

6. Please present concise arguments for the GE principles applicable to this course.

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| □ General Knowledge | Use of literary methodologies, such as close readings and critical analysis, that can later be applied to documents/texts beyond the course’s scope. |
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| □ Integrative Learning | Use of film, literature and testimonies allows students to practice analysis across a range of disciplines and texts. |
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| □ Ethical Implications | Questions of empathy and analysis of empathy allows students to evaluate their own interactions with society. |
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| □ Cultural Diversity | The question of empathy is at the foundation of seeing and working through or across difference. |
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| □ Critical Thinking | Through writing and class discussion, as well as demonstrations by the instructor, students will foster techniques of critical analysis of books, films and testimony. |
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| □ Rhetorical Effectiveness | Class participation is at the base of this course. Weekly discussion board posts and in-class discussion will aid students in develop their rhetorical skills. |
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| □ Problem-solving | Through the development of their final paper, which will include thesis statements and detailed outlines, students will effectively practice identifying problems and resolving them. |
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| □ Library & Information Literacy | The final paper is based on a student’s choice of text or film. Through instruction, students will learn how to effectively use the UCLA library system both online and in person. |
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(A) STUDENT CONTACT PER WEEK (if not applicable write N/A)

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| 1. Lecture: | <u>3</u> | (hours) |
| 2. Discussion Section: | <u> </u> | (hours) |
| 3. Labs: | <u> </u> | (hours) |
| 4. Experiential (service learning, internships, other): | <u> </u> | (hours) |
| 5. Field Trips: | <u> </u> | (hours) |

(A) TOTAL Student Contact Per Week 3 **(HOURS)**

(B) OUT-OF-CLASS HOURS PER WEEK (if not applicable write N/A)

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| 1. General Review & Preparation: | <u>2</u> | (hours) |
| 2. Reading | <u>4</u> | (hours) |
| 3. Group Projects: | <u>1</u> | (hours) |
| 4. Preparation for Quizzes & Exams: | <u>N/A</u> | (hours) |
| 5. Information Literacy Exercises: | <u>1</u> | (hours) |
| 6. Written Assignments: | <u>4</u> | (hours) |
| 7. Research Activity: | <u>1</u> | (hours) |

(B) TOTAL Out-of-class time per week 13 **(HOURS)**

GRAND TOTAL (A) + (B) must equal at least 15 hours/week 16 **(HOURS)**

Empathy and Alterity: Exploring How Literature and Film Evoke Compassion

Instructor Anne G. Mueller

Spring 2016

Thursdays 2:00-4:50



OVERVIEW:

As informed and curious global citizens, we are constantly confronted with tragedy and sadness. Yet, when do we take the time to reflect on these situations or our reactions to them? Whether it is the homeless woman on the corner with her child, the shooting briefly featured on the news, or a tragedy within our friends' and families' lives – our reactions are founded on a mix of emotions but namely sympathy, compassion, fear, and empathy. This course will take a comparative approach to question our perceptions of others and the creation and experience of empathy within ourselves as spectators and as participants.

We will focus on literature and films that question our notion of otherness and that encourage spectators and readers to move beyond their conventional notions of victimhood and empathy. Through film, novels, testimonies and images, we will explore how empathy is elicited and for whom. Of each "text" the class will ask: is there an Other? How is this character othered? For whom do we feel empathy? How is this empathy elicited? How do the notion of otherness and empathy work together? Are we more likely to empathize with the Self or the Other?

In order to raise these questions, the discussion will focus on several historical moments and societal experiences. Immigrant communities in *Gran Torino*, victims and perpetrators of the Rwandan Genocide, doctor/patient relationships in the U.S., and mass murder in Indonesia will all be explored. This analysis will inherently include a discussion of the repercussions of immigration, colonialism, globalization, and gentrification that continue to influence the political aspects of empathy in our society and abroad.

The case studies introduced in this class should serve as a framework through which students are encouraged to pursue research of their own interests. Students are encouraged to focus their final projects on a subject or text of their own choosing with approval from the instructor. The goal of this class is to create an affective environment in which students can analyze processes of otherness and empathy using tools of literary analysis. Critical and historical articles will supplement and enhance

these analyses and collaboration will encourage an exploration of a wide range of student projects, ideas, and discussions.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1) Introduce students to the topics of empathy and alterity. What/who is Other? What is empathy and how is it elicited?
- 2) Develop an analytical, intellectual dialogue in class (and on the forums) regarding the questions mentioned above.
- 3) Develop students' research and writing skills in the form of a term paper and incremental writing assignments.
- 4) Foster a collaborative environment in which students work with one another and the instructor to develop new questions and conclusions in writing and discussion.
- 5) Prepare a presentation open to colleagues and the university at large in which students will learn to convey very specific facts and artifacts in a coherent and meaningful presentation.
- 6) Open the discussion to the general public by means of an interactive blog through which students will hone their own skills and definitions of empathy through daily interactions and reflection.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Texts:

Jamison, Leslie. *The Empathy Exams*. Minneapolis, MN: Graywolf Press, 2014. Print.

Gatore, Gilbert. *The Past Ahead*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 2012. Print.

Films:

Eastwood, Clint. *Gran Torino* (2008)

Oppenheimer, Josh. *The Act of Killing* (2008)

ASSIGNMENTS:

Readings: Readings and films are listed on the calendar date by which they are to be completed. Students should feel prepared to discuss detailed aspects of these assignments, thus close-readings are encouraged. The instructor will provide reading strategies on the first day of class.

Online Forum: Students are expected to post twice weekly on the class website's forum. This **first post** is due by 5 pm the day prior to class (Wednesday of each week). In this first post, students may do one of the following. Each student must do each option at least once throughout the quarter. Each post must be between 250 and 300 words.

- 1) Write 2 detailed and interesting discussion questions that could be used in class the following day. Students are encouraged to reference specific film scenes or passages in the texts.
- 2) Perform a close-reading of a short passage or scene in which they reference how this scene or passage enacts a larger theme of the text. They may also reflect upon how this scene or passage disrupts a theme that they saw within a text – thus they may question

(constructively) the inclusion of such a scene or passage. It is perfectly all right to say how the inclusion of a certain passage confused their reading of the text (or the scene of the film).

***Week 2 will be an exception.** For this week I will provide a list of discussion questions on the forum to which students must respond. This will help students model their future questions and forum contributions.

The **second post** is due by the Monday after each class session (by 5 pm). Students may either respond to another student's original post or react to the class discussion. Students may use this opportunity to bring up issues that were not discussed in class or to develop others' ideas or the class discussion.

Final Paper: The grade of the final paper is divided into several parts to be completed throughout the course of the quarter. This incremental manner of writing is devised in order to promote well-planned and well-organized writing. As one of our objectives is to develop students' writing skills, particularly in the realm of literary or film analysis, students are required to complete each step and are encouraged to meet frequently with the instructor. Two meetings with the instructor are required but office hours are weekly and students are encouraged to begin working on their projects early. The paper requirements are as follows:

- 1) **Close-reading** (due Week 2, 1-2 pages): Students are asked to engage with the primary text. Week 1 will introduce a model and methodology for performing a close-reading and students are encouraged to use these tools to analyze a short passage of the primary text.
- 2) **Critical Analysis** (due Week 3, 1-2 pages): Students are asked to write a short response to the secondary text of Week 3. In this response, students should identify the thesis of the critic and explain in what ways this thesis is or is not supported. Students are encouraged to critique the thesis and the support given by the critic. Weeks 1 and 2 will provide in class modeling of how to perform critical analyses.
- 3) **Topic/Meeting/Working Bibliography** (due Week 5, 300 word maximum, 1 page maximum bibliography): By week 5, students should develop a basic idea of the topic for their final paper. Thus, they are asked to turn in a short abstract of their topic idea and how they came to it. Moreover, in order to give a substantiated abstract they are expected to turn in a short working bibliography showing the research they have already performed. The paper can focus on the primary sources we have read or watched in class but students are encouraged to engage with topics that motivate and impassion them. For example, students may choose a primary text regarding a tragedy other than those covered in class. Students may also follow a comparative approach using two texts, films, or works of art, but may not use more than 2 primary 'texts'. Students are expected to meet with the instructor to discuss this work.
- 4) **Thesis statement/Outline** (due Week 7): After receiving feedback from the instructor at the required meeting mentioned above, students are asked to further develop their ideas. At the beginning of class in Week 7 students must thus turn in a thesis statement and a developed outline (at least 3 pages). Students are encouraged to include primary source quotes with which they plan to engage.
- 5) **First Draft** (due Week 9, 10-12 pages): A complete draft must be sent to the instructor and a peer reviewer (chosen by the instructor) by noon on Monday of Week 9. Students will then

be asked to read their peer's paper and prepare substantial commentary for Thursday's class. Students are asked to prepare a one-page (maximum) response to their peer's paper to be turned in to the instructor and their peer in class on Thursday. We will discuss ways in which to formulate clear, constructive criticism for one another. Moreover, in class, the instructor will provide clear activities to aid in the process of peer review and self-editing. Students are required to meet with the instructor once between the first draft and their final draft. Extra office hours will be offered.

- 6) **Final Draft** (due Friday of Finals Week by 5 pm, 12-15 pages): A standard (12 pt Times New Roman, 1" margins, double-spaced) typed paper is due by email to the instructor by 5 pm the Friday of Finals week. Again, students are encouraged to work with the instructor and their peers between the first draft and final draft and significant development is expected.

Presentations: Week 10 will feature an open-house of student presentations to which University members are invited. Colleagues from the French department in particular will be present, including graduate students and faculty. Each student is expected to prepare a presentation of 10 minutes in which they will explain in laymen's terms their work and its significance. This format imitates the format of humanities professional presentations at which participants are given a brief opportunity to share their work with colleagues and mentors. This activity will help students develop a professional vocabulary and demeanor that will be a fundamental aspect of their post-university success.

Blog: Throughout the quarter students are asked to participate (anonymously if they so choose) in a class blog. This website will be a location for students to publicly reflect on questions of empathy in their everyday lives. Students are asked to post about encounters that elicited empathy, situations in which they wished they'd felt empathy or any other relevant theme or experience. The goal of the website is to encourage students and readers to reflect on their interactions with others on a daily basis.

GRADING BREAKDOWN:

Preparation and Participation (includes forum postings and blog): 25%

Critical Analysis: 5%

Close Reading: 5%

Paper: 65%

Abstract + Meeting + Working Bibliography: 10%

Thesis Statement + Outline: 5%

First Draft of Term Paper + Meeting: 15%

Colleague collaboration: 5%

Final Draft: 25%

Presentation: 5%

WEEKLY SYLLABUS:**Week 1: What is Empathy?**

Jamison, Leslie. "The Empathy Exams." *The Empathy Exams*. Minneapolis, MN: Graywolf Press, 2014. Print.

Themes/Questions: In what environments do we seek or see empathy in our daily lives? This week will focus on defining empathy and questioning the role it plays in students' lives and in the lives of the characters explored by Jamison.

Week 2: Recognizing the Victim and Feeling for the Victim

Jamison, Leslie. "Pain Tours (I + II)." *The Empathy Exams*. Minneapolis, MN: Graywolf Press, 2014.

*Assignment due: Close reading. Forum Postings.

Themes/Questions: This week asks how/why we feel empathy for victims. The short stories in Jamison's work feature characters from various demographic backgrounds. Students are asked to choose one short story and perform a close-reading, focusing on how the author identifies the victim and how she elicits empathy from the reader.

Week 3: Recognizing and Feeling the Victim in Film

Eastwood, Clint. *Gran Torino* (2008) – **available on Video Furnace**

Singh, Greg. *Feeling Film: Affect and Authenticity in Popular Cinema*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2014. **Introduction and Chapter 1. CW.**

*Assignment due: Critical Analysis. Forum Postings.

Themes/Questions: After spending two weeks working with short stories, we turn to film to question how the moving image and cinematography change our interaction with the text. How do images, music, sound and script contribute to our identification of and with the victim?

Week 4: Testimony and Empathy

Watch two testimonies from Shoah Foundation (including one perpetrator testimony)

Laub, Dori. "Bearing Witness, or the Vicissitudes of Listening." *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History*. New York, NY: Routledge (1992). **CW**

Karpf, Anne. "The Chain of Testimony: The Holocaust Researcher as Surrogate Witness." *Representing Auschwitz: At the Margins of Testimony*. Eds. Chare, Nicolas and Dominic Williams. New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan (2012). **CW**

*Assignment due: Forum Postings.

Themes/Questions: This week we ask how the absence of a pre-formulated narrative arc changes our perception of the victims' stories. How are we affected by the "direct" testimony of a survivor or the lack of a creative interlocutor (such as a director or author)? How does hearing (and seeing) the testimony affect our role as spectator?

Week 5: Testimony, Empathy and the Image

Mukagasana, Yolande and Alain Kazinierakis. *Les Blessures du Silence*. Ann Arbor, MI: Michigan UP (2006). **Excerpts (translation available). CW**

Jean-Charles, Régine Michelle. "Beneath Layers of Violence: Images of Rape and the Rwandan Genocide." *Conflict Bodies: The Politics of Rape Representation in the Francophone Imaginary*. Columbus, OH: Ohio State UP (2014). Print. **CW**

Sontag, Susan. *On Photography*. New York, NY: Picador, 2001. Print. **Excerpted essay, CW**

*Assignment due: Forum Postings. Topic/Working Bibliography. Required meeting with instructor.

Themes/Questions: Bringing back in an interlocutor, we ask how testimonies can be shaped by the addition of an image. How do images contribute to our reaction and to the creation of an other or victim? Does seeing a still image next to a recorded testimony affect differently than does a video testimony?

Week 6: When it Feels Wrong: Empathy for the Perpetrator

Oppenheimer, Josh. *The Act of Killing* (2008) – **available on Video Furnace**

Gobodo-Madikizela, Pumla. "Empathic Repair After Mass Trauma: When Vengeance is Arrested." *European Journal of Social Theory*. 11.3 (2008) **pg 331-350. CW**

*Assignment due: Forum Postings.

Themes/Questions: This week begins a three-week investigation of empathy with which we are uncomfortable. How is it possible to feel compassion for an 'evil' character? We begin with Oppenheimer's film to question how his portrayal of Anwar Congo leads or does not lead to an over-extension of empathy.

Week 7: When it Feels Wrong: Empathy for the Perpetrator

Gatore, Gilbert. *The Past Ahead*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 2012. Print. **First Half.**

Supplemental Reading: Levi, Primo. "The Grey Zone." *Drowned and the Saved*. New York, NY: Summit Books, 1989. Print. **CW**

*Assignment due: Forum Postings. Thesis + Outline.

Themes/Questions: Continuing to question over-extended empathy, the first part of this book will give students certain impressions that will be undercut in the second half. How are the two characters portrayed? With whom does the reader feel most connected and how? How does a lack of clarity contribute to our impressions of these characters?

Week 8: When it Feels Wrong: Empathy for the Perpetrator

Gatore, Gilbert. *The Past Ahead*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 2012. Print. **Second Half**.

*Assignment due: Forum Postings.

Themes/Questions: Now that the role of each character has been clarified, we can ask why it is possible to feel empathy for someone considered evil. I will present Primo Levi's "Grey Zone" (listed under week 7) theoretical framework and students are encouraged to read it as well.

Week 9: Peer Review Workshop

*Class time used for Peer Review Workshop. Instructor's Presentation of Revision Techniques.

*Assignment due: Forum Postings. Peer review reflection. First Draft due Monday of Week 9.

Week 10: Presentations of Final Papers

*Students prepare 10 minute presentations of their papers for classmates and colleagues

Friday of Finals Week: Final Draft Due by 5pm via email.



New Course Proposal

French 98T

Empathy and Alterity: Exploring How Literature and Film Evoke Compassion

Course Number French 98T

Title Empathy and Alterity: Exploring How Literature and Film Evoke Compassion

Short Title

Units Fixed: 5

Grading Basis Letter grade only

Instructional Format Seminar - 3 hours per week

TIE Code SEMT - Seminar (Topical) [T]

GE Requirement Yes

Major or Minor Requirement No

Requisites Enforced requisite: satisfaction of Entry-Level Writing requirement. Freshmen/sophomores preferred.

Course Description This course will foster a discussion of empathy and otherness in film, novels, testimonies and images, while also developing students' analytical and writing skills. Case studies include the Rwandan Genocide, doctor/ patient relationships, political massacres in Indonesia, and social inequality in the U.S.

Justification Part of the series of seminars offered through the Collegium of University Teaching Fellows

Syllabus File [Mueller syllabus.pdf](#) was previously uploaded. You may view the file by clicking on the file name.

Supplemental Information Professor Dominic Thomas is the faculty mentor for this course

Grading Structure 25% Preparation and Participation; 5% critical analysis; 5% close reading; 65% paper

Effective Date Spring 2016

Discontinue Date Summer 1 2016

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|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| <u>Instructor</u> | Name | Title |
| | Anne Mueller | Teaching Fellow |

Quarters Taught Fall Winter Spring Summer

Department French & Francophone Studies

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|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| <u>Contact</u> | Name | E-mail |
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Routing Help

ROUTING STATUS

Role: FEC Chair or Designee - Castillo, Myrna Dee Figuracion (MCASTILLO@COLLEGE.UCLA.EDU) - 45040

Status: Pending Action

Role: CUTF Coordinator - Chen, Michelle L. (MCHEN@OID.UCLA.EDU) - 53042

Status: Approved on 6/26/2015 2:34:25 PM

Changes: No Changes Made

Comments: on behalf of Professor Kathleen L. Komar, chair of the CUTF Faculty Advisory Committee

Role: Initiator/Submitter - Chen, Michelle L. (MCHEN@OID.UCLA.EDU) - 53042

Status: Submitted on 6/26/2015 10:59:53 AM

Comments: Initiated a New Course Proposal

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