

DEREE COLLEGE SYLLABUS FOR:

EN 3369 CONTEMPORARY BRITISH LITERATURE - LEVEL 5

(Updated Fall 2010)

UK CREDITS: 15

US CR: 3/0/3

PREREQUISITES:

WP 1010 Introduction to Academic Writing
WP 1111 Integrated Academic Writing and Ethics
WP 1212 Academic Writing and Research

CATALOG

DESCRIPTION:

Detailed study of major contemporary British authors with an emphasis on the cultural context of the post-1945 period in Britain.

RATIONALE:

This course explores representative trends in British literature in the last sixty years, which pose a challenge to established literary modes and thematic concerns. Within a context of major cultural and sociopolitical transitions, the course traces the emergence of a post (-war, -empire, -modern) sensibility resulting in subversive storytelling and ambiguous representations of self and other.

LEARNING

OUTCOMES:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Analyse the cultural and literary characteristics of post-world-war-II modernity and trace the emergence of a postwar and postcolonial sensibility and its influence on contemporary British literature;
2. Discuss the contemporary reaction to traditional literary and cultural structures and concepts;
3. Identify and define experimentation in narrative, poetic, and dramatic forms through close textual reading of representative contemporary British literary texts;
4. Relate and compare the contribution of individual authors and works to the development of themes and techniques typical of contemporary British literature.

METHOD OF TEACHING

AND LEARNING:

Teaching and learning strategies include:

- Lectures, class discussions, workshop-style pair work and group work during class meetings;
- Formative exercises and other learning tasks assigned to help students acquire confidence and benefit from independent study;
- Timely instructor feedback on assignments;

- Additional print and audiovisual educational material posted on the Blackboard course template;
- Other relevant educational material placed on reserve in the library;
- Individualized assistance during office hours for further discussion of lecture material, additional reading, assignments and examinations;
- Close collaboration with Librarian and Writing Center Coordinator to encourage students' effective use of academic support services.

ASSESSMENT:

Formative coursework	0%	Essay drafts and all in-class and out-of-class assignments in preparation for the examination and the essay
SUMMATIVE Coursework		
Essay (2,500 words)	50%	10-page analysis of author(s) and work(s) developed through close reading; choice of topics
Comprehensive 2-hour Final examination	50%	Explication of extracts and one Essay question OR Two Essay Questions; choice of extracts and Essay Questions

The formative coursework prepares students for successful completion of the summative coursework.

The critical essay tests learning outcomes 2, 3 and 4.

The final examination tests learning outcomes 1, 2 and 4.

READING

MATERIAL:

Greenblatt, Stephen, ed. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, Volume 2. New York: Norton, latest edition. [Core Textbook]

Jacobus, Lee A., ed. *The Bedford Introduction to Drama*. Boston: Bedford Books, latest edition. [Core Textbook]

At least **two of the following novels** [Core Texts]

Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day* (Faber)

Nadine Gordimer, *July's People* (Bloomsbury)

A. S. Byatt, *Possession: A Romance* (Vintage)

Pat Barker, *Regeneration* (Penguin)

Penelope Lively, *Moon Tiger* (Penguin Modern Classics)

Jeanette Winterson, *The Passion* (Vintage)

Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children* (Vintage Classics)
Ian McEwan, *On Chesil Beach* (Vintage)
Graham Swift, *Last Orders* (Picador)
Julian Barnes, *Flaubert's Parrot* (Vintage)

James Acheson and Romana Huk, ed. *Contemporary British Poetry: Essays in Theory and Criticism*. SUNY P, 1996.

Nick Bentley. *Contemporary British Fiction*. Edinburgh UP, 2008.

Steven Connor, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Postmodernism*. 2004.

James F. English, ed. *A Concise Companion to Contemporary British Fiction*. Blackwell, 2006.

N. Holdsworth and M. Luckhurst, ed. *A Concise Companion to Contemporary British and Irish Drama*. Blackwell, 2006.

V. K. Janik and Del Ivan Janik, ed. *Modern British Women Writers: An A-to-Z Guide*. Greenwood, 2002.

A. Lee. *Realism and Power: Postmodern British Fiction*. Routledge, 1990.

David Ian Rabey. *English Drama Since 1940*. Longman, 2003.

**COMMUNICATION
REQUIREMENTS:**

With the exception of the in-class examination, all written work must be word-processed on Word and adhere to MLA guidelines for manuscript format and documentation.

**SOFTWARE
REQUIREMENTS:**

Word, Blackboard

WWW RESOURCES:

www.wwnorton.com/english/nael
www.contemporarywriters.com

**INDICATIVE
CONTENT:**

Instructors select material on the basis of traits and techniques relevant to all major thematic and stylistic particularities of contemporary British literature (such as historical fiction, narrative experimentation, multiculturalism, class consciousness, gender roles).

Possible topics and themes:

1. Impact of World War II and post-war disillusionment
2. The Rejection of Traditions
3. Nature and the Human Condition
4. Experiments with form and style: Realism and Modernism Revisited
5. Femininity / Masculinity Redefined
6. Historicizing fictions of Nationhood and Empire

READING LIST: In addition to the primary texts studied during the semester, students will

also read all introductory materials, including the general introductions and introductions to each assigned author.

Instructors should select representative material from all genres.

- A. **Contemporary Poetry** (at least **two works for each poet**)
1. Stevie **Smith**, “Not Waving But Drowning” , “Pretty”
 2. W. H. **Auden**, “The Shield of Achilles”, “The More Loving One”, “August 1968”
 3. Philip **Larkin**, “Church Going,” “Ambulances,” “Aubade”
 4. Ted **Hughes**, “Relic,” “Pike,” “Daffodils”, “Theology”
 5. Seamus **Heaney**, “Digging,” “The Forge”, “The Skunk”
 6. Thom **Gunn**, “From the Wave,” “Still Life”
 7. Tony **Harrison**, “Book Ends” and “Long Distance”
 8. Carol Ann **Duffy**, “Medusa” and “Mrs Lazarus”
- B. **Contemporary Drama** (at least **one play for each writer**)
1. Harold **Pinter**, *Betrayal* OR *Celebration*
 2. Tom **Stoppard**, *The Real Thing* OR *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*
 3. Caryl **Churchill**, *A Number* and / OR *Seven Jewish Children*
- C. **The Contemporary Novel** (at least **two of the following novels**)
1. Kazuo **Ishiguro**, *The Remains of the Day*
 2. Nadine **Gordimer**, *July’s People*
 3. A. S. **Byatt**, *Possession*
 4. Pat **Barker**, *Regeneration* (volume I of the *Regeneration* trilogy)
 5. Penelope **Lively**, *Moon Tiger*
 6. Jeanette **Winterson**, *The Passion*
 7. Salman **Rushdie**, *Midnight’s Children*
 8. Ian **McEwan**, *On Chesil Beach*
 9. Graham **Swift**, *Last Orders*
 10. Julian **Barnes**, *Flaubert’s Parrot*
- D. **The Contemporary Short Story** (at least **three stories by three different authors**)
1. Doris **Lessing**, “To Room Nineteen”
 2. Fay **Weldon**, “Weekend”
 3. Salman **Rushdie**, "The Prophet's Hair"
 4. Nadine **Gordimer**, “The Moment before the Gun Went Off”
 5. John **Fowles**, “The Enigma” (from *The Ebony Tower*)
 6. Ian **McEwan**, “Solid Geometry” (from *First Love, Last Rites*)
 7. Julian **Barnes**, “Vigilance” (from *The Lemon Table*)
 8. Martin **Amis**, “Straight Fiction” (from *Heavy Water*)
 9. Graham **Swift**, “Seraglio” (from *Learning to Swim*)