Course Description, Objectives, and Outcomes

This course invites you to engage with the poetry, prose, fiction, and drama from some of the well-known authors of English literature spanning from 1750 to the present, with particular emphasis on those of the long 20th Century. While the body of English literature during this period is vast, the works of these authors will allow us to attend to the major formal, philosophical, political, cultural, and aesthetic aspects of the English cannon and analyze how and why they have developed. The primary aims of the course are 1) to introduce students to a wide range of English authors and the historical, cultural, political forces that influenced them, and 2) to sharpen how we read and respond to literary texts in a critical fashion. We will practice close-readings of texts daily and also investigate their historical contexts. Additionally, we will discuss the use and development of literary criticism and theory, and we will learn how to execute various theoretical and critical approaches to literary analysis.

Students will develop the skills of reading critically both literary texts and literary criticism. In clear, academic-level prose, students will be able to make substantiated arguments about the texts they have read, their place in literary history, their broader historical contexts, and the critical scholarship written about literary texts. They will be able to conduct formal research on literature, using secondary and/or archival sources to support their theses, analyses, and arguments.

Required Texts

(Assigned readings absent from the required texts list are available online at no cost.)

Barnes, Julian. Flaubert’s Parrot. 0679731369. ($13)

Friel, Brian. Translations. 0571117422. ($11)

Joyce, James. A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. 0486280500. ($3)

Smith, Zadie. White Teeth. 0375703861. ($10)

Wilde, Oscar. The Importance of Being Earnest. 0486264785. ($2)
Assignments and Grade Breakdown

10 Response Papers (200 words each, 200 points total)
Throughout the semester, you will be expected to write and submit 10 brief response papers to a reading of your choice analyzing the readings and addressing larger concerns evoked through your reading. Response papers are to be submitted prior to the class period in which we will discuss the reading.

Essay 1: Close-Reading/Analysis (1,000 words, 200 points)
This essay will be a sustained close-reading of any text on our syllabus which appears on or before the end of Week 6.

Essay 2: Researched Critical Essay (3,000 words, 400 points)
This essay will be a sustained, formally researched critical analysis in which you will make an original argument about one or more literary text(s) through a particular theoretical, historical, or critical lens.

Attendance/Daily Participation (200 points)
The majority of class time will be spent reading, analyzing, and discussing the assigned texts and learning in workshops on writing and researching. For these reasons, daily and engaged participation is a priority in this course. Your participation will be monitored to ensure that the seminar dynamic characterizes our sessions. All students should participate every day in some fashion, whether through offering points of view, raising questions, asking for clarification, and/or writing when it is required.

Grading Scale

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A: Student fulfills all required aspects of assignment and work shows superior levels of originality, creativity, and critical insight.

B: Student fulfills all required aspects of assignment to adequate degree. Work in this range needs revision.

C: Student fails to complete all required aspects of assignment. Work is incomplete in content. Work in this range needs significant revision.

D: Student neglects basic requirements of the assignment.

E: Student fails to complete assignment.
General Education Guidelines

This course can satisfy the General Education requirement for Composition or Humanities. For more information, see: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-education-requirement.aspx

This course can provide 6000 words toward fulfillment of the UF requirement for writing. For more information, see: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/writing-and-math-requirement.aspx

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information, see: http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/

UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/sexual/

All students must abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalog at: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx

The instructor will evaluate and provide feedback on students’ written assignments regarding the following: 1) the depth of critical inquiry, the execution and sophistication of theses and arguments, and the level of researched evidence supporting arguments made, 2) the content, organization and coherence of this work, 3) and its style, clarity, grammar, punctuation, and mechanics. This course can satisfy the UF General Education requirement for Composition or Humanities. For more information, see: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-education-requirement.aspx

For this 2000- level course, students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Department of English Program Assistant. Please note that grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.
Schedule of Classes and Assignments
(Subject to Change)
Complete readings/assignments before class on the day they are listed.

Week One: Introduction
Mon. Aug. 25 - Course introduction
Fri. Aug. 29 - Drop/Add Ends

Week Two: Romantic Poets
Mon. Sept. 1 - No Class
Fri. Sept. 5 - John Keats, “Bright Star,” “La Belle Dame,” “Ode to a Nightingale,” “Ode on a Grecian Urn”; suggested film, Dead Poet’s Society

Week Three: Oscar Wilde
Mon. Sept. 8 - Oscar Wilde. The Importance of Being Earnest (Act I)
Wed. Sept. 10 - Oscar Wilde. The Importance of Being Earnest (Act II)
Fri. Sept. 12 - Oscar Wilde. The Importance of Being Earnest (Act III)

Week Four: Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Week Five: Joseph Conrad & Colonialism
Mon. Sept. 22 - Joseph Conrad, Heart of Darkness (Part I)
Wed. Sept. 24 - Joseph Conrad, Heart of Darkness, (Part II)
Week Six: World War I & Modernism


Fri. Oct. 3 - Close Reading/Analysis Due; Blast, selections; W. B. Yeats, selected poems; suggested film, The Wind that Shakes the Barley

Week Seven: James Joyce

Mon. Oct. 6 - James Joyce, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (Part I)

Wed. Oct. 8 - James Joyce, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (Part II)

Fri. Oct. 10 - James Joyce, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (Part III)

Week Eight: James Joyce, cont’d

Mon. Oct. 13 - James Joyce, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (Part IV)

Wed. Oct. 15 - James Joyce, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (Part V)

Fri. Oct. 17 - No Class

Week Nine: Samuel Beckett


Fri. Oct. 24 - No Readings

Week Ten: The Empire Writes Back


Fri. Oct. 31 - Stephen Frears, Hanif Kureishi, My Beautiful Laundrette (film)

Week Eleven: Julian Barnes
Mon. Nov. 3 - Julian Barnes, *Flaubert’s Parrot* (Chapters 1-2)

Wed. Nov. 5 - Julian Barnes, *Flaubert’s Parrot* (Chapters 3-4)

Fri. Nov. 7 - Julian Barnes, *Flaubert’s Parrot* (Chapters 5-6)

**Week Twelve: Julian Barnes, cont’d**

Mon. Nov. 10 - Julian Barnes, *Flaubert’s Parrot* (Chapters 7-8)

Wed. Nov. 12 - Julian Barnes, *Flaubert’s Parrot* (Chapters 9-11)

Fri. Nov. 14 - Julian Barnes, *Flaubert’s Parrot* (Chapters 12-15)

**Week Thirteen: Brian Friel**

Mon. Nov. 17 - Brian Friel, *Translations* (Act I)


Fri. Nov. 21 - Brian Friel, *Translations* (Act III)

**Week Fourteen: Zadie Smith**

Mon. Nov. 24 - Zadie Smith, *White Teeth* (Chapters 1-4)

Wed. Nov. 26 - **No Class**; Zadie Smith, *White Teeth* (Chapters 5-6)

Fri. Nov. 28 - **No Class**; Zadie Smith, *White Teeth* (Chapters 7-8)

**Week Fifteen: Zadie Smith, cont’d**


Wed. Dec. 3 - Zadie Smith, *White Teeth* (Chapters 12-13)

Fri. Dec. 5 - **Researched Critical Essay Due**; Zadie Smith, *White Teeth* (Chapters 14-16)

**Week Sixteen: Last Week of Class**

Mon. Dec. 8 - Zadie Smith, *White Teeth* (Chapters 17-20)

Wed. Dec. 10 - **Last day of class; course wrap-up**