

Prof. Michael G. Levine  
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Spring 2020  
TTh 6 (4:30-5:50)  
Scott Hall 220  
German 470:354:01  
Comp Lit 195:382:01  
Jewish St. 563:355:01

**Kafka and World Literature**  
Taught in English  
(3 credits)

Course Description

The course will provide an introduction to Kafka's work and its impact on World literature. Kafka's texts constitute a new level and quality of literature that has triggered innumerable responses in many languages, media, and discourses. He is generally recognized as an "international" author of a new type of "world literature." While the quality of the work is clear, it nevertheless tends to defy all attempts to approach it through traditional means of interpretation. In an effort to forge new ways of addressing the challenges posed by Kafka's work, the course seeks to locate it in a number of related contexts: at the crossroads of European modernity; within debates about Jewish languages, culture, identity, and music in the early twentieth-century and beyond; at the center of current controversies concerning the politically charged notion of "minor literature"; and perhaps most importantly as the source of inspiration for new works of art, literature, film, and music. Among the works to be considered are the introduction to his writing in "comix" form by Mairowitz and Crumb; the fiction of Borges, Neyestani, Oz, and Roth; and the music of Glass. Readings also include canonical texts by Ovid and Homer and critical/biographical works by Wagenbach, Butler, Balint, Deleuze and Guattari, and others.



Permanent Core Curriculum requirements:

**AHo, AHp.**

- **AHo.** Examine critically philosophical and other theoretical issues concerning the nature of reality, human experience, knowledge, value, and/or cultural production.
- **AHp.** Analyze arts and/or literatures in themselves and in relation to specific histories, values, languages, cultures, and technologies.

*No Prerequisites*

Required Readings

All texts are available for purchase at the Barnes and Noble campus bookstore. Other readings can be downloaded from Sakai prior to class meetings. Downloaded texts should either be printed out (preferred option) or brought to class in a readily accessible and easy-to-highlight electronic form.

<https://sakai.rutgers.edu/portal/site/98cd687b-4efd-4317-98b3-abbd499867f4/tool/ac4561d0-41ee-44eb-a6d8-d017c99ae00e>

Texts to be purchased:

Mairowitz and Crumb, *Introducing Kafka* 978-1-56097-806-0  
Kafka, *Kafka's Selected Stories* Norton Critical Edition 978-0-393-92479-4  
Kafka, *The Metamorphosis* Modern Library 978-0-8129-8514-6

Activities and Grading:

[1] Students are expected to keep up with reading assignments and to participate actively in class discussions.

[2] 3 papers 6-pages in length. Suggested topics and prompts will be provided. Papers will be worth 30% each and 90% of final grade

[3] One oral presentation: 10%

- The professor reserves the right to give impromptu quizzes during the semester.

Department Policies

- Attendance

All students must attend regularly and arrive prepared; if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me. Those who miss more than two class sessions without a compelling excuse should expect a one-step reduction in the course grade (i.e. an A becomes a B+, a B+ becomes a B). Three late arrivals count as one absence. Note: It is the responsibility of students who have been absent (for any reason) to find out what they have missed and obtain materials that may have been handed out.

- Disability Support Services

Students who may be requesting accommodations due to disabilities are encouraged to familiarize themselves with procedures and policies regarding disability support services at the following website: <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>. It is recommended that students seeking accommodations begin filing paperwork as soon as possible as the documentation review process may take up to 30 business days. Students are encouraged to speak with teachers about these issues at the beginning of the term. All such conversations will be kept strictly confidential.

- Academic Integrity

Violations of academic integrity are an extremely serious matter, and can lead to a student's failing the course and being referred to the University's Office of Student Conduct for disciplinary action. When referring to ideas other than your own, always acknowledge your sources clearly and completely, whether you are quoting or paraphrasing. Note also that use of online translation services is not permitted as a tool for generating work that you submit for course credit. Please see the University's policies on academic integrity at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>, and discuss with your instructor any questions you may have about this and related issues.

- Copyright

Note that unauthorized upload of materials created by the instructor and/or students for this course may violate the University Academic Integrity Policy and subject the student to disciplinary action.

- Turnitin plagiarism detection

In coordination with the Office of General Counsel, Rutgers Teaching and Learning with Technology advises instructors who use Turnitin for plagiarism detection to include the following statement in their course syllabus:

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com (directly or via learning management system, i.e. Sakai, Blackboard, Canvas, Moodle) for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site.

Students who do not agree should contact the course instructor immediately.

- **Important Additional Information:**

Cell phones and all other technological devices (beepers, iPods, MP3players...) must be turned off during class. Failure to comply may result in dismissal from class and a drop in class participation grade.

**Office hours:** Students are strongly advised to consult with the professor about any problems that might arise regarding ideas for presentations, material to be covered in a paper, etc. Office hours are Mondays between 1:00 and 3:00 p.m. – or by appointment. Do not bottle up all questions for the session before a paper is due.

### Class Meetings

January

21 T	Kafka, "First Distress" in <i>Kafka's Selected Stories</i>
23 Th	Kafka, "First Distress" in <i>Kafka's Selected Stories</i>
	Mairowitz and Crumb <i>Introducing Kafka</i>
28 T	Mairowitz and Crumb <i>Introducing Kafka</i>
30 Th	<b>Kafka in Central Europe</b>

Kafka, "An Introductory Talk on the Yiddish Language" (Sakai)

Wagenbach, "Prague at the Turn of the Century" (Sakai)

Deleuze and Guattari, "What is Minor Literature?" (Sakai)

## February

4 T

**Kafka's "Breakthrough"**

Kafka, "The Judgment" in *Kafka's Selected Stories*

6 Th

Kafka, "The Judgment" in *Kafka's Selected Stories*

11 T

**Hybrids, Misfits and Monstrosities**

Ovid, *Metamorphoses* Chapter 6 (Sakai)

13 Th

Kafka, *The Metamorphosis* Part I

18 T

Kafka, *The Metamorphosis* Part II (combined class with Lit Across Borders)

20 Th

Kafka, *The Metamorphosis* Part III

25 T

Corbeyran and Horne, *The Metamorphosis* (Sakai)

27 Th

Class Canceled

**FIRST PAPER DUE (6-7 pages) SUBMITTED VIA EMAIL BY 5PM**

## March

3 T

**Kafka in Iran**

Neyestani, *An Iranian Metamorphosis* (Sakai)

5 Th

Neyestani, *An Iranian Metamorphosis*

10 T

**Kafka on Trial**

Balint, *Kafka on Trial* (Sakai)

Butler, "Who Owns Kafka?" (Sakai)

Kafka, "Jackals and Arabs" in *Kafka's Selected Stories*

	Oz, "Where the Jackals Howl" (Sakai)
12 Th	<b>Kafka on Trial</b> cont.
Spring Break	
24 T	<b>Kafka in the Tropics</b>
	Kafka, "In the Penal Colony" in <i>Kafka's Selected Stories</i>
26 Th	Kafka, "In the Penal Colony" in <i>Kafka's Selected Stories</i>
31 T	Glass, <i>In the Penal Colony</i> (Sakai) <b>SECOND PAPER DUE (6-7 pages)</b>
April	
2 Th	Bill Donahue Lecture Reschedule Class
7 T	<b>Kafka in Latin America</b>
	Kafka, "The Burrow" in <i>Kafka's Selected Stories</i>
	Borges, "The Secret Miracle" (Sakai)
9 Th	Borges, "Garden of the Forking Paths" (Sakai)
	Vogl, <i>On Tarrying</i> , Ch 5 (Sakai)
14 T	<b>Kafka in the Mouse Hole</b>
	Kafka, "Josefine the Singer, or the Mouse Folk" in <i>Kafka's Selected Stories</i>
16 Th	Wagner, "Jewishness in Music" (Sakai)
21 T	<b>Kafka at Sea</b>
	Homer, <i>The Odyssey</i> Sirens episode (Sakai)
	Kafka, "The Silence of the Sirens" in <i>Parable and Paradox</i> (Sakai)
23 Th	<b>Kafka in New Jersey</b>

Kafka, "A Hunger Artist" in *Kafka's Selected Stories*

28 T Ilit Ferber Lecture Reschedule Class

30 Th Roth, "I Always Wanted You to Admire my Fasting"; or Looking at Kafka" (Sakai)  
**THIRD PAPER DUE (6-7 pages)**

Student-Wellness Services:

- Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)

(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/  
<http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/>

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners. Crisis Intervention :  
<http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/crisis-intervention/>

- Report a Concern: <http://health.rutgers.edu/do-something-to-help/>
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- Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)

(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / [www.vpva.rutgers.edu/](http://www.vpva.rutgers.edu/)

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

- Disability Services

(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in

your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.