



Department of Central, Eastern and Northern European Studies

Velkommen to the Nordic Program!

NORD 333: Nordic Literary Cultures (English)

Acknowledgement

UBC's Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam) people. The land upon which it is situated has always been a place of learning for the Musqueam people, who for millennia have passed on their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site.

Danish

UBCs Point Grey Campus er placeret på Musqueam-folkets nedarvede, traditionsrige og ikke retsmæssigt afståede territorie. Området, hvorpå det er placeret, har altid fungeret som et rum for læring for Musqueam-folket, som i årtusinder har videregivet deres historie, kultur og traditioner fra én generation til den næste på dette sted.

Swedish

UBC Vancouver ligger på xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam)-folkets traditionella, nedärvda och icke överlåtna territorium. Det landområde campus är placerat på, har alltid varit en plats för lärande för Musqueam-folket, som i årtusenden har fört vidare sin kultur, historia och traditioner från en generation till nästa på denna mark.

COURSE INFORMATION

Title: Nordic Studies **Code:** NORD 333 **Section:** 921 **Credit Value:** 3

Meeting Times: MWF, 1 pm – 2 pm

UBC Schedule: <https://vancouver.calendar.ubc.ca/dates-and-deadlines>

Meeting Locations: SWNG 207

CONTACTS

Instructor: Ann-Kathrine Havemose

Contact: Make sure to check Announcements on Canvas regularly. This will be our main tool to communicate but you can also email me at annkathrine.havemose@mail.ubc.ca
(disclaimer: I will not be answering emails on weekends)

Office hours: Fridays 2-3 pm in Buchanan Tower 905 or by appointment

Fika (the Swedish word for having coffee/tea together):

Drop-in 4-5 pm **on Wednesdays** in Cenes Lounge (Room 910), 9th floor, Buchanan Tower from January 17th

DISCLAIMER

The material in this course includes content that might be offensive and upsetting to some readers, such as strong language, reference to and consumption of alcohol and drugs, violence, graphic and sexual imagery. Some also deal with sensitive issues, such as suicide, death, racism, and sexual abuse.

If for any reason whatsoever you feel engaging with a particular text might negatively impact your mental health, please email me at annkathrine.havemsose@ubc.ca immediately or have someone you trust email me on your behalf, so that we make an alternative arrangement.

COURSE STRUCTURE AND ACTIVITIES

In this course we will analyse and discuss the works of 7 Nordic authors who have made a lasting impact on Nordic Literary culture and beyond. Each work or works will figure as the centrepiece of their own module and will be approached using different methods and theories used in literary and cultural studies.

The aim of this course is, in part, to give you an idea of how each piece of Nordic literature historically has affected the Western world in their time as well as today, while also giving you an understanding of how (Nordic) literature can be read in relation to selected themes, genres and ideas that exists in most Western Culture, and thus build on or create a deeper understanding of the world around you and its history.

There are no prerequisites for this course. Readings and discussion in English.

DISCLAIMER: Have you never taken a course in academic writing, it is **strongly encouraged** that you do so either before or while taking this class.

Each class, students will read the materials required for the week and participate in class discussion, which will include in-class writing and group work. Over the course of the semester, students will write one **Assignment** and two **Short Essays** (max. 1000 words), one of which will form the foundation of their **Final Essay**, a research-based revision of their earlier piece of writing based on peer feedback, research and in class practice.

Student presentations

Each module (except our first class) will feature at least one group presentation on an assigned topic. Instructions can be found on canvas → people → pages. The presentations (and preparation) will be done in groups.

Assignments

Over the course of the semester, students will write one **Assignment** without peer-review (150-450 words) and two **Short Essays** of 750 to 1000 words (3-4 pages, double-spaced) with peer-review on select topics. Supported by discussions on writing practice, these short essays will encourage students to develop their critical thinking, writing, and peer review skills. At the end of the semester, students will select one of their two peer-reviewed drafts to revise and expand into their **Final Essay**, a **Research-Based Revision** (2000 to 2500 words; 8-10 pages, double-spaced) of one of their earlier short essays.

Handing in Homework: I will only accept homework posted online or submitted through our course's Canvas site. Homework submitted by email or Google Drive will not be accepted unless previously discussed with me.

DEADLINE of final term paper: April 21, 11:59 pm.

Late policies:

Should you be unable to hand in a written assignment or Final Paper on the given deadline, you can get an extension if you notify your instructor NO LESS THAN 48 HOURS BEFORE the deadline. No questions asked.

Any and all extensions requested after this time will only be granted with proof of medical emergency, a valid accommodation letter from Arts Advising or similar.

Continuous tardiness (in-class attendance or assignments) without sufficient explanation will result in lower marks.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course (i.e. with active attendance and participation, completion of reading and writing assignments, and exams) students will be individually and cooperatively able to:

- **Define** important concepts and **identify/asses** historical and cultural contexts and relevance surrounding the emergence and development of the work(s) and periods in question.
- **Respond** to thematic questions in clear and concise form.
- **Recognize** aspects of belonging and 'otherness', social standing and Nordic social politics in the periods and cultural products discussed.
- **Navigate** group settings and other professional interactions in a mature manner that shows respect of your peers' time and presence.
- **Write** and **structure** academic papers and arguments and **analyse** primary texts contextually (i.e. to genre, topic, media etc.) and comparatively.
- **Prepare** and **present** academic research in an organized and effective way.

LEARNING MATERIALS

Texts (required, available at UBC Bookstore):

Ditlevsen, Tove (2021). *The Faces*, trans. Tiina Nunnally, Penguin Classic

Jansson, Tove (2008). *The Summer Book*, trans. Kathryn Davis, New York Review Book

Torseter, Øyvind (2016). *The Heartless Troll*, trans. Kari Dickson, Enchanted Lion Books

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND CLASSES (subject to change)

There will **always be secondary reading**, but this will be posted directly on Canvas rather than written into this syllabus, so **remember to check canvas before every lesson**.

Week 1: Introduction

Monday 01.08: Introduction to the class, structure, syllabus and assignments

Reading: The syllabus

Wednesday 01.10: Introduction to Nordic Studies

Reading: Hilson, Mary (2019). "The Nordic region", *Nordics.info*, Aarhus University (<https://nordics.info/show/artikel/the-nordic-region/>)

Friday 01.12: How to Read Literature

Reading: Eagleton, Terry (2013). "Chapter 1. Openings" *How to read literature*, Yale University Press

Lundgren, Andrea (2021). "The Girlfriend" *Nordic Fauna*, Peirene Press (available on Canvas)

Recommended reading: Kjældgaard, Lasse Horne and Simonsen, Peter (2017). "Chapter 1. Literature" in *Literature: An Introduction to Theory and Analysis*. London: Bloomsbury Academic (available through UBC Library as ebook)

MODULE 1

H.C. ANDERSEN'S FAIRYTALES

Hans Christian Andersen (1805-1875) was a Danish author of literary fairytales, plays and novels. He is best known as the author of stories like *The Little Mermaid* (1837) and *The Snow Queen* (1844). His works have been translated from Danish to more than 125 languages, and H.C. Andersen is considered to be the 8th most translated author in the world.

Week 2:

Monday 09.15: Introduction the author and the Romantic Period

Reading: Andersen, H.C. (1847/1986). "The Little Mermaid" in *80 Fairytales*, Skandinavisk Bogforlag (available on Canvas)

Wednesday 01.17: The Shadow and the little mermaid

Reading: Andersen, H.C. (1847/1986). "The Shadow" in *80 Fairytales*, Skandinavisk Bogforlag (available on Canvas)

Andersen, H.C. (1847/1986). "The Little Mermaid" in *80 Fairytales*, Skandinavisk Bogforlag (available on Canvas)

Friday 01.19: Biographical method(s)

Reading:

Student Presentation: TBA

MODULE 2

WOMEN OF THE MODERN BREAKTHROUGH

Amalie Skram (1846-1905) and Victoria Benedictsson (1850-1888) both wrote about the lives of Nordic women towards the end of the 1800s – a period known as The Modern Breakthrough. This artistic and literary period is characterised through the ability the artists had of painting realistic images of the sufferings of the common people and for putting societal topics and problems up for debate.

Week 3:

Monday 01.22: Introduction to the Modern Breakthrough and Victoria Benedictsson.

Reading: Benedictsson, Victoria (2004). "Happiness", transl. Susan Brantly, *Sex and the Modern Breakthrough: an anthology*, Department of Scandinavian Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI, pp. 68-82

Wednesday 01.24: Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble*

Reading: Benedictsson, Victoria (2004). "Happiness", transl. Susan Brantly, *Sex and the Modern Breakthrough: an anthology*, Department of Scandinavian Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI, pp. 68-82

Friday 01.26: Close-reading of "Happiness"

Reading: Benedictsson, Victoria (2004). "Happiness", transl. Susan Brantly, *Sex and the Modern Breakthrough: an anthology*, Department of

Scandinavian Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI,
pp. 68-82

Week 4:

Monday 01.29: Close-reading of “Prayer and Doubt”

Reading: Skram, Amalie (2004). “Prayer and Doubt”, transl. Susan Brantly, *Sex and the Modern Breakthrough: an anthology*, Department of Scandinavian Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI, pp. 83-92

Wednesday 01.31: Comparing “Prayer and Doubt” and “Happiness”

Reading: Skram, Amalie (2004). “Prayer and Doubt”, transl. Susan Brantly, *Sex and the Modern Breakthrough: an anthology*, Department of Scandinavian Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI, pp. 83-92

Friday 02.02: Madness as an illness – women in the Modern Breakthrough

Reading: Skram, Amalie (2004). “Prayer and Doubt”, transl. Susan Brantly, *Sex and the Modern Breakthrough: an anthology*, Department of Scandinavian Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI, pp. 83-92

MODULE 3

EDITH SÖDERGRAN’S POETRY

Edith Södergran (1892-1923) was a Swedish speaking Finnish poet. Though plagued by Tuberculosis most of her short life, she received a highly international education and spoke Russian, German, Finnish, French and Swedish. Dubbed as one of the first modernist poets to write in Swedish and much ahead of her time, Södergran’s poetry continues to gain traction around the Western World today.

Week 5:

Monday 02.05: How to read poetry

Reading: Södergran, Edith (1980). “I” *The Collected Poems of Edith Södergran*, trans. Martin Allwood, Anglo-American Center (available on Canvas)

Södergran, Edith (1985) “Vierge Moderne” and “The Hyacinths” in *Love & Solitude*, Trans. Stina Katchadourian, Fjord Press (available on Canvas)

Wednesday 02.07: Modernist poetry and Queer-readings

Reading: Södergran, Edith (1980). "I" *The Collected Poems of Edith Södergran*, trans. Martin Allwood, Anglo-American Center (available on Canvas)

Södergran, Edith (1985) "Vierge Moderne" and "The Hyacinths" in *Love & Solitude*, Trans. Stina Katchadourian, Fjord Press (available on Canvas)

Student Presentation: Queer-theory

Friday 02.09: Can translation be... gendered?

Reading: Södergran, Edith (1980). "I" *The Collected Poems of Edith Södergran*, trans. Martin Allwood, Anglo-American Center (available on Canvas)

Södergran, Edith (1985) "Vierge Moderne" and "The Hyacinths" in *Love & Solitude*, Trans. Stina Katchadourian, Fjord Press (available on Canvas)

Student Presentation: Translation theory

MODULE 4

TOVE DITLEVSEN'S *THE FACES*

Tove Ditlevsen (1917-1976) was a Danish poet and author of both fiction and non-fiction. Her most known works are the Copenhagen-trilogy that portrays the life of the working class in 1940s and '50s Copenhagen. Disregarded by her peers at the time for not being 'literary' enough. She has since been likened to, especially, her contemporary, Sylvia Plath, as they not only shared the same tragic end but also wrote in similar styles.

TW: *The Faces* is about suicide and mental health issues, also mentions adultery, incest and other sexual references.

Week 6:

Monday 02.12: Introduction to Tove Ditlevsen and post-war modernism

Reading: Ditlevsen, Tove (2021). *The Faces*, trans. Tiina Nunnally, Penguin Classic*

Wednesday 02.14: Narrator and author – what's the difference, really?

Reading: Ditlevsen, Tove (2021). *The Faces*, trans. Tiina Nunnally, Penguin Classic*

Student Presentation: Narrator

Friday 02.16: A Narrative of Madness

Reading: Ditlevsen, Tove (2021). *The Faces*, trans. Tiina Nunnally, Penguin Classic*

Student Presentation: Narrative theory

Week 7: MIDTERM BREAK – ALL WEEK

Week 8:

Monday 02.26: A return to psychoanalysis

Reading: Ditlevsen, Tove (2021). *The Faces*, trans. Tiina Nunnally, Penguin Classic*

Wednesday 02.28: Confessional literature and autobiography – The body in *The Faces*

Reading: Ditlevsen, Tove (2021). *The Faces*, trans. Tiina Nunnally, Penguin Classic*

Student Presentation: Autobiography as a genre

Friday 03.01: Confessional literature and autobiography – a question of Thruth

Reading: Ditlevsen, Tove (2021). *The Faces*, trans. Tiina Nunnally, Penguin Classic*

MODULE 5

TOVE JANSSON'S *THE SUMMER BOOK*

Tove Jansson (1914-2001) was a Finnish writer, artist and cartoonist. She is best known for her comic strip and children's books about the Moomins, which has been translated to over

50 different languages and has made her the most widely read Finnish author abroad. Her success is largely due to her ability to write for both children and adults at the same time, and

The Summer Book is no different.

Week 9:

Monday 03.04: Introduction to Tove Jansson and 1970s realism

Reading: Jansson, Tove (2008). *The Summer Book*, trans. Kathryn Davis, New York Review Book*

Wednesday 03.06: Narrative and Narrator

Reading: Jansson, Tove (2008). *The Summer Book*, trans. Kathryn Davis, New York Review Book*

Friday 03.08: Metaphor and Metonymy

Reading: Jansson, Tove (2008). *The Summer Book*, trans. Kathryn Davis, New York Review Book*

Student presentation: Metaphor and Metonymy

Week 10:

Monday 03.11: Place, sensation and affect – part 1

Reading: Jansson, Tove (2008). *The Summer Book*, trans. Kathryn Davis, New York Review Book*

Student presentation: TBA

Wednesday 03.13: Place, sensation and affect – part 2

Reading: Jansson, Tove (2008). *The Summer Book*, trans. Kathryn Davis, New York Review Book*

Friday 03.15: Experiencing nature and affect

Reading: Jansson, Tove (2008). *The Summer Book*, trans. Kathryn Davis, New York Review Book*

MODULE 6

ØYVIND TORSETER

Øyvind Torseter (1972 -) is a Norwegian illustrator, children's book author, cartoonist and artist. Since his debut in 2002, Torseter has won numerous awards, among them the Bologna Ragazzi Award for his book *Avstikkere* (2007) and the Nordic Council's Children and Youth Literature Award in 2014 for his children's book, *Brune* (2013).

Week 11:

Monday 03.18: Introduction to the author and the Nordic picturebook

Reading: Torseter, Øyvind (2016). *The Heartless Troll*, trans. Kari Dickson, Enchanted Lion Books

Wednesday 03.20: How picturebooks work

Reading: Torseter, Øyvind (2016). *The Heartless Troll*, trans. Kari Dickson, Enchanted Lion Books

Friday 03.22: Maybe ASYNCHRONOUS

See Canvas for further instructions

Reading: Torseter, Øyvind (2016). *The Heartless Troll*, trans. Kari Dickson, Enchanted Lion Books

Week 12:

Monday 03.25: ASYNCHRONOUS / ON ZOOM

See Canvas for further instructions

Reading:

Wednesday 03.27: ASYNCHRONOUS / ON ZOOM

See Canvas for further instructions

Reading:

Friday 03.29: GOOD FRIDAY – NO CLASS

Week 13:

Monday 04.01: EASTER MONDAY – NO CLASS

Wednesday 04.03: The Child Reader

Reading: Torseter, Øyvind (2016). *The Heartless Troll*, trans. Kari Dickson, Enchanted Lion Books

Student presentation: The Child Reader

Friday 04.05: Performativity of the picturebook

Reading: Torseter, Øyvind (2016). *The Heartless Troll*, trans. Kari Dickson, Enchanted Lion Books

Week 14:

Monday 04.08: Scary Pictures in Nordic Picturebooks

Reading: Torseter, Øyvind (2016). *The Heartless Troll*, trans. Kari Dickson, Enchanted Lion Books

Wednesday 04.10: Class Discussion

Reading:

Friday 04.12: Final class – Final term paper guidance

Reading:

ASSESSMENT

Participation	20%
(attendance; in-class group work; In-class essays)	
Student presentations	15%
Assignment #1	15%
Short Essay #1	10%

Short Essay #2	10%
Term paper	30%

CONTRACT GRADING

This class uses a grading contract for **some** of its assignments. This means that these assignments are graded based on whether they are handed in (complete) or not (in-complete). These assignments include the following:

In-Class Essays	5%
Short Essay #1	10%
Short Essay #2	10%

Following the work of Jane Danielewicz and Peter Elbow (see “A Unilateral Grading Contract to Improve Learning and Teaching” for more information), I believe that a grading contract allows me to give more honest evaluative feedback, improves learning and teaching, and is a fuller representation of social-justice-oriented pedagogy in the classroom. Not all students have identical educational backgrounds, nor do they possess the same experience in scholarly writing in the Humanities. This is especially true for CENS and NORD courses, which draw students from diverse academic disciplines and training.

A grading contract, therefore, allows students to produce their best work (on their own terms) and learn from their mistakes and inexperience while striving to meet their own individual learning goals. Furthermore, considering every student in our class is experiencing the COVID-19 global pandemic differently and with different degrees of stress, changes in employment status, caregiving responsibilities, emotional labour and/or anxiety, I want all my students to feel like this course is prepared to meet them where they are at. I believe a grading contract is an inclusive pedagogical practice that more effectively supports the diversity of student experience we are facing today. This may be particularly true with regard to students with disabilities, international students, first-generation students, students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, and students self-isolating. To this end, every assignment with a grading contract will receive complete or in-complete – you either participate or you don’t, you either complete the homework or you don’t, you either submit your Short Essay and perform the Peer Review or you don’t.

The Short Essay is subject to peer review. Note that completing the assigned peer review(s) is part of your final grade for this class.

Grading:

The Short Essay is graded as complete/incomplete, and is not subject to any greater grading-process. This means that upon hand-in, you will automatically receive 75% for your work. This is to allow for everyone to improve at their own pace without the additional pressure of reaching a certain grade.

Receiving 75% for the Short Essays does not prevent you from getting a higher grade overall in this class.

Attendance and Participation: In accordance with UBC Policies and Regulations, students are expected to attend class regularly. Furthermore, in accordance with CENES's Course Policies, **students may not miss more than 40% of the course's scheduled class sessions, regardless of whether their absences are avoidable or unavoidable.** In the event that a student misses 12 or more hours of class time, they may be considered unable to meet the "learning outcomes" of the course and may therefore be excluded from final examination. Those students who are unavoidably absent from in-person or online class or miss multiple class sessions and their associated in-class assignments must report their absence to me immediately or upon their return to participating in class in order to establish how they should proceed in catching up on missed material. Students may be granted a concession for their absence either by me or, in the case of an extended absence, by the Academic Advising Services of the Faculty of Arts.

In-Class Essays (5%): During class, students will have 5-7 minutes of in-class time to write 150-350 words in response to a prompt. These short essays offer students the opportunity to reflect on the course material prior to class or group discussion or consolidate their ideas at the conclusion of class or group discussion. Moreover, these short essays afford quieter students or students that don't feel comfortable participating in in-class discussion the opportunity to share their thoughts with me. This is especially important in larger classes, since it is difficult for every student to participate in in-class discussion in a way that I can monitor. **These short In-Class Essays will not be graded for grammar, spelling, punctuation, or syntax; instead, they will be graded for completion. They thereby function as a testament to students' engagement with the course material and proof of their participation in class as well as often form the foundation of in-class discussion and group work.**

However, since these In-Class essays will be assigned through Canvas and posted immediately before class along with the PDF-version of my PowerPoint lecture slides (which also function as lecture notes), these short essays can also be completed at home and, if necessary, outside of class time. This ensures that students don't feel compelled to come to class when sick just for participation marks since participation will be gauged through in-class writing that can be accomplished at home just as easily. **Students are still expected to attend class regularly when able and multiple absences without accommodation will be reflected in their final grade. Regular attendance will account for 7.5% of their final grade.**

All In-Class Essays will be due Sunday at midnight the week they were assigned. Extension requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis, so please email your instructor if you become sick and require additional accommodation.

Presentations:

Student presentations will be a combination of pre-recorded and in-class.

Each group (assigned to you by your instructor) will be assigned a topic to present on. The group will perform research and record their presentation to be uploaded to a discussion board on Canvas.

The groups will then present one of their three discussion questions to the class and mediate the following discussion.

CHAT GPT

In the Nordic program, we discourage the use of ChatGPT (or a similar tool) in general. However, if you decide to deploy ChatGPT to get answers for an assignment and/or to generate any text for a draft or final version of any part of a written assignment do so responsibly! You must declare that you have used it, with a couple of sentences describing the extent to which it was used, and you must save any generated text from this tool in case it is requested. Failure to provide a proper reference and description will be considered a breach of academic integrity and an academic misconduct.