

**City University of Hong Kong**

**Information on a Course  
offered by Department of English  
with effect from Semester B in 2014/2015**

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**Part I**

**Course Title:** The Western Canon

**Course Code:** EN6508

**Course Duration:** 1 semester

**Credit Units:** 3

**Level:** P5

**Medium of Instruction:** English

**Prerequisites:** Nil

**Precursors:** Nil

**Equivalent Courses:** Nil

**Exclusive Courses:** Nil

**Part II**

**Course Aims**

The course aims to allow students to deepen their knowledge of British and American literature by focusing on specific writers, genres, or themes in the context of literary history and criticism. They will be introduced to current debates on issues such as narrative form, gender, colonialism and postcoloniality, modernity, globality and cosmopolitanism, as well as the place of the “canon” in literary studies. The course will enhance students’ ability to analyse and interpret British and American literary production (including fiction, poetry, and drama), through discussions of form, style, innovations on traditional creative paradigms and themes. Students will generate critical and creative responses to these texts, through the writing of essays and creative pieces.

**Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)**

*Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*

No.	CILOs	Weighting (if applicable)
1.	Identify key writers, themes and genres in contemporary British and American literature.	N/A
2.	Describe the characteristics of the literature and locate them in the context of relevant theories and criticism.	N/A
3.	Analyze the texts in the context of the theories and comparatively. Apply creativity as well as critical reading, thinking, and writing skills in interpreting literary texts.	N/A
4.	Understand and critique the writers' styles, literary purposes, and contributions to literary history	N/A

### Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

*(Indicative of likely activities and tasks designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs. Final details will be provided to students in their first week of attendance in this course)*

CILO No.	TLAs	Hours/week (if applicable)
CILOs 1-4	<b>Lectures</b> Lectures will introduce the concepts and topics to be discussed in class	
CILOs 1-4	<b>Discussions</b> Students are expected to participate actively in class discussions. They will be required to give a short individual presentation.	
CILOs 1-4	<b>Essay writing</b> Students will demonstrate their understanding of the topics through 2 written essays.	
CILOs 1-4	<b>Critical Literary Workshop Project:</b> Students will work in groups to generate critical reexaminations of theories about British and American literature, leading them to rethink literary conventions and re-imagine the ways texts are created and received. They will present the project in class.	

### Assessment Tasks/Activities

*(Indicative of likely activities and tasks designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs. Final details will be provided to students in their first week of attendance in this course)*

<b>CILO No.</b>	<b>Type of Assessment Tasks/Activities</b>	<b>Weighting (if applicable)</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
CILOs 1-5	<b>Essays.</b> Students will submit 2 critical/research essays (2000-2500 words each).	40%	Individual work; to be assessed individually
CILOs 1-5	<b>Class participation.</b> Students will be assessed on the basis of their contributions to class discussions and the short presentation.	30%	Individual work; to be assessed individually
CILOs 1-5	<b>Critical Literary Workshop Project</b> In groups students will generate creative responses to key primary texts that provide a critical reflection on key themes and concepts explored by the author.	30%	Group work; assessed individually

**Grading of Student Achievement:** Refer to Grading of Courses in the Academic Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Degrees.

Grading pattern: Standard (A+, A, A- . . . F). Grading will be based on student performance in assessment tasks and activities.

**Assessment form: Individual assignment**

Grade A+, A, or A-	Grade B+, B, or B-	Grade C+, C, or C-	Grade D	Grade F
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The topic is extremely well-presented and analysed;</li> <li>◆ All relevant information is excellently covered;</li> <li>◆ The purpose of analysing and presenting the material is completely achieved;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The topic is competently presented and very well analysed;</li> <li>◆ The information is sufficiently covered;</li> <li>◆ The purpose of analysing and presenting the material is achieved;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The topic is adequately presented and is analysed reasonably well;</li> <li>◆ Only part of the information is covered;</li> <li>◆ The purpose of analysing and presenting the material is partially</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The topic is sketchily presented and analysed inadequately presented;</li> <li>◆ Only limited information is included;</li> <li>◆ The purpose of analysing and presenting the material is not fully achieved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The topic is highly inadequate in its presentation and is very badly analysed;</li> <li>◆ Very limited or inaccurate information is included;</li> <li>◆ The purpose of analysing and presenting the material is not</li> </ul>

◆ Style and tone are highly appropriate	◆ Style and tone are appropriate	achieved; ◆ Style and tone are somewhat appropriate	at all; ◆ Style and tone are inappropriate	achieved in any way; ◆ Style and tone are completely inappropriate
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### Part III

#### Keyword Syllabus

English literature, American literature, form, novel, fiction, drama, poetry, postcolonialism, global literature, cosmopolitanism, American dream, Englishness, colonialism.

#### Primary Texts

Henry James, *Daisy Miller* (1879)  
 Bram Stoker, *Dracula* (1897)  
 George Bernard Shaw, *Saint Joan* (1924)  
 Ernest Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* (1926)  
 T.S. Eliot, *Four Quartets* (1943)  
 Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966)

#### Recommended Secondary Reading

Bentley, Nick. *Contemporary British Fiction*. Edinburgh University Press, 2008  
 Berberich, Christine. *The Image of the English Gentleman in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Literature: Englishness and Nostalgia*. Ashgate, 2007.  
 Blamires, Harry. *Twentieth-Century English Literature*. Macmillan Education, 1986.  
 Davies, Alistair and Alan Sinfield, eds. *British Culture of the Postwar: An Introduction to Literature and Society 1945-1999*. Routledge, 2000.  
 Dimock, Wai Chee and Lawrence Buel, eds. *Shades of the Planet: American Literature as World Literature*. Princeton University Press, 2007.  
 Feidelson, Charles. *Symbolism and American Literature*. The University of Chicago Press, 1970.  
 Fishkin, Shelley Fisher. *Feminist Engagements: Forays into American Literature and Culture*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.  
 Giles, Paul. *Atlantic Republic: The American Tradition in English Literature*. Oxford University Press, 2006.  
 Gray, Richard J. *A History of American Literature*. Blackwell, 2004.  
 Hutner, Gordon. *American Literature, American Culture*. Oxford University Press, 1999.  
 Jay, Gregory. *American Literature and the Culture Wars*. Cornell University Press,

- 1997.
- Kent, Alicia A. *African, Native, and Jewish American Literature and the Reshaping of Modernism*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- King, Bruce. *The Internationalization of English Literature*. Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Korte, Barbara and Peter Muller, eds. *Unity in Diversity Revisited? British Literature and Culture in the 1990s*. Narr, 1998.
- Kutzer, M. Daphne. *Empire's Children: Empire and Imperialism in Classic British Children's Books*. Garland Pub., 2000
- Lee, A. Robert and W.M Verhoeven, eds. *Making America, Making American Literature: Franklin to Cooper*. Rodopi, 1996.
- Murphet, Julian. *Multimedia Modernism: Literature and the Anglo-American Avant-Garde*. Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Onega, Susanna and Christian Gutleben, eds. *Refracting the Canon in Contemporary British Literature and Film*. Rodopi, 2004.
- Patterson, Anita Haya. *Race, American Literature and Transnational Modernisms*. Cambridge University Press, 2008
- Perloff, Marjorie. *21<sup>st</sup>-Century Modernism: The "New" Poetics*. Blackwell Publishers, 2002.
- Pope, Rob, ed. *The English Studies Book: An Introduction to Language, Literature and Culture*. Routledge, 2002.
- Poplawshi, Paul. *English Literature in Context*. Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Rosenwald, Lawrence Alan. *Multilingual America: Language and the Making of American Literature*. Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Shepherd, Simon. *The Cambridge Introduction to Modern British Theatre*. Cambridge University Press, 2009
- Waugh, Patricia. *The Harvest of the Sixties: English Literature and its Background, 1960-1990*. Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Williams, Jeffrey. *Theory and the Novel: Narrative Reflexivity in the British Tradition*. Cambridge University Press, 1998
- Wollaeger, Mark A. *Modernism, Media, and Propaganda: British Narrative from 1900-1945*. Princeton University Press, 2006.