **Final examination**

Note: I would like to think of this syllabus as final. However, I welcome your input, and we might be able to make some changes as we go along.