

COIL MODULE TEMPLATE

Hizme / El Sayd COIL Module Template 2024

Class Information and Mode of Instruction

Prof. Robin Hizme

Queens College, CUNY, New York, United States

Course Title: ENGL 157.W – 001 Readings in Global Literatures in English

3hr. 3 credit course; fifteen week semester (COIL project for five weeks)

Mode of instruction: In-Person

International Class Information:

Prof. Abdelmajid EL SAYD

Abdelmalek Essaâdi University, Tangiers, Morocco

Course Title: Readings in Culture

Mode of instruction: In-Person

Project Description

Comparative Analysis of Cultural Difference through Literature (U.S. + Morocco)

Purpose / Goal: Students will engage in comparative cultural analysis to increase cross-cultural knowledge and develop international communication and collaboration skills.

After reading and analyzing late-twentieth century narratives by authors from Morocco and the United States, bi-national student teams will select topics (and questions) for comparative cultural analysis.

Collaborative project topics should arise from content in the literary texts, but the comparative exploration is not confined to discussion of the assigned readings; topics and questions may also address our contemporary cultural moment. Students should feel free and encouraged to engage in the comparative analysis with their own experiential knowledge as a starting point or as a unique lens to enhance other data and research resources. This comparative inquiry is aimed at developing and enhancing cross-cultural understanding and sensitivity.

(Possible topic examples: education, poverty / food insecurity, gender roles; social structures, customs of death and mourning, coming of age rituals, beliefs about (or access to) medical and health care, criminal justice, opportunity for social advancement, employment, modes of transportation, holidays and traditional rituals, et.al.)

Literary Texts* for Comparative Analysis:

Morocco:

- Mohamed Choukri For Bread Alone (Composed c. 1952. Published in Arabic 1982; English translation by Paul Bowles 1973)
- Leila Aboulela Elsewhere Home (pub. 2019)

United States:

- Toni Morrison Recitatif (1980; pub 1983)
https://www.cusd80.com/cms/lib/AZ01001175/Centricity/Domain/1073/Morrison_recitafessay.doc.pdf
- Jack Forbes “Only Approved Indians Can Play: Made in USA” (1983)
- Tim O’Brien “The Things They Carried” (1990)

*Please note that we supplied Open Access links to these texts – or provided pdfs of the relevant sections.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Students collaborate, synchronously and asynchronously using mobile-friendly platforms to promote broad-based interdisciplinary and international learning.

Students develop and enhance skills across the range of the NACE competencies, each of which can be demonstrated in a various ways (see [NACE Center Career Competencies](#)):

- Career and Self-Development
- Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Equity and Inclusion
- Leadership
- Professionalism
- Teamwork
- Technology

PDF with more discussion of each competence can be found here: [NACE Center Career Competencies PDF](#)

Participation Policy:

Queens College, CUNY: All students must participate in COIL exchange for 23% of their overall course grade.

Assessment and Grading:

Queens College, CUNY: COIL project is 23% of final course grade; the COIL activities are broken down as follows (full credit given for completion of activity):

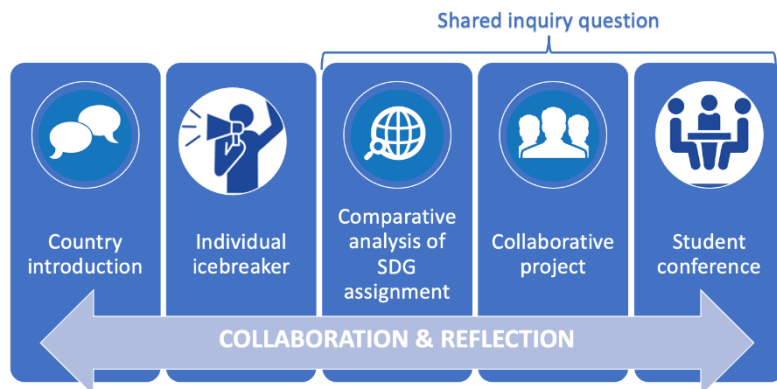
- Icebreaker and responses to other students: 16%
- Responses to prompts about readings and responses to other students 40%

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Project collaboration / planning + Project (including project writing): 30%
 COIL Written Reflection: 10%
 Participation in end-of-semester COIL Showcase: (optional) 4%

Online Platforms / Technology:

Google tools. We use google classroom to centralize the materials of the exchange, with student interaction via writing through questions / responses and on group google docs and slides. Student groups communicate via google meet, WhatsApp, and / or discord. Class-to-class synchronous sessions very challenging due to time-zones.



COIL Exchange Activities

Pre-Exchange activities:

- pre-COIL assessment- survey
- creating a self-intro video
- Discussing the benefits of developing the NACE competencies (see above)
- discussing the challenges and benefits to a digital, global world:
- Digital behavior to facilitate respectful dialogue; netiquette; have students reflect on their own digital behaviors
- Working against assumptions about the Other
- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's [The Danger of a Single Story](#)
- Discussion about respectful responses: [Dialogue Toolkit Handout](#)
- Created small student groups (3-4 students per group → bi-national groups 6-8 students each)

COUNTRY Introduction: Morocco

Students brainstorm and list everything they think they know about Morocco; groups compare their lists to the information in the COIL Intro to Morocco powerpoint.

Student groups assess each of the websites below (including POV) and share information they learn with the larger class:

U.S. Department of State [United States Relations with Morocco](#)

U.S. Department of State [Countries & Areas: Morocco](#)

U.S. Department of State Office of the Historian [History of U.S-Morocco Relations](#)

<https://moroccoam2023.ma/discover-morocco/history/Kingdom of Morocco>

Britannica Online [Encyclopedia Entry of Morocco](#)

Look at map of Morocco: varied terrain, location of Tangiers

Video about Abdelmalek Essaâdi University [YouTube video about AEU](#) (in French)

Exchange Activities: Week by Week Schedule

(Prompts and Guidelines Below)

Week 1 Ice-breaker

- Post icebreaker videos
- Reflection paragraph about Choukri reading

Weeks 2 & 3 Comparative Analysis

- Week 2 Moroccan Texts
- Respond to icebreaker videos
- Response to Choukri reflections
- Write reflection paragraph on Aboulelela
- Week 3 American Texts
- Response to Aboulelela reflections
- Write reflection paragraphs on American texts (Morrison and O'Brien / Forbes)

Week 4 Collaborative Project

- Responses to American texts reflections
- Collaborative topic planning on group documents

Week 5 Projects & Reflection

- Online, synchronous meeting – if possible
- Student reflection about the project - what they learned from texts and discussion with peers in Morocco / US
- End-of-semester COIL Showcase: At the end of the Spring semester, all faculty partners and their students are invited to share their projects with the COIL community.

Prompts and Guidelines for Exchange Activities

Icebreaker Videos

asynchronous exchange in small groups

Record and upload a 1-2 minute introduction video. On the video, you should:

Introduce yourself to your international peers, stating your name, institution, course of study (major), hobbies, and a fun fact about yourself.

Explain your feelings about starting this international project and why.

As part of your video, present a still image or recording about something / someplace and explain how it represents your personal experience of daily life in _____, New York / Tangier.

Share something about your life and culture (related to the image or not), and ask a related question to your international peers.

Encourage them to ask you a question in response. (For example, share an image of your favorite food truck - ask them if they have food trucks or if there is an alternative type of "fast food" or "street food"... If you are more interested in something else - e.g. school / shopping / concerts / video games / etc... go with that topic.)

Please note that you are not required to use your face in the video, but it would be nice to at least show a picture of yourself at some point so that your international collaborators can envision with whom they are interacting.

One way to share your video is by uploading it to your google drive and then sharing the link or uploading. Please be sure to change the settings on the video file to allow access for anyone with the link.

Icebreaker Responses in small groups

Please see the attached google document for the assigned groups.

Find the names of students in your group, watch their introduction videos and respond to at least TWO of your international peers with a minimum of two (required) comments per response.

If you are not sure how to respond, guidance for comments and suggested questions can be found in the dialogue toolkit handout (attached).

When you have completed your responses, please post the names of students to whom you responded (from your group) and submit / turn in.

Comparative Analysis paragraph writing prompts based on READINGS

Mohamed Choukri For Bread Alone Responding to the Text

Assignment includes posting your paragraph as well as responding to the paragraph of two international peers from your group. See the "Dialogue Toolkit" (same as in the icebreaker responses) for suggestions and strategies for responding.

Topic: Please compose a well-developed paragraph (at least eight-nine complete, complex sentences) in response to the Mohamed Choukri text, For Bread Alone. Your opening sentence should establish both the text (author + title) and general topic of your reflection (e.g. social conflict,

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food insecurity, status of women, etc.) Subsequent sentences should be as specific as possible with details from the text and at least one brief quote (with the page number in parentheses).

Remember that you are using this paragraph to communicate with international colleagues via writing. Your main purpose is to present a focused discussion / analysis of something which intrigued you, as well as using the opportunity to ask any questions you may have about the text of your international peers.

Leila Aboulela *Elsewhere Home* (selected stories)

Assignment includes posting your paragraph as well as responding to the paragraph of two international peers from your group. See the “Dialogue Toolkit” (same as in the icebreaker responses) for suggestions and strategies for responding.

Topic: Leila Aboulela’s *Elsewhere Home*: personal and social identities explored through short stories

Please compose a well-developed paragraph (at least eight-nine complete, complex sentences) in response to one of the stories in the Leila Aboulela collection *Elsewhere Home*. Your opening sentence should establish both the text (author + “title of story”*) and the general focus of your writing. Within your writing, you should embed at least ONE brief quote which showcases the focus; be sure to analyze the quote and articulate the connection to your focus / analysis.

In your focus, try to assess themes of personal and social identity development, identity conflicts (internal and / or external), and social belonging or exclusion. How do these topics manifest in the text? How are these personal and social identity issues navigated or negotiated? Is there any resolution? If so, how is it brought about? When considering social and personal identity, please feel free and encouraged to consider any of the following categories alone, or as they intersect: nationality, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, economic / social class, generational positioning (familial relations), age, educational status, ability, et.al.

Remember that you are using this paragraph to communicate with international colleagues via writing. Your main purpose is to present a focused discussion / analysis of something which intrigued you; always feel free and encouraged to use the opportunity to reflect on your own experiences and / or ask any questions you may have of your international peers.

*As per MLA format, the title of the collection of stories (the book) should be italicized, while the “titles of individual stories” should be enclosed with “quotation marks” (no italics).

Toni Morrison “Recitatif” and Race Relations

Assignment includes posting your paragraph as well as responding to the paragraph of two international peers from your group. See the “Dialogue Toolkit” (same as in the icebreaker responses) for suggestions and strategies for responding.

The struggle for desegregated education was an integral part of the Civil Rights movement in the United States. In Morrison's story, Twyla and Roberta ultimately take different sides on the issue of desegregation, a division which is symbolic of the ongoing racial strife. Morrison's twist, however, is to keep the reader guessing as to which character belongs to which race: in her critical tome *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*, Toni Morrison explains that "'Recitatif,' was an experiment in the removal of all racial codes from a narrative about two characters of different races for whom racial identity is crucial."

To learn more about the civil rights movement and desegregation please visit either one of these resources (or both):

- U.S. Library Of Congress, Civil Rights History Project: [School Segregation and Integration](#)
- Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture [The Struggle Against Segregated Education](#)

Please compose a well-developed paragraph (at least eight-nine complete, complex sentences) in response to Morrison's "Recitatif." Your opening sentence should establish both the text (author + "title of story" *) and the general focus of your writing. Within your writing, you should embed at least ONE (but preferably two) brief quote(s) as support for your claims. Be sure to introduce the quote (context and speaker) as well as clarify the connection to your focus / analysis.

FOCUS: In your writing, consider personal and social identity development, identity conflicts (internal and / or external), and social belonging or exclusion, specifically in relation to race (and/or gender). How is race negotiated in the text? Assess some of the authorial strategies, such as returning over and over to the same moment from a different angle (a technique also prominent in O'Brien's story). What are some of the ways this short story meditates on identity, racial conflict, and memory?

Remember that you are using this paragraph to communicate with international colleagues via writing. Your main purpose is to present a focused discussion / analysis of something which intrigued you, but feel free and encouraged to use the opportunity to reflect on your own experiences and / or ask any questions you may have of your international peers.

*As per MLA format, the title of the collection of stories (the book) should be italicized, while the "titles of individual stories" should be enclosed with "quotation marks" (no italics). Any quotes should be followed by the page number in parentheses.

O'Brien- *Legacies of Vietnam War* / Forbes – Native American Experience

Assignment includes posting your paragraph as well as responding to the paragraph of two international peers from your group. See the "Dialogue Toolkit" (same as in the icebreaker responses) for suggestions and strategies for responding.

Tim O'Brien: Legacies of Vietnam "The Things They Carried"

This short story is the opening story in a book containing several short stories about the Vietnam war. If you are unfamiliar with this conflict, it is described by history.com as follows:

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“a long, costly and divisive conflict that pitted the communist government of North Vietnam against South Vietnam and its principal ally, the United States. The conflict was intensified by the ongoing Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. More than 3 million people (including over 58,000 Americans) were killed in the Vietnam War, and more than half of the dead were Vietnamese civilians. Opposition to the war in the United States bitterly divided Americans” (for more information, see [History.com Vietnam War](#)).

The memorial to the war in Vietnam is the most visited monument in Washington D.C. You can view images and read about it at the United States Department of Defense [Vietnam Veterans Memorial](#).

As you compose your reflection paragraph, consider that what was carried was both the tangible items catalogued throughout the story as well as that which is intangible; assess some of the authorial strategies, such as returning over and over to the same moment from a different angle (a technique prominent in Morrison’s “Recitatif” as well). What are some of the ways this short story meditates on cultural identity, war, and memory?

As always, please introduce the text and author in your opening sentence and provide at least one or two brief quotes as evidence for your claims. (As per MLA citation format, include the page number of the quote in parentheses at the end of the sentence.)

If you are interested in hearing the author speak about his work, please see any of these brief videos:

- [Keeping Memories and Ourselves Alive – video interview with Tim O’Brien](#) (<4 min.)
- [What We Still Don't Get About Vietnam – video interview with Tim O'Brien](#) (< 5 min.)
- [Tim O'Brien Tells a True War Story not found in the book - interview](#) (< 5 min.)

Jack Forbes: Cultural Destruction of Indigenous Peoples in “Only Approved Indians Can Play: Made in USA” (1983)

Forbes was a scholar and activist in the Native American movement. He was particularly concerned about the rights of indigenous peoples in higher education. Although this short, short story does not focus on education per se, it does foreground the struggle over Native American identity, the criteria associated with identity, and who determines inclusion / exclusion.

FOCUS: As you compose your reflection paragraph, consider the conflict among the multiple ethnicities in the tale. How does the final line function on multiple levels? What are some of the ways this short story meditates on cultural identity and social power? Feel free and encouraged to draw connections with any of the previous readings (Choukri, Aboulela, Morrison, O’Brien).

As always, please introduce the text and author in your opening sentence and provide at least one or two brief quotes as evidence for your claims. (As per MLA citation format, include the page number of the quote in parentheses at the end of the sentence.)

These sites offer more information about American Indian Culture, the BIA, or Jack Forbes:

- [History from the Perspective of Indigenous Tribes:](#)
- [National Museum of the American Indian: Understandings](#)
- [Poetry Foundation Bio of Jack Forbes](#)
- [Bureau of Indian Affairs – US Gov.](#)

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Collaborative Final Project: Comparative Cultural Analysis

Collaborative Project Description

Following the comparative analysis assignment tasks, student teams should collaborate on a project that will present the topic under focus and the discussions surrounding the topic. The project offers a space to showcase the spectrum of cross-cultural topics and practices. The process of collaborating on the project provides students with opportunities to respectfully learn about and address cultural difference, negotiate varying viewpoints, and reach consensus about the process and product of the project (not the topic). The goal is to learn from each other while simultaneously creating a product which showcases this learning to others. Examples of project “products” are varied and could be any of the following (depending on how much time is available): google slides, an infographic chart, a brief video, a podcast, et. al.

Collaborative Project Process

Topic selection: Bi-national teams work asynchronously on group google doc to agree on a topic. (see page 1)

Comparative Analysis Tasks:

Bi-national teams work asynchronously on group google doc to agree on a topic.

- Students work together on the document to answer the shared inquiry questions. (The first shared inquiry question may have already been addressed through the paragraph reflections and responses for each reading, depending on the topic).
 - How is this topic explored and represented in texts from different cultures? What are root similarities or differences in how this topic is depicted across the readings from different cultures? How does this topic impact the characters in the narratives? To what extent is this topic determined by the historical context of the narratives? What can students observe and consider in terms of their contemporary experience of this topic? What resources are available to provide more data about this topic in each country? What information is uncovered through preliminary research queries?
- Students should feel free to interact synchronously via chat or other means to participate in comparative discussions with international peers.
- Students teach each other about how the topic is relevant to their own experience and community. (Remember that one of the goals is communication; we want to understand things we cannot simply 'find out about' by accessing a website or any other resource apart from COIL international peers.)
- Students find resources on the topic to share with international peers: articles from local newspaper or media, or academic resources / databases, reliable websites, et.al.

By Wed May 8, each group creates a project which can be presented or described in two minutes or less. Please keep in mind that due to the brief nature of this spring 2024 COIL exchange (due to conflicting academic calendars and different time zones), the collaborative project is not expected to be a polished, complete research analysis, but a subjective description of a “project-in-process” and the experience of that process. To that end, please peek ahead to some of the “COIL reflection” questions (forthcoming).

Post-exchange activities:

- post-COIL assessment-survey
- each group showcases their presentation to the wider classroom (many students could not log on at the time of the showcase)
- we reflect as a class on how our knowledge of Morocco has shifted as well as how the interaction with international colleagues was both challenging and instructive. We review the questions in the reflection (see below) and do some initial free-writes with share outs.

Required (written) Reflection

- For the reflection, students select four of the questions below and draft a two-page reflection.
- We upload all the reflections to Gen AI and discuss what patterns or inflection points emerge.

Reflection Prompts excerpted from GSACS Qualitative Assessment Reflection Prompts (document was developed collaboratively by Olga Aksakalova, Grace Pai, Mohammad Nazzal and Maha Bali):

Knowledge about own culture/self

Based on this course experience,

What did you learn about your own culture(s), identities and/or lifestyles?

What did you learn about your own preconceptions or biases?

Perspective-taking

Describe a specific situation during the GSACS project when you had to consider a different cultural perspective or were exposed to a different worldview. How did you react and respond?

OR

How has this experience changed your perspective on the world? Compare between past and current perspectives. What prompted these changes in perspectives (if any)?

Cross-cultural communication

Describe your style of communication habits when connecting with your international peers. Discuss whether/how your written, oral, body language had to be adapted to communicate successfully.

Self-Other Overlap

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Now that you've completed the exchange, what do you think you might have in common with students in _____, and what do you think might be the major differences? What is your plan to become a better collaborator? Re-draw a Venn Diagram and compare with your earlier version.

Cross-cultural collaboration

Regarding the collaborative activities with international peers:

What was the most useful learning moment/experience for you in your collaborative activities with international peers? What made it successful, and what did you learn from it? What aspect of this collaboration was challenging for you? Why do you think that is? How did you attempt to overcome this challenge?

If you could improve 1-2 things in the design of this learning experience, what would they be?

Now that you've completed the exchange, What have you wished to have learned or gained from this project, but you didn't? What changes to this experience would you propose?

Collaborative project/ Experiential learning

For reflecting on the collaborative / experiential learning element (the project you conducted with the community), you can use Gibbs' Model of reflection (addressing each phase of Gibbs Model and its corresponding questions. When each question in each phase is addressed, you would have a thorough and thoughtful reflective process).

Description: Describe what happened (what is the context? Who was there? What was happening?).

Feelings/ Thoughts (self-awareness of what you were thinking and feeling): How did you feel? How did others around you feel? How did you feel about the outcomes?

Evaluation (Judgment consideration): Consider what went well, what not so well about your experience.

Analysis (making sense of the experience): Break down the event and explore each part separately with more detailed questions?

Conclusion (Synthesis): Explore what else you could have done or done differently?

Action Plan: Consider what would you do differently if you encountered this experience again? Would you act differently or do the same?

Career Success

How do you think that participating in this project might help you with your future academic and career goals?

Global Citizenship/Social Responsibility

How do you rate yourself as a global citizen? How has this experience changed the way you think about your own connection to (SDG issue) or other global issues that are related to SDGs? If the latter, describe the global issue, event or context that you learned about through this project. How did you connect with it personally? Reflect on how to become a better global citizen based on the experience you described.

How do your actions affect both local and global communities? How has this experience affected your sense of personal and social responsibility?

Success and Challenges

STUDENTS: Different groups had different successes. Groups whose international partners were willing to join alternative platforms (WhatsApp, discord, etc.) had the best successes, least frustrations, and made the more significant connections. Groups where that wasn't the case shared frustration at the jagged communication through google docs. (I highly recommend slack.)

I recommend scheduling regular planning sessions with your partner, weekly "check-ins", and (if possible) being attentive to scheduling so that the classes can have synchronous sessions / meetings. I also favor the idea of each faculty member presenting a mini-lecture about some aspect of the material (preferably live, but recorded would also work).