**Comparative Literature 203: (Re)Thinking Haiti**

**Spring 2018**

Instructor: Judith Levy

Email: j.t.levy@emory.edu

Class Day/Time: T/TH/F 9:00-9:50 am

Room: Rich Building 103

Section #: CPLT 203RW-2 (1185)

Office Hours: T/TH 10:00 am-11:00 am in Peet’s coffee shop in Woodruff Library, and also by appointment

Course Website: <http://haiti.judithtlevy.com/>

**Course Description:**

As the location of the first successful slave revolution, Haiti was used as an example of potential liberty-to-come for slaves in other Caribbean, American, and Latin American contexts. However, such potential was neglected by dominant colonial powers, and various elements of the Haitian revolution have failed to be incorporated into dominant historical narratives. Scholars such as Susan Buck-Morss have claimed that the Haitian revolution’s influence has been suppressed by dominant “Western” thought, which she explains can be unveiled with minimal investigation. Since its revolution, Haiti has undergone many changes of leaders, dictators, and even U.S. occupation. Some of these changes have created hostile environments for Haitians, causing various diasporas in which Haitians have moved to various locations around the globe. This course will use responses to (or neglect of) the Haitian revolution as a lens with which to analyze Haiti’s socio-political shifts to follow. Text will include both local and relocated diasporic Haitian literature and film. In doing so, this course will question where Haiti is located within (or outside of) dominant political narratives, considering how Haiti is seen as a nation, using Haiti as an opening to reconsider nationalism more broadly.

**Course Outcomes:**

* Engage in critical thinking through reading and writing.
* Develop a nuanced understanding of and engagement with the writing process(es).
* Composing writing in various modes and genres through building and writing on a web domain.
* Gain an understanding of discourse, research, and rhetoric in the field of Literary Studies.
* Gather an understanding of Haitian literature and history, including colonial and imperial influences on Haiti and the concept of the nation-state.

**Required Texts:**

Ollivier, Émile. *Passages*. Translated by Leonard W. Sugden, Ekstasis Editions, 2003.  
Roumain, Jacques. *Masters of the Dew.* Translated by Langston Hughes and Mercer Cook, Caribbean Studies Press, 2012.

All other texts will be available via Course Reserves or online.

**Other Required Materials:**

You will each be required to purchase a domain. If this is a financial burden, please talk to me, as there may be scholarships available, or you can use the free version of WordPress.

**Grade Breakdown**

15% Rhetorical Analysis

15% Review

35% Literary Argument (5% abstract and annotated bibliography; 30% final product)

20% Reading Response Blog Posts

10% Participation

**Grading Scale**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 93.00-100 | A |  |
| 90.00-92.99 | A- |  |
| 86.00-89.99 | B+ |  |
| 83.00-85.99 | B |  |
| 80.00-82.99 | B- |  |
| 76.00-79.99 | C+ |  |
| 73.00-75.99 | C |  |

**Participation**

This class relies heavily on class discussion and group work, so participation will be counted as a large portion of your grade. **You will be expected to come prepared, whether that means having completed the assigned readings or having written the assigned drafts or responses.** Because I understand that some people are less inclined to speak during class discussion, I will also take other in-class work (such as free-writes and group activities) into consideration when calculating your participation grade. I expect everyone to give his or her best effort when it comes to discussion and to also remain respectful of others who are contributing to discussion.

**Attendance**

With participation as an important factor for your success in this class, attendance will be noted and can affect your grade. You are allowed **three absences** throughout the semester that will **not** negatively affect your grade. After three absences, your final grade will decrease 3% for each subsequent absence. Similarly, significantly late arrivals will be recorded, so three late arrivals will be counted as the equivalence one absence. This policy is solely to encourage your success as an individual and foster growth for the whole class as a community. **If you have any emergency situations during the semester that will cause you to have a significant number of absences, please inform me, and we will work out the best solution.**

**Assignments**

**Reading Responses**

In order to prepare you for your larger assignments, to practice writing frequently, and to help facilitate class discussion, you will be responding to the out-of-class readings on your blog. You will submit a personal response to the reading, along with a visual element to further your point. Your visual element can be from another source or you can create it yourself; however, if you use someone else’s work, you must cite the source or include a link to the original content. The text must be **between 250 and 500 words**, and the visual element can be anything from a video to a photo, or even a meme. For your response, you may choose any of the readings we have done between the last reading response and the time the new one is due. You may discuss whichever element of the reading you desire in these posts; however, your **post must make a clear claim about the reading which is supported by evidence within the text or from external critical material.** The feedback you receive on these posts will help prepare you for larger assignments. These **five blog posts** will be due each **Thursday noted on the calendar,by the time class begins.**

**Rhetorical Analysis (750-1250 words and 1 multi-modal element):**

In this essay, you will be analyzing the claim of one text (either literary or critical) which we have encountered in class or another text that is relevant to course material *which I have approved during office hours*. Using the interpretation tools and rhetorical devices we have been discussing in class, your paper will interrogate how the text achieves its purpose.

**Text or Film Review (5 to 10-minute podcast; manuscript must also be posted to blog, along with a 100-250 word description of your podcast theme):**

In this assignment, you’ll be creating a concept for a themed podcast. After thinking of who your anticipated audience would be for this podcast, you’ll be recommending whether or not your audience should read either a text or a film that we’ve encountered in class. In order to justify your review, you’ll create criteria that would give the text a good review and discuss whether or not specific details from the text fulfill that criteria. You can think of this assignment as a podcast version of an Amazon book review. For this assignment, consider using the Emory Center for Digital Scholarship to record and produce your podcast. Their website is: <http://digitalscholarship.emory.edu/index.html> .

**Literary Argument (250 word abstract and 4 source annotated bibliography, with the final product a minimum of 1000 words and 1 multi-modal element):**

Using texts we have encountered in class, this assignment will consider a debatable topic, consider the viewpoints and conversations surrounding that topic, take a stance, and support it with evidence. You must closely analyze at least one text from the course in order to make your argument, and you must use at least two outside sources to support this argument. If you use the same source as your rhetorical analysis or review, you may utilize key points from this assignment in order to add to any of the specific evidence used to prove your point. Please note that if you utilize key points from your previous assignment, they must be clearly adjusted in order to fit the scope of this specific argument. This assignment will require at least one multi-modal element that connects to your argument’s point. Before writing the paper, you’ll submit an abstract and annotated bibliography (four sources minimum) to me, which will help us discuss your topic during conferences.

**Revision Option**

If you are not satisfied with your grades on either of the first two larger assignments (the Rhetorical Analysis and the Review), you can opt to revise your assignment. In order to do this, you must provide the original document, the new document, and a one-page explanation of the revisions you made. Should you choose to revise an assignment, **revisions are due two weeks after you have received your original, graded assignment.** Once your new assignment is graded, the grade that will be recorded will be the average between your grade on the original assignment and the revised assignment.

**Writing Center**

The Writing Center is an incredible resource, where fellow students give helpful feedback on your writing process. They can help you through any part of the writing process, so you may visit the Writing Center at any stage of writing (even if you just want to talk about your topic and see if it makes sense). You are able to go as frequently as you want (they allow one appointment per week, and one walk-in per day), so feel free to get extra assistance if you enjoy going to the Writing Center. Please take note that the Writing Center tutors will not simply “proofread” your papers; they are there to help you through the writing process, which means that you will be doing the work, they will just be giving you feedback and helpful advice along the way.

Website (General Information): <http://www.writingcenter.emory.edu/>

Appointment System Website: <https://emory.mywconline.com/>

Phone: 404-727-6451

Location: 212 Callaway North

**Conferences**

Conferences are a beneficial time where you can receive direct feedback from me on your assignments. We will hold one day of conferences for the Rhetorical Analysis and two days of conferences for your Literary Argument assignment. For conferences, you will sign up for a specific time, and you will only have to show up at my office for that time the entire week. **However, if you do not show up for your scheduled conference, you will be considered absent for the all of the days for that round of conferences (one day for the Rhetorical Analysis and two days for the Literary Argument).**

**Web Domain**

For this course, you will use a variety of digital tools to compose your own website. No experience with web design is necessary for this work. Please be aware that your work will be published to the web and available for audiences beyond the class and university. Because of the public nature of your work, please consider your essay topics with care, and only write on material which you are comfortable sharing with others.

**Contact**

Generally, the best way to contact me is through email. I will respond quickly, within approximately 24 hours, except for weekends and holidays. Please be considerate of your email format, including relevant subject headings and clear communication. I will also occasionally send course information through email, so you are responsible for checking your own email regularly to receive such notifications.

**Late Work**

All essays and assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class on the days that they are due. **Late work for online responses will not be accepted; however, larger assignments will be accepted late with a 10 percent deduction for each day that it is late.** This class is fast-paced, so falling behind on essays will affect you negatively in the long run. Also, if you turn in a late essay, I cannot guarantee that it will receive as much feedback compared to if it were turned in on time.

**Classroom Etiquette and Electronic Devices**

Please be respectful of your other classmates by engaging in discussion in a kindly fashion. I expect you to not be disruptive of other students speaking. Cell phones use is not allowed, and the use of phones can result in deductions from your participation grade. Eating and drinking are allowed, so long as you clean up your mess and you are not causing any distractions. I would like to create a classroom community that is fun and engaging while maintaining respect and understanding of others.

Because we will be doing various sorts of digital, multimodal writing, **I encourage the use of laptops**; however, the use of laptops is only allowed for course-related activities, and participation will be deducted if laptops are utilized for purposes not related to class.

**Tutoring for Multilingual Students**

If English is not your first language and you are struggling with course materials, you may benefit from working with an ESL instructor. ESL instructors are undergraduate students who will help you develop your English language skills. They can meet with you to simply practice talking, or even to discuss specific assignments.

Visit the website of the Office for Undergraduate Education (http://college.emory.edu/oue/) and select "Student Support" and then "ESL Program" to schedule an appointment, read the tutoring policies, and view the offerings of the ESL Program (direct link to ESL Tutoring: http://college.emory.edu/oue/student-support/esl-program/esl-tutoring.html). If you do not have a scheduled appointment, you may want to meet with a drop-in tutor in the ESL Lab, Callaway S108. Here, you may have less time with a tutor if other students are waiting, but you can briefly discuss an assignment and some of your concerns. For more information, visit the website or contact Levin Arnsperger at [larnspe@emory.edu](mailto:larnspe@emory.edu)

**Emory Counseling Services**

If you’re stressed or dealing with difficult challenges in your personal life, free and confidential counseling services and support are available from the Emory Counseling Center. Call (404) 727-7450 or visit <http://studenthealth.emory.edu/cs/> .

**Special Needs**

In order to foster a comfortable and productive classroom environment, I am happy to assist any special needs which you may have. Please register with Access, Disability Services, and Resources (ADSR) (<http://www.ods.emory.edu/index.html>) and present the Accommodation Letter from ADSR to me during the first week of classes, or once the letter is attained.

**Plagiarism**

Academic communities can only be successful through the means of critical thinking and honesty. Plagiarism violates this academic integrity, and it will not be tolerated. Do not submit the work of others, turn in work that you have already turned in for another class, or neglect to acknowledge any sources you use in essays or other assignments. Engaging in plagiarism can result in you receiving an “F” on the assignment, an “F” in the entire course, and can potentially result in dismissal from the university. Please go to <http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policy/honor_code.html> to review Emory’s Honor Code involving plagiarism.

**Tentative Course Schedule**

**Week 1**

TH 1/18 Campus Closed due to Inclement Weather; Read Syllabus

F 1/19 Introduction to Course

**Come having read the syllabus and prepared to ask questions about the course.**

**Week 2**

T 1/23 Michelle-Rolf Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, “The Power in the Story”(on Woodruff Library Website)

TH 1/25 Michelle-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, “The Three Faces of Sans Souci”

F 1/26 Domain of One’s Own

**Week 3**

T 1/30 Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past,* “An Unthinkable History”

**Email link to subdomain**

TH 2/1 Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, “The Presence of the Past” and “Epilogue”

**Reading Response Due**

F 2/2 Reading Response Discussion

**Week 4**

T 2/6 Jacques Roumain, *Masters of the Dew*, Chapters 1 and 2

TH 2/8 Jacques Roumain, *Masters of the Dew*, Chapters 3 and 4

**Reading Response Due**

F 2/9 Conferences for Rhetorical Analysis

**Week 5**

T 2/13 Jacques Roumain, *Masters of the Dew*, Chapters 5 and 6

TH 2/15 Jacques Roumain, *Masters of the Dew*, Chapters 7-9

F 2/16 **Peer Review**

**Week 6**

T 2/20 Jacques Roumain, *Masters of the Dew*, Chapters 10 and 11

TH 2/22 Jacques Roumain, *Masters of the Dew*, Chapters 12 and 13

**Reading Response Due**

F 2/23 **Rhetorical Analysis Due**

Reading Response Discussion

**Week 7**

T 2/27 Jacques Roumain, *Masters of the Dew*, Chapters 14 and “The End and the Beginning”

TH 3/1 Bhabha, Homi. “DissemiNation: Time, Narrative and the Margins of the Modern nation”

F 3/2 Reading Response Discussion

**Week 8**

T 3/6 Viewing of Raoul Peck’s *L’Homme sur le quais (The Man by the Shore)*

TH 3/8 Viewing and discussion of Raoul Peck’s *L’Homme sur le quais (The Man by the Shore)*

F 3/9 Workshop on Writing Reviews

**Week 9**

**Spring Break: Class does not meet.**

**Week 10**

T 3/20 Émile Ollivier, *Passages*, Part 1

TH 3/22 Émile Ollivier, *Passages*, Part 1

Discuss Literary Argument Assignment

**Reading Response Due**  
F 3/23 **Peer Review**

**Week 11**

T 3/27 Émile Ollivier, *Passages*, Part 2

TH 3/29 Émile Ollivier, *Passages*, Part 2

F 3/30 Library Research Methods

**Week 12**

T 4/3 Émile Ollivier, *Passages*, Part 3

TH 4/5 Émile Ollivier, *Passages*, Part 3

**Reading Response Due**  
F 4/6 Research Workshop/Discussion

**Review Due**

**Week 13**

T 4/10 Edwidge Danticat, *Krik? Krak!*, excerpts

TH 4/12 Edwidge Danticat, *Krik? Krak!*, excerpts

F 4/13 **Abstract and Annotated Bibliography Due**

**Week 14**

T 4/17 Conferences

TH 4/19 Conferences  
F 4/20 **Attend at least one panel or the keynote address at the (Un)Moorings Conference on campus.**

**Week 15**

T 4/24 Workshop on Literary Argument

TH 4/26 Sample Argument; Reading TBA

F 4/27 Peer Review

**Literary Argument Due Tuesday, May 8 by 3:00 pm**