

Semester at Sea Course Syllabus
Colorado State University, Academic Partner

Voyage:	Fall 2017
Discipline:	English
Course Number and Title:	E 142 Reading Without Borders
Semester Credit Hours:	3
Faculty:	P.F. Kluge

Meeting: A Day 1400-1520, Vierjahres
Prerequisites: None

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Reading Without Borders is an ideal accompaniment to a Semester At Sea voyage. It is designed to impart depth and perspective to the students' experience of the places they encounter. In an era of mass tourism, featuring visits to monuments and malls, a plethora of guides and group trips, the course acquaints students with the work of thoughtful, talented writers who have engaged with these places in a dramatic variety of ways. In the books listed below, students will confront the stories of people who have preceded them and who have stayed longer. They will share their experience, their enlightenment and—sometimes disillusionment, their love and anger, their belief or lack of it, optimism or despair, their love of and loyalty to a homeland or itch to escape. One of the benefits of reading, I contend, is that it makes us feel less lonely in the world. This course will alleviate that problem. The course will involve short reactions to visited countries and a longer paper in which students visit a location featured in one of the books we've read and offer a thoughtful commentary on what they've thought and what they read.

Our reading list is designed to provide in depth accounts which will enrich and complicate our sense of where the SAS voyage has taken us. The first book, Marilyn Heward Mills' - Association of Foreign Spouses offers an account of four women who've met Ghanaian men overseas and accompany them to Ghana. It's a mixed and perceptive book, detailing frustrations with and underlying commitment to their new homeland. The second book is Phaswane Mpe's Welcome To Our Hillbrow: A Novel of Post-Apartheid South Africa. It will complicate prevailing views of Mandela-era South Africa. Our third book is Avind Adiga's White Tiger, a prize-winning tale of poverty and corruption in India. Books four and five concern Vietnam. The first, Night Again, is a collection of short stories by local authors. The other is Graham Greene's The Quiet American, an ironic and prophetic story of the beginnings of America's engagement in Viet Nam. Our sixth book, Shanghai Redemption, is a hard-boiled detective novel, portraying the underside of life in China. We end with Rashomon and other stories by Ryunosuke Akutagawa, two of which form the basis of a classic film which we'll be showing on board: Akira Kurosawa's *Rashomon*. The third story, "Hell Scene," is an acknowledged masterpiece.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. Conduct close, critical examinations of fictional portrayals of places they will visit. *What do the novels tell readers about life in these places? What is affirmative, what is cautionary?*
2. Acquire skills in the analysis of diverse “voices” and different perspectives in literature. *Who is telling the story? What is their perspective? Their point of view? What are strengths and limitations of the perspectives?*
3. Compare information and perspectives presented in the assigned readings with their own experiences in countries visited. *Reading the assigned books should provide information and guidance. Students will be asked to bear these books in mind as they go ashore. They should attend to moments, places, encounters that remind them of things they read. And they may be attentive to things that surprised them, that complicated or even contradicted what they read.*
4. Contrast the advantages and limitations of narratives of visitors and local authors. *Students are readers, travelers and —to an extent—writers. (See assignments section to follow). They will be asked to consider what kind of stories they might write about the places they visit. This will surely lead to a discussion of the advantages-and limitations of narratives by visitors and, likewise, of local authors.*
5. Gain an appreciation of the complexities and the challenges in travel and the implications for writing. *In the final objective, I draw from my own experience as a travel writer. The course should teach students that their travel on Semester At Sea, their short sojourn in various places should instruct them in the complexity, the depth, the personal challenge involved in visiting foreign places. Travel is thoughtful, serious business.*

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Faithful attendance and participation in class discussion is important.
2. The schedule of early assignments will be determined, in part, by the class enrollment. I will ask that students present a short piece—it could be about a market, a street, a meal, a conversation that connects to—or contrasts with—a passage in the book that is set in the place they visit. Two-page papers will suffice.
3. After about five weeks, I will ask for longer papers, four or five pages. Like the earlier papers, these will refer to passages we’ve read, but the topics should be larger: i.e., city life, conversations about America, questions about local customs, reactions to touristic offerings, discoveries that are not touristic, etc. The final paper should be comparative and contemplative, going into greater depth, comparing the mood of Mpe’s Hillbrow or Xiaolong’s Shanghai Redemption with their own discoveries.
4. I foresee three or four two-page papers, three four-page papers and a final six page paper. There will be occasional pop quizzes to confirm reading. Grades will be based

20% on the field class, 20% on early papers (the two and four pagers), 30% on classroom participation, and 30% on final papers.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

AUTHOR: Kwei Quartey
TITLE: Wife of the Gods: A Novel
PUBLISHER: Random House Trade Paperbacks)
ISBN #: 978-0812979367
DATE/EDITION: 2010 (paperback Reprint Edition)

AUTHOR: Phaswane Mpe
TITLE: Welcome To Our Hillbrow: A Novel of Post-Apartheid South Africa
PUBLISHER: Ohio University Press
ISBN: 978-0821419625
DATE/EDITION: 2011 (paperback)

AUTHOR: Avind Adiga
TITLE: White Tiger
Publisher: Free Press
ISBN: 9781416562693
DATE/EDITION: 2006 (paperback)

AUTHOR: Linh Dinh (editor)
TITLE: Night, Again: Contemporary Fiction from Vietnam
Publisher: Seven Stories Press
ISBN: 978 1583227067
DATE/EDITION: 2006 (paperback)

AUTHOR: Graham Greene
TITLE: The Quiet American
Publisher: Penguin Books
ISBN: 9780142001387
DATE/EDITION: 2002 (paperback)

AUTHOR: Qui Xiaolong
TITLE: Shanghai Redemption
Publisher: Minotaur Books
ISBN: 978 1250092450
DATE/EDITION: 2016 (paperback)

AUTHOR: Ryunosuke Akutagawa
Title: Rashomon and Seventeen Other Stories
Publisher: Penguin Classics

ISBN: 9780140449709
DATE/Edition: 2009 (paperback)

TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

The strategy goals of the course and the character of the books has been previously described. In this section, I list the order of consideration and the rate of progress, assuming that students--and professor--will be closely examining about eighty pages of text on any given day.

Depart Bremerhaven, Germany — September 9

A1—September 11: Introduction, discussion of objectives, explanation of requirements

A2—September 13: Association of Foreign Spouses

Barcelona and Valencia, Spain — September 15-18

A3—September 19: Association of Foreign Spouses

A4—September 21: Association of Foreign Spouses

No Class — September 23

A5—September 24: Association of Foreign Spouses

A6—September 26: Welcome to Our Hillbrow

Tema and Takoradi, Ghana — September 27-30

A7—October 3: Welcome to Our Hillbrow

A8—October 5: Welcome to Our Hillbrow

Cape Town, South Africa — October 7-12

A9—October 13: White Tiger

A10—October 15: White Tiger

No Class — October 16

A11—October 18: White Tiger

Port Louis, Mauritius — October 19

A12—October 21: White Tiger

No Class — October 22

A13—October 24 Night Again

Cochin, India — October 25-30

No Class — October 31

A14—November 2: Night Again

Yangon, Myanmar — November 4-8

A15—November 9: The Quiet American

No Class — November 11

A16—November 12: The Quiet American

Ho Chi Minh City , Vietnam — November 14-18

A17—November 19: The Quiet American

No Class — November 21

A18—November 22: The Quiet American

Shanghai, China — November 24-29

A19—November 30: Shanghai Redemption.

Kobe, Japan — December 2-6

A20—December 7: Shanghai Redemption

A21—December 9: Shanghai Redemption

A22—December 11: Rashomon and Other Stories

A23—December 13: Rashomon and Other Stories

A24—December 15: Open discussion

Honolulu, Hawaii — December 16

A25—December 18: A Day Finals

San Diego, California — December 23

FIELD WORK

Semester at Sea field experiences allow for an unparalleled opportunity to compare, contrast, and synthesize the different cultures and countries encountered over the course of the voyage. In addition to the one field class, students will complete independent field assignments that span multiple countries.

Field Class attendance is mandatory for all students enrolled in this course. Do not book individual travel plans or a Semester at Sea sponsored trip on the day of your field class. Field Classes constitute at least 20% of the contact hours for each course, and are developed and led by the instructor.

Field Class and Assignment

The Field Class for this course will take place on Friday, 24 November, in Shanghai, China.

Class Title: The French Concession

By the time we reach Shanghai, students will have crossed their share of borders, as their passports will verify. But in Shanghai they will confront borders of a different kind, borders that once separated colonial zones from Chinese and that now separate the past and present. From the late 19th century until 1943, foreign powers were accorded concessions that were under foreign control with their own administrations, court systems, police, etc. Britain and America possessed the International Concession. And then there was the French Concession. All sorts of people lived there. Gangsters, con-men, White Russian refugees. It was a good place to hide, safe from prosecution for crimes committed elsewhere. The place was home to international figures: Chou En Lai, Mao's Foreign Minister, Sun Yat Sen, founder of the Chinese Republic, Madame Soong, his wife and eventual widow. Their houses can all be visited today. And... where the tour should make its first stop— is Fuxing Park, where statues of Marx and Engels look down on tai chi and dancing classes, singers, chess and badminton and dominos players. You can walk through the art-deco district, stroll leafy streets and linger in places that invite exploration and generate reflection. In a city of high rises (Pudong) and vintage business buildings (the Bund), the French Concession dispenses a unique and ineffable charm.

Learning Objectives:

1. A sense of the European past, on what was once foreign property.
2. A sense of what has changed in the area...and what has not.
3. A challenge to reporting and writing skills, appraising a place that is unlike any other.

METHODS OF EVALUATION / GRADING SCALE

Grades will be based on the following: 20% based on field class, 20% on early papers, 30% on classroom participation, and 30% on final paper.

The following Grading Scale is utilized for student evaluation. Pass/Fail is not an option for Semester at Sea coursework. Note that C-, D+ and D- grades are also not assigned on Semester at Sea in accordance with the grading system at Colorado State University (the SAS partner institution).

Pluses and minuses are awarded as follows on a 100% scale:

<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Satisfactory/Poor</u>	<u>Failing</u>
97-100%: A+	87-89%: B+	77-79%: C+	Less than 60%:
93-96%: A	83-86%: B	70-76%: C	
90-92%: A-	80-82%: B-	60-69%: D	

ATTENDANCE/ENGAGEMENT IN THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Attendance in all Semester at Sea classes, including the Field Class, is mandatory. Students must inform their instructors prior to any unanticipated absence and take the initiative to make up missed work in a timely fashion. Instructors must make reasonable efforts to enable students to make up work which must be accomplished under the instructor's supervision (e.g., examinations, laboratories). In the event of a conflict in regard to this policy, individuals may appeal using established CSU procedures.

LEARNING ACCOMMODATIONS

Semester at Sea provides academic accommodations for students with diagnosed learning disabilities, in accordance with ADA guidelines. Students who will need accommodations in a class, should contact ISE to discuss their individual needs. Any accommodation must be discussed in a timely manner prior to implementation.

A memo from the student's home institution verifying the accommodations received on their home campus is required before any accommodation is provided on the ship. Students must submit this verification of accommodations to academic@isevoyages.org as soon as possible, but no later than two months prior to the voyage.

STUDENT CONDUCT CODE

The foundation of a university is truth and knowledge, each of which relies in a fundamental manner upon academic integrity and is diminished significantly by academic misconduct. Academic integrity is conceptualized as doing and taking credit for one's own work. A pervasive attitude promoting academic integrity enhances the sense of community and adds

value to the educational process. All within the University are affected by the cooperative commitment to academic integrity. All Semester at Sea courses adhere to this Academic Integrity Policy and Student Conduct Code.

Depending on the nature of the assignment or exam, the faculty member may require a written declaration of the following honor pledge: "I have not given, received, or used any unauthorized assistance on this exam/assignment."

RESERVE BOOKS AND FILMS FOR THE LIBRARY

Books:

AUTHOR: Kwei Quartey
TITLE: Wife of the Gods: A Novel
PUBLISHER: Random House Trade Paperbacks)
ISBN #: 978-0812979367
DATE/EDITION: 2010 (paperback Reprint Edition)

Films:

Rashomon; Director Akira Kurosawa
Eddie And The Cruisers; Director Martin Davidson
Dog Day Afternoon: Director Sidney Lumet

ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS

None