

Antalya Bilim University
Department of Political Science and International Relations, POLS 320/386
Politics and Literature
Spring 2024

Class Time: Thursdays 13:30-16:20
Office Hours:

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(A2-34)

Literature is not only a powerful reflection of society but also a powerful tool in shaping society. Literary works can depict historical events and political dynamics, and at the same time act as tools of political engagement. The objective of this course is to introduce a range of issues, theories, institutions and events that form the study of political science through literary works, particularly through the *novel*. By focusing on a select number of novels that take place and describe divergent historical, country and political settings, the course will address topics critical to comparative politics. Thus while each novel will be studied within a particular context it will simultaneously be evaluated through a comparative approach. Other literary form such as short stories or poems may be introduced where relevant. The course will begin with an introduction to the role of literature in society and politics. The course will then continue with an examination of two novels. Each novel will highlight divergent events and political phenomena such as modernization, colonialisms, forms of government, types of leadership, social organization, conflict and populism. Through the events and characters in the novels we will examine different political events, question institutional structures, reflect on societal compositions and evaluate settings of conflict and cooperation. We will link the worlds of fiction to today's world and examine global politics.

Course Readings

We will read the following two novels for this course. Each student must have a copy of the novels.

- 1) Chinua Achebe. *Things Fall Apart*. 1958. Penguin Books.
- 2) George Orwell. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. 1949. Penguin Books.

All other readings and course materials (PowerPoint slides and video links) will be posted to the relevant week on LMS.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. Plagiarism is a type of intellectual theft. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement. You will be subject to disciplinary action and punishment if you are caught plagiarizing.

Assessment Criteria

- 1) Attendance and participation (10%):** Students are expected to attend class and actively participate in class discussions. In the case that you will miss class please let me know beforehand. Since the course is based on novels it is important that you read the assigned section of the book *before* each class. Each class you should come to class with a question or a comment about an event/ character/ theme that you read for the week. We will begin discussion with you questions and comments.
- 2) Presentation and Report (20%):** For each novel, students will be assigned a topic that they will research and present on. I will propose a list of topics relevant to the novels but students may also propose a topic to present on. The presentations should last approximately 20 minutes. Students will also submit a written report of their presentation. The report should not be a summary of the presentation but an analysis/review of the novel based on the assigned theme. Specific guidelines will be distributed in class.
- 3) Midterm Exam (30%):** The midterm exam will cover the material we have studied until the exam week.
- 4) Final Exam (40%):** The final exam will be based on all the materials covered throughout the semester.

Course Schedule

Part I: Introduction

Week 1: Introduction / Syllabus / Expectations

Week 2: Politics and Literature

- Whitebrook, Maureen. 1995. "Politics and Literature?" *Politics*, 15(1), 55-62.
- Mohsin Hamid and Francine Prose. 2015. "Does Fiction Have the Power to Sway Politics?" *New York Times-Bookends*. February 17, 2015.

Part II: *Things Fall Apart*. Chinua Achebe

Week 3:

- *Things Fall Apart* Ch. 1-7

Week 4:

- *Things Fall Apart* Ch. 8 -12
- Colonial Inheritance in Africa

Week 5:

- *Things Fall Apart* Ch. 13-20
- Pfaff, William. 1995. "A New Colonialism? Europe Must go Back into Africa," *Foreign Affairs*, 74 (1), 2-6.
- **Presentations on *Things Fall Apart* begin Week 5

Week 6:

- *Things Fall Apart* Ch. 21-25
- Bird, Gemma. 2016. "Beyond the Nation State: The Role of Local and Pan-national identities in Defining Post-Colonial African Citizenship" *Citizenship Studies*, 29 (2), 260-275.

Week 7:

- Academic Reviews of *Things Fall Apart* + Presentations

Week 8:

Midterm Week

----- NO CLASS -----

Part III: *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. George Orwell

Week 9:

- *Nineteen Eighty-Four* Introduction + Part I Ch. 1- 4
- Palous, Martin. 2014. "Totalitarianism" *The Encyclopedia of Political Thought*. John Wiley and Sons Ltd. DOI: 10.1002/9781118474396.wbept1006

Week 10:

- *Nineteen Eighty-Four* Part I Ch.5 – Ch. 8
- George Orwell “Why I Write”

Week 11:

- *Nineteen Eighty-Four* - Part II Ch.1 – 6
- Glasius, Marlies. 2018. “What Authoritarianism is and is not: A practice perspective” *International Affairs* 94 (3): 515-533.
- ***Presentations on Nineteen Eighty-Four begin*

Week 12:

- *Nineteen Eighty-Four* - Part II Ch.7 - ch. 10
- Nadia Urbinati (2017). “Populism and the Principle of the Majority” in *The Oxford Handbook of Populism*, eds. Kaltwasser et al. pp. 571-589.

Week 13:

- *Nineteen Eighty-Four* - Part III Ch.1 - Ch. 6

Week 14:

- Review and Presentations