



**ÇANKAYA UNIVERSITY**  
**Department of English Language and Literature**  
**2025-2026 Academic Year – Spring Semester**  
**ELL 334 Literature and Politics (Elective)**  
**Course Syllabus**

**Instructor:** Özge Üstündağ Güvenç, PhD.  
**Course Hours:** 13.20 – 16.10 Wednesday **Class:** RA 06  
**Office Hours:** Friday 13.00-15.00  
**Office:** R 107 **Phone:** 2331416  
**e-mail:** [ozgeguvenc@cankaya.edu.tr](mailto:ozgeguvenc@cankaya.edu.tr)

### **Course Description**

Literary works can be read and analysed, in a very limited, traditional sense, as cultural products, which “reflect” the political and material concerns of their writers and audiences during the times when they were produced. This course takes a much broader approach, given that the meanings of texts can be shaped by audiences and can also shape audiences’ perceptions. Course material may range from literary works to news and media texts. Theoretical frameworks may include the works of such writers as Hegel, Marx, Gramsci, Althusser, Foucault, Barthes, Zizek, Anderson, Butler, among others; the focus of the course will vary depending on the semester, from analyses of ethnicity and nationalism to discussions of gender, race, class, age, or other rights issues.

### **Requirements**

For each class, students are expected to:

1. Be ready to discuss the debatable issues in class
2. Bring a pen, pencil, and paper to be able to take notes and write
3. Participate in class and group discussions, and activities
4. Turn off their mobile phones during class
5. Attend at least 60 % of their classes, otherwise they will not be allowed to take the final examination. This means that students may have no more than 15 hours of absence. Students are also responsible for tracking their own attendance.

### **Learning Objectives**

1. Broaden students’ knowledge of international literature/culture as it relates to politics
2. Provide a range of critical frameworks for analysing the politics of literature
3. Provide awareness of current political issues and concerns in the study of literature
4. Increase students’ analytical skills in evaluating international cultural and political developments.

**Course Materials will be provided by the instructor.**

**Unethical use of AI technology in assignments and class activities will be treated as plagiarism and will be subject to academic penalties.**

**Please note that the schedule is tentative; the instructor may make changes if necessary.**

## Evaluation and Grading

ASSESSMENT TOOL	QUANTITY	PERCENTAGE
Midterm Exam	1	% 30
Final Exam	1	% 40
Presentation	1	% 10
Analytical Essay	1	% 15
Participation in the discussion of reading materials	14	% 5

**Presentation:** Students select a literary/visual text not on the syllabus and analyze it through one of the course's political frameworks (power, body, aging, food, maps, OR propose their own category).

**Analytical Essay:** Students write an analytical essay (1500-1800 words) that explores how multiple political frameworks intersect in literary texts.

## Weekly Schedule

Weeks	Content
<b>Week 1</b> 16 Feb.-20 Feb.	<b>Course Introduction – Syllabus</b> “What is politics?” “What is literature?” “What is the relationship between politics and literature?” “The Danger of a Single Story” by Chimamanda Adichie
<b>Week 2</b> 23 Feb.-27Feb.	<b>Literature and Politics</b> “The Politics of Fiction” by Elif Shafak “Why I Write” by George Orwell “Shooting an Elephant” by George Orwell
<b>Week 3</b> 2 March-6March	<b>Power and Politics</b> “Homo Sacer” by Giorgio Agamben “Before the Law” by Franz Kafka “The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven” by Sherman Alexie
<b>Week 4</b> 9 March-13 March	Michel Foucault and Power “The Unknown Citizen” by W. H. Auden “Examination Day” by Henry Slesar
<b>Week 5</b> 16 March-20 March	<b>Body and Politics</b> “Docile Bodies” by Michel Foucault “Debbie and Julie” by Doris Lessing
<b>Week 6</b> 23 March-27 March	“Stolen Bodies, Reclaimed Bodies: Disability and Queerness” Paintings by Frida Kahlo + <i>Frida</i> (2002) movie

<b>Week 7</b> 30 March-3 April	<b>Revision and Midterm</b>
<b>Week 8</b> 6 April-10 April	<b>Ageing and Politics</b> “Warning” by Jenny Joseph “The Old Fools” by Philip Larkin “A Visit of Charity” by Eudora Welty
<b>Week 9</b> 13 April-17 April	<b>Culture and Politics</b> “Fidelio and Bess” by Ali Smith Migration Series of Jacob Lawrence <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B1toU8YYppQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B1toU8YYppQ</a>
<b>Week 10</b> 20 April-24 April	<b>Food and Politics</b> “Persimmons” by Li-Young Lee “When Mr Pirzada Came to Dine” by Jhumpa Lahiri
<b>Week 11</b> 27 April-30 April	<b>Maps and Politics</b> “The Map-Maker” by Keki Daruwalla “Map” by Wisława Szymborska “That the Science of Cartography is Limited” by Eavan Boland
<b>Week 12</b> 4 May-8 May	<b>Student Presentations</b>
<b>Week 13</b> 11 May-15 May	<b>Student Presentations</b>
<b>Week 14</b> 18 May-22 May	<b>Writing in class: Analytical Essay</b>
<b>Week 15</b> 1 June-5 June	<b>FINAL WEEK</b>
<b>Week 16</b> 8 June-12 June	<b>FINAL WEEK</b>

**I WISH US ALL A GREAT SEMESTER**