

**Literature Core: Literature and Adaptation**  
English 1080.02

Spring 2017 | Classroom: Cushing 335 | Tues/Thurs 3:00-4:15pm  
Instructor: Kelsey Norwood | [kelsey.norwood@bc.edu](mailto:kelsey.norwood@bc.edu)  
Office: Stokes South 490B | Office Hours: Thursday 2:00-3:00, and by appointment

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**Course Description**

In this section of Literature Core, we will explore adaptation as a literary process through which culture and individual creativity combine to reshape or reinvigorate one text by turning it into another. We will read pairings of original and adapted works of literature and film/performance with an eye toward understanding the circumstances that motivate and shape the project of adaptation. We will aim to answer the following questions: Why are some texts more adaptable than others? What motivates an individual to adapt a text? How and why does an adapted text change the themes of its source? How do communities use adaptation to represent and empower themselves?

As part of the core curriculum, this course will help us to develop our skills in critical thinking, close reading, and analytical writing. It will also aim to foster an appreciation for literature across a variety of historical periods and literary forms.

**Required Texts**

William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*<sup>1</sup>  
Tennessee Williams, *A Streetcar Named Desire* | ISBN: 9780811216029  
Dorothy B. Hughes, *In A Lonely Place*<sup>2</sup> | ISBN: 9780141192314

All books should be purchased as hard copies. Please purchase the correct edition where noted (*In A Lonely Place* and *Streetcar*).

All other readings will be available on the class Canvas site. Please print the readings out in advance and bring them to class on the day they are assigned.

**Films and TV Episodes**

There will be a scheduled screening of *A Streetcar Named Desire* on Thursday, March 16<sup>th</sup>. If you cannot make the screening, please let me know in advance so I can arrange a way for you to watch the recording. All other assigned films and TV episodes are available in the library via Course Reserves and are listed below.

Andrew Solt and Edmund H. North, *In A Lonely Place*  
Steven Moffat, *Sherlock* 1.01, “A Study in Pink”  
Steven Moffat, *Sherlock* 2.01, “A Scandal in Belgravia”  
Mark Gatiss, *Sherlock* 2.02, “The Hounds of Baskerville”  
Charlie Kaufman, *Adaptation*

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<sup>1</sup> Any edition with footnotes/sidenotes and line numbers will be fine for the purposes of this class. I’ve requested the Arden 3 edition at the bookstore, but if you’re trying to save money, you can find a Folger edition online for about \$6.

<sup>2</sup> Not available at BC bookstore; please buy the correct edition online (search by ISBN).

## **Grading**

I don't discuss individual grades over email or in class, but I'm happy to talk with you about your grades during my office hours. Your final grade for the course will be based on the following:

Close Reading Paper 10%

Midterm 15%

Longer Paper 20%

Creative Project 20%

Final Exam 15%

Participation 20%

Your final participation grade will be determined based on several factors: productive and consistent engagement in class discussion, Canvas posts, ungraded assignments, scores on reading quizzes, and adherence to course policies.

## **Course Policies**

### Attendance:

Unexcused absences (or repeated late arrivals) will cause your grade to go down. More than six absences will automatically result in a failing grade for the course. In case of family emergency or prolonged illness, please contact your dean.

### Conferences:

Once during the semester, I will meet with all students individually for required midterm conferences. A missed conference counts as a class absence.

### Late Work:

Each day a writing assignment is late, you will lose half a letter grade (i.e. A to A-).

### Formatting:

All written work should be double-spaced with 12 pt. font size, and in MLA or Chicago format. For help with citations, see the following website: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl>

### Electronics:

Please turn off and put away all electronic devices (cell phones, tablets, laptops) during class meetings.

### Academic Integrity:

Boston College values the academic integrity of its students and faculty. Please familiarize yourself with the university's policy on academic integrity:

<http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/resources/policy/#integrity>

If you have any questions, please ask me before turning in an assignment. If a student is found responsible for violating the policy, penalties may include a failing grade as well as possible probation, suspension, or expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the violation.

### Disability Statement:

If you have a disability and will be requesting accommodations for this course, please register with Kathy Duggan ([kathleen.duggan@bc.edu](mailto:kathleen.duggan@bc.edu)), Associate Director, Academic Support Services, The Connors Family Learning Center (learning disabilities or ADHD) or Suzy Conway ([suzy.conway.1@bc.edu](mailto:suzy.conway.1@bc.edu)), Assistant Dean for Students with Disabilities (all other disabilities).

Advanced notice and appropriate documentation are required for accommodations.

**Campus Resources:**

Connors Family Learning Center (CFLC):

The CFLC, located in O'Neill Library, offers one-on-one writing tutoring. This is a great resource if you're struggling with an assignment or any aspect of the writing process. Tutoring is free for all BC students. To schedule an appointment call 617-552-0611.

Counseling Services:

If you're having a difficult time or need someone to talk to, there are people available at University Counseling Services. This service is free for BC students. To set up an appointment, call (617) 552-3310 or stop by Gasson 001.

Sexual Assault and Misconduct

From the Boston College policy on sexual misconduct:

“Boston College seeks to foster a campus environment that supports its educational mission and is free from exploitation and intimidation, as well as discrimination based upon gender. Sexual misconduct of any kind, including sexual harassment and sexual violence, domestic and dating violence, and stalking, is antithetical to the mission of Boston College and the values it espouses and will be responded to accordingly.”

To report sexual assault or misconduct, call the Sexual Assault Network (SANet), an anonymous hotline available 24/7: (617) 552-2211. <http://www.bc.edu/offices/dos/sexual-violence-policy-website>

### Course Schedule

This schedule is preliminary and I will announce any changes in class. If you are absent, please reach out to a classmate to learn what you have missed.

Tues, January 17	Syllabus
Thurs, January 19	Sanders, "What is Adaptation?" <b>Canvas Post due</b>
Tues, January 24	<i>Macbeth</i> , acts 1-2
Thurs, January 26	<i>Macbeth</i> , act 3 <b>Canvas Post due</b>
Tues, January 31	<i>Macbeth</i> , act 4 Excerpts from Major, "A History of Greater Britain," and Buchanan, "History of Scotland"
Thurs, February 2	<i>Macbeth</i> , act 5 Clips from film adaptations <b>Canvas Post due</b>
Tues, February 7	Fernie and Palfrey, <i>Macbeth, Macbeth</i> , preface and pp. 1-20 <b>Close Reading Paper due</b>
Thurs, February 9	<i>In A Lonely Place</i> , pp. 1-53
Tues, February 14	<i>In A Lonely Place</i> , pp. 54-143
Thurs, February 16	<i>In A Lonely Place</i> , pp. 144-186
Tues, February 21	<i>In A Lonely Place</i> (1950 film)
Thurs, February 23	<i>In A Lonely Place</i> (1950 film) Elliott, "Literary Adaptation and the Form/Content Dilemma"
Tues, February 28	<b>Midterm</b>
Thurs, March 2	<i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> , scenes 1-5
SPRING BREAK	
Tues, March 14	<i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> , scenes 6-8
Thurs, March 16	<i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> , scenes 9-11 Corrigan, "Realism and Theatricalism in <i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> " Screening: <i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> (2014)
6:00pm	

Tues, March 21	<i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> (2014 National Theatre)
Thurs, March 23	<i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> (2014 National Theatre) Short film: <i>The Departure</i> (2014)
Tues, March 28	Excerpts from <i>Devonshire MS</i> Jamison, “Love is a Much More Vicious Motivator” Tandy, “How Harry Potter Fanfic Changed the World”
Thurs, March 30	Rowling, <i>Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone</i> , chapters 2-3 Lomonaacren, <i>The Art of Self-Fashioning</i> , chapter 1
Tues, April 4	Chernow, <i>Alexander Hamilton</i> : “The Melting Scene,” “Eliza” Miranda, <i>Hamilton</i> : “The World Was Wide Enough,” “Who Lives, Who Dies, Who Tells Your Story” <b>Long Paper due</b>
Thurs, April 6	Doyle, <i>A Study in Scarlet</i> , Part I
Tues, April 11	Doyle, <i>A Study in Scarlet</i> , Part II <i>Sherlock</i> , “A Study in Pink” Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss interview (Den of Geek)
Thurs, April 13	No class – Easter Break
Tues, April 18	Doyle, <i>A Scandal in Bohemia</i>
Thurs, April 20	<i>Sherlock</i> , “A Scandal in Belgravia” thecutteralicia, “Scene Analysis: Battersea Power Station”
Tues, April 25	Doyle, <i>The Hound of the Baskervilles</i>
Thurs, April 27	<i>Sherlock</i> , “The Hounds of Baskerville”
Tues, May 2	<i>Adaptation</i> (2002)
Thurs, May 4	<b>Creative Project due</b>
Sat, May 13 12:30pm	<b>Final Exam</b>

## Assignment Descriptions

All assignments should be submitted online via Canvas. Each assignment is due before class on the day it appears on the syllabus. Canvas posts are due by 9:00am.

### **Discussion Starter** (1 page)

Compile a handout for the other members of the class, including the following:

- A brief context/summary of the day's reading assignment
- A few questions/topics to start the class discussion
- A few excerpts from the text that will help us to start answering your questions

Your questions and excerpted passages should aim to connect to the course's overall topics and themes. You will start the class discussion by referring to your handout. Please bring enough copies of the handout to give to the entire class.

Each student will start the class discussion once during the semester.

### **Canvas Posts** (1-2 paragraphs)

Write about a detail from the assigned reading that you found puzzling or intriguing. Quote a short excerpt from the text and follow it with analysis and perhaps some questions for discussion.

### **Close Reading Paper** (2-3 pages)

Write about a specific moment from the text of *Macbeth*, connecting it to a larger question you have about a character, relationship, or recurring detail from the play. This will be an "exploratory essay," in which your objective is to work closely with the text to better understand a puzzling detail or to answer a question you have.

You should analyze diction, syntax, and tone in order to make meaning of the selected passage or excerpt. Consider consulting both scholarly footnotes and the Oxford English Dictionary while writing your paper; they will add depth and authority to your work with the text.

Do not worry about including an introductory or concluding paragraph for this paper. You want to give as much space as possible to a nuanced analysis of a few quotations from the text.

### **Long Paper** (6-7 pages)

In this paper, you will engage with the concepts we've discussed in class, writing about the nature of adaptation in one of our texts. If you'd like, you can write about a different adaptation, as long as it's an adaptation of a text we've discussed in class.

Your paper should push beyond reiterating the ideas and concepts we've discussed in class. An A- or A paper will, at minimum, teach me something I don't know about the text you've selected.

A successful paper should:

- Make an original argument about the text.
- Work closely with the text. Your use of quotation and close reading should shape, inspire, and add complexity to your argument, rather than simply confirming it.
- Be written clearly so that a reader can easily follow it – logical paragraph structure, topic sentences, no grammatical errors, etc.

Some possible topics to start with:

- Pick a character from one of our source texts. Make a focused and specific argument about how or why they are changed in the adaptation—that is, the nature of this change, or the circumstances that may have produced it.
- Pick a scene that appears in both texts. Make a focused and specific argument about the two different shapes this scene takes.
- Pick an artistic aspect of a film or dramatic adaptation—acting, music, cinematography, set design—and make a focused and specific argument about how it changes or enhances our understanding of the source text.
- Deploy a theory or idea from one of our secondary texts to make a new argument about one of the adaptations we've watched or read in class.

If you'd like to write on another topic, please feel free – just clear it with me first.

### **Creative Project**

For this assignment, you will adapt one of the texts we've read in class, using your intellectual understanding of adaptation to construct something meaningful while taking advantage of your own skills and abilities. You can utilize any form or genre of your choosing: a song, short play, comic, music video, painting, fanfic, zen garden, dishwasher commercial, etc. We will present our projects on the last day of class.

This assignment will include a 2-3 page rationale in which you explain your choices in this project and lay out the connections to the concepts we've discussed in class.

A successful project should:

- Adapt the source text with a meaningful objective that stems from our conversations in class about the *why* and *how* of adaptation.
- Demonstrate how a different form/genre can add new meaning to a text, expanding the possibilities of the source text.