

## Course Outline

### 1. Course Information

Course: ENGLISH 4670G/GSWs 4430G, Winter 25/26

Time: Thursday, 12:30- 3:30 pm

Venue: UC4401

**Note:** Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course, and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

### 2. Instructor Information

**Instructor:** Dr. Sakiru Adebayo

**Office hour:** Monday, 3:30 pm

**Email Policy:** All email communication be professional, courteous and concise, with the course indicated in the subject line or sent through Canvas. Responses can usually be expected within 24 hours during weekdays. Also, address me as Dr. Adebayo in your emails to me.

**Note:** Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/>) regularly for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class. If students need assistance with the course OWL site, they can seek support on the [OWL Brightspace Help](#) page. Alternatively, they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk. They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

### 3. Course Overview, Format, and Learning Outcomes

#### Course Format

Lectures will be in-person. Classes will involve the discussion of primary texts and secondary readings.

#### Course Overview, Content, and Objectives

This course will introduce students to canonical literary texts from the African continent. It will expand students' understanding of the world by exposing them to different literary cultures and traditions from the African continent. It will introduce students to some of the African authors (Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, J.M. Coetzee, Ngugi wa Thiongo, Ama Ata Aidoo, Abdulrazak Gurnah etc) whose works have shaped world literature as we know it today. This course will also

address the contributions of African literature to questions of genre, orality, language, colonialism, decolonization, postcolonialism, political conflicts, apartheid, genocide, feminism, digitality and many more.

## Learning Outcomes

By the completion of this course, students will:

1. Be able to discuss and assess the canonical authors and literary texts that have come out of Africa
2. Be familiar with African geographies, languages, cultures, histories (pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial) and post-independence politics
3. Be equipped with a balanced understanding of contemporary Africa and its peoples.
4. Be familiar with (African) literary criticism in relation to the analysis and assessment of literary texts
5. Be able to discuss and assess various African fictional, poetic, and dramatic texts in terms of their formal construction, including, but not limited to, their relationship to the history and development of genre and technique, literary periodization, and historical as well as contemporary aesthetic standards.

## 4. Course Materials

Chinua Achebe's (1958) *Things Fall Apart*

Ngugi wa Thiong'o's (1980) *Weep Not, Child*

Tsitsi Dangaremba's (1988) *Nervous Conditions*

[ENG 4670G Custom Link](#) (here is a link to the prices of the novels and where to get them)

## 5. Course Schedule

**January 8:** The Image of Africa/What is Africa to me?

Chimamanda Adichie's "[The Danger of a Single Story](#)"

Chinua Achebe's "[The Image of Africa](#)"

Poem for discussion: Excerpt from Okot P Bitek's [Song of Lawino](#)

**January 15:** What is African literature/Negritude/Orality

Eileen Julien's "African Literature"

Abiola Irele's "What is Negritude?"

Liz Gunner's "Africa and Orality".

Poem from discussion: Leopold Senghor's "[Dear White Brother](#)"

**January 22:** Colonialism/ language and the gender question in African literature

Ama Ata Aidoo To Be an African Woman Writer"

Simon Gikandi's "[The Colonial Factor in African Literature](#)"

Ngugi wa Thiong'o's "The Language of African Literature" (reading tbp by instructor)

Poem for discussion: Hasfat Abdulahi's "[Mother Tongue](#)")

**Jan 29:** Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*/ Titilope Sonuga's "[From a Place](#)  
**Feb 5:** Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*/ Wole Soyinka's "[Telephone Conversation](#)"  
**Feb 12:** Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*/ Stella Nyanzi "[Women Shall Not Wait](#)"

**Feb 14- 22 (reading week)**

**Feb 25-March 4 (no class)**

**March 5:** Tsitsi Dangaremba's *Nervous Conditions*/ Koleka Putuma's [Every Three Hours](#)  
**March 12:** Dangaremba's *Nervous Conditions*/ Bernard Dadie's "[I Give You Thanks](#)"  
**March 19:** Tsitsi Dangaremba's *Nervous Conditions*/ Niyi Osundare's "[Come Buy History](#)"

**March 26:** /Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Weep Not, Child* / Warsan Shire's "[Home](#)"  
**April 2:** Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Weep Not, Child*/ Kofi Awoonor's "[The Weaver Bird](#)"  
**April 9:** Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Weep Not, Child*/ Lola Shoneyin's [A Fragile State](#)

## 6. AI Policy

Students may use AI tools for preliminary research work, such as gathering information or brainstorming, but are not permitted to use them on any assessed work or final submission. Put simply, you can use AI as part of (not the only) research tools, but not as a writing tool. YOU MUST WRITE YOUR ESSAYS BY YOURSELF. As you may already be aware, AI tools are not always accurate, and they sometimes perpetuate biases. Additionally, AI tools plagiarise materials from the internet and often provide wrong references. So, for your own good, do not use AI to write, although you can use it as part of your many research tools. If you end up using AI, you must indicate the specific AI tool you used and how you used it at the end of your essay.

If AI use is suspected in essay writing, the instructor will ask for research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and other materials used in preparing assignments. Students are expected to retain these materials until after final grades have been entered. In the unlikely event of concerns being raised about the authenticity of any assignment, students may be asked to produce these materials; an inability to do so may weigh heavily against them.

## 7. Methods of Evaluation

The overall course grade will be calculated as listed below:

Attendance	12
Participation	12
Midterm Essay	24
Presentation	12
Final Paper	40

### **Attendance**

There are 12 classes in all, and I will be marking attendance in each class. Your attendance in each class will fetch you one point. Please note that there will be no consideration for any missed classes. However, students who can provide proper documentation for their absence will be given the opportunity to make their contributions online, which will count toward participation (not attendance).

### **Participation**

Every week, students are required to post their thoughts (in not less than one paragraph) on class readings on Brightspace. I will open a discussion thread on Brightspace at the beginning of every week and will close it by the end of the week, so you have a week to go on to Brightspace and drop your comments on class readings. Please note that participation on Brightspace is not a substitute for class attendance. In fact, for your grade for participation on Brightspace to count, you must contribute to class discussions in person. You are supposed to do the readings before each so that you are able to contribute to class discussions. Hence, if you are absent from class, you will not be allowed to post your thoughts, but if you can provide a valid reason and proper documentation, you will be given a chance to post your thoughts on Brightspace. Every post on Brightspace will be one point, which will make the total of 12 points at the end of the class.

### **Presentation**

In each class, a student will make a 20-minute presentation on an African poem, which will be assigned at the beginning of the semester. Students are expected to take this presentation seriously. They are expected to do a proper literary analysis of the poem, touch on the subject matter, themes, and literary devices in the poem. Most importantly, they are expected to connect the poem to the African literary tradition and show how it reflects some of the preoccupations of African literature. There will be a 10-minute Q and A after the presentation. The student should also submit a summary of their presentation at the end of the class.

### **Midterm Paper (1200 words)**

Before the mid-term break, we would have discussed six poems in class. Therefore, for the mid-term essay, students will be required to write an essay on modern African Poetry (using five poems already discussed in class). While students will be rewarded for citing other critical readings, the grading will be based primarily on four things: originality of ideas, clarity of argument, ability to critically analyse a literary text/poem, and the ability to write an academic (university-level) essay. Other factors that I will be looking out for include the scope and thesis of the essay, organization and development of the essay, and textual analysis. An excellent paper will appropriately reference the works cited using the MLA format. Further Instructions on the essay will be discussed in class and posted on Canvas. The midterm essay is due February 21st.

### **Final Paper (2000 words)**

You are required to write a final research paper of about 2000 words on the colonial factor in African literature. An excellent research paper will provide an original argument using the three novels read in the course, demonstrate knowledge of critical commentaries on those novels, and show good mastery of university-level argumentation and writing skills. Further Instructions on the essay will be discussed in class and posted on Brightspace, but in the meantime, bear in my that you will be graded based on your ability to analyse a novel, give examples and use direct

quotations, engage with secondary readings on the novels and on the topic of colonialism, sentence construction, diction/grammar, clarity of argument, originality of ideas, organization/structuring, and referencing. An excellent paper will appropriately reference the works cited using the MLA format. Final paper is due on the 20<sup>th</sup> of April.

**Late Submission Policy:** A point will be deducted from the total for every 24 hours that an assignment (midterm and final paper) is not submitted, but in extenuating circumstances (with formal documentation), students may be given a maximum of 72 hours' grace, depending on the gravity of their situation.

### **Formal Documentation Designation statement**

Please note that all assessments are central to the learning objectives for this course. Accordingly, students seeking academic consideration for assessments will be required to provide formal supporting documentation.

Note that supporting documentation is **always** required for academic consideration requests for examinations scheduled by the office of the registrar (e.g. December and April exams) and for practical laboratory and performance tests typically scheduled during the last week of the term.

Students must request academic consideration as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

### **General information about missed coursework**

Students must familiarize themselves with the *University Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs* posted on the Academic Calendar:

<https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academicpolicies/appeals/academicconsiderationSep24.pdf>

This policy does not apply to requests for academic consideration submitted for **attempted or completed work**, whether online or in person. The policy also does not apply to students experiencing longer-term impacts on their academic responsibilities. These students should consult: [Accessible Education](#).

For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar's webpage:

<https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academicconsiderations/>

All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline.