1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

SCAND 151 will acquaint you with the literary and cultural history of Finland during the 19th and 20th centuries. The course has three aims. First, it seeks to develop skills of reading literature in an academic setting, and writing about it well. Second, we’ll try to explain some of the changes, conflicts, movements, and underlying attitudes that have made up Finnish literature during the last two centuries. Third, the course seeks to introduce some major figures of Finnish literature and culture, including, among others, Elias Lönnrot, Johan Ludvig Runeberg, Aleksis Kivi, Edith Södergran, Jean Sibelius, Väinö Linna, Pentti Saarikoski, and Aki Kaurismäki.

Literature is especially significant in Finland because the country’s “founding fathers” thought that the nation expressed itself through writing in Finnish. Literature has played a significant role in shaping modern Finland’s identity. We will study works ranging from the earliest oral poetry to controversial contemporary works. We’ll place stories, poems, and literary figures in social context and analyze literary structure through close reading. As a result, you will learn about Finland while building up a critical cultural vocabulary and developing writing skills. At the end of the course, we’ll also study how literature has changed, as popular culture has replaced it as an influential building block of individual and national identity.

2. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will become familiar with the major figures, works, and ideas in Finnish literary and cultural history of the 19th and 20th centuries. You will be able to connect particular works with the larger cultural context into which they fit. That is, given an exemplary passage from a text or the name of an author, you will be able to explain its significance by discussing it in connection with its form, content, or prominent ideas and texts of the time.
3. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

The course grade will be comprised of grades awarded for participation, and introductory letter, a writing portfolio and self-reflective essay, a mid-term, and final examination.

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introductory Letter</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td>Writing Portfolio and Self-Reflective Essay</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-Term</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Final</td>
<td>25%</td>
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4. COURSE ACTIVITIES

Reading: It is essential that you complete all readings, so that you can understand the frame of reference for each lecture as well as be ready to view and discuss the assigned poems and novels. *You should have the reading completed by the day that it is listed in the syllabus, and be prepared to ask questions about and discuss the assigned texts.*

Lectures: Another key component in the course is the in-class lecture. The lectures provide explanations of the key terms in the course, which provide context for understanding the readings. Each week’s lectures and discussion questions will be posted on the course website by Monday. You can use the posted notes as a guide to taking notes in class.

Participation: Approximately half the course is based on discussion. You should be prepared to discuss the reading assignments, and ready to raise questions about lectures. If you raise questions and make comments regularly, the class will be productive, thought-provoking, and rewarding.

I see participation as your responsibility, and so I will ask that you decide your participation grade. At the time of the mid-term and final examination, you will submit to me a statement or email assigning yourself a grade and giving a brief statement explaining why you’ve awarded yourself the grade you have. I will return your statement to you with a brief response and your participation grade. I’ll average the two participation grades to determine your final participation grade.

Introductory Letter: The letter should be two to three pages, typed, and double-spaced. The letter will be graded on a pass/no-credit basis. It is due on Monday, October 3rd.

The letter may be addressed to anyone you like, except me (the professor). The letter should *say something about your interest in Finland or in literature.* You might relate a personal experience, explain your interest in the course, or write about a favorite novel. I ask you to write in the form of a letter, because I *don’t want you to write an academic paper.* I want you to write in your own voice and with feeling. Also think about the criteria for evaluation in writing the letter, and practice holding yourself to those
criteria in drafting the letter. The letter is graded pass or fail, to give you the freedom to do what you want.

**Writing Portfolio and Self-Reflective Essay:** You will compile a writing portfolio over the course of the quarter. You will do this in four ways: in-class writing activities; overnight writing assignments to be discussed during the next course meeting; journal-writing for the course; and blogging on the course weblog: [http://andrewnestingen.typepad.com/scand151](http://andrewnestingen.typepad.com/scand151). Over the course of the quarter, you will need to collect everything you write into the portfolio. (While in-class writing may not be typed, I would urge you to type as much of this as possible and collate it into a folder.) On the basis the portfolio you compile, you will compose two self-reflective essays, one of which is due Wed., Nov. 2, and the second of which is due the last day of class, Wed. Dec. 7th. When you turn in the portfolio and essay, you should turn them in as a package, with the self-reflective essay on top of the portfolio, which should be organized by date, from earliest to latest writing. What am I asking you to do with this writing and these self-reflective essays?

The writing portfolio is my way of encouraging you to write regularly about what we’re reading. This helps you think through and understand the texts we’re reading. It also fosters discussion in class. The self-reflective essays ask you to sum up what we’ve done, and what you’ve learned in a way that makes sense for you.

What does this assignment mean in practice? First, it means writing regularly to build a portfolio, and going back to think about what you’ve learned by engaging in thinking and writing in the class.

Second, it means some concrete requirements. Each self-reflective essay should be typed, double spaced, and at least five pages long. You’ll also need to build your self-reflective essays on citations from your writings and the readings in class. Your citations should be given in parentheses in the self-reflective essay, and include the date and source, for example (11/10, Andrew Nestingen’s comment on course blog); or (12/1, my portfolio); or (10/31, Mike Strachota’s comment on the course blog); or ([Seven Brothers](http://andrewnestingen.typepad.com/scand151), 171). If you need help or have questions about this, please ask me for assistance.

Third, this assignment means thinking consistently about what you want to learn from the course, and what you do learn from the course. The self-reflective essay is an open-ended way of asking you to articulate what you’ve learned in the course. Some of the questions you might consider building your self-reflective essays around are the following:

- What were my expectations about Finnish culture? What have I learned?
- How do Finnish and American culture differ?
- How do you define Finnish identity?
- What’s the most beautiful work we’ve read? Why?
- What don’t you understand? Why does it give you trouble?
- What does Väinö Linna have to say about J.L. Runeberg? Why does this matter to the course, and Finland?
- What are the three most important things you’ve learned about Finland, and why are they important?
By drawing on your portfolio, you should be able to develop a thoughtful, detailed response to these questions. While your self-reflective essay should probably begin with a question like one of the above, and explain why you think that question is significant, and develop an answer to it, the effectiveness of your essay will depend on concrete details from your writing and reading in the course.

You will submit self-reflective essays twice during the quarter. You must turn them in to me by 6:30 PM on the day they’re due, or you will be marked down a full grade. I will not accept any submission more than a week late.

The grading of the two submissions of portfolio and self-reflective essay differs, and you need to be aware of this. The first submission will be given a provisional grade, while the second submission will be given a final grade. Since the final grade makes up 40% of your final grade, I urge you to carefully complete the self-reflective essay.

Because this is an open-ended assignment, you may find it helpful to discuss your essay with others in class. I might also prove useful to talk to me. I will make an effort to provide feedback on your writing in class and on the blog. The provisional grade at mid-quarter will also include feedback about how you’re doing in the writing.

**Mid Term:** The mid-term exam will be held in class on Monday November 7th, in class. It will consist of five textual identification questions from everything we’ve read in the course to that point. You will be given a list of texts read in the class, to help you with names and spelling. The second part of the exam will provide you a list of fifteen keywords from the readings and lectures, of which you’ll need to define seven. These will include the names of authors, ideas, institutions, and works of literature. Finally, the test will include three essay questions, of which you’ll need to answer one.

**Final Exam:** The final exam will be comprehensive for the entire course, but focus on the second part of the course. It will have the same structure as the mid-term, however, there will be on textual identification dealing with the films viewed in class. You will also need to define ten of fifteen keywords, and answer one of three essay questions.

**5. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION**

I will make my evaluation of the portfolio and self-reflective essay, as well as the exams, according to the following criteria.

1) **Sharpness:** My evaluation of sharpness focuses on the paper’s form, which I break into two components

   a) **Structured:** When you discuss things with friends or family members, you often need to state your point, and then back it up with two or three examples. Finally, you tie things together by repeating your point, or summarizing it in a slightly different way. A well-structured piece of academic writing works the same way. You need to get across your main idea in a sentence or two, and then explain your point to the reader with examples that support and complicate your point. Excellent paper organized and works efficiently to make every word matter, instructing and delighting the reader.
b) **Clean:** Students’ ideas get across most effectively when their papers are free from spelling, grammatical errors, and word choice that distract the reader. When someone reads your paper, their eye gets hung up in the errors, instead of focusing on your points, insights, and argument. Edit your work carefully, spell-check both by computer and with proofreading, and pay attention to grammar and punctuation.

2) **Detail:** Your response paper should focus on key details that support your point of view. Key details are observations you make, which you can relate to the main ideas of the course, but which are meaningful because of the way you explain them through your point of view. Choosing thought-provoking and interesting points and supportive examples to discuss them grabs the reader’s attention, helping convince her of the significance your understanding of something. By choosing details carefully and thoughtfully tying them to your paper’s main point, your writing becomes relevant and persuasive.

3) **Freshness:** In the best papers, the writer’s voice is clear, whatever she has to say. A fresh voice comes across in many ways: with an arresting anecdote that introduces the paper, with a thought-provoking question that lays the ground for a powerful thesis, with an imaginative choice of topic. In each of these, you show you care by bringing your imagination and voice to the paper. That makes the reader care too. As you’re writing for the class, consider what kinds of questions and points you have, state them in your voice, and help the class understand Finnish literature and culture more fully.

6. **COURSE POLICIES**

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** The University of Washington is a community dedicated to learning. Ethical expectations of students belonging to the community are defined in the student conduct code (http://www.washington.edu/students/handbook/conduct.html). Plagiarism, cheating, and disruptive behavior in class violate the code, and harm your own and others’ learning. Any violations of the code in connection with the course will result in referral to the university administration for appropriate action. If you want to learn more about how to avoid plagiarism, please consult the following resource page on academic honesty, (http://depts.washington.edu/grading/issue1/honesty.htm), or speak to me directly.

**GRADERS GRIEVANCE POLICY:** If you disagree with the grade you have been awarded and wish to appeal your grade, you must follow the policy outlined below. I will make no exceptions to this policy, and I reserve the right to refrain from considering your complaint if you do not follow the policy.

a. Wait twenty-four hours from the time you receive the grade.
b. Deliver a written statement to my post-box in Raitt 318 (Campus Mail Box 353420) explaining your complaint. (No emails or telephone calls accepted)
c. Make an appointment with me to discuss your written complaint (email is fine for making the appointment).

d. I will indicate my final decision to you by email after our meeting.

e. If you disagree with my final decision, request a meeting with the Chair of the Scandinavian Department, Prof. Terje Leiren, and me to come to a final solution.

7. REQUIRED TEXTS

Texts required available at the University of Washington Bookstore


Course Reader (CR) for SCAND 151 at the Ave. Copy Center, 4141 University Way NE
# COURSE PLAN

## I. CREATING NATIONAL LITERATURE

### Week 1: Locating Finland

| W  | 9/28 | Course Introduction  
Lecture 1: Finland Between East and West, 1155-1809 |

### Week 2: The Birth of Literature in Finland, 1809-1849

| M. 10/3 | Lecture 2: Elias Lönnrot and the *Kalevala*  
Reading: *Kalevala*, Poems 1, 10, 42-42, 50 |

**Introductory Letter Due**

| W. 10/5 | Lecture 3: Johan Ludvig Runeberg and Romanticism  
Reading: *Songs of Ensign Ståhl* selections, “Our Land” “Ensign Ståhl,” “Sven Dufva”; and from *Dikter I* “Paavo of Saarijärvi” in CR |

### Week 3: Making Literature National

| M. 10/10 | Lecture 4: J.V. Snellman and Nationalism  
Reading: “The Nationality Question—A Svecoman View” and “J. V. Snellman on the Finnish Nation” in CR |

| W. 10/12 | Film Viewing: *Siblelius* (2003) |

### Week 4: The First Finnish Novel

| M. 10/17 | Lecture 5: “Aleksis Kivi and the First Finnish Novel”  
Guest Lecture: Dr. Eric Schaad  
Reading: *Seven Brothers*, Chapters 1-4; and “The Song of My Heart” in CR |

| W. 10/19 | Lecture 6: Realist Literature  
Reading: Minna Canth “The Nursemaid” in *Finnish Short Stories*;  
<table>
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<th>Week 5: From National Romanticism to National Realism</th>
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| **M. 10/24** | Lecture 7: Neo-Romanticism and Eino Leino  
| **W. 10/26** | Lecture 8: Who is Väinö Linna?  
| Reading: Väinö Linna, *Here Under the North Star*, Chapters 1-5 |

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<th>Week 6: National Realism and the Civil War</th>
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| **M. 10/31** | Lecture 9: *Here Under the North Star*  
| Reading: Väinö Linna, *Here Under the North Star*, Chapters 6-10 |
| **W. 11/2** | Lecture 10: The Finnish Civil War  
| Reading: Joel Lehtonen, “Dead Apple Trees”; Pentti Haanpää “Military Splendor” in *Finnish Short Stories*  
| Mid-Term Review  
| First Self-Reflective Essay # 1 Due |

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<th>Week 7: Mid-Term Exam and Interwar Modernism</th>
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<td><strong>M. 11/7</strong></td>
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*Interwar Modernism*

| **W. 11/9** | Lecture 11: In Search of Modern Life and Modern Literature  
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<th>Week 8: The Finnish War Experience</th>
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| M. 11/14 | Lecture 12: Finland's Three Wars: Literature in the Trenches  
| W. 11/16 | Lecture 13: Finland’s Culture and Literature, 1950s-1980s  
Guest Lecture: Marimekko’s History Roger Johnson and Ulla Freeman |

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<th>Week 9: The Art Film</th>
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Reading: Nestingen, “In Search of Aki Kaurismäki,” “The Kaurismäki Phenomenon” and Werner in *Aesthetics and Contexts* |
| W. 11/23 | No Class: Thanksgiving Holiday |

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<th>Week 10: The Art Film and Popular Cinema</th>
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Reading: “Nostalgias and Their Publics: The Finnish Film Boom” |
Discussion of Films |

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<th>Week 11: Finnish Popular Culture at the Millennium</th>
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| M. 12/5 | Lecture 15: Finnish Popular Literature, 1990s-2000s  
Reading: Mystery Short Story, TBA |
| W. 12/7 | Second Self-Reflective Essay #2 Due  
Final Review and Evaluations |

Final Exam 4:30-6:20 p.m. Monday, Dec. 12, 2005, Savery 249