



## **ELL 307 – The Outsider in Literature**

*Asst. Prof. Michael D. Sheridan*

Monday 13<sup>00</sup>–15<sup>00</sup> (H205)

Wednesday 13<sup>00</sup>–14<sup>00</sup> (H112)

*Office Hours:* Monday 15<sup>30</sup>–18<sup>00</sup> (B165 or online via Zoom)

*Email:* michael.sheridan@tedu.edu.tr

### **Course Description**

This course examines a variety of literary and other artistic works, mainly in English but also some works in translation, that portray characters or groups of characters labeled as “outsiders,” “misfits,” “outcasts,” “eccentrics,” “others,” and similar related terms. As such, the course will utilize such critical tools as techniques of characterization, variations in readers’ responses, discourses of othering, intersectionality, and labeling theory in order to understand how and why characters are labeled and/or label themselves as “outsiders,” as well as how such processes reflect the lived realities of alienation, discrimination, stigmatization, marginalization, and identity formation within which literary works are produced.

### **Readings and Course Materials**

All texts for the course will be provided for you via the course Moodle page, in either PDF format or via a URL link, as appropriate.

Most of the readings will consist of primary sources (*e.g.*, short stories, poems, songs, etc.), although some introductory or analytical secondary sources (*e.g.*, book chapters, journal articles, etc.) will also be occasionally assigned.

You are also strongly encouraged to seek out and read, on your own, any other material that will help you, and I am of course ready and willing and happy to point you in the direction of such sources.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- ✓ define what it means to be “outsider” and evaluate in what ways traditions, norms, and expectations have governed the behavior of individuals, groups, and institutions
- ✓ analyze how behavior has been defined both normatively and through radical and alternative perspectives
- ✓ comprehend how the concept of “outsider” has changed over time in relation to different ideologies

## Course Format and Expectations

Any lectures or mini-lectures will be delivered by the instructor in order to lay the theoretical and literary ground. However, the bulk of classroom discussion will be the students' responsibility, in which they are asked to take the lead, whether we are meeting face-to-face or online.

Students will be asked to share their ideas and participate actively in discussions of the material at hand. As such, it is of utmost importance that they come to class having read or viewed the assigned material.

## Important Points

*How to Listen:* Note-taking is an ideal form of active listening, and thus it is highly recommended that you take notes during class sessions, especially because in the classroom I rarely use slides but make frequent and heavy use of the blackboard/whiteboard. When you are writing down the ideas you are hearing, you summarize and retain those ideas more than when you let them wash over you, and certainly more than when you are distracted. You are, of course, welcome to take notes in the way you prefer (via handwriting or digital tools).

*Classroom Courtesies:* I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate/preferred name or gender pronoun, but you are kindly asked to use your legal name(s) in exams, papers, or any other official course document. Please advise me early in the semester if you have any such preferences as to how to address you so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

You are kindly asked to keep your camera on during Zoom meetings unless you have a major reason for being unable to do so, in which case you are kindly asked to inform me of this reason beforehand.

*Punctuality:* Please be on time for classes. If you are late for any reason, please make sure not to disrupt the flow of the lecture or discussion.

*Course Requirements:* Please attend class regularly, and please come to class prepared to discuss the assigned material, as discussion forms a central part of the coursework. You are responsible for regularly checking the course Moodle page for assigned readings, updates, and announcements.

*Academic Integrity:* This course adheres to the academic honesty policy. All work submitted and presented by you must be your own original work, with any contributions by others to that work being openly acknowledged. Any cases of plagiarism or cheating of any kind will on no grounds be tolerated: such cases will be reported to the department chair and result in a grade of zero for the relevant work.

In regard to academic integrity, please keep the following points in mind:

- Plagiarism is a form of dishonesty that occurs when a person passes off someone else's work as his or her own. This can range from failing to cite an author for ideas incorporated into a student's paper to cutting and pasting paragraphs from various websites to handing in a paper downloaded from the Internet. All of these are plagiarism.
- All parties to plagiarism are considered equally guilty. If a student shares their coursework with another student and that student plagiarizes it, the sharer is considered as guilty as the one who has plagiarized their work, since they enabled the plagiarism to take place. Under no circumstances should a student make their coursework available to another student unless the instructor gives explicit permission for this to happen. Copying someone's work is an extreme and straightforward act of plagiarism. More commonly, however, students plagiarize without realizing they are doing so. This generally happens when a student fails to acknowledge the source of an idea or phrasing. A student can avoid such plagiarism by citing their sources properly.
- Read the university's academic honesty contract at:  
<https://student.tedu.edu.tr/en/principles-academic-integrity>.
- Assignments will be uploaded on Moodle, which integrates TurnItIn. The TurnItIn similarity index of your assignments must be lower than 25% to qualify for evaluation.
- You may neither receive help from nor give help to others during exams. During exams, you may not leave the room, talk, or use any electronic devices. You must also keep your eyes on your own work.

*Non-discrimination Policy:* In this course, discrimination and harassment based on race, color, religion, creed, ethnicity, ancestry, national origin, sexual orientation, age, or disability, among other personal characteristics or choices, are strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated.

*Late Submissions:* Late submission of assignments, except in cases of documented illness or emergency, will be accepted at a penalty of 5% reduction of the assignment's overall grade per day. After three days from the due date, late submissions will no longer be accepted.

## Grading

Your final grade will be determined according to the criteria found below, but please keep in mind that these assessments might be subject to change depending on decisions made by Turkey's Higher Education Council. Students will be informed of any such potential changes via Moodle, email, and/or in class.

- **Assignments (20% of total grade, 10% each)**

During the semester, you will write a total of two (2) assignments, one in the first half of the semester and one in the second half of the semester. The assignments will require you to write between approximately 750 and 1,250 words each, with each assignment worth 10% of your total grade. The due dates of the assignments are listed in the course schedule below, but please keep in mind that these due dates may change slightly. More details about these assignments will be provided during the semester at appropriate times.

- **Presentation (10% of total grade)**

In the final weeks of the semester, you will be giving a presentation on a choice of texts or other media related to the subject of the course. You will have the following options for this presentation: (a) You may present either individually or as part of a group of no more than three people; (b) You may present either to the class as a whole or to me separately; and (c) You may present either online via Zoom or face to face. More details about the presentation will be provided during the semester at an appropriate time.

- **Midterm examination (30% of total grade)**

During Week 8 of the semester (April 24–30), there will be a midterm examination covering the material from Weeks 1 through 8. The midterm exam will be held online via Moodle, with the exam questions available throughout the four-day period from April 27 to 30.

- **Final examination (40% of total grade)**

During the final examination period (June 12–23), there will be a comprehensive, face-to-face/sit-down final examination covering the material from Weeks 1 through 14. More information about this exam will be provided during the semester at an appropriate time.

## Feedback and Email Policies

There will be a grading rubric available on Moodle that will give you a basic idea of what I look for in written work and thus how I grade. For each submitted assignment, I will provide a breakdown of your grade according to this rubric, and, where necessary, a couple of short comments as feedback. If you would like more detailed feedback on a graded assignment, please email me to request it within three (3) days after the grade is posted.

Whenever you write an email to me for any question or request, please be aware that I will respond to your email as soon as I am able, but only within weekday business hours; that is, I do not respond to emails in the evenings or on weekends.

## Course Schedule

Below you will find a thematic schedule outlining the basic topics to be covered each week, along with the texts that we will be reading. More precise details of each week's daily reading will be provided via Moodle, email, and/or in class as the semester progresses, but please keep in mind that you are responsible for checking on and keeping up with the assigned reading before coming to class, in order to facilitate discussion. Please note that, due to time constraints, we may not be able to discuss all of the assigned texts in class; however, you are still responsible for reading them prior to class, as well as for your written assignments.

Please note that the schedule and readings below are subject to change, including additions and/or removals, with any changes to be announced via Moodle, email, and/or in class. Also note that the schedule might be subject to change based on procedures decided on by Turkey's Higher Education Council.

### **Week 1 (Mar. 6 + 8)**

#### **Introduction**

- *In-class reading:* Emily Dickinson, "I'm Nobody! Who are you?" and "The Soul selects her own Society —"
- John Clare, "I Am"

### **Week 2 (Mar. 13 + 15)**

#### **Defining an "Outsider"**

- David Shulman, "Labeling Theory" from *The Encyclopedia of Social Theory* and Sherry Lynn Skaggs, "Labeling Theory" from *Encyclopaedia Britannica*
- Olena Hankivsky, Selection from "Intersectionality 101"
- Edgar Allan Poe, "The Man of the Crowd"

**Weeks 3 and 4 (Mar. 20 + 22, Mar. 27 + 29)****The Romantic or Byronic Hero/Anti-hero**

- George Gordon, Lord Byron; Selection from *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*
- Mary Shelley, Selection from *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*

**Week 5 (Apr. 3 + 5)****Outlaws and Criminals**

- Anonymous, "Robin Hood and the Beggar"
- Scott Farrell, "Robin Hood"
- Selected recordings of the folk song "Pretty Polly"
- Selection from Paul Slade, "Timber Wolf: Pretty Polly"

**Weeks 6 and 7 (Apr. 10 + 12, Apr. 17 + 19)****Existential Outsiders and Loners**

- Samuel Beckett, "The Expelled"
- Franz Kafka, "A Hunger Artist"
- H.P. Lovecraft, "The Outsider"

**Week 8 (Apr. 24 + 26)****"Misfits" and the Disabled**

- Evliya Çelebi, Selection from Volume 1 of *The Book of Travels*
- Flannery O'Connor, "Good Country People"

**📌 Assignment #1: Due before class on Wednesday, Apr. 26**

**📌 The midterm examination will be available on Moodle between April 27 and 30, and will cover material from Weeks 1 through 8.**

**Weeks 9–11 (May 3, May 8 + 10, May 15 + 17)****Against Conformity: American Writing of the 1950s and 1960s**

- James Baldwin, “Stranger in the Village”
- William S. Burroughs, “Prologue” to *Junky*
- Allen Ginsberg, “Howl: For Carl Solomon”
- Sylvia Plath, “The Applicant,” “Paralytic,” “The Snowman on the Moor”
- Anne Sexton, “Her Kind,” “Unknown Girl in the Maternity Ward”
- **Please note that there will be no class on Monday, May 1 due to International Workers’ Day.**

**Weeks 12 and 13 (May 22 + 24, May 29 + 31)****Presentations**

During these weeks, students will give their presentations. The works listed below are possible options from among which you or your group may choose, and include both novels and films, with the films indicated as such and listed according to their director. However, I will certainly consider other options if there is another relevant work (in any medium) on which you or your group would like to present.

- James Baldwin, *Giovanni’s Room*
- Tod Browning, *Freaks* (film)
- Albert Camus, *The Stranger*
- Osamu Dazai, *No Longer Human*
- David Fincher, *Fight Club* (film)
- Dan Gilroy, *Nightcrawler* (film)
- Barry Jenkins, *Moonlight* (film)
- Spike Jonze, *Her* (film)
- Franz Kafka, *The Metamorphosis*
- Carson McCullers, *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*
- Toni Morrison, *Sula*
- Martin Scorsese, *Taxi Driver* (film)
- John Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men*
- Nathanael West, *Miss Lonelyhearts*
- Jeanette Winterson, *The Daylight Gate*
- Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One’s Own*

**Week 14 (June 5 + 7)****Review**

During this week, we will conduct a review of the course in preparation for the final examination. Additionally, any presentations that were not done in the previous two weeks due to time constraints or other reasons will be given during this week.

**📌 Assignment #2: Due before class on Wednesday, June 7**

**📌 The final examination will cover material from Weeks 1 through 14.**

## **Student Services Information**

### *Student Development and Psychological Counseling Center*

The center is a service mandated with providing crisis intervention and supportive listening services to the campus community. A major part of fulfilling that mandate is raising awareness of our service so that students know they are never alone in dealing with problems. You may contact the center at:

- *Email:* [ogrencidanismamerkezi@tedu.edu.tr](mailto:ogrencidanismamerkezi@tedu.edu.tr)
- *Telephone:* 0312 585 0316
- *Office:* A122
- *Website:* <http://csc.tedu.edu.tr/>

### *TEDU COPeS – Psycho-Social Support*

The TED University Psychosocial Support Team was initially established to facilitate coping with the psychological, social, familial, academic, and professional difficulties that may arise due to adverse conditions associated with COVID-19 pandemic for TEDU students and employees.

In time we have expanded our services to provide psychosocial support in diverse disasters. In this line, TEDU COPeS offers psychosocial support for TED University students and employees in the aftermath of the Kahramanmaraş earthquakes.

For further information and/or questions, visit their website at <https://copes.tedu.edu.tr/>.

### *Specialized Support and Students with Disabilities*

Students who may require specialized support due to a disability affecting mobility, vision, hearing, learning, and/or mental or physical health should consult with the Specialized Support and Disability Coordinator, Asst. Prof. Emrah Keser (Email: [emrah.keser@tedu.edu.tr](mailto:emrah.keser@tedu.edu.tr)), or visit the website at <https://www.tedu.edu.tr/tr/main/engelsiz-tedu>.