

World Literature I
Fall 2009
MWF 11:00-11:50
Main 28

Bane

Office: Irby 317B
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Hours: Daily 8:00-9:00; MWF 9:00-10:00
TTh 11:00-12:00 or by
appointment

Website: www.uca.edu/english/facultystaff/cbane.php

Religion is regarded by the common people as true, by the wise as false, and by the rulers as useful. ~ Seneca the Younger

All men have need of the gods. ~ Homer

Welcome to the single most exciting experience you'll have this semester: ENGL 2305 and RELG 1320 with Bane and Spivey. I know it will be difficult, but please try to control your emotions. Not everyone gets a chance to take courses this exciting, this enthralling, this enlightening. In our courses we spell "fun" with a capital F-U. Now just because it will be fun doesn't mean that it will be easy. There will be a lot of hard work, but the work will be rewarding. We promise.

Course Description or What is World Literature?

The World Literature sequence at UCA is designed to introduce students to a variety of literary texts that have had a **major impact** on **political**, **social**, and **philosophical** thought throughout the world. In short, it is the study of texts that *matter*. Not matter in the sense that they mean something to English professors, but matter because they have greatly influenced the myriad cultures of the world. Since this course is an introduction, it will take the form of many literature courses by conducting close analyses of the literature, focusing on themes, forms, style, language, and structure.

This particular World Literature course is being clustered with Phillip Spivey's RELG 1320: World Religions. As such, the courses will work together to give you a more complete understanding of the place and purpose of both literature and religion in our world. While Mr. Spivey's course will provide examination of the world's major religious traditions, beliefs, customs, and sacred texts, this course will concentrate primarily on literary works influenced by the religion of their culture. Because of its scope, this cluster satisfies six hours of UCA's World Cultural Traditions Core in the General Education Program.

Course Rationale or Why should I take this World Literature/World Religion cluster?

Because they're the best damn classes being offered this semester. Spivey and I redefine the word "cool." Like all the other World Lit and Religion courses being offered we will be covering "old" works like *The Book of Job*, *Inferno*, and *The Arabian Nights*, but we hope to provide a more engaging contemporary connection by discussing the topics in relation to our world today. As such, there will be a service learning component to the course. More on that later. The purpose of literature and philosophy is to enlarge, enliven, and enlighten. If at the end of the semester you do not feel enlarged, enlivened, and enlightened, it will be because you have perversely resisted enlightenment and blockaded yourself in a pinched and shrunken soul. The study of literature and religion can redeem you for the human community...if you let them. Let them.

WARNING!!!

What we read we shall read with intensity, passion, and critical awareness, all in keeping with the expectations of a college level course. These courses are about critical reading and analytical discussion. Sometimes language, even poetic and philosophical language, can be brutal. This does not mean that the language in question is obscene or pornographic. We are all adults here; however, if you know that you will have issues reading, hearing, and discussing certain words and topics, you need to drop the courses now.

Course Texts or What do I have to buy?

This is a college class, so unfortunately you have to buy something. Fortunately for you, I myself know the woes of being a lowly (and broke) college student, so your texts are relatively inexpensive. The national average cost for a college textbook is \$102.44. The texts for this class can be purchased for around \$20.00—plus shipping and handling in some cases—if you’re a smart shopper. They are available in the campus bookstore, the local textbook supply stores, all major bookshops (i.e. Barnes and Noble), and online (amazon.com, studentmarket.com, etc.). Shop smart...shop S-Mart.

The primary texts for this class are:

- Aeschylus. *The Oresteia*. Translated by Robert Fagles. (Penguin)
- Anonymous. *Arabian Nights*. Translated by Husain Haddawy. (Norton)
- Anonymous. *The Bhagavad-Gita*. Translated by Barbara Stoler Miller. (Bantam Classics)
- Dante. *Inferno*. Translated by Allen Mandelbaum. (Bantam)
- The Book of Job*. Translated by Stephen Mitchell (HarperPerennial)
- Wu Ch’Êng-ên, *Monkey*. Translated by Arthur Waley. (Grove)

You will also receive additional handouts throughout the semester. Though not required, I also recommend that you get yourself a good dictionary.

You are required to purchase (or check out from a library) the texts for this course. This is a literature course, which means that the focus is on reading and textual analysis, not regurgitating lecture notes. Students who routinely fail to bring the appropriate text to class will be counted absent. See the attendance policy below for the consequences.

Course Requirements or What do I have to do?

In-class assignments, three exams, and a service learning component.

Each assignment will be discussed in detail prior to its due date. In-class assignments will consist of various group activities and writing assignments. The exams will consist of two sections: objective and essay and will be taken over a two hour period covering both classes. Any student who misses an exam will be allowed to make it up at our discretion. If a make-up exam is allowed, points will be deducted. Below is a point breakdown for the course.

Grade Distribution

In-class Assignments	400
Service Learning Project	200
Exam I	100
Exam II	100
Final Exam	200

Total: 1000

***Late writing assignments will not be accepted. Missed exams will receive a twenty point deduction.**

Dire warnings, final thoughts, etc. or How do I stay on your good side?

Come to class. According to the UCA Handbook, “students are expected to attend all class meetings,” therefore regular attendance is essential. *Attendance* in this class is defined as being present, engaged, and alert the entire **50 minutes of class**. Being tardy will be penalized as an absence. Leaving early will be penalized as an absence. Disruptive behavior—that is, any behavior which impedes another student’s learning process—will be penalized as an absence; seriously disruptive behavior may result in expulsion from the course. Students with four absences will have their final grade lowered one letter grade. Students who miss five classes will be dropped with a WF. Absences include “excused” absences, so there is no need to contact me to explain why you were/will be absent (although you are welcome to do so).

When absent, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed from either a classmate—preferably—or me.

You are in college. Act like it. Be considerate of your classmates and the instructor. Do nothing that distracts the instructor or disrupts a colleague’s concentration. Visit the restroom before coming to class. Turn off all watch alarms, laptops, and **cell phones** before entering the classroom. Conduct private conversations, read the newspaper, do homework, eat snacks, and catch up on sleep outside the classroom.

Do not ask for extra credit. The assignments outlined above are sufficient to assess your performance in the class. Sustained and intense engagement with the course materials and ideas is the single-most important prerequisite to a good grade. Decide from the outset of the term either to take the course seriously or to drop it. Take notes, mark significant passages in your textbooks for easy reference, and make certain that you understand clearly the major ideas of the course. It's time to take off the training wheels and lose the security blanket. Take an active role in your education, not a passive one.

READ! The single most effective strategy to success in a literature course, or any college class for that matter, is to read the assigned material. The student handbook "suggests a minimum of two hours preparation on the part of the student" for each credit hour taken. That means a class worth three hours of credit requires a minimum of six hours of preparation per week. Since the average reader can read 150-200 words per minute, you should expect to read approximately 60-80 pages per class.

University Policies or The Fine Print

The university's two academic bulletins – the University of Central Arkansas *Undergraduate Bulletin* and *Graduate Bulletin* – are the official publications for all academic programs and policies. Students are urged to study these bulletins. In addition, students should familiarize themselves with the various policies in the *Student Handbook*, some of which are outlined below. The *Handbook* may be accessed online at http://www.uca.edu/student/dean/student_handbook.php.

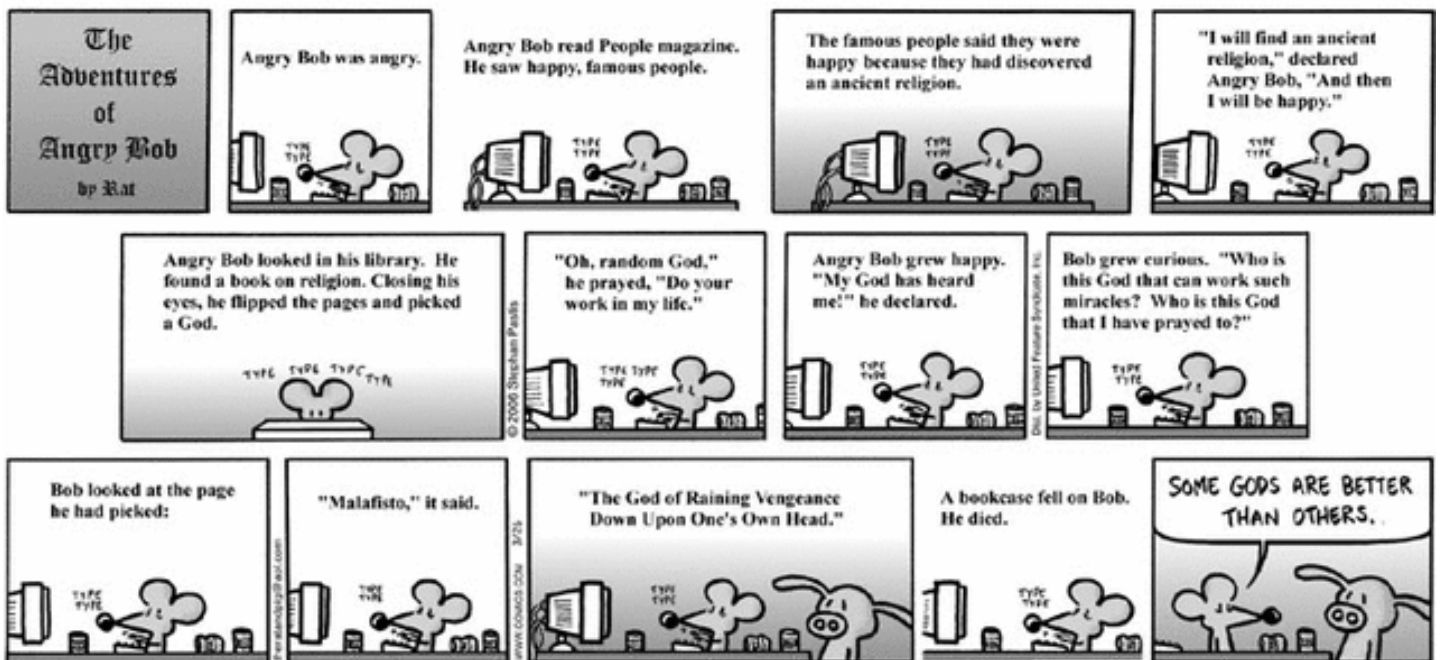
Academic Misconduct/Plagiarism. Any student deemed guilty of an act of academic misconduct may fail the course, be placed on probation or suspended from the university for a specific period of time, or be expelled from the university (*Student Handbook* 32-34).

Sexual Harassment. Sexual harassment by any faculty member, staff member, or student is a violation of both law and university policy and will not be tolerated at the University of Central Arkansas. Sexual harassment of employees is prohibited under Section 703 of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and sexual harassment of students may constitute discrimination under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (*Student Handbook* 95-99).

Americans with Disabilities Act. The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this Act due to a disability, please contact the UCA Office of Disability Services, 450-3135.

PEARLS BEFORE SWINE

BY STEPHAN PASTIS



Semester Breakdown:

Following is a tentative outline of the course. We will adjust as necessary to cover as much of the material as possible.

Aug 21 – Introduction: The Intersection of Literature and Religion

The Place of God(s)

- 24 – Aeschylus, *The Oresteia: Agamemnon*
- 26 – Aeschylus, *The Oresteia: The Libation Bearers*
- 28 – Aeschylus, *The Oresteia: The Eumenides*

Hinduism

- 31 – *The Bhagavad-Gita*, pgs. 23-49
- Sept 2 – *The Bhagavad-Gita*, pgs. 50-72
- 4 – *The Bhagavad-Gita*, pgs. 73-96
- 7 – **Labor Day Holiday**
- 9 – *The Bhagavad-Gita*, pgs. 97-122
- 11 – *The Bhagavad-Gita*, pgs. 123-146
- 14 – Hinduism: General Discussion or In Class Writing Assignment
- 16 – **First Examination**

Buddhism

- 18 – *Monkey*, Chs. I-VIII
- 21 – *Monkey*, Chs. IX-XVII
- 23 – *Monkey*, Chs. XVIII-XXIII
- 25 – *Monkey*, Chs. XXIV-XXX
- 28 – Buddhism: General Discussion or In Class Writing Assignment

Judaism

- 30 – *The Book of Job*, pgs. 1-14
- Oct 2 – *The Book of Job*, pgs. 15-65
- 5 – *The Book of Job*, pgs. 67-91
- 7 – David: A Man after God's Own Heart
- 9 – David, cont'd

12 – Judaism: General Discussion or In Class Writing Assignment

14 – **Second Examination**

16 – **FALL BREAK – NO CLASS!**

Christianity

- 19 – Dante, *Inferno*, Cantos I-III
- 21 – Dante, *Inferno*, Cantos IV-XI
- 23 – Dante, *Inferno*, Cantos XII-XX
- 26 – Dante, *Inferno*, Cantos XXI-XXVII
- 28 – Dante, *Inferno*, Cantos XXVIII-XXXIV
- 30 – Christianity: General Discussion or In Class Writing Assignment

Islam

- Nov 2 – Service Learning Project Prep
- 4 – Service Learning Project Prep
- Thursday 5 – UCA Ecumenical Dialogue
- 6 – Service Learning Post Discussion
- 9 – *Arabian Nights*, selected tales
- 11 – *Arabian Nights*, selected tales
- 13 – *Arabian Nights*, selected tales
- 16 – *Arabian Nights*, selected tales
- 18 – *Arabian Nights*, selected tales
- 20 – *Arabian Nights*, selected tales
- 23 – Islam: General Discussion or In Class Writing Assignment
- 25 – **Thanksgiving Break – No Class**
- 27 – **Thanksgiving Break – No Class**
- 30 – Religion and Violence
- Dec 2 – Wrap up and Review
- 4 – **Study Day!**

December 9 – Final Exam – 2:00 – 4:00

Main 28

Hinduism

31 – *The Bhagavad-Gita*, pgs. 23-49 (1st: Arjuna's Dejection, 2nd: Philosophy and Spiritual Discipline, 3rd: Discipline of Action)

2 – *The Bhagavad-Gita*, pgs. 50-72 (4th: Knowledge, 5th: Renunciation of Action, 6th: The Man of Discipline)

4 – *The Bhagavad-Gita*, pgs. 73-96 (7th: Knowledge and Judgment, 8th: The Infinite Spirit, 9th: The Sublime Mystery, 10th: Fragments of Divine Power)

7 – Labor Day Holiday

9 – *The Bhagavad-Gita*, pgs. 97-122 (11th: The Vision of Krishna's Totality, 12th: Devotion, 13th: Knowing the Field, 14th: The Triad of Nature's Qualities)

11 – *The Bhagavad-Gita*, pgs. 123-146 (15th: The True Spirit of Man, 16th: The Divine and the Demonic in Man, 17th: Three Aspects of Faith, 18th: The Wondrous Dialogue Concludes)

Christianity

19 – Dante, *Inferno*, Cantos I-III

21 – Dante, *Inferno*, Cantos IV-XI (Focus on 4, 5, 10)

23 – Dante, *Inferno*, Cantos XII-XX (Focus on 13, 15)

26 – Dante, *Inferno*, Cantos XXI-XXVII (Focus on 23, 26)

28 – Dante, *Inferno*, Cantos XXVIII-XXXIV (Focus on 28, 32-34)