

## LITERATURE DEPARTMENT COURSE OUTLINES

### ALT 100: Critical Reading and Response

#### Unit Description

The purpose of this unit is to introduce students to the basics of literary criticism. Students will be guided in systematically practicing the skills involved in the appreciation of word art; and in responding critically to literature. This will involve reading selected literary pieces including novels, plays, poems and non-fiction. Elements such as form, content and style will be given prominence. Students will also read the critical reviews of others and respond critically to them.

#### Unit Objectives

By the end of this unit students should:

- ❖ Have a clear understanding of terms and phrases used in the course of literary criticism.
- ❖ Have the capacity to identify literary devices and stylistic features of word art.
- ❖ Have studied a selection of literary pieces produced by writers from around the world.
- ❖ Have improved the skills necessary to the appreciation of, and critical response to, word art.

#### References

- ✓ Coombes, H. *Literature and Criticism*. The Penguin Group, 1991.
- ✓ Lodge, David. *After Bakhtin: Essays on Fiction and Criticism*. London and New York: Routledge, 1990.
- ✓ Lunsford, Andrea A., John J. Ruszkiewicz and Keith Walters (eds). *Everything's an Argument: with readings* (Third Edition). New York: Bedford/St. Martins, 2004.
- ✓ Noworthy, W. *The Language Poets Use*. London: The Athlone Press, 1962.
- ✓ Ricard, Alain. *The Languages and Literatures of Africa*. Cape Town: David Philip Publishers, 2004.
- ✓ Richards, I. *Practical Criticism: A Study of Literary Judgement*. London: K. Paul, 1929.

### ALT 101: Introduction to Literary Genres

#### Unit Description

The unit introduces students to the major genres (forms) of literature: prose fiction, drama, poetry, biography, autobiography, oral literature and the essay. This will deepen their insights into the nature of literature and its relevance to humankind. Both the external and internal structures of the literary works will be explored. Besides examining the differences and similarities among these literary genres, this unit will show how to identify, describe and discuss features of literary matter.

#### Unit Objectives

At the end of the end of the unit, students should be able to do the following;

- ❖ Identify and explain the various forms of literature
- ❖ Identify and illustrate aspects of form and content of various literary genres
- ❖ Explain the functions of the literary genres
- ❖ Identify and explain the various dynamics of literature genres

## References

- ✓ Forster, E. M. (1974). *Aspects of the Novel*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- ✓ Gordon, J.B. & Kuehner, K. (1999). *Fiction: The Elements of the Short Story*. Lincolnwood, Chicago: National Textbook Company.
- ✓ Hawthorn, J. (1985). *Studying the Novel*. London: Edward Arnold.
- ✓ Nowotony, W. (1962). *The Language Poets Use*. London: Athlone Press.
- ✓ Weales, G. (1964). *A Play and its Parts*. New York: Basic Books.
- ✓ Welleck, R. & Warren, A. (1956). *Theory of Literature*. Harmondsworth. Penguin

## ALT 102: Introduction to Eastern African Oral Literature

### Unit Description

This is an introductory unit with the overall objective of broadening the students' perspective and understanding of oral literature through studying their own oral literature as it is expressed and studied in Eastern Africa. Students should be able to appreciate the central place of orature in the broad spectrum of the discipline of literature in general.

The unit shall thus introduce the students to the socio-historical and pedagogical developments of orature with a view to contextualising it so that the students comprehend the motivations and ramifications of various phases that Eastern African orature and its study has gone through since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. By the end of the unit the student should be able to describe orature material from Eastern Africa, explaining its development to date; and forecast the nature of the future of oral literature study in Eastern Africa in terms of directions, opportunities and challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### Unit Objectives

The course aims at introducing the students to:

- ❖ The socio-historical context of the development of orature across the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial eras.
- ❖ The content and functions of the genres of orature in East Africa.
- ❖ The concept of performance in oral literature.
- ❖ The relationship between orature and contemporary African literature both oral and written.

## References

- ✓ Adagala, K. And Mukabi, W. *Kenyan Oral Narratives*
- ✓ Bukenya, A. Et. Al.. *Understanding Oral Literature*.
- ✓ Finnegan, Ruth. *Oral Literature in Africa*
- ✓ Kichamu, A. And Bole, O. *Teaching Oral Literature in Schools*
- ✓ Taban Lo Liyong.. *Popular Culture of East Africa*.
- ✓ P'Bitek, O. *The Hyena And the Rock*.
- ✓ Kabele, D. *Certificate Guide to Oral Literature Research*.

## ALT 200 Eastern African Prose Fiction

### Unit Description

The purpose of this unit is to read prose fiction produced by writers from the Eastern African region. Prose fiction in Eastern Africa is rich and vibrant. It is a twentieth century

phenomenon, and yet it includes works of art in English, Kiswahili, French, and African languages. Eastern Africa has been through great historical upheavals in the relatively short span of fifty years. As a result the literature reflects a multiplicity of themes and concerns that in other parts of the world took hundreds of years to become manifest. The literature of Eastern Africa therefore includes not only anti-colonial and postcolonial literature but a host of other universal themes discernible in literature from other parts of the world. We shall look at the question of identity and self-awareness, the peculiarities of style and form, and the place of Eastern African literature in world literature.

### Unit Objectives

By the end of this unit students should:

- ❖ Have studied a selection of prose works produced by writers from Eastern Africa.
- ❖ Understand and appreciate the different contexts in which the works took shape.
- ❖ Be able to write critically about the literature of Eastern Africa in relation to world literature.
- ❖ Undertake critical evaluation of selected pieces in the historical, social, economic, cultural, political and theoretical contexts in which they were created.

### References

- ✓ Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. Trans. Charles I. Markmann. London: Pluto Press, [1952] 2008.
- ✓ Gikandi, Simon and Evan Mwangi. *The Columbia Guide to East African Literature in English Since 1945*. New York: Columbia UP, 2007.
- ✓ Mwangi, Evan. *Africa Writes Back to Self: Metafiction, Gender and Sexuality*. Albany: SUNY Press, 2009.
- ✓ Ogude, James. "Introduction." *Rethinking Eastern African Literary and Intellectual Landscapes*. Ed. James Ogude, Grace Musila and Dina Ligaga. Trenton, NJ.: Africa World Press, 2012. vii-xxvi
- ✓ Ricard, Alain. *The Languages and Literatures of Africa*. Cape Town: David Philip Publishers, 2004.

## ALT 201: Eastern African Poetry and Drama

### Unit Description

The purpose of this unit is to read poems and plays produced by writers from the Eastern African region. The unit focuses on how writers from Eastern Africa evaluate, in their poems and plays, various social, economic and cultural issues that have shaped the "African experience". Learners use current theories to analyse selected texts.

### Unit Objectives

- ❖ To situate the poetry and drama of East Africa on the world map.
- ❖ To expose students to the poetry and drama of Eastern Africa.
- ❖ To examine the themes and styles predominating in the poetry and drama of the region.
- ❖ To undertake critical analysis of poems and plays produced in the region.

### References

- ✓ Alembe, Ezekiel B. (2000). *Appreciating Drama*. Nairobi: Acacia Stantex Publishers.
- ✓ Cook, David and David Rubadiri. (1996). *Poems from East Africa*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers.

- ✓ Olembo, Waveney. (1985). *The Music of Poetry*. London: Edward Arnold.
- ✓ Ruganda, John. (1992). *Telling the Truth Laughingly*. Oxford: African Books Collective.

## **ALT 202: A Survey of African Literature**

### **Unit Description**

The survey unit will critically examine and explore selected African literary texts written in English. The general focus will be on three distinct but fairly related concepts: myth, history, and tradition in so far as they function as principal signposts for the approach to and appreciation of contemporary African literary expression. Specifically we will examine how selected works draw upon and/or re-invent myth as a perspective and as basis of dramatic conflict. We will also explore the extent to which African writing re-interprets history and draws on oral traditional modes. Eventually, we will be interested in critical evaluation of this body of writing as a unique phenomenon reflecting sensibility and consciousness.

### **Unit Objectives**

- ❖ To introduce learners to the theoretical understanding of the concept of ‘African literature’
- ❖ To sensitize students about the phenomenon of African consciousness in as far as it relates to myth, history and tradition
- ❖ To enhance the learner’s ability to critique literary works competently

### **References**

- ✓ Gikandi, Simon. *Reading the African Novel*
- ✓ Irele, Abiola. *The Cambridge Companion to the African Novel*
- ✓ Orisawayi, Dele. *Literature and Black Aesthetics*
- ✓ Soyinka, Wole. *Myth, Literature, and the African World*
- ✓ Wanjala, Chris. *Standpoints on African Literature” Critical Anthology*
- ✓ Wa Thiong’o, Ngugi. *Writers in Politics*

## **ALT 206: Creative Writing**

### **Unit Description**

This unit introduces the students to the mechanics of ‘creative writing’ in the three main streams of literature: Drama, Poetry and Prose. It puts emphasis on practical, creative works by the students and the attendant responses in the course of tutor-student discussions. The end-products are students who are confident in the mechanics of their art and can apply them in further growth as creative writers and literary critics.

### **Unit Objectives**

- ❖ To equip the students with the basic skills of drafting and revising given experimental works in creative writing.
- ❖ To develop in the students the habit of intensive, systematic and creative writing on a wide range of themes using a variety of styles.
- ❖ To encourage intensive reading as means to self-confidence and meaningful, credible self-expression.

## References

- ✓ Egri, Lajos. *The Art of Creative Writing*.
- ✓ Elbow, Peter. *Writing with Power*.
- ✓ Gardner, John. *The Art of Fiction: Notes for Young Writers*.
- ✓ Mphahlele, Ezekiel. *A Guide to Creative Writing*.
- ✓ Nowotny, Winfred. *The Language Poets Use*.
- ✓ Stuart, G. *How Plays Are Made*.
- ✓ Strunk and White. *The Elements of Style*.
- ✓ Walter, B. P. *Short Story Writing*.

## ALT 208: Literary Language and Presentation

### Unit Description

The purpose of this unit is to enhance students' abilities to formulate and articulate well-crafted essays appropriate for an academic audience; and to provide opportunities for students to express thoughts and opinions in a succinct and cohesive manner. It introduces the learner to the basics of scholarly literary presentation, organization and expression; rudiments of identifying, defining and delimiting literary topics; formulating hypotheses and theses; conducting research and evaluating research findings; final presentation of critical writing; reviews, essays articles, responses, term papers and dissertations.

### Unit Objectives

By the end of the semester, the unit should be able to:-

- ❖ Inculcate and develop efficient scholarly habits, attitudes, and practices in the student
- ❖ Inculcate in the learner the habit of original and critical thinking
- ❖ Introduce students to the basics skills of scholarly topic handling, mechanics of research and documentation in literature using both traditional media and electronic sources
- ❖ Equip the learner with the requirements and procedures of writings a response in the discipline of literature
- ❖ Enable the students to respond in analytical and argumentative ways with a focus on synthesizing new knowledge whenever reading texts
- ❖ Write unified, well-organized, mechanically-correct, college-level essays that demonstrate mastery of grammar, diction, and manuscript conventions.

## References

- ✓ Gwen, Lisa. (Ed). (2008). *The sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods*, Vol 1&2. California: Sage
- ✓ Knowles, J.G., Cole, A.L., & Promislow, S. (Eds). (2007). *Creating scholartistly: Imagining the arts-informed thesis or dissertation* (Arts-Informed Inquiry series, Vol 4). Halifax, Canada: Backalong Books.
- ✓ Lunsford, Andrea, John J. Ruskiewicz & Keith Walters. (2007). *Everything's an Argument, with Readings*.4<sup>th</sup> ed.Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.
- ✓ Silverman,D. (2005). *Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. London: Sage.
- ✓ Woolf, Judith. (2005). *Writing about Literature: Essay and Translation Skills for University Students of English and Foreign Literature*. London: Routledge.

## **ALT 300: Stylistics and Literary Techniques**

### **Unit Description**

This unit highlights the imaginative use of language and ultimately focuses on the linguistic analysis of texts. Established and emerging theories in stylistics are covered. Varieties of creative experiments by selected authors are explored. Selected texts are examined using the analytical tools of stylistics. The concept of poetic licence, and the uniqueness of a writer's style, will become clearer in this unit.

### **Unit Objectives**

- ❖ To introduce learners to historical and intellectual contexts of stylistics.
- ❖ To expose learners to a variety of literary devices, techniques and stylistic concepts.
- ❖ To improve sensitivity to and appreciation of literary language.
- ❖ To apply stylistics in the analysis of creative work.

### **References**

- ✓ Abrahams, M. H. (1972). *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston
- ✓ Leech, Geoffrey and Mick Short. (2007). *Style in Fiction*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. London: Person Macmillan.
- ✓ Simpson, Paul. (2004). *Stylistics: A Resource Book for Students*. London: Routledge.
- ✓ Verdonk, Peter. (2002). *Stylistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

## **ALT 301: Theory and Methods in Oral Literature**

### **Unit Description**

The unit is an introduction to the theoretical approaches to the study of oral literature. It deals with the role of theory in the study of oral literature. The theories will then be applied in the analysis of oral literature material. Methods of collecting, recording and storing oral literature material will also be explored.

### **Unit Objectives**

- ❖ To describe various theoretical approaches to the study of oral literature.
- ❖ To use oral literature theory in analysing and interpreting oral literature material.
- ❖ To explain key methodological approaches to the collection, recording and transcribing oral literature material.
- ❖ To discuss concerns relating to translating and analysing oral literature material.

### **References**

- ✓ Barnard, A. (2000). *History and Theory in Anthropology*. Cambridge: CUP.
- ✓ Derrida, Jacques. (1997). *Of Grammatology*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
- ✓ Dundes, Allan. (1980). *Interpreting Folktale*. Indiana: IUP.
- ✓ Finnegan, Ruth. (2012). *Oral Literature in Africa*. Open Book Publishers.
- ✓ Nandwa and Bukenya. (1983). *Oral Literature for Schools*. Nairobi: Longman.
- ✓ Strauss, Claude Levi. (1967). *Structural Anthropology*. New York: Doubleday Anchor Books.

## **ALT 302: Poetry**

## Unit Description

The unit purpose is examining the creative use of language in poetry; poetry within the oral context; similarities and/or differences between oral poetry and written poetry; special categories of poetry e.g. love, social, political, religious, private and public; the role of African poets in contemporary societies; creating a poem.

## Unit Objectives

By the end of the semester, students should:

- ❖ Have studied a wide range of poems (both oral and written) and be able to recognise the characteristics of the genre.
- ❖ Be able to render poems aloud appropriately.
- ❖ Be familiar with several categories of poems in English.
- ❖ Have experienced and responded to the techniques which poets use to communicate effectively.
- ❖ Be able to write explications of poems.

## References

- ✓ Cook, D & D. Rubadiri (eds.) *Poems from East Africa*.
- ✓ Amateshe, K. (ed.) *An Anthology of East African Poetry*
- ✓ Kariara, J. & E. Kitonga (eds.) *Introduction to East African Poetry*.
- ✓ Luvai, A (ed.) *Boundless Voices*.
- ✓ Okpewho, L. (ed.) *The Heritage of African Poetry*.
- ✓ Olembo, W. *The Music of Poetry*.
- ✓ Okot p'Bitek. *Song of Lawino and Song of Ocol*.

## ALT 303: Theory and History of Literature

### Unit Description

This unit introduces students to the major theories of literature and their postulations about literary works. It is concerned with the nature and development of literature and also looks at the major literary movements and their impact on literature; they include classicism, Negritude, The Beat Generation, Realism among others. It will also delve into aspects of (Post)Structuralism, Formalism, New Criticism, Feminism, Reader-Response et cetera. Topics of the unit will arise out of readings of selected creative works as well as works of literary theory. The course shall introduce students to the relationship between literary theory and literary creativity using several historical contexts across epochs in the English-speaking world in general and the 20<sup>th</sup> Century in particular. The methodology will involve lectures, classroom presentations and discussions.

### Unit Objectives

This unit has the following objectives:

- ❖ To define the nature and functions of literature.
- ❖ To define theory and discuss its place in the study of literature
- ❖ To trace the historical development of literature.
- ❖ To discuss selected theories and show how they can be used in the study of literature.
- ❖ To analyse some creative works in the context of literary theory.

### References

- ✓ Warren, Austin and Wellek, Rene. *Theory of Literature*
- ✓ David Lodge. *Modern Criticism and Theory*
- ✓ E. M. Forster. *Aspects of the Novel*

- ✓ Patricia Waugh. *Literary Theory and Criticism*
- ✓ Penelope Murray. *Classical Literary Criticism*
- ✓ William K. Wimsatt JR. and Cleanth Brooks. *Literary Criticism: A Short History*.

### **ALT 307: European Literature to the Nineteenth Century**

#### **Unit Description**

The aim of this unit is to explore the writings of European authors from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. As you can tell, there will not be enough time to study many of the major authors or individual works. Therefore, we shall sample a few works across the genres and explore them in a combined new critical/new historical approach so that we develop a sense of the rich heritage of literary work from the selected region and period. Of particular interest will be the rise of capitalism, the ascendancy of the middle classes, industrialization and the relevance of European literature to society as we know it.

#### **Unit Objectives**

In this unit you will:

- Strengthen your ability to read literary works closely and sensitively;
- Foster the practice of relating texts to their various contexts;
- Develop the habit of comparative study of literary works;
- Observe how various writers use the resources of language;
- Build approaches to reading and appreciating literatures from points other than our own.

#### **References**

- ✓ *A Tale of Two Cities* (Charles Dickens)
- ✓ *A Doll's House* (Henrik Ibsen)
- ✓ *Othello* (Shakespeare)
- ✓ *Hard Times* (Dickens)
- ✓ *Pride and Prejudice* (Jane Austen)
- ✓ *Madame Bovary* (Gustav Flaubert)

### **ALT 308: African Drama (A Special Study)**

#### **Unit Description**

This unit introduces the learner to African Drama. Attention will be paid to the dramatic techniques utilized by African Playwrights in the making of contemporary drama: influence from Western dramatic movements and African Drama.

#### **Unit Objectives**

- ❖ To expose the student to the inherent relation between contemporary African drama and dramatic forms in African Oral Literature.
- ❖ To analyse various theoretical approaches to and movements in African Drama.
- ❖ To analyse various dramatic modes such as tragedy satire and comedy in African drama.
- ❖ To study the various structure patterns, stylistic techniques and language use by African playwrights.

## References

- ✓ Graham, White. *The Drama of Black Africa*.
- ✓ Williams, Raymond. *Drama in Performance*.
- ✓ Soyinka, Wole. *Myth, Literature and the African World*.
- ✓ Imbuga, Francis. *Aminata*.
- ✓ Clerk J. P. *Song of a Goat*.
- ✓ Athol Fugard. *The Blood Knot*.
- ✓ Ama Ata Aidoo. *The Dilemma of a Ghost*.
- ✓ Austin Bukenya. *The Bride*.

## ALT 309: Introduction to Theatre Arts

### Unit Description

This unit is designed to introduce the students to the basics of Drama and Theatre Arts practices. Special emphasis will be placed on a variety of practical productions during the semester, aimed at equipping the individual students with meaningful skills in acting, directing, play analysis and scripting. The practical approach demands extra hours in addition to the ones reflected in the university timetable.

### Unit Objectives

- ❖ The product of this unit is a student who can apply theatre arts fundamentals and can confidently script/direct/stage drama items before an audience.

### References

- ✓ Wilson, Edwin. *The Theatre Experience*
- ✓ Chilver, Peter. *Staging A School Play*
- ✓ Barranger, Milly: *Theatre: A Way of Seeing*
- ✓ McGaw, H. *Acting is Believing*
- ✓ Gassner, John. *Producing the Play*
- ✓ Amateshe, Kisa. *Scripting/Acting*

## ALT 310: Theatre Arts Intermediate

### Unit Description

This is essentially a practical-oriented unit. Throughout the semester the students will be involved in sample projects in Creative/Performing Arts. Seeks to define 'DRAMA' within the context of an African society. Of particular focus is the imaginative use of the stage (as performers or directors) to create meaningful dramatic experiences for given audiences. The unit is also useful in highlighting the essence of 'theatre for community development'.

### Unit Objectives

- ❖ To enlarge and deepen student's knowledge of, and experience in, theatre.
- ❖ To provide more focused training for the actors/actresses in the creative use of the **body**, the **voice** and **emotions** with regard to role preparation or in directing/production.
- ❖ To equip the students with skills in ADJUDICATION.

## References

- ✓ Amateshe, Kisa. *Scripting/Acting: Workshop presentations*
- ✓ Barranger, Milly. *Theatre: A Way of Seeing*
- ✓ Cameron, B & Gillespie (1999): *Enjoyment of Theatre*. McGraw Hill, New York.
- ✓ Graham, Anthony. *The Drama of Black Africa* Mcgan, Charles (2004). *Acting is Believing\_* (8<sup>th</sup> Edition). Oxford University PressWilson,

## ALT 400: Literary Aesthetics

### Unit Description

This unit is a systematic investigation of aesthetic theory and literary creativity in the context of various social, cultural and historical conditions in which they develop. The formulations of various aestheticians will be examined and critically applied to specific literary works from Africa and the African Diaspora.

### Unit Objectives

- ❖ To establish the place of aesthetics in literary study.
- ❖ To expose students to the Platonic postulation of literary aesthetics.
- ❖ To arouse and enhance the appreciation of Literature as a tool for social communication and spiritual fulfilment.
- ❖ To deepen the understanding of the theoretical questions involved in literary aesthetics and their practical implications in the creation and appreciation of literary works.
- ❖ To analyse the elements of literary aesthetics in selected texts.

## References

- ✓ Plato. (2002). *The Republic*. <http://www.idph.net>
- ✓ Kant, Immanuel. (2013). *Critique of Pure Reason*. Translated by J. M. D. Meiklejohn. An Electronic Classics Series Publication: PSUP.
- ✓ Raymond, Williams (1963). *Culture and Society*. New York: CUP.
- ✓ Richards, I. A. (1930) *Practical Criticism*. The Open Archive.

## ALT 401: African Literature

### Unit Description

This unit is a study of selected and largely representative creative texts from the south, west and north of Africa (the east having been covered in ALT 200). The unit focuses on how African writers from these three corners evaluate, in their imaginative representation of reality, various social, economic and cultural issues that have shaped what might be called the “African Experience”. Significant happenings such as colonisation, independence as well as globalisation will be given prominence.

### Unit Objectives

- ❖ To situate African Literature on the world map by studying its origins and subsequent influences.
- ❖ To improve critical competence of African Literature.
- ❖ To interrogate and improve understanding of some of the sensibilities that are unique to the African experience.

- ❖ To expose students to themes and styles commonly found in African Literature.
- ❖ To get an update on the major literary trends in creative writing from Africa.

### References

- ✓ Ashcroft, Bill. (1989). *The Empire Writes Back*. New York: Routledge.
- ✓ Bhabha, Homi. (1994). *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge.
- ✓ Gikandi, Simon. (1987). *Reading the African Novel*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- ✓ Ngara, Emmanuel. (1985). *Art and Ideology in the African Novel: A study*. London: Heinemann.
- ✓ Olaniyan Tejumola and Ato Quayson (Eds). (2007) *African Literature: An Anthology of Criticism and Theory*. New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell.

## ALT 402: DRAMA

### Unit Description

The unit traces the origins of drama and major movements in its development; classical Greek tragedy; medieval miracle and mystery plays; Shakespearean and Jacobean theatre; French neo-classical theatres; Brechtian theatre and the theatre of the absurd. Emphasis is on drama as an instrument of social expression and transformation.

### Unit Objectives

- ❖ Define the nature and forms of Drama
- ❖ Explore the origins of Drama and introduce students to the major movements in its development.
- ❖ Analyse some of the works of major playwrights and discuss their place in the development of Drama.
- ❖ Examine the underlying themes and concerns of the works of these playwrights.

### References

- ✓ Clarke R. F. *The growth and nature of drama*.
- ✓ Macgowan, Melmiz. *The Living Stage*
- ✓ Nocol R. *The Development of Theatre*
- ✓ Macgowan, Melmiz. *Golden Age of Theatre*
- ✓ Courney, Styan. *Modern Drama in Theory and Practice*

## ALT 403: Modern European Literature

### Unit Description

In this unit, we shall read and analyse selected plays, poems, novels and short stories from Europe. Although one of the tests of great literature is its universality, all fictional works have local flavour. Modern European literature is literature that has a European flavour. “Modern” can go as far back as the history of Western thought, which starts with the Greeks (≈ 500BC). Indeed, everything after the Roman Empire (and the advent of Christianity) is considered “modern”. Modern European Literature is a voluminous entity. For this unit, therefore, we shall take the name Alfred Nobel as a convenient starting point. The Nobel Prize in Literature was first awarded in 1901. We shall then take a closer look at some writers of the twentieth century, and sample the fictional works of some of the European Nobel laureates in greater detail.

### Unit Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- ❖ Know which countries make up the continent of Europe and understand the historical background of each.
- ❖ Understand how modern European literature has developed from the philosophical and intellectual movements of earlier periods.
- ❖ Demonstrate knowledge of the key European literary figures of the twentieth century and familiarity with some of their creative pieces.
- ❖ Express an informed opinion and appreciation of modern European literature.
- ❖ Undertake critical evaluation of selected European texts in the historical, social, economic, cultural, political and theoretical contexts in which they took shape.
- ❖ Understand the influence of European literature on written African literature.

### References

- ✓ Camus, Albert. *The Outsider*. London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1977. First Published in 1946 as *L'etranger*.
- ✓ Hardy, Thomas. "Ah, Are You Digging On My Grave?" A Poem.
- ✓ Kafka, Franz. "The Metamorphosis." *In Metamorphosis and other Stories*. Minerva Press, 1949. Originally published in 1916 as "*Die Verwandlung*."
- ✓ Kipling, Rudyard. "If- ." A poem.
- ✓ Sartre, Jean Paul. *Dirty Hands*. Originally published as *Les Mains Sales*. 1948.
- ✓ Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr. *Prisoners*. London: The Bodly Head, 1983. Originally published in 1981 as *Plenniki*.
- ✓ Woolf, Virginia. *A Room of One's Own*. London: Hogarth Press, 1929

## ALT410: Drama in Education

### Unit Description

The unit addresses concepts of the nature of play as a means to human development especially in children. It deals with the problems inherent in working with children of different age groups and backgrounds in the context of their attitude and motivation. It focuses on improvised drama as an aid to teaching; examination of various ways of developing drama programmes in educational institutions.

### Unit Objectives

- ❖ To delve into ways in which Drama can be used in the development of the individual; and as a vehicle of developing self-awareness and self-expression.
- ❖ To depict Drama as a medium of education.
- ❖ To encourage the power of imagination through Drama.
- ❖ To expose students to the potential of drama as a curriculum subject and as a teaching methodology in the classroom.
- ❖ To analyse educational and dramatic qualities inherent in various African plays.
- ❖ Study of Mekatilili: The use of dance drama as a tool of empowering the people against colonialism

### References

- ✓ Slade, P. *An Introduction to Child Drama*.
- ✓ Allen, J. *Drama in Schools*.
- ✓ Bolton, G. *Drama and Education*.

- ✓ Byron K. *Exploring Theatre and Education*.
- ✓ Way B. *Developing Through Drama*.
- ✓ Bolton G. *Drama and Education*.
- ✓ Rodney W. *How Europe under-developed Africa*.

### **ALT 413: The Epic in Africa**

#### **Unit Description**

Tracing the existence of epic literature in Africa and examining nature of the various epic poems and narratives from the continent of Africa.

#### **Unit Objectives**

- ❖ Define the nature of epic in Africa
- ❖ Analyse various epic poems/narratives from East, West Central and South Africa.
- ❖ Discuss types of epic that exist in Africa.

#### **References**

- ✓ Jan Khappet. *The Epic in Africa*
- ✓ Isidore Okpewho. *The Epic in Africa*
- ✓ John W. Johnson. *Oral Epics from Africa*
- ✓ Janice Siegal. *Outline of the Sundiata Epic*
- ✓ Jan Jansen. *The Sundiata Epic – The Ultimate Version*
- ✓ Mpanja Jack. *Oral Poetry from Africa*

### **ALT 414: women in Literature**

#### **Unit Description**

This unit will explore a selection of works by male and female authors. The unit will examine the portrayal of women in major works of world literature; perspectives of male and female writers; relationship between writer's vision and artistic form. A range of literary texts - novels, drama, poetry and non-fiction will be used to examine the role of women in literature and to study diversity in the representation of female characters. The reading of these texts will be focused on key thematic concerns and the authors' innovative use of language to communicate these concerns.

#### **Unit Objectives**

- ❖ To introduce students to the idea of, and to problematize, gender.
- ❖ To sensitize students regarding women's position in various societies at certain historical periods.
- ❖ To examine the role of women in literature as reflected in selected creative works.
- ❖ To appraise and situate feminist criticism.

#### **References**

- ✓ Lewis, Reina & Sara Mills Eds. *Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*. Edinburgh Univ. Press, Edinburgh, 2003.
- ✓ Bell, Hooks. *Feminism is for everybody*. Passionate Politics, 2000.
- ✓ Nnaemeka, Obioma, (ed). *The Politics of (M)Othering: Womanhood, Identity, and Resistance in African Literature*. Routledge, London, 1997
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_. *Sisterhood: Feminism & Power – From Africa to the Diaspora*. Africa World Press, 1998.

- ✓ Walker, Alice. *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose*, 1984.
- ✓ French, Marilyn. *Beyond Power: On Women, Men and Morals*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1985.
- ✓ Ferguson, Kathy, E. *Self, Society and Womankind: The Dialectic of Liberation*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1980.
- ✓ Brown, L.W. *Women Writers in Black Africa*. Greenwood Press, 1981.
- ✓ Miller, M. Sally (ed). *Flawed Liberation: Socialism and Feminism*. London: Greenwood Press, 1981.

## **ALT 416: Myth in Literature**

### **Unit Description**

This unit examines how myth and its sister, ritual, have become essential tropes in art. In specific terms, the unit intends to show how writers explore and narrativize myth in order to illuminate and sharpen theme and structure in their works of art. Besides, the unit also considers the influence of myth criticism on critical theory and practice.

### **Unit Objectives**

- ❖ To examine the relationship between myth and literature
- ❖ To make explication of the appropriation of myth in literary texts

### **References**

- ✓ Soyinka, Wole. *Myth, Literature and the African world*.
- ✓ Righter, William. *Myth and Literature*.
- ✓ Okpewho, Isidore. *Myth in Africa* .
- ✓ Mbiti, John. *African Religions and philosophies*.

## **ALT 417: Major Literary Movements**

### **Unit Description**

This unit introduces students to some of the major literary movements of the twentieth century in relation to literatures produced mainly in the English language. Other literary traditions whose works have been translated (for instance: from French into English) on basis of literary merit, will also be studied, the better to appreciate the nature of literary movements. Examples of literary movements are identified from Europe, North America and Africa with the aim of tracing their proponents, agenda, literary contexts of operation as well as contributions to the discipline and practice of Literature. They include among others: Irish Renaissance, Modernism, Harlem Renaissance, Negritude, the Beat Generation, the so-called “Bolekaja school”, and Womanism. Topics of the course will arise out of readings of selected creative works as well as works of literary theory.

### **Unit Objectives**

By the end of the unit the students will:

- ❖ Become familiar with the historical context of each movement studied.
- ❖ become familiar the biographies of authors under study as well as the major themes and literary styles associated with each of the movements under study.
- ❖ Develop their own critical thinking skills further.

- ❖ Reflect upon the spirit which animates writers.
- ❖ Become more sensitive to the universal nature of literature.
- ❖ Become more knowledgeable about human beings through time and space.

## References

- ✓ Chinweizu, Jemie, Onwuchekwa and Madubuike, Ihechukwu. *Towards the Decolonization of African Literature* (1980).
- ✓ Harris, Laurie Lanzen, Pederson, Jay P. and Henderson, Helene. *Twentieth Century Literary Movements Dictionary* (1999)
- ✓ Hutchinson, George. *The Cambridge Companion to the Harlem Renaissance* (2007).
- ✓ Jack, Belinda Elizabeth. *Negritude and Literary Criticism: History and Theory of Negro-African Literature in French* (1996)
- ✓ Levenson, Michael, *The Cambridge Companion to Modernism* (2011)
- ✓ Marcus, Phillip L. *Yeats and the Beginning of the Irish Renaissance* (1987).
- ✓ Travers, M. P. A. *European Literature from Romanticism to Postmodernism* (2006)
- ✓ Wellek, Rene and Warren, Austin *Theory of Literature* (1968)

## ALT 418: Research/Creative Writing Project

### Unit Description

Alt 206 Creative Writing is a pre-requisite. In 206 the students will already have been introduced to the mechanics of imaginative writing. ALT 418 therefore focuses on both the intermediate and advanced levels of creative/imaginative writing in the three major areas of literature: Drama, Poetry and Prose. In addition to the above focus, each student is expected to undertake meaningful research in the respective areas of literature.

### Unit Objectives

The main objectives of the unit are:

- ❖ To build on the writing skills acquired in Alt 206 as a means of developing the individual creative talents further.
- ❖ To sharpen the students' skills in drafting, editing and literary criticism.
- ❖ To provide avenues for original, creative composition in any of the genres of literature: poetry, drama, the novel, short stories or non-fiction.
- ❖ To equip the students with the relevant techniques in productive research as far as literary studies are concerned.

## References

- ✓ Nowotny, W. *The Language That Poets Use*
- ✓ Leech, Geoffrey. *A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry*
- ✓ Short. *Style in Fiction*.
- ✓ Altick, D. Richard: *The Art of Literary Research*
- ✓ Abrams, M. H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*
- ✓ Peter C. B. *A Guide To Academic Writing*