

## Syllabus for Honor 2810 A Divine Wandering: Dream & Unreality

Spring 2024

Sec 005: TTH 10:45-12:05 KV 1135

Sec 004: TTH 12:25-1:45 KV 1115

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Office Hours by appointment

### Course Description

We all dream, whether we like it or not. But what is a dream and what does it do? The English word for “dream” comes from the old English “drēam”, meaning “music, joy”, and the wonderful strangeness of dreams, their *unreality* bright or dark, seems to bear this out. But fall a little deeper down the word and you find that it comes from the Proto-Indo-European “d<sup>h</sup>rewgh”, that is, “to deceive, injure, damage”. Dreaming can be dangerous, and if dreams tell the truth, they tell it slant. Take “rêver”, “to dream” in French. This word comes from the old French, “resver”, which means “to wander” and “to err”. Socrates, making fun of people who put too much stock in etymologies, points out that the Greek word for truth, “alêtheia”, is “a compressed form of the phrase, ‘a wandering that is divine’ (*alê theia*)” (Plato, *Cratylus*). Is that what a dream is, does — allows us to divinely wander towards truth? And if we get lost?

In this class we will be studying cultural artifacts that unreal reality in productive ways. We will consider a few of these ways by looking at a range of “texts”: poems and novels and stories; philosophy and psychology essays; paintings and film. Certain artifacts deal directly with dreaming in order to augment if not transform how we think of and address reality; others estrange the ordinary so that in the widening distance between what we read and what we know, we see more clearly who and where we are.

This sounds pretty abstract, but the artifacts we are going to look at are anything but — diverse, strange, hilarious, scary, serious, fun, seemingly incomprehensible and seemingly comprehensible, they all raise reality as a question and as a common project, as something we personally dream and as something, dreaming, we share whether we like it or not.

Get ready to wander!

This course fulfills the Humanities Exploration Requirement.

### Required Texts

- Luis de Góngora, *The Solitudes*. Trans. Edith Grossmann. Penguin (9780143106722).
- Jangar. *The Hero Epic of the Kalmyk Nomads*. Trans. Saglar Bougdaeva. University of California (9780520344723).
- Mário de Andrade, *Macunaíma, The Hero With No Character*. Trans. Katrina Dodson. New Directions (9780811227025).
- *Last Year at Marienbad* (film). Dir. Alain Resnais; screenplay by Alain Robbe-Grillet.\*

- Gabriel García Márquez, *The Autumn of the Patriarch*. Trans. Gregory Rabassa. Harper (9780060882860).
- Clarice Lispector, *Água Viva*. Trans. Stefan Tobler. New Directions (978081122072).
- The Divine Reader (Canvas).

**You have already purchased *Jangar*, *Andrade*, and *Lispector*, and these titles will be available on the “Bookshelf” in Canvas.** If you prefer (like me) hard copies, please purchase the above editions and remember to opt out of the Inclusive Access Program **by Jan 19**.

\*You will need to rent *Last Year at Marienbad*.

You **MUST** bring the assigned reading to class on the day it is due.

### Course Objectives

- Learn how to read critically.
- Learn how to construct persuasive arguments with supportive evidence, and communicate these arguments in oral and written ways.
- Strengthen your ability to engage with and appreciate ideas that may initially seem difficult and unfamiliar.
- Practice identifying and responding to intellectual problems that are not defined for you in advance.
- Explore the continuum of ideas that have shaped human thought and experience across eras and cultures and the relationship of those ideas to present understanding and perspectives.

### Instructor’s Responsibilities

- To create an environment in which you feel free to comment and ask questions
- To respond to your writing regularly through discussion and written commentary
- To be more or less clear
- To engage in dialogue rather than lecture
- To discuss the reading, your writing or any other concerns by appointment

### Students’ Responsibilities

- *Attendance*. You are responsible to the group and must be at all the class meetings on time and stay for the whole class period. I keep track of lateness — and of the times you leave early — and this will be added to your absences. **After 4 absences your grade will drop one step for every additional absence (an A becomes an A-). After 8 absences you will fail the class.** This class is work intensive and it is difficult to catch up when you fall behind. I understand that sometimes you cannot make it to class, but it is your responsibility to inform me (if possible) if you will be absent and to find out from a classmate what you have missed.
- *Preparation*. **THIS IS NOT A LECTURE CLASS.** You need to come to class prepared to participate. Thus you must do the assigned reading. **If you come to class unprepared — not having done the reading, without your book and/or the course reader — you will be marked absent.** Make sure you bring writing technology to class.
- *Participation*. Participate in small group work and full class discussions and take notes in class no matter who is speaking. We will all be thinking together in class. Thinking often leads to disagreement; I disagree with myself at least 42 times a day. Disagreeing with each other helps us think more clearly — be grateful that you disagree or are disagreed with! That

means: be respectful, kind and generous when you don't agree with what a peer or with what I assert and be prepared to explain why you disagree. Be prepared as well to have your interlocutor respond to your disagreement by reformulating their position, bringing in other evidence, and/or pointing out where your own thinking wasn't rigorous enough. Be prepared as well to have peers take your ideas and push them towards places that hadn't occurred to you. *All this is writing and material for writing*, even if it is said out loud.

- TURN OFF all cell phones. DO NOT text while in class.
- Make sure I'm clear. Ask questions when I'm not. Disagree with me when warranted and explain why you do.
- Make fun of my handwriting.
- Occasionally be funny.

### Assignments

**ALL WRITING FOR THIS CLASS IS PUBLIC WRITING, AND YOU MAY BE CALLED UPON TO SHARE IT WITH THE CLASS OR IN A SMALL GROUP.**

**Connection Responses.** This is the place where you'll be keeping a record of your thinking about the class texts, especially the questions that intrigue and/or confound you. This is also the place where you will CONNECT texts both to each other and to some of the larger course ideas. The cultural artifacts we will examine all speak to each other as well as to any number of the larger course ideas; the artifacts are at the same time wholly *individual* poems or stories or essays dealing with specific issues or ideas AND part of a greater cross-historical and cross-cultural dialogue about dream and reality. Your job is to address the uniqueness of the artifacts you connect while at the same time thinking about how the different cultural and historical instances at play in each reveal contrasting and/or complimentary approaches to any of the larger course ideas. SO, EVERY FEW WEEKS, YOU WILL WRITE 2-3 DOUBLE SPACED PAGES where you

1. choose AT LEAST TWO of the class texts we've discussed since the last response;
2. introduce the larger idea or question you'll be thinking about;
3. talk briefly about how your chosen texts address this idea;
4. show in some detail what your texts help you say about the larger idea by quoting and/or paraphrasing, analyzing and connecting passages from them
5. as well as thinking about how their historical and/or cultural differences clash or compliment as you show what alone and together they reveal about the larger idea.

These questions and ideas will provide material for class discussion and for your writing. **They must be turned in via Canvas BY NOON the SATURDAY of the week they are due.** See the class schedule for dates.

These response will be graded on a 5 point scale: 5 being excellent, 4 being very good, 3 being appropriate, 2 being less than appropriate, and 1 being insufficient.

### Essays

You will be writing two essays for the class: a midterm essay and a final paper. I will hand out more detailed assignments during the semester. You can find the due dates on the class schedule.

- **Midterm Essay.** Think of this essay as a more formal and extended Connection Response. In 6-7 double spaced pages, you will thoughtfully explore one of the larger issues raised by the class artifacts by closely reading and connecting AT LEAST THREE of the artifacts. The point isn't to (only) closely read them but to use them to think more deeply about and connect the ideas they raise. This means attending to, among other things, differences in genre, media, and historical and cultural difference. The point isn't (necessarily) to focus on these differences but to be sensitive to how they will help you situate your own understanding in a larger historical and cultural context.
- **Final Essay.** Here you will have a choice:
  - In 8-9 double spaced pages you will analyze some of the ways our authors interrogate or exacerbate the gap between dream and reality, between unreality and world, and how we are to understand their various turns towards dream and the unreal. You will need to write about AT LEAST FOUR of the class texts, keeping in mind differences in genre, media and historical and cultural context.
  - OR you can try your hand at creating a dream-artifact or wander in words along one of the byways of the unreal. You might experiment with some of the forms and techniques used by our authors to dream reality or you might invent one of your own. Then you will write 6-7 double spaced pages thinking about what you've created by explaining your techniques and what responses they bring to some of the larger class questions. To do this, you'll talk about what you "stole" from some of our writers and artists, how you understand what those writers and artists are doing and why they were successful on their own and how you've tried to build on them, respond to them, and/or critique them by writing your own text. We've explored artifacts from diverse cultures and diverse historical moments — how does *your* creation reflect (or consciously avoid) our current moment and culture? How does it differ and/or resonate with some of the course artifacts?

**Letter to the Reader.** The letter provides a place for you to specifically raise writing questions: questions/issues that you didn't have the time or the space or the information to deal with, things you struggled with, where you thought you were successful. I consider these letters an important part of the writing process. They should be at least 3/4 of a page in length and accompany your two essays.

### Grading

- *Participation & Attendance:* 15%
- *Connection Responses:* 20%
- *Midterm Essay:* 30%
- *Final Essay:* 35%

### Honors grading rubric

**A** Outstanding achievement. Student performance demonstrates full command of the course material and evinces exceptional levels of originality and sophistication that far surpass course expectations.

**A-** Excellent achievement. Student performance demonstrates thorough knowledge of the course material and exceeds course expectations by completing all requirements in a superior manner.

**B+** Very good work. Student performance demonstrates above-average comprehension of the course material and exceeds course expectations on all tasks as defined in the course syllabus.

**B** Good work. Student performance meets designated course expectations and demonstrates understanding of the course materials at an acceptable level.

**B-** Adequate work. Student performance demonstrates inconsistent understanding of course materials.

**C+** Marginal work. Student performance demonstrates incomplete understanding of course materials.

**C** Poor work. Student performance demonstrates limited understanding of course materials.

**C-** Unsatisfactory work. Student performance demonstrates inadequate understanding of course materials.

**D** Unacceptable work. Coursework performed at this level will not count toward the honors bachelor's degree. For the course to count toward the degree, the student must repeat the course with a passing grade.

**E** Failing.

### **Canvas**

I will post material on **Canvas pages** throughout the semester. There will be a page for the syllabus and writing assignments, a page for readings (where you will find the Course Reader and any supplementary readings I may post during the semester), and pages with other material relevant to our authors (paintings, videos, etc.). Each time I create a new page I will let you know. After clicking on "Pages", you will be taken to the home page. Click on "View all pages" to access course materials.

### **Grades on Canvas**

I will be posting grades on Canvas as you turn in your assignments. I will also be updating attendance on Canvas. For various reasons, I will NOT be having Canvas calculate a running grade. Nevertheless, the posted grades should give you a *rough idea* at any moment of your overall grade for the course. You should always feel free to contact me if you want more precise information about how you are doing in the class.

**Class Schedule:**

While we will make every effort to keep to the schedule below, we might have to make changes to the order of readings or to assignment due dates. I will promptly notify you of any changes.

Reading is due ON the dates they appear below. Writing is due on Canvas by 12 pm the FRIDAY of the week it is due.

CR = Connection Response

Date	In Class	Reading Due	Writing Due
T 1/9	Course introduction; Dream, artifice, song	“Sailing to Byzantium” & “Farai un vers de dreyt nien”	
TH 1/11	Art, a modulated fiction	“Afternoon of a Faun”	
T 1/16	Of the symbol	“The Golem” (excerpt)	
TH 1/18	Literature, falsity & impossible writing	“The Aleph”	
T 1/23	Meaning overwrought	<i>Solitudes</i> , Dedication & The First Solitude	
TH 1/25		<i>Solitudes</i> , The Second Solitude	<b>CR due Saturday</b>
T 1/30	Dreaming national character	<i>Jangar</i> , Prologue-Cycle 3	
TH 2/1		<i>Jangar</i> , Cycles 4-5	
T 2/6		<i>Jangar</i> , Cycles 6-10	
TH 2/8	National character, dreaming	<i>Macunaíma</i> , 1st Preface, Ch 1-5	
T 2/13		<i>Macunaíma</i> , Ch 6-13	<b>CR due Saturday</b>
TH 2/15		<i>Macunaíma</i> , Ch 14-Epilogue	
T 2/20	Storytime	<i>1001 Nights</i> , Nights 24-33	
TH 2/22	The inscrutable unreal	“The Cares of a Family Man”	
T 2/27	Everything nightmare	“The Metamorphosis”	
TH 2/29		“The Metamorphosis”	<b>Midterm Essay due Saturday NOON</b>
<b>T 3/5</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	<b>TAKE A BREAK</b>	<b>FROM CLASS</b>

TH 3/7	SPRING BREAK	TAKE A BREAK	FROM CLASS
T 3/12	Of sleep, night & the dream	“Sleep, Night”, “The Dream”	
TH 3/14	Freud on Dreams	“Dream Work: Condensation”	
T 3/19	Surrealism	“First Manifesto of Surrealism”	
TH 3/21	Surrealism & Automatic Writing	“First Manifesto of Surrealism” & <i>Soluble Fish</i> (excerpts)	<b>CR due Saturday</b>
T 3/26	Painting Dream	Surrealist painting	
TH 3/28	Ibn Raashid Al-Bakir Al-Qafsi on dreams	“Dream Interpretation” (excerpts)	
T 4/2	Form & Memory & Violence	<i>Last Year at Marienbad</i> (film)	
TH 4/4	National character, screaming	<i>Patriarch</i> , Ch 1	
T 4/9		<i>Patriarch</i> , Ch 2-3	<b>CR due Saturday</b>
TH 4/11		<i>Patriarch</i> , Ch 4	
T 4/16		<i>Patriarch</i> , Ch 5-6	
TH 4/18	Writing the present	<i>Água Viva</i> 3-35	
T 4/23		<i>Água Viva</i> 36-88	<b>Final Essay due by THURS 12 pm</b>

### Important University of Utah Policies that apply to this course

#### *Student Mental Health Resources*

- Rates of burnout, anxiety, depression, isolation, and loneliness have noticeably increased during the pandemic. If you need help, *campus mental health resources are available*, including counseling, trainings and other support.
- Consider participating in a *Mental Health First Aid* or other *wellness-themed* training provided by our Center for Student Wellness to help contribute to creating a healthier and safer campus community. These are designed to equip you to better recognize and respond to signs and symptoms of mental health and substance abuse challenges.

*ADA Accommodations.* Given the nature of this course, attendance is required, and adjustments cannot be granted to allow non-attendance, except in cases of quarantining due to COVID-19 exposure, or for those who have an ADA accommodation. If you need to seek an ADA accommodation to request an exception to this attendance policy due to a disability, please

contact the Center for Disability and Access (CDA). CDA will work with us to determine what, if any, ADA accommodations are reasonable and appropriate.

*Plagiarism.* The Council of Writing Program Administrators defines plagiarism thus: “In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source” (www.wpacouncil.org). This is a pretty good definition, and you should keep it in mind whenever you write. *If the idea and/or the writing is not your own, you need to document it; if you are not sure and cannot ask me, document to be safe.* In accordance with University of Utah policy, any instances of cheating or plagiarism will result in failure of the course, along with other possible sanctions. For more information and a number of important definitions, including that of plagiarism, see the University of Utah’s Student Code of Conduct.

*Content accommodation policy.* “Students are expected to take courses that will challenge them intellectually and personally. Students must understand and be able to articulate the ideas and theories that are important to the discourse within and among academic disciplines. Personal disagreement with these ideas and theories or their implications is not sufficient grounds for requesting an accommodation. Accommodations requested on such grounds will not be granted. The University recognizes that students’ sincerely-held core beliefs may make it difficult for students to fulfill some requirements of some courses or majors. The University assumes no obligation to ensure that all students are able to complete any major.” No content accommodations will be made for this course.

*Disability accommodations.* “The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Union Building, 801-581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations.”

If you have emergency medical information you wish to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please inform me as soon as possible by seeing me after class or making an appointment to visit during office hours.

*Addressing sexual misconduct.* “Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran’s status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677.”

*Safety.* “The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, call campus police at 801-585-COPS



(801-585-2677). You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message. For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit [safeu.utah.edu](http://safeu.utah.edu).”