Course Title	: Critical Perspectives in Literary Studies
Course Code	: ENG3204
Recommended Study Year	: 3rd Year
No. of Credits/Term	: 3
Mode of Tuition	: Lecture-tutorial mode
Class Contact Hours	: 3 hours per week
Category	: Required Course
Prerequisite(s)	: Nil
Co-requisite(s)	: Nil
Exclusion(s)	: Nil
Exemption Requirement(s)	: Nil

Brief Course Description

ENG3204 introduces students to the major questions and issues that motivate literary studies today. We will explore the theoretical frameworks that inform the analysis of literary texts and examine the ways in which literature reflects and shapes social, cultural, and historical contexts, including gender studies, postcolonial studies, Marxist and materialist approaches to literature, ecocriticism, and new methodologies using digital tools.

By the end of the course, students should be able to identify key schools of thought within literary studies and understand how they have shaped the ways in which literary texts are read and interpreted. Through close reading and analysis of texts from different literary genres, you learn to apply these frameworks to your own literary analyses and engage in scholarly conversations about literary texts. You should also be able to reflect on your own theoretical assumptions and biases and engage in critical thinking and writing about literature.

Aims

This course aims to provide students with the tools and knowledge necessary to engage with literary texts in a critical and theoretically informed manner. Emphasis will be placed on developing skills in not only literary interpretation but also critical writing. Through lectures, tutorials, online reading responses, and peer-review writing workshops, students will learn to analyze and write about both the literature and the world today.

The goal of this course is to help you advance your own thinking and writing as literary and/or cultural critics. Thus, the course requires a high level of hard work, professionalism, and courtesy. You will be expected to do all assigned readings before class, submit your papers in a timely manner, and participate in discussions both in class and online. In turn, to help you think through difficult questions and articulate your ideas, this course will offer you the practical skills necessary for designing, researching, drafting, and revising an academic essay in literature.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will:

1. Develop a critical understanding of the major questions and issues that motivate literary studies today (LO1)
2. Analyze literary texts using a range of critical approaches (LO2)
3. Engage in scholarly conversations about literary texts and develop their own critical perspectives (LO3)
4. Write analytically about contemporary literature using correct citational and formatting conventions (LO4)
5. Effectively communicate ideas and arguments related to literature and critical approaches during class and group activities (LO5).

Indicative Contents

1. What is literary theory?
2. What is a text?
3. Marxist and materialist approaches to literature
4. Feminist and queer theories
5. Psychoanalysis
6. Postcolonial theory and the global Anglophone
7. Ecocriticism
8. Distant reading and other digital methods

Teaching Method

This course consists of weekly lectures, tutorial discussions, and (towards the latter half of the course) research and writing workshops. Attendance is mandatory. I expect you to have done the assigned work before each class and be prepared to talk and listen in each discussion session. In addition to in-person meetings, students are also required to post online reading responses to the literary and/or critical texts and respond to their peers' work regularly. Participation in both in-person discussions and online work is crucial as the overall success of this course depends on the quality of your contribution.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

The progress and achievement in learning will be gauged through in-class and online discussions, presentations, essay writing and a final examination.

Table matching LOs with assessment methods

Assessment	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**
In-class quizzes (mid-term and end-of-term): 15% each	X	X	X		
Close Reading Analysis: 20%	X	X	X	X	
Research Essay: 35%	X	X	X	X	
Attendance & Participation: 15%	X	X	X		X

Assessment

In-class quizzes (15% +15%)
Held at the middle and the end of the semester, the quizzes are designed to test students' understanding of the key concepts, themes, and theoretical frameworks covered in the course. Quizzes will take the form of short-answer questions and will cover both the required readings and in-class discussions.

Close-Reading Analysis (20%)
Students will analyze a literary text of their choice using one of the critical approaches introduced in the course. The essay should demonstrate their ability to apply theoretical frameworks to literary analysis and engage in scholarly conversations about the text. It should also include the student's own reflections on the strengths and weaknesses of the methodologies they discuss.

Research Essay (35%)
Students will write a final research essay on the critical history of a literary work, explaining and evaluating the interpretations made by different critics, and how they may contradict or complement each other.

Attendance & Paritcipation (15%)

1. You may check your attendance records on Moodle.
2. **You MUST attend (marked "present" or "late"; NOT "excused") at least 66% of all the classes (at least 8 out of 12).** Failure to do so means that you will fail your participation mark, and you will not be allowed to sit for the exam. (Academic Regulations 12.8: "A student whose accumulated leave of absence exceeds one-third of the term should not be assessed and awarded credits for the courses enrolled in the term.)
3. You MUST come to class punctually.
    1. You will be marked "late" if you arrive in class 5 min after the scheduled time, and repeated tardiness will affect your participation grade adversely.
    2. If you are late for more than 15 mins, you will be marked as "absent" for that class.
4. If you cannot come to class, you'll need to email me with a reasonable excuse **at least 1.5 hours before class begins**. You may not receive a reply from me, but if I do not raise objection before the class, you may consider yourself "excused" from that class. **No more than 3 excuses will be given,** with the exception of medical reasons or real emergencies.
5. Note that participation grade is unavoidably subjective. The more you engage with your classmates and the more you answer questions in class, the stronger an impression you make.
6. Come to each of our sessions prepared to talk and listen. **Careful reading before class** is very important in this course. Even if a text is uninteresting, explain what bores you. If you find an idea confusing, ask questions and help your friends to clarify it. If you are having trouble joining in the conversation, or if you are uncomfortable with our class dynamic for any reason, please let me know.

Required Readings

- Peter Barry, *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* (Manchester University Press, 2017)
- *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, edited by Vincent B. Leitch (Norton, 2010)

Important Notes:

(1) Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3 hours of class contact and 6 hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.
(2) Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations and Course Work. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is "the presentation of another person's work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student's own work". Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
(3) Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.
(4) To enhance students' understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course "Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness" is available on https://pla.ln.edu.hk/.
(5) Students must adhere to the University's guidelines and practices when using Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools. The official documents "Guidelines for Using GAI Tools at Lingnan University" and "Best Practices for Ethical and Responsible Use of GAI Tools in Course Assessments" can be found here: https://www.ln.edu.hk/tlc/generative-artificialintelligence/gai-guidelines-best-practices.