

B.A. (Honours) in Contemporary English Studies

Course Title	: Contemporary Literature in English I: Prose Fiction
Course Code	: ENG3204
Recommended Study Year	: 3 rd 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	: Required Course
Prerequisite(s)	: Nil
Co-requisite(s)	: Nil
Exclusion(s)	: Nil
Exemption Requirement(s)	: Nil

Brief Course Description

Building on students' exposure to short fiction in Literary Analysis I, ENG3204 offers an overview of 21st century global Anglophone literature across a variety of narrative forms. Students will learn about the traditions and innovations of different novelistic genres, the conditions of the global circulation of both the English language and Anglophone literature, as well as other socio-political contexts unique to our contemporary moment. We will explore issues from gender & sexual politics to the workings of global capitalism and its impact on our ecological future, focusing on how writers depict, reflect on, and engage the world and its diverse linguistic, cultural, and racial histories. 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.

Aims

ENG3204 is designed to acquaint students with contemporary fiction written in English. We will study the function of genres such as the *bildungsroman*, dystopian science fiction, realism, and the *picaresque* as we analyze each text. We will focus mostly on the novel, though we will also read a few short stories as well as a graphic memoir. In doing so, this course also pushes students to rethink what counts as "literature" or "literary" fiction, what or who determines our reception of a text, and how historical developments in the past 20 years have influenced literary forms.

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. We will focus on three aspects: (1) how to generate a meaningful problem from what seems to be confusion or ambiguity in a literary text, (2) how to respond to that problem with a

strong, contestable claim supported by textual evidence, and (3) how to construct a well-reasoned argument.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course students will:

1. Be able to discuss and analyze contemporary literature in English from a multicultural and global perspective (LO1);
2. Be able to interpret and discuss literary narratives using a range of critical terms and approaches (LO2);
3. Identify and describe distinct literary characteristics of contemporary fiction and demonstrate an understanding of how contemporary culture, trends and historical events affect literary form and production (LO3);
4. Write analytically about contemporary literature using MLA guidelines (LO4);
5. Effectively communicate ideas and arguments related to literature and critical approaches during class and group activities (LO5).

Indicative Contents

- 21st century global Anglophone literature
- The novel and its subgenres (realism, the graphic novel, science fiction, etc)
- Close reading of stylistic elements like diction, syntax, and narrative structure.
- Recent literary critical approaches (postcolonialism, queer theory, world system theory, etc)
- The global literary marketplace and other historical contexts

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 discussion 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, , essay writing and a final examination.

Learning Outcome	Assessment Method			
	Attendance & Participation	Online Reading Responses	Final Essay	Exam
1. Be able to discuss and analyze contemporary literature in English from a multicultural and global perspective	X	X	X	X
2. Be able to interpret and discuss literary narratives using a range of critical terms and approaches	X	X	X	X
3. Identify and describe distinct literary characteristics of contemporary fiction and demonstrate an understanding of how contemporary culture, trends and historical events affect literary form and production	X	X	X	X
4. Write analytically about contemporary literature using MLA guidelines			X	
5. Effectively communicate ideas and arguments related to literature and critical approaches during class and group activities.	X			

Assessment

Continuous Assessment:

Attendance & Participation 10%

Online Reading Responses:: 20% (4 X 5% each)

Essay: 35%

Final Examination: 35%

Required Readings

Sally Rooney, *Normal People* (2018)

Octavia Butler, "Bloodchild" (1984)

Aravind Adiga, *The White Tiger* (2008)

Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic* (2006)

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/>.