



Global Literature: The World through Memoir

Carleton University
Global and International Studies
GINS 2020 Winter 2026

Professor Sandra Fahy, Ph.D.

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Lecture Dates:

January 5, 12, 19, 26 February 2, 9, (16-20th Winter Break) 23 March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
(RED means assignment day) **Tutorials** B1 Mondays 1:35-2:25 Tory Building 230
B2 Mondays 4:35-5:25 Southam Hall 417

Preparing for our Course

Students prepare for class by purchasing or printing course readings. In this class we are practicing the art of reading on paper while taking notes by hand on the reading and in your notebook. Students are asked to bring these to tutorials and lectures. Students are expected to take notes with pen and paper in lecture and tutorials unless physical disability prohibits this. Reading off the computer or phone will not be permitted. Use of phones, earbuds or computers is not permitted. Students are responsible for obtaining reading materials in print.

Assessment: Four assignments (written in class) determine your grade. Each is worth 25 points (25 X 4 = 100). Assignments are handwritten in tutorial hour. Students with accommodation will be notified via the PMC and exam center about the location of their assignments. It is your responsibility to read your emails. Attendance is required for this class. Students who do not attend at least 15 of our 24 meetings will not pass this class. Attendance is taken at each lecture and tutorial. **Missed Assignments:** If you miss an assignment, you may sit the assignment on the following Monday at 7:30am at Dunton Tower 21st floor with a five-point grade deduction. There are no exceptions. You must contact the professor in a timely manner for arrangements.

Grade Review Policy: Requests for grade review must follow the process described below. Emails that do not follow this process will go unanswered. After you receive the physical copy of your assignment, wait 48 hours. Carefully review the feedback written on your assignment. Write a polite email, properly addressed, identifying the specific criterion under review which explains how your work met the criteria (in less than 150 words). Students who request a grade review should be aware their grade could stay the same, go up or be lowered. The best time to ensure you do well on assessments is before the assessment: read, reread, study, take notes, attend class, ask questions.

Introduction to Our Course

How should one go about creating a twelve-week course that covers the subject of Global Literature? Where should we begin in time and place? Empires have risen and fallen; languages have evolved and died; countries that once existed exist no longer. And we only have twelve weeks! I must teach you in English. Your time is limited. Perhaps you are not yet familiar with reading lengthy books. Top this all off with the fact that this is a required course for your degree! All these questions and issues come to mind even before we ask: how should one define “global literature?” How can one be sure we capture enough of Global Literature, however we define it, to ensure that you gain a thorough education on the topic?

In the process of creating the course, I asked our friend Chat GPT to create a twelve-week course on global literature. The platform populated a screed that was obvious and unimaginative. Luckily, the human mind is not an algorithm. And that is what I used to build this course, rather than Chat GPT. For fun, do that now, then compare our syllabus with it. After much deliberation, and considering my audience of predominantly young university students, I have decided to approach the topic of Global Literatures through the genre of memoir. What this means is that I have selected several powerful memoirs which tell us about their time and place. They also offer different points of view, showing the value of viewpoint diversity. Some of these memoirs tell us an unusual version of their time and place that further expand our understanding of history.

It is my hope that these memoirs will open more of our world to you. This is a world that predated you, but nevertheless is yours. These are memoirs of people you do not know, and yet in the process of reading it is my hope that you find resonance with the authors, that you are a fellow human traveller, bound up with all of the emotions and struggles of being alive in a world that is so varied, in countries and places and politics that ask different things of you. This is a core feature of Global and International Studies.

And memoir is a great genre because it is like a time and place travel machine, and what psychologists might call a personality dissociation: we get to dip into the life of another! Magic! Yet, we must recall that the “I” is an unreliable narrator. After all, memory is fallible. And humans have ego, a deep desire to avoid public embarrassment, and so on. Will these authors really share their thoughts with us, even those that make them look bad? They touch on the personal struggle amidst the broader political, economic, and geographic movements of the era.

Learning Outcomes

- Learn to think and write clearly
- Learn to articulate your thoughts with reference to the readings
- Learn how different points of view shape the record of historical events
- Learn to assess what influences different points of view

Course Objectives

- To read memoirs from around the world
- To understand strengths and weaknesses of memoir as a genre
- To write in a manner that is clear, professional, and sophisticated

Lecture Schedule

Class One January 5th

Read and print before class

Plato, The Allegory of the Cave, Republic, VII, 514a, 2 to 517 a, 7 Translation by Thomas Sheehan (<http://vanzant.thenewplace.org/reading/the-cave.pdf>)

Class Two January 12th

Read and print before class

Vaclav Havel, The Power of the Powerless, October 1978 (<https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/wp-content/uploads/1979/01/the-power-of-the-powerless.pdf>)

Class Three: January 19th

In-Class **first** Assignment (25%) during tutorial time: **Tutorials time and location:** B1 Mondays 1:35-2:25 Tory Building 230; B2 Mondays 4:35-5:25 Southam Hall 417. No Lecture this day. TA and Prof to grade assignments during lecture hours

Class Four January 26th

Read Chapter 1-7 (to the end of "Part 1 Change by choice"

Kang, Hildi. "Under the Black Umbrella" Voices of Colonial Korea, Cornell University, 2001

Class Five February 2nd

Read Chapters 8-14 (to the end of "Part II: Change by Coercion"

Kang, Hildi. "Under the Black Umbrella" Voices of Colonial Korea, Cornell University, 2001

Class Six: February 9th

In-class **second** assignment (25%) during tutorial time. **Tutorials time and location:** B1 Mondays 1:35-2:25 Tory Building 230; B2 Mondays 4:35-5:25 Southam Hall 417. No Lecture this day. TA and Prof to grade assignments during lecture hours

February 16-20th 2026 Winter Break No Lectures/ Tutorials

Class Seven February 23rd

Hirsi Ali, Ayaan. *Infidel*. Free Press, 2007

Class Eight March 2

Hirsi Ali, Ayaan. *Infidel*. Free Press, 2007

Class Nine: March 9th

In-class **third** assignment (25%) during tutorial time. **Tutorials time and location:** B1 Mondays 1:35-2:25 Tory Building 230; B2 Mondays 4:35-5:25 Southam Hall 417. No Lecture this day. TA and Prof to grade assignments during lecture hours

Class Ten March 16th

Read first half of the book!

Macias, Monica. *Black Girl from Pyongyang: In Search of My Identity*. Duckworth, 2024.

Class Eleven March 23rd

Read second half of the book!

Macias, Monica. *Black Girl from Pyongyang: In Search of My Identity*. Duckworth, 2024.

Watch: BBC Archive, "1969: Stalin's Daughter on Defecting from the Soviet Union | Classic Interviews | BBC Archive"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MhUQlid4Dwc>

Class Twelve March 30th

In-class **fourth** assignment (25%) during tutorial time. **Tutorials time and location:** B1

Mondays 1:35-2:25 Tory Building 230; B2 Mondays 4:35-5:25 Southam Hall 417.No

Lecture this day. TA and Prof to grade assignments during lecture hours

Carleton University Freedom of Speech Policy

"As an institution of higher learning anchored in the ideals of open inquiry and debate, the University's students, staff, and faculty have the freedom of speech to articulate their views. Pursuant to the Carleton University Act, the essential purpose of the University is to engage in the pursuit of the advancement of learning, the dissemination of knowledge, and the intellectual development and betterment of its community. To achieve this purpose, members of the University have freedom of speech, which is defined as the right to examine, question, investigate, speculate, comment and criticize except insofar as limitations are necessary by law or the functioning of the University. The purpose of the University also depends upon an environment of respect and tolerance. Every member needs to be able to learn, teach, live and work free from harassment and discrimination... Disagreements and dissenting views make for a vibrant academic culture. The University strives to find a balance between allowing for critical views to be expressed civilly on campus and not obstructing the freedom of others to communicate their views. In exercising free speech, staff, students and faculty are encouraged to consider the value of mutual respect. Informed, thoughtful and respectful argument, even when disagreement is profound, benefits the University community and fosters its essential purpose." The full document can be accessed here: <https://carleton.ca/equity/policies-procedures/>

Plagiarism Please ensure that you do not intentionally or unintentionally use the ideas or writing of others without referencing this writing. Be sure to read Carleton University's statement on plagiarism and how to avoid it: <https://carleton.ca/economics/courses/writing-preliminaries/pammett-on-plagiarism-and-paraphrasing/> There are significant consequences for plagiarism. Remember, your ideas and writing are valuable. You can reference others while building your thoughts in writing.

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Carleton University has a duty to accommodate students with institutional needs. Please see information on the following page. <https://carleton.ca/pmc/faculty-and-instructors/institutional-obligations/> Their website states, "Students with disabilities are responsible for identifying their needs for disability-related accommodation to the Paul Menton Centre by booking an intake appointment with a PMC Coordinator and bringing appropriate documentation to the first meeting." Please ensure that you do this, so that you can have the best experience of accommodation at Carleton. There are deadlines for this process. See Carleton dates and deadlines for specific dates." (<https://carleton.ca/registrar/registration/dates/>)

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows: **Pregnancy** obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. **Religious** obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If

you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made.

Links for helpful resources.

Mental Health: <https://carleton.ca/studentaffairs/student-mental-health/>

Substance Use: <https://carleton.ca/studentaffairs/safe-substance-use/>

Care and Support: <https://carleton.ca/studentaffairs/student-care-and-support/>

Rights & Responsibilities: <https://carleton.ca/studentaffairs/student-rights-and-responsibilities/>

Emergency Fund: <https://carleton.ca/studentaffairs/student-emergency-fund/>

Grade Appeals: If you wish to appeal your grade, do so in a timely fashion. Prior to requesting your appeal, please ensure that you have identified the grading error on the assignment and notify me and the TA. If a mistake has been made, we will correct it asap. Approval of final grades: The instructor determines your grade in the course which is subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale	Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale
90-100	A+	12	67-69	C+	6
85-89	A	11	63-66	C	5
80-84	A-	10	60-62	C-	4
77-79	B+	9	57-59	D+	3
73-76	B	8	53-56	D	2
70-72	B-	7	50-52	D-	1