

HL1001: Introduction to the Study of Literature

Semester 1, AY2026-27

NB: This syllabus is subject to change.

Instructor: Asst Prof. Li Qi Peh (liqi.peh@ntu.edu.sg)

Tutors: TBA

Office hours: By appointment

Time and Venue: Wednesdays, 9:30am—11:20am, HSS Auditorium

Course Description

HL1001 is an introduction to the study of literature at the tertiary level. In this course, you will experiment with different ways of reading and analysing texts, different ways of developing compelling and well-supported academic arguments, and different ways of doing academic research. As we read across a wider range of genres and traditions, you will not only learn to ask questions about form, style, content, and context, but also be exposed to the conventions of academic writing.

This class will invite you to be curious, reflective, and critical. The class's main goal is for you to become confident readers and writers, capable of reading literary texts with an open mind, working collaboratively, researching responsibly, and writing clear, persuasive prose. In our time together, you may encounter points-of-view that seem counter-intuitive or even disagreeable. I ask that you consider these points-of-view and your own responses to them thoughtfully, ethically, and generously. The reading, writing, and thinking skills you acquire in HL1001 will serve you well no matter what career you choose.

Course Readings (to be purchased)

*All other readings in the schedule can be found online.

Walter Miller's *A Canticle for Leibowitz* (Orion)

Free online edition of *Canticle* available here:

<https://avalonlibrary.net/ebooks/Walter%20M.%20Miller%20Jr.%20-%20A%20Canticle%20for%20Leibowitz.pdf>

*I encourage you to purchase the text for ease of reading, but this is up to you.

Stella Kon's *Emily of Emerald Hill* (Constellation)

Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho*

*Please find a copy of the film online or borrow it from the library.

Assignments and Deadlines

Textual analysis – 15% (1000 words)

Make an argument about one short story we've read in the course thus far, paying special attention to their rhetorical and stylistic features.

Deadline: 11th September (Friday), 11am

The Conversation Essay (In-Class Assessment - TBA) - 20% (1500 words)

Advance an argument by putting Walter Miller's *A Canticle for Leibowitz* in conversation with a secondary source.

Deadline: 28th October (Wednesday), 9:30am

Participation - 15%

Students are expected to participate in class discussions and any activities conducted within the classroom.

Final Exam - 50%

Date: TBA

AI Policy

As this course is designed to develop your writing, critical thinking, and argumentative skills, the use of generative AI is strongly discouraged. If you do use AI in your work, please cite its use in accordance with the rules of academic integrity. Please also provide an appendix detailing the prompts you used.

Course Schedule

Week	Topic	Readings/ Activities
Week 1	Course Overview	Richard Selzer, "The Knife"
Week 2	Introducing Close-Reading	Annie Dillard, "Seeing" Richard Selzer, "The Knife" Zadie Smith, "Speaking in Tongues" Tutorials begin
Week 3	Developing Academic Arguments	Xingjian Li, "The Lobster's Promotion" (Student Essay) Sue Bahk, "The Final Judgment" (Student Essay)
Week 4	Reading for Form and Genre	Poetry Anthology I
Week 5	Using Evidence	Poetry Anthology II

		Textual analysis due on 11th September (Friday)
Week 6	Literary and Historical Contexts	Poetry Anthology II
Week 7	Doing Academic Research	Walter Miller, <i>A Canticle for Leibowitz</i> , Book I
RECESS WEEK		
Week 8	The Novel Form	Walter Miller, <i>A Canticle for Leibowitz</i> , Book II
Week 9	Theoretical Approaches	Walter Miller, <i>A Canticle for Leibowitz</i> , Book III
Week 10	Archives	Stella Kon's <i>Emily of Emerald Hill</i>
Week 11	TBA	Tentative: In-class assessment on 28 October (Weds) at 9:30am
Week 12	Film Criticism	Alfred Hitchcock's <i>Psycho</i>
Week 13	Recap	