

Phil489 Philosophical Fiction 1

Phil489.01E—Philosophical Fiction Spring 2025

Dr. Bill Bolin

Office & Hours: Talbot Hall 324, MW 3:30p-5:00p. T 3:00p-5:00, and by appt.

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Course Description:

There are at least two ways to define *independent* in the term *independent study*. The first refers to the study, itself, and identifies a course designed for a particular student's degree and not available to the general student population. The second refers to the student and emphasizes the student's responsibility as a self-sufficient learner. This independent study utilizes both definitions. You are taking a course designed for your minor, and you are responsible for achieving the student learning outcomes listed below. I'll be your guide on the side

Three textbooks are required, and two other texts (book, short story, film...) will be named later. Any version of these books is fine, but listed is the ISBN for each copy that I'll be using:

- Albert Camus's *The Plague* ISBN-10: 0075536498
- Muriel Barbery's *The Elegance of the Hedgehog* ISBN-13: 978-1933372600
- Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* ISBN-978-1-4000-7877-6

Student Learning Outcomes/Course Objectives:

1. The student will investigate features of a literary genre called philosophical fiction.
2. The student will read and critique book reviews of several literary texts to determine if these texts fit into the genre of philosophical fiction.
3. The student will write a review of a chosen literary text to see if this text fits into the genre of philosophical fiction.

Assignments:

- You will write 5 response papers of 400-500 words, each covering one of the assigned novels and at least one published review of that novel. Separate assignment sheets are forthcoming in D2L.
- You will write a research-based paper of 4-5 pages arguing that a literary text of your choice ought to be included in the genre of philosophical fiction. A separate assignment sheet is forthcoming in D2L.

Evaluation: Each response paper is worth up to 10 points, and the final project is worth up to 50 points, for a total of 100 possible points. Your final grade will be determined by the total of points you earn during the semester.

Phil489 Philosophical Fiction 2

Tentative Calendar--We will discuss the assigned reading and the idea of philosophical fiction each time we meet. Meetings will be scheduled for specific dates/times as we go.

Meeting 1: Lecture over genre and over philosophical fiction

Meeting 2: Read Part I and Part II of *The Plague*; lecture over book reviews

Meeting 3: Read the rest of *The Plague*; **RP 1 due**

Meeting 4: Read up through the end of "Summer Rain" in *The Elegance of the Hedgehog*

Meeting 5: Read the rest of *The Elegance of the Hedgehog*; **RP 2 due**

Meeting 6: Read Part 1 of *Never Let Me Go*

Meeting 7: Read Part 2 of *Never Let Me Go*; **RP 3 due**

Meeting 8: (or two meetings): TextA

Meeting 9 (or two meetings): TextA; **RP 4 due**

Meeting 10 (or two meetings): Text B; **RP 5 due**

Meeting Ultimate: **Final Paper due**