**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH & LITERARY STUDIES**

**Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria**

**Course Title/Code: INTRODUCTION TO NIGERIAN LITERATURE (ELS 121)**

**Course Credit Units: 2**

**Course Tutor: Olumide OLUGBEMI-GABRIEL**

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**Course Overview**

This course is a two unit course available in the first semester of the first year Bachelor of Arts English progamme. The course is compulsory for first year English students and required for first year Law students. The term “Introduction to Nigerian Literature” is assumed to refer to the national writing of Nigerian authors across the three genres of literature: prose, poetry and drama. The course serves as a foundation course in the study of Nigerian literature through the three critical phases in its evolution. These phases are pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial. You will be required to read some literary texts which illustrate the above.

**Course Aim**

The aims are to help you understand the concept of Nigerian literature and its evolution over the years dating back to the pre-colonial era of oral tradition. These broad aims will be achieved by:

1. Introducing you to the general principles of literature as a course.

2. Familiarising you with the unique characteristics of literature as they concern Nigeria and her authors.

3. Acquainting you with the unique procedure that will enable you read, appreciate and analyse literary texts.

4. Preparing you for further studies in literature and literary tradition.

**The course is organized in two parts: (a) Modular lectures which shall also involve review of recommended texts (b) Seminars, involving paper and practical presentations by individuals as well as groups.**

**Course Objectives**

The course involves reading of the historical forces and catalysts responsible for the creation of the unique body of literature known as “Nigerian Literature”. The historical condition of colonialism, its aftermath and consequences, and the fusion of the colonial experience and certain African oral literary forms by Nigerian authors in both revolutionary and reactionary ways have been noted as the significant basis of the body of literature known as “Nigerian Literature”.

On your successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

a. define literature/Nigerian literature,

b. explain the different genres of literature,

c. understand the historical basis of Nigerian literature,

d. recognise the distinguishing boundaries between the three critical phases (pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial) in the evolution of Nigerian Literature,

e. analyse literary texts (prose, poetry and drama), and

f. enjoy and appreciate any literary work.

**Course Outline**

**Week 1-2**

* Defining and Understanding Literature: From Oral to Modern

1. Oral Literature
2. Classification of Oral Literature:

1. The Spoken Form (Prose): Myth, Legend, Folktale, Fable, Proverb

2. The Sung Form (Poetry): Musical poetry, Lyrics, Dirges/Elegy, Invocative poetry, Panegyric Poetry, Special Occasion poetry e.g. Births, Weddings…

3. The Performance (Drama): Festival, Ritual, Masquerades, Storytelling as drama, Music and Dance.

1. School of Drama: The Evolutionist School and The Relativist School

**Week 3-4 (Week 3: Submission of Class Assignment)**

* The Rise of Modern Nigerian Literature

1. Vernacular Writings: Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba
2. Early Nigerian Prose: Olaudah Equaino and Amos Tutuola
3. Early Nigerian poetry: Dennis Osadebey and Gabriel Okara
4. First Generation Nigerian Playwrights

**Week 5-6**

* Colonialism and the Development of Nigerian Literature

1. Colonialism and the Nigerian Culture and Nigerian Religion
2. The Implication of Colonialism on Nigerian Literature
3. Africa in Colonialist Literature: The writings of Joyce Cary and Joseph Conrad

**Week 7-8**

* Influences on Nigerian Literature

1. The Islamic Missionaries
2. The Christian Missionaries
3. Colonial Education
4. The Publishing Houses

**Week 9**

* Nigerian Drama: From Alarinjo to Indigenous Plays

**Week 10**

* Onitsha Market Literature/Tradition (OML)

**Week 11**

* Class Quiz
* Analysis of Literary Texts

**Week 12**

* Revision, Group Seminar and Performance Presentations

**Primary Literary Texts\***

*Things Fall Apart* – Chinua Achebe

*Death and the King’s Horse man* – Wole Soyinka

*The Trials of Oba Ovonramwen* – Ahmed Yerima

*Waiting for an Angel –* Helon Habila

“Abiku” – J.P Clark

“Don’t Call Me Daddy” – Tayo Olafioye

**Secondary Texts\*\***

*The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, The African: Written by Himself* - Olaudah Equiano

*The Palmwine Drinkard* **-** Amos Tutuola

*Gandoki* - Muhammed Bello

*Omenuko* - Pita Nwana

**Authors\*\*\***

D. O. Fagunwa, Pita Nwana, Ene Henshaw, Malam Tafida, Muhammed Bello, Cyprian Ekwensi Amos Tutuola, Chinua Achebe, Ola Rotimi, Wole Soyinka, Flora Nwapa, Zulu Sofola, John Pepper Clark, Gabriel Okara, Ahmed Yerima, Niyi Osundare, Zainab Alkali, Tayo Olafioye, Ben Okri, Chimanda Ngozi Adichie, Toni Kan, Chika Unigwe, Helon Habila, Lola Shoneyin.

**Selected Critical Texts\*\*\*\***

Moody, H. (1972). *The Study of Literature. London:* George Allen and Unwin.

Ruth Finnegan. (1973). *Oral Literature in Africa*. Kenya: Oxford UP.

M. Umukoro, A. A. Sam, A. M. Bangbose and I. E. Anene (1997).*Exam Focus: Literature in English. Ibadan:* University Press Plc.

**Important Note:**

* General assessment shall be based on attendance, class assignment, and participation in lecture/group activity including presentation, class quiz and end of semester examination.
* Pop quiz shall be administered as dictated by classroom events, national events, attendance and punctuality.
* Bonus marks could be won for outstanding performance(s).

Examinations – 60 Marks.

Continuous Assessment – 40 Marks

Total – 100 Marks

**Breakdown of CA**

Attendance-5mks

Assignment-10mks

Class Ouiz-10mrks

Group Presentation-15mks

* Class participation is not only encouraged but essential for stimulating discussions; thus it is important that you read each assigned text ahead of class hour(s).
* Attendance is mandatory; no form of truancy is allowed. However, if for emergency reason(s) you cannot attend any class, you **MUST** inform me by **s-mail** or **e-mail** and be thereafter excused. Otherwise unexcused absence(s) will be penalised without any form of restraint.
* **NOTE:** **Punctuality is a signifier of discipline. I’m not an African where Time is concerned. I will never be late for my class; you MUST never be late.**

**(Symbols and their meanings)**

\*Each member of the class **MUST** own copies, read them and always come to class with them.

**\*\***Necessary but not compulsory.

**\*\*\***Students are expected to know who these authors are.

**\*\*\*\***Required (Any of the texts would suffice)

**My students welcome on board and to ABUAD.**

**September 2017**