



Bachelor's courses Faculty of Humanities

VU University Amsterdam - Student- & Onderwijszaken - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit - 2018-2019

Literature in a Changing World 2

Course code	L_ELBALES305 ()
Period	Period 5
Credits	6.0
Language of tuition	English
Faculty	Faculteit der Geesteswetenschappen
Coordinator	dr. B. Boter
Examinator	dr. B. Boter
Teaching staff	dr. B. Boter
Teaching method(s)	Seminar
Level	300

Course objective

After completing this course, students are able to:

- close-read texts coming from a variety of (continental as well as diasporic) African backgrounds and various historical time periods.
- draw on academic theories that are relevant for an understanding of the short story and novella genre; the workings of anthologies; online writing space; issues such as canon formation; etc.
- apply theoretical concepts such as subject-position, intersectionality, and agency to the texts studied.
- comparatively analyze texts coming from different national and cultural contexts.
- share their own reflections, both personal and academic, on assigned readings with fellow participants.
- freely express their ideas in both written work and oral presentations.
- engage in class discussions in a diversity-sensitive manner and are (more) aware of socio-political issues that play a role in culturally diverse classroom settings.

Course content

This course offers the opportunity to become acquainted (again) with

1. two genres that have been overlooked in (western) academia for a long time: short stories, novellas.
2. a collection of texts that have only recently become more widely popular in the west: African short stories in English.

The stories assigned for reading will be grouped according to topics and/or origin. However, we will also look at issues such as

- context: anthologies, canon formation, literary awards, translation, reception, theories of (post)colonial writing, world literature, etc.
- narrative structure, style, genre, focalization, etc.

In conjunction with the short stories we will also read secondary texts.

Form of tuition

Seminar: 2 x 3 hours per week; possibly guest speakers from the literary field; possibly excursion (museum, lecture at a cultural institute, film viewing).

Type of assessment

30%: Participation (10% class participation; 20% student-led discussion). Detailed instructions will be on Canvas before the course starts.

30%: Written assignments (personal journal entries). Detailed instructions will be on Canvas before the course starts.

40%: Take-home exam. Detailed instructions will be on Canvas before the course starts. Students will work with sample questions in week 3 and week 7.

Course reading

The reading list (novellas, short stories, secondary sources) will be uploaded on Canvas before the course starts.

Entry requirements

Prerequisites: Students must have taken part in the modules "Literature, Culture, and Society" and "Literary Theory."

Target group

BA students in the English track of Literature & Society; exchange students.

Remarks

Attendance required: 80%. Students who miss more than 20% will not receive credits for the course.