

Comparative Literature R1B:11, CCN 17263, Fall 2014

M/W/F 11-12, 209 Dwinelle

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FACT AND FICTION

We tend to view fact and fiction as polar opposites, opposites that shape our concept of knowledge, truth, and morality. Yet when we speak of “actual fact” in contrast to “mere fiction,” we often take for granted or simply ignore the basis for differentiating them from one another. In this course, we will endeavor to define the precepts—cultural, philosophical, and psychological—that govern this distinction. More radically, we will ask to what extent the distinction holds up. What “counts” as fact or fiction and how, even within a given world (or text), might that shift? In a claim to truth, what constitutes evidence or proof? Although we may be used to deliberating over what was said or done, how do we grapple with whether someone or something even exists (or existed)? Does the fact that different texts have different standards for fact and fiction make all truth relative? Or is there such a thing as absolute or objective truth, and if so, what form does it take? How do we, as readers, establish whether an account is reliable? And by what means do fact and fiction each signal, or attempt to summon, the presence of the other?

Course Objectives

From the Reading and Composition Committee Report of 1989:

“The aim of 1A and 1B is to improve the student’s ability to write clearly, effectively, and accurately about subjects of intellectual complexity. Such writing — and the kinds of thinking that make such writing possible — is both a practical necessity for college students and a significant step in the life of the mind generally.”

“A number of **skills** are advanced as essential to students’ effective writing and reading:

- **Establishing increasing authority over whole structures.** For writers, this means expressing a full and balanced presentation of their ideas. For readers, this means needing—for enjoying, comprehending, and for remembering—to sense the relation of the parts to the whole. . . .
- **Moving from concrete to abstract and vice versa.** Writers control the interplay of the abstract and the concrete to engage the mind of the reader and to involve the reader progressively in the development of the writer’s idea. In principle, what students practice as writers they heed as readers. They recognize the move from the abstract to the concrete not only in unfolding ideas but also in establishing patterns of analysis and evaluation the evidence they propose for their readings and analyses.
- **Practicing the distinction between observation and inference.** This skill trains writers and readers to replace fruitless opinionating with original perception sustained by pertinent evidence. This also trains students to establish increasing intellectual independence.

- **Practicing rewriting.** Writers discover in rewriting a way to open up and to clarify what is in their idea. Rewriting offers writers the opportunity to understand to explain the fullness of their ideas. Habitual rewriting means that students know to spend time reworking an idea until they make it their own, until, that is, they establish authority over it.
- **Practicing rereading.** (Rereading in this sense parallels rewriting.) Readers—with a similar appetite for the fullness and understanding that rewriting provides—come to expect such fullness and understanding from texts other than their own, and they reread those texts to discover and appreciate new dimensions of that fullness.

Practicing these skills regularly will result in prolific writing and reading marked by the student's ability to:

- Control grammar by writing at will sentences suitable and correct
- Limit a topic, discover an idea about it, and formulate a thesis
- Develop and organize the whole essay through related paragraphs that exhibit the order of the parts
- Unfold the parts of the essay through outlining or writing rough drafts
- Support the logic of the thesis by subordinating some parts and expanding others
- Practice conventional structures and patterns in support of the developing thesis
- Integrate secondary sources in an essay by paraphrase, summary, and quotation as well as documentation of sources.”

Attendance

Regular attendance is mandatory, and we will observe “Berkeley time” (i.e., beginning promptly at 11:10). Pursuant to department policy, if you miss any class meeting during the first two weeks you will be dropped from the class. Waitlisted students will be manually enrolled as space permits.

After calling roll for the first two weeks of class, I will switch to circulating a sign-up sheet that will be collected 10 minutes into each class. You will be marked absent if you:

- Arrive too late to sign in or forget to sign in
- Leave class for an extended period of time
- Sleep through class or occupy yourself with unrelated tasks
- Use electronic devices such as a laptop or cellphone (more on which below)

Please inform me of an absence via email prior to class, ask about what you will have missed, and get notes from a classmate. If an assignment is due, you are responsible for submitting it on time unless you have made prior arrangements with me. If you have a medical emergency, provide documentation. Any unexcused absence will reflect negatively on your participation grade, and more than six absences will result in a failing grade for the course.

Participation

This class will be led as a seminar, not a lecture, so your active participation is essential. You will arrive to class having prepared the reading, viewing, and/or writing

assignments. Coming to class without your text(s) is unacceptable. Whenever possible, read or view a text at least twice. Take notes and bring in specific questions and observations.

Your participation grade will reflect the thoughtfulness of your contributions to in-class discussions and activities and your responsiveness to the contributions of your classmates. It will also reflect your effort in all aspects of the course, your receptiveness to general and individual instruction, and your willingness to seek extra help when you need it. My goal is to make this a classroom where you feel comfortable sharing both carefully crafted and spontaneous thoughts, but do remember to be respectful of others, in speaking and in writing.

Feel free to bring beverages to class. Do not bring food unless you intend to share it with everyone (or unless you have a medical condition required that you do, in which case you should have a DSP accommodation on file). Unless I explicitly instruct or permit you to use a laptop (such as for a research presentation), do not use one in class. Cell phones should always be turned off.

bCourses

Our course website can be found on bCourses. There you will be able to electronically submit assignments, access electronic resources, sign up for meetings, and send me messages. Please address any problems you have with the website immediately.

Grading, Assignments, and Submission Process

You will have three types of assignments: reading/viewing, writing, and presentation. Late assignments will not be accepted.

The written assignments consist of three essays (the second and third of which will be extensively revised) and a number of short assignments (e.g., paper proposals, sentence corrections, film analyses). Essays will receive a letter grade while short assignments will be assigned a point value ranging from 5 to 20 points.

All written work, without exception, should be typed, proofread, and formatted according to the “Formatting Guidelines” given in this syllabus. Assignments must be submitted in both hard and electronic copy. Hard copies should be submitted at the beginning of class, in a folder specifically designated for this purpose, labeled with your name. When you turn in a new assignment, you will be turning all your previous work in with it so that I can evaluate your progress. Electronic copies should be uploaded as Word documents under “Assignments” on bCourses 11am the day the assignment is due (though I will occasionally ask you to submit assignments at other times, particularly so that I can use them in class). The filename of your electronic assignment should contain your first initial, last name, and the name of the assignment (e.g., “MGordon_Paper1Draft.doc”).

You will complete two group presentations: one research-based, one creative. First, you will sign up to give one 15-minute group presentation on one of the texts we will be reading. Each group must meet on their own to prepare, and has the option of meeting with me as well. The presentations will focus on providing well-researched background information on the text and its author: consult at least one book from the library and one article. Each presentation should have a written component (a handout), an interactive component (discussion questions, a game), and a visual aid (poster, PowerPoint, 3D model, video). The creative presentation, which will take place towards the end of the semester, will require you to reinterpret one or more of our texts as a multimedia performance. I will give you detailed guidelines on the latter as the date approaches.

Course grades are calculated according to the following percentages:

Participation	20%
Paper 1 (2 pp.)	5%
Paper 2, First Version (5 pp.)	5%
Second Version (5 pp.)	15%
Paper 3, First Version (7 pp.)	5%
Second Version (7 pp.)	20%
Research Presentation	5%
Final Presentation	5%
Short Assignments	20%

Office Hours and Email Etiquette

I warmly encourage you to come talk with me in office hours about any enthusiasms, concerns, or confusions you might have. There will be three mandatory paper consultations. For brief communication (e.g., reporting an absence), you may contact me by email, but I ask that you come to office hours to discuss any matter of substance (such as an assignment). I can be relied upon to check my email once a day, not including weekends. Please be polite and professional in your emails and remember to write, spell, and punctuate accordingly. Always respond to emails from me, so I know you received them.

SLC Tutoring

While we will spend a good deal of time working on writing in class and during office hours, we can't cover everything. A range of tutoring options is available at the Student Learning Center in the Golden Bear Building on Sproul Plaza, including individual tutors who will work with you for the entire semester. R&C students have first priority, but to obtain a dedicated tutor, make arrangements during the first week of classes.

Disability Accommodations and the Disabled Students' Program

If you need disability-related accommodations in this course, please request them through the Disabled Students' Program (DSP). Instructors are not permitted to grant accommodations unless and until they receive an official Request for Accommodation.

Honor Code and Plagiarism Policy

By accepting your offer of admission at UC Berkeley, you agreed to abide by the following honor code: "As a member of the UC Berkeley community, I act with honesty, integrity, and respect for others." A primary goal of this code is to prevent plagiarism.

"Plagiarism is defined as use of intellectual material produced by another person without acknowledging its source, for example:

- Wholesale copying of passages from works of others [including classmates] into your homework, essay, term paper, or dissertation without acknowledgment.
- Use of the views, opinions, or insights of another without acknowledgment.
- Paraphrasing of another person's characteristic or original phraseology, metaphor or other literary device without acknowledgment."

—The Berkeley Campus Code of Student Conduct from the Center for Student Conduct

If you are caught plagiarizing, you will automatically receive a 0 for the work in question or for the entire course. I am also required either to submit a disposition regarding the matter to the Center for Student Conduct, and may refer you for a hearing that could result in expulsion. Check out the Student Code of Conduct at: sa.berkeley.edu/code-of-conduct.

Nobody is 100% original. When in doubt, cite your source! If you are ever uncertain about the proper way to cite, quote, or acknowledge a source, please ask!

Formatting Guidelines

Your assignment should be typed in 12pt Times New Roman font on standard, white 8.5 x 11-inch paper, with 1" margins on all sides. You may print two-sided, if you wish. Staple the pages. Use the same font for the title, heading, page numbers, etc. Use *italics* for the titles of complete works in any medium (e.g., *Othello*) and quotation marks for short stories, poems, or articles (e.g., "Some Dreamers of the Golden Dream").

Double-space and left-align the text of your paper. Do not put extra spaces before/after your title or between paragraphs. Indent the first line of each paragraph one half-inch from the left margin. Insert a page number at the bottom of each page. Do not make a title page for your paper, but include the following heading on the first page, single-spaced: your name; my name; the course name; the assignment; and the date, e.g.:

Otto Hauptman
Margarita Gordon
Comp Lit R1B: Fact and Fiction
Paper 1
5 September 2014

Points will be deducted for improper formatting.

Texts

Please purchase the following **books** at the Cal Bookstore or at a retailer of your choice. These particular editions of the texts are *required*:

Mikhail Bulgakov, *The Master and Margarita* (Trans. Diana Burgin and Katherine O'Conner. Vintage; ISBN 978-0679760801)
William Shakespeare, *Othello* (ed. Stephen Orgel. Penguin; 978-0140714630)

I also recommend that you purchase the following **writing guides**:

David Rosenwasser and Jill Stephen, *Writing Analytically* (Cengage, 7th ed.)
Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers, *Rules for Writers* (Bedford/St. Martin's, 7th ed.)

Our **course reader** will be available at **ZeeZee Copy** (2431-C Durant). It includes short pieces, along with excerpts from a number of grammar and style guides.

You are required to view the following **films** in advance of our first class discussion of them. You may elect to purchase or rent them via Amazon or Netflix and you may also watch them for free at the Media Resource Center (in the basement of Moffitt Library). Their hours are Mon-Thu 9-9, Fri 9-5, Sat 12-5, and Sun 1-9.

Akira Kurosawa, *Rashomon* (DVD 1143)
Ari Folman, *Waltz with Bashir* (DVD X1670)

We will also be viewing photographs and prints by Alexander Gardner, Francisco Goya, and Jeff Wall. These **images** will be uploaded to bSpace for your reference.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Date	Readings, Screenings, Workshops	Writing Assignments, Meetings, Presentations
Week 1		
F, 8/29	Introduction Aristotle, from <i>Poetics</i>	
Week 2		
M, 9/1	Labor Day: No Class	
W, 9/3	<i>Othello</i> , Act I	
F, 9/5	<i>Othello</i> , Act I	Paper 1 (2 pp.)
Week 3		
M, 9/8	<i>Othello</i> , Act II	
W, 9/10	Writing Workshop (Grammar) Excerpts from writing guides	Sentence Corrections I Individual Meetings Th-F
F, 9/12	<i>Othello</i> , Act III	
Week 4		
M, 9/15	<i>Othello</i> , Act III-IV	Paper 2 Proposal (1 p., single-spaced)
W, 9/17	<i>Othello</i> , Act IV	Sentence Corrections II Individual Meetings W-F
F, 9/19	<i>Othello</i> Act V	
Week 5		
M, 9/22	Library Day	Paper 2, Version 1 (5 pp.)
W, 9/24	<i>Othello</i> + secondary sources	Secondary Source Analysis
F, 9/26	Writing Workshop (Revision)	
Week 6		
M, 9/29	Herodotus, from <i>Histories</i> Montaigne, "Of Sorrow" Benjamin, from "The Storyteller" Kurosawa, <i>Rashômon</i>	
W, 10/1	Kurosawa, <i>Rashômon</i>	Film Analysis (1 p.)
F, 10/3	Kurosawa, <i>Rashômon</i>	
Week 7		
M, 10/6	Sontag, from <i>Regarding the Pain of Others</i> Gardner, <i>Photographic Sketchbook of the Civil War</i> Goya, <i>The Disasters of War</i> Wall, <i>Dead Troops Talk</i>	Paper 2, Version 2 (5 pp.)
W, 10/8	Sontag, Gardner, Goya, and Wall	
F, 10/10	Sontag, Gardner, Goya, and Wall	Image Analysis (1 p.)
Week 8		
M, 10/13	Folman, <i>Waltz with Bashir</i>	Research Presentation
W, 10/15	<i>Waltz with Bashir</i>	Film Analysis (1 p.)

F, 10/17	<i>Waltz with Bashir</i> Historical sources and interviews Shahid, from “The Sabra and Shatila Massacre: Eye-Witness Reports”	
Week 9		
M, 10/20	Writing Workshop	
W, 10/22	Writing Workshop	
F, 10/24	Writing Workshop	
Week 10		
M, 10/27	Bulgakov, <i>The Master and Margarita</i> Historical/theoretical sources	
W, 10/29	<i>The Master and Margarita</i> Selections from the Gospels	Research Presentation
F, 10/31	<i>The Master and Margarita</i>	
Week 11		
M, 11/3	<i>The Master and Margarita</i>	Research Presentation
W, 11/5	<i>The Master and Margarita</i>	
F, 11/7	<i>The Master and Margarita</i>	
Week 12		
M, 11/10	<i>The Master and Margarita</i>	
W, 11/12	<i>The Master and Margarita</i>	
F, 11/14	<i>The Master and Margarita</i>	
Week 13		
M, 11/17	<i>The Master and Margarita</i>	Paper 3 Proposal (1 pp.)
W, 11/19	<i>The Master and Margarita</i>	
F, 11/21	<i>The Master and Margarita</i>	
Week 14		
M, 11/24	Multimedia Presentations	
W, 11/26	Multimedia Presentations Writing Workshop	
F, 11/28	Thanksgiving: No Class	
Week 15		
M, 12/1	Didion, “Some Dreamers of the Golden Dream”	Research Presentation
W, 12/3	“Some Dreamers”	
F, 12/5	“Some Dreamers”	Paper 3, Version 1 (7 pp.)
RRR Week		
Finals Week		
M, 12/15		Paper 3, Version 2 (7 pp.)