

B.A. (Honours) in Contemporary English Studies

Course Title	: Making It New: Introduction to Modernism
Course Code	: ENG3012
Recommended Study Year	: 3 rd Year or 4 th Year
No. of Credits/Term	: 3
Mode of Tuition	: Lecture-tutorial mode
Class Contact Hours	: 2-hour lecture per week 1-hour tutorial per week
Category	: Discipline Elective (Contemporary Literary Studies Strand)
Prerequisite(s)	: Nil
Co-requisite(s)	: Nil
Exclusion(s)	: Nil
Exemption Requirement(s)	: Nil

Brief Course Description:

This course aims to introduce students to modernism as one of the key developments in twentieth-century literary history. We will explore both the formal properties of modernist fiction and poetry and the relationship between the rise of modernism and the social context of the early twentieth century. We will address such questions as the role of experimental techniques and mythical allusions in both poetry and fiction, as well as modernism's relationship to the First World War and the rise of technological modernity. We will read the programmatic texts of T.S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf, poetry by Eliot and Ezra Pound, as well as the fiction of Woolf and James Joyce, among others.

Aims:

The aims of this course are to 1) develop the students' understanding of the modernist movement and its place in twentieth-century literary history; 2) further their skills in close reading and critical analysis of fiction and poetry; 3) enhance their ability to write and speak more effectively in English through written communication; 4) enhance their ability to perform independent research.

Learning Outcomes (LOs):

On completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the distinctive thematic and formal features of modernist fiction and poetry.
2. Explain the relationship between modernist literary texts and their social and intellectual contexts.
3. Develop cogent interpretations of individual literary texts.
4. Identify, evaluate and describe secondary sources (such as scholarly articles, chapters, and books).

Indicative Contents:

The course will include major works of Anglophone modernism across the genres of drama and poetry, as well as the theoretical contributions of modernist writers in order to provide students with a well-rounded understanding of modernist practices and ideas.

Major topics include:

- 1) The rise of the avant-garde and modernist poetic techniques as exemplified by

- BLAST*, as well as the poetry of Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot;
- 2) Modernist poetry's relationship to history and myth as exemplified by such texts as W. B. Yeats' "Easter, 1916" and T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*;
 - 3) The relationship between individual and collective identity in modernist fiction (Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*);
 - 4) Stream of consciousness and modernist notions of subjectivity as exemplified by Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* and excerpts from Joyce's *Ulysses*;
 - 5) Modernism and sexuality (Djuna Barnes, *Nightwood*)
 - 6) Modernist theories of literary production (T.S. Eliot, "Tradition and Individual Talent," "Ulysses, Order, and Myth." Virginia Woolf, "Mr. Bennet and Mrs. Brown")

Teaching Method:

This course consists of lectures and tutorials. The classes will be as interactive as possible, and the students will have ample opportunity to interact with their peers. The lectures will help develop the students' awareness of the key characteristics of literary modernism (ILO 1), demonstrate how to establish links between modernist texts and their contexts (ILO 2), and introduce the students to the handling of secondary sources (ILO 4). The discussions held during the tutorial class will give the students the opportunity to employ their critical skills in analyzing literary works (ILO 3).

Measurement of Learning Outcomes:

The learning outcomes will be measured through continuous assessments which will be administered both throughout the course and at the end of term. Students' progress will be measured with regard to their engagement with the lectures, tutorial discussions, readings, and assignments. Annotated Bibliography will assess the student's ability to recognize quality scholarly sources, as well as to precisely describe and evaluate their content. The course will involve two exams – a Midterm that will mostly assess the students' familiarity and factual knowledge about modernist literary practices and a more substantial Final Exam that will be used to assess students' ability to independently describe, analyze, and contextualize modernist literary texts.

Learning Outcome	Assessment Method			
	Participation	Midterm Exam	Annotated Bibliography	Final Exam
Be able to describe the distinctive thematic and formal features of modernist fiction and poetry.	x	x		x
Be able to explain the relationship between modernist literary texts and their social and intellectual contexts.	x	x		x
Be able to develop cogent interpretations of individual literary texts.	x			x
Be able to identify, evaluate, and describe secondary sources.			x	

Assessment:

(Continuous Assessment – 65%; Final Exam 35%)

No.	Assessment Method	Type	Outcome	Percentage
1.	Participation	Individual	1, 2, 3	20%
2.	Midterm Exam	Individual	1, 2	20%
3.	Annotated Bibliography	Individual	4	25%
4.	Final Exam	Individual	1, 2, 3	35%

Attendance and Academic Honesty

Students are expected to attend both lecture and tutorial on a weekly basis. This is necessary, given the collaborative nature of much of the course. Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations and Course Work.

Required Readings:

BLAST (1914/15)

Ezra Pound, selections from poetry

W. B. Yeats, “Easter, 1916” (1916)

T.S. Eliot, *Prufrock and Other Observations* (1917), *The Waste Land* (1922)

James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1914/15); *Ulysses* (1922; excerpts)

Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (1927) and a selection of shorter fictions

Djuna Barnes, *Nightwood* (1936)

T.S. Eliot, “Tradition and Individual Talent” (1919) and “Ulysses, Order, and Myth” (1923)

Virginia Woolf, “Mr. Bennet and Mrs. Brown” (1924)

Recommended/Supplementary Readings:

A selection from major introductory works on modernism will be provided. Some of the sources the students might wish to consult include Pericles Lewis, *The Cambridge Introduction to Modernism* (2007), *The Cambridge Companion to the Modernist Novel*, ed. Morag Shiach (2007), Jesse Metz, *The Modern Novel: A Short Introduction* (Blackwell, 2004). Yale Modernism Lab (<https://modernism.coursepress.yale.edu/>) also offers a wealth of information on key modernist figures and texts.

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. 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/>.