**BHP-206 Politics and Literary Form**

Dr. Frank Rusciano—Fine Arts 277; Office Hours: MW 9:30-11:00 AM and by appointment; Phone: 896-5264; email: rusciano@rider.edu.

Dr. Seiwoong Oh—Fine Arts 313; Office Hours: MW 10:30AM-12:00 PM and by appointment; Phone: 895-5572; email: oh@rider.edu.

LAS General Education requirement(s) filled by the course: this course counts toward satisfying the Disciplinary Perspectives: Social Science or Literature

Grading Criteria:

1 research paper (8-10 pages, submitted to Canvas)—20%.

Reading Log: 15%

Midterm exam: 30%

Participation and quizzes: 5%

Final Exam: 30%

Reading Log: Before the beginning of every class period, please go to Canvas (Discussion Forum) and write your response to the reading(s). Minimum of 200 words on what you just read: your analysis of the assigned reading(s) and your questions. No plot synopsis.

Research Paper: Write a 2500-word-long paper (about 8-10 typed pages) based on your reading in this course. Choose any topic you like, but be sure to address the broad theme of the course (politics and literary form). Use at least three secondary sources either from libraries or online databases. Please do not use Web sites or magazine or newspaper articles as your sources. MLA Style. Submitted to Canvas (Assignment-Term Paper).

• Cell-phone use is prohibited in class. No web-surfing. No texting.

Course Goals: The course investigates the relationships between political life and literary form. Students will analyze literary texts in the context of selected political periods and ideologies, going beyond literary content to understand how language, genre, and structure mirror, otherwise represent, or criticize the political order within which the author writes. The course will address such questions as why certain cultures choose certain literary forms to express political messages, how the form affects the message’s expression and the specific messages that can be communicated, and how the politics of the time affects the form chosen for expression. Literary readings will be chosen from a variety of cultures and historical periods, with accompanying readings that reflect the time and place when the work was created.

**Course Objectives:**

* To explore ethical and social issues expressed in literary texts
* To examine the cultural and historical contexts of the political ideas as well the literary works from an interdisciplinary perspective
* To understand how great ideas influence all realms of human endeavor, from politics to morality, from science to the arts
* To learn the basic concepts of analysis and criticism
* To learn to use research in order to write persuasively, cogently and correctly about the issues read and discussed in class
* To learn to engage in intellectual discussion with peers
* To write a paper that demonstrates your ability to write analytically.

Required Texts:

*1984* (George Orwell) 978-0451524935

*The Visit* (Durrenmatt) 9780802144263

*The Tempest* (Shakespeare) 9780743482837

Yeats’ poems on Irish Revolution (Canvas)

*Mother Courage and Her Children* (Brecht) 9780143105282

*The Reader* (Schlink) 9780307454898

*Persepolis* (Marjane Satrapi), graphic novel 9780375714573

*M. Butterfly* (Hwang) 978-0452272590

*Say You’re One of Them* (Uwem Akpan) 9780316086370

*My Year of Meats* (Ruth Ozeki) 978-0140280463

Discussion schedule:

Sept 6 introduction to the course

Sept 11 *1984* (George Orwell)

Sept 13 *1984* (George Orwell)

Sept 18 *M. Butterfly* (Hwang)

Sept 20 *M. Butterfly* (Hwang)

Sept 25 *The Tempest* (Shakespeare)

Sept 27 *The Tempest* (Shakespeare)

Oct 2 *The Reader* (Schlink)

Oct 4 *The Reader* (Schlink)

Oct 9 *Mother Courage and Her Children* (Brecht)

Oct 11 *Mother Courage and Her Children* (Brecht)

Oct 16Yeats’ poems on Irish Revolution (Canvas)

 Yeats “The Great Day”; Robert Frost “A Semi-Revolution”; Oscar Williams “A Total Revolution”; Nikki Giovanni “Dreams”

Oct 18 *Persepolis* (graphic novel)

Oct 23 mid-term exam

Oct 25 “The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas” (Le Guin) (Canvas)

 “The Bridegroom” (Ha Jin)

Oct 30 *Utopia* (Canvas)

Nov 1 *Utopia* (Canvas)

Nov 6 *My Year of Meats* (Ruth Ozeki)

Nov 8 *My Year of Meats* (Ruth Ozeki)

Nov 13 *Say You’re One of Them* (Uwem Akpan)

Nov 15 *Say You’re One of Them* (Uwem Akpan)

Nov 20 *Say You’re One of Them* (Uwem Akpan)

Nov 27 *The Visit* (Durrenmatt)

Nov 29 *The Visit* (Durrenmatt)

Dec 4 Term paper due; *Pan’s Labyrinth (movie)*

Dec 6 Review

Dec 18 Final Exam (3:30-5:50 p.m.)