**Working Syllabus University Honors 201**

**Course Title:**  “Lost” Literature

**Course Abstract**

This course will feature the television show Lost to explore themes in literature and general literary techniques. We will explore character archetypes developed in the show using selected readings from Christopher Vogel and Joseph Campbell to examine archetypal characteristics. We will examine literary techniques employed in the show including Deus Ex Machina, flashback, forwards, and sideways, Framing, symbolism, plot twists and dramatic irony. Selected episodes will be used to demonstrate both the use of character archetypes and literary devices. Selected readings which appear either directly or in reference in the show will be used to enhance student understanding of these themes.

The overarching theme of the show is free will vs. determinism or fate. This dichotomy is explored through both a philosophical and scientific lens. Dueling camps in science, unified field theory vs. chaos theory, and philosophy, theological determinism vs. metaphysical libertarianism, explore the concepts. The characters in the show are created to exemplify these points of view with many of them taking names of prominent philosophers and scientists who debated these issues. John Locke, Emile Rousseau, Jeremy Bentham, and Daniel Faraday are some of the characters in the show whose actions mirror the positions of these thinkers. In literature one can argue that all characters suffer from a pre-determined outcome as their fate is sealed by virtue of their being an end to the story. Along with a critical analysis of literary technique we will engage in counterfactual speculation and predictive dialogues to open discussion on the dual topics of free will and fate.

**Literary references from “Lost”**

Each of these books appears directly in the show either as a reading selection of a character or as part of the set of a scene. When texts appear as set props they are often a clue as to the motivations of one of the characters appearing in that scene or they foreshadow events to come or they give clues to some unrevealed plot point (these kinds of indirect or obscure clues are called Easter eggs by the show creators).

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer-Mark Twain

Alice in Wonderland-Lewis Carol

Animal Farm-George Orwell

A Brief History of Time-Stephan Hawking

The Brothers Karamazov-Fyodor Dostoevsky

Carrie-Stephan King

Catch 22-Joseph Heller

Chronicles of Narnia-C.S. Lewis

Everything That Rises Must Converge-Flannery O’Conner

Evil under the Sun-Agatha Christi

Fear and Trembling-Soren Kierkegaard

The Fountainhead-Ayn Rand

Heart of Darkness-Joseph Conrad

The Invention of Morrell-Adolfo Bioy Casares

The Lord of the Flies-William Golding

Moby Dick-William Melville

The Mysterious Island-Jules Verne

An Occurance at Owl Creek Bridge-Ambrose Bierce

The Odyssey-Homer

Of Mice and Men-John Steinbeck

On the Road-Jack Kerouac

Our Mutual Friend-Charles Dickens

A Separate Reality-Carlos Castaneda

Slaughterhouse Five-Kurt Vonnegut

The Survivors of Chancellor-Jules Verne

Turn of the Screw-Henry James

To Kill a Mockingbird-Harper Lee

Ulysses-James Joyce

Valis-Philip K. Dick

**Representative Assignments**

1. Comparative analysis between selected readings and show episodes. Identifying literary techniques common in both.
2. Identification and illustration of character archetypes in both Lost and selected readings
3. Philosophical position articulated on the central theme of free will vs determinism with source citations from selected readings and show characters that are nominally connected to thinkers in science or philosophy.

**Course Content**

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| **Literary Technique** | **Representative Lost Episode** | **Literature Reference** |
| Back-story | s.1 Exodus |  |
| Cliff Hanger | s.3 Through the looking glass |  |
| Deus ex machine | s. 1 Deus Ex Machina |  |
| Eucatastrophe | s. 1 Walkabout |  |
| Flashback | s. 1 Confidence Man |  |
| Flash forward | s.4 Beginning of the End |  |
| Flash Side-ways | s.6 The Substitute | Slaughterhouse Five |
| Foreshadowing | s.3 Greatest Hits | Carrie |
| Framing Device | s.2 Expose |  |
| In medias res | s.2 Live together Die alone |  |
| Poetic justice | s.2 Collision |  |
| Predestination Paradox | s. 4 The Constant | Valis |
| Red Herring | s. 6 Across the Sea |  |
| Repetitive Designation | s. 3 Tricia Tanaka is Dead |  |
| Unreliable Narrator | s. 3 Tale of two cities | The Brothers Karamazov |
| Defamiliarization | s. 4 Confirmed Dead | Animal Farm |
| Epiphany |  | A Separate Reality |
| Magical Realism | s.5 There’s no place like home | Alice in Wonderland |
| Situational Irony | s.6 The End |  |
| Dramatic Irony | s.2 Man of science, Man of Faith |  |
| Verbal Irony | s.5 life and Death of Jeremy Bentham |  |
| Symbolism |  | Everything that Rises must Converge-Greenleaf |
| Thematic Patterning | s.6 Happily Ever After |  |
| Paradox | s. 3 Some like it Hoth | Catch 22 |
| Pathos | s.1 White Rabbit |  |
| Satire | s.2 Everybody Hates Hugo |  |
| Anthropomorphism | s.4 The Shape of things to Come | Chronicles of Narnia |
| Dramatic Visualization | s.6 Ab Aeterno |  |
| Juxtiposition | s.3 Tricia Tanaka is Dead |  |

Character archetypes (based on Carl Jung’s 12 archetypes)

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Archetype** | **Lost Character** | **Literary Character** |
| The Innocent | Desmond Hume |  |
| The Orphan | Hugo Reyes |  |
| The Hero | Jack Shepherd / Sayid Jarrah |  |
| The Caregiver | Sun Kwon / Claire Littleton |  |
| The Explorer | John Locke |  |
| The Rebel | Kate Austen | Captain Ahab , Billy Pilgrim |
| The Lover | Juliette Burke |  |
| The Creator | Daniel Faraday |  |
| The Jester | Charlie Pace / Miles Straume | Tom Sawyer / Cheshire Cat |
| The Sage | Richard Alpert / Rose Nadler |  |
| The Magician | Man in Black |  |
| The Ruler | Benjamin Linus |  |

**Course Schedule**

Week 1

Course Introduction

Week 2/3

*Literary Techniques*: Back Story, Deus Ex Machina, Euchatastrophe, Flashback, Framing Device, Pathos. *Character Archetypes*: Orphan and Hero

Week 4/5

*Literary Techniques*: In Medias Res, Poetic Justice, Dramatic Irony, Satire. *Character Archetypes*: Caregiver and Explorer

Week 6/7

*Literary Techniques*: Cliff Hanger, Foreshadowing, Repetitive Designation, Unreliable Narrator, Paradox. *Character Archetypes*: Rebel and Ruler

Week 8

*Literary Techniques*: Flash Forward, Predestination Paradox, Defamiliarization, Anthropomorphism. *Character Archetypes*: Innocent and Jester

Week 9/10

*Literary Techniques*: Magical Realism and Verbal Irony. *Character Archetypes*: Creator and Lover

Week 11/12/13

*Literary Techniques*: Dramatic Visualization, Flash Sideways, Situational Irony, Red Herring. *Character Archetypes*: Magician and Sage

Week 14

Course Wrap up