Course Description
This course will acquaint you with a selection of the literature of world cultures from 1750 to the present. In addition to introducing important authors, the course is designed to enhance your ability to read literary texts critically and insightfully, and to write clear and persuasive arguments for your interpretations of those texts.

Learning Objectives
My hope is that this course will contribute to your learning how to:

- detect the cultural assumptions underlying writings from a different time or society, and in the process to become aware of one’s own cultural assumptions;
- read closely, with attention to detailed use of diction, syntax, metaphor, and style, not only in high literary works, but also in decoding the stream of language everyone in modern society is exposed to;
- work and learn with others, taking literature as a focus for discussion and analysis;
- develop interpretive arguments about literature and present them effectively in the form of academic essays.

Required Texts (available at the bookstore: NAC 1/103)
Bennett, Alan. *The History Boys*. Faber & Faber.

Course Blog
I will post important course documents and announcements—as well as the occasional article or resource—on a web log. Please check it frequently at http://whumspring2010.wordpress.com/

Homework, Attendance, and Participation
Participation in class is crucial for your grade. In-class discussions and workshops are some of the most effective tools to develop your ability to analyze, learn from, and write about texts.

That said, you may miss three sessions without penalty. After that, each absence will lower your final grade an entire letter (an A becomes a B, etc.). You will be marked as late if you arrive after I have called role. Three late arrivals will be counted as an absence.

Occasionally I will assign written homework. These will be graded on a check system.

- check = satisfactory: full marks.
- check minus = unsatisfactory: your participation grade will suffer.
- check plus = more than satisfactory, which functions pretty much as extra credit.
Schedule of Readings
(I may change some of these assignments, so please check your email and the course blog regularly for updates. I may also assign additional short readings that I will hand out in class.)

Jan. 28  TH  INTRODUCTION.
Dickinson, Emily. “Our Lives Are Swiss.” (handout)

Feb. 2   TU  DRAMATIC MONOLOGUES: Introduction to the Narrative Voice
Browning, Robert. “My Last Duchess.” (handout)

Feb. 4   TH Lahiri, Jhumpa. “When Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine.” (handout)
Lee, Li-Young. “Self-Help for Fellow Refugees.” (h)

Feb. 9   TU  FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE: Metaphor, Symbolism, Imagery
Tennyson, Alfred Lord. “Crossing the Bar.” (handout)
Hughes, Langston. “A Dream Deferred.” (h)
Francis, Robert. “The Hound.” (h)
Frost, Robert. “The Road Not Taken.” (h)

Feb. 11  TH Kafka, Franz. The Metamorphosis. Ch. 1-2 (pp. 3-37).

Feb. 16  TU Kafka, Franz. The Metamorphosis. Ch. 2-3 (pp. 38-55).
——. “A Hunger Artist.” (h)

Feb. 18  TH NO CLASS (Monday Schedule)

Feb. 23  TU Achebe, Chinua. Things Fall Apart. Chapters 1 through 10 (pp. 3–94).
(N.B. There is a glossary of important Ibo words at the back of the book.)

Feb. 25  TH Achebe, Chinua. Things Fall Apart. Chapters 11 through 16 (pp. 95-142).

Mar. 2   TU Achebe, Chinua. Things Fall Apart. Chapter 17 through end (pp. 143-209).
Mar. 4   TH  First Essay Rough Draft due at the beginning of class. Workshop.

Mar. 9   TU Lee, Spike. Do the Right Thing. (no reading)
Mar. 11  TH Lee, Spike. Do the Right Thing. (no reading)

Mar. 16  TU First Essay Final Draft due at the beginning of class.
Lee, Spike. Do the Right Thing discussion. (reading TBA).

Mar. 18  TH Alexie, Sherman. “Every Little Hurricane.” (h)
——. “This Is What It Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona.” (h)
——. “How to Write the Great American Indian Novel.” (h)

Mar. 23  TU Duras, Margarite. “Monsieur X, Here Called Pierre Rabier.” (h)
Colas, Santiago. “Teaching Stories.” (h)
Rosenblaat, Louise M. selections. (h)
Calvino, Italo. “Why Read the Classics?” (h)
Mar. 30  TU  NO CLASS (Spring Recess)
Apr.  1  TH  NO CLASS (Spring Recess)

( Last day for “W” grades)

Apr. 13  TU  Lee, Li-Young. “The Cleaving.” (h)
Apr. 15  TH  Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. Ch. 1-5 (pp. 1-50).

Apr. 20  TU  Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. Ch. 6-12 (pp. 51-115).
Apr. 22  TH  Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. Ch. 12-end (pp. 116-193).

Apr. 27  TU  **Midterm Exam**
Apr. 29  TH  Cortázar, Julio. “The End of the Game.” (h)
     ———. “Axolotl.” (h)
     ———. “House Taken Over.” (h)


May 13  TH  Satrapi, Marjane. *Persepolis*. “The Joke” through end (pp. 258-341).

May 25  TU  **Final Papers due by noon** via email (amagnet@ccny.cuny.edu).

**Assignments**
You will write two papers for this class. I will distribute the assignments at least a week before the first required draft is due. Papers should be MLA-formatted, typed, double-spaced, and titled. They should focus on a central claim and draw support from your own exposition and from quoted textual evidence. Papers will be due at the beginning of class, in the classroom and printed on paper, on the assigned dates. If for some reason you email me a paper, it only counts as submitted if the email comes through and I can open the attachment. PDFs are the safest bet.

**Grading**
Midterm Essay 25%
Midterm Exam 30%
Final Essay 35%
Homework and Participation: 10%

**Plagiarism**
Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of anybody else’s material (words or ideas). Any paper with your name on it signifies that you are the author—that the wording and ideas are yours, with exceptions indicated by quotation marks and citations. Evidence of plagiarism will result in one or more of the following: a failing grade for the assignment, an F in the course, a report filed with the college, and disciplinary action. Really. Don’t Plagiarize. It’s a stupid thing to do.