

**City University of Hong Kong  
Course Syllabus**

offered by College/School/Department of English  
with effect from Semester A 2016 / 17

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**Part I Course Overview**

**Course Title:** Critical Approaches to Literature

**Course Code:** EN6508

**Course Duration:** One Semester

**Credit Units:** 3 Credits

**Level:** P5

**Medium of Instruction:** English

**Medium of Assessment:** English

**Prerequisites:**  
(Course Code and Title) Nil

**Precursors:**  
(Course Code and Title) Nil

**Equivalent Courses:**  
(Course Code and Title) Nil

**Exclusive Courses:**  
(Course Code and Title) Nil

## Part II Course Details

### 1. Abstract

The course aims to introduce students to major theoretical concepts and critical practices in literary studies. Students will focus on specific writers, genres or themes in the context of literary history and criticism. The critical perspectives that this course explores may include gender studies, postcolonialism, new criticism, psychoanalysis, postmodernism and reader-response theory. This course will enhance students' ability to analyse and interpret literary production from different cultural contexts through discussions of form, style, innovations on traditional creative paradigms and themes. Students will generate critical and creative responses to selected texts throughout the course.

### 2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs	Weighting (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	A2	A3
1.	Identify key critical approaches to literature	NA	V	V	
2.	Describe the characteristics of the set texts and locate them in the context of relevant theories and criticism.	NA	V	V	V
3.	Analyze the texts in the context of literary theories and criticism.	NA	V	V	V
4.	Apply creativity as well as critical reading, thinking, and writing skills in interpreting literary texts.	NA	V	V	V
5.	Understand the social, cultural and political influence on the development of critical practices in literary studies	NA	V	V	V
		100%			

A1: Attitude

*Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.*

A2: Ability

*Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.*

A3: Accomplishments

*Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.*

### 3. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

(TLAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.					Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4	5	
Lectures	Lectures will introduce the concepts and topics to be discussed in class	V	V	V	V	V	
Discussions	Students are expected to participate actively in class discussions.	V	V	V	V	V	
Essay Writing	Students will demonstrate their understanding of the topics through writing essays.	V	V	V	V	V	
Group Literary Project	Students will work in groups to generate critical re-examinations of a topic covered in class through the production of a literary project.	V	V	V	V	V	

### 4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.					Weighting	Remarks
	1	2	3	4	5		
Continuous Assessment: <u>100</u> %							
Response Paper Students will write a short response paper on a selected topic.	V	V	V	V	V	20%	Individual Work
Group Literary Project Students will form in groups to critically re-examine the topics covered in the course through the production of a literary project that engages with a specific theme. They will need to present their project to the class.	V	V	V	V	V	30%	Group Work
Final Research Paper Students are required to write one substantial final research paper.	V	V	V	V	V	40%	Individual Work
Class Participation and Discussion Students are expected to participate actively in class discussion and demonstrate their reading preparation.	V	V	V	V		10%	Individual Work
Examination: <u>0</u> % (duration: _____, if applicable)							
						100%	

## 5. Assessment Rubrics

(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Adequate (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Response Paper	Content and interpretation; organisation; language	Demonstrates creative and original thought; shows thorough understanding of the text; a very effective structure and focus of discussion is very clear; excellent language	Demonstrates some thoughtful ideas; shows good understanding of the text; an effective structure and a clear focus; show good language skills	Shows fairly good understanding of the text, but ideas may not be original; structure is evident and focus of discussion can be identified; shows adequate language skills	Shows some misinterpretation of the text; structure is confusing and focus of discussion is weak; shows weak language skills	Fails to fulfil assignment requirement
2. Final research paper	Content and Interpretation; Research; organisation; Language	The paper is exceptionally well-researched and the analysis of the primary text(s) and historical or other critical contexts is outstanding; there is intelligent understanding of themes in the texts and the broader correlation to critical perspectives on space and place in literary studies; The purpose of analysing and presenting the material is completely achieved; style and tone are highly appropriate	The paper is well-researched and the analysis of the primary text(s) and historical or other critical contexts is strong; there is clear understanding of themes in the texts and the broader correlation to critical perspectives on space and place in literary studies; the purpose of analysing and presenting the material is achieved; style and tone are appropriate	There are some moderate concerns with the research and the analysis of the primary text(s) and historical or other critical contexts; there is limited understanding of themes in the texts and the broader correlation to critical perspectives on space and place in literary studies; the purpose of analysing and presenting the material is partially achieved; style and tone are somewhat appropriate	There are problems with the research and the analysis of the primary text(s) and historical or other critical contexts; there is minimal understanding of themes in the texts and the broader correlation to critical perspectives on space and place in literary studies; the purpose of analysing and presenting the material is not fully achieved; style and tone are somewhat inappropriate	Fails to fulfil assignment requirement

3. Group Literary Project	Content; Originality and Creativity Presentation skills; Organisation	The project demonstrates the group's excellent critical thinking and creativity; the topic is exceptionally well-presented and analysed; the presentation style is highly appropriate; ideas are communicated to the audience very effectively.	The project demonstrates the group's critical thinking and creativity; the topic is competently presented and analysed; the presentation style is appropriate; ideas are generally communicated to the audience effectively.	The project demonstrates the group's understanding of the primary text but more critical analysis is needed; the topic is adequately presented and analysed; the presentation style is somewhat appropriate; Ideas are in general communicated to the audience though improvements are needed for clarity of expression.	The topic is sketchily presented and inadequately analysed; the presentation style is largely inappropriate; failed to communicate key ideas to the audience.	Fails to fulfil the assignment requirements.
4. Participation	Participation in in-class activities (such as group discussion and writing tasks)	Makes significant contribution to in-class discussion and completes writing tasks satisfactorily.	Makes occasional contribution to in-class group discussion and completes the writing tasks satisfactorily.	Seldom makes contribution to in-class group discussion; completes most of the in-class writing tasks	Little evidence of participation in class; completes very few in-class writing tasks.	Fails to sufficiently participate in in-class activities

### Part III Other Information (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

#### 1. Keyword Syllabus

(An indication of the key topics of the course.)

Literary theory, textual practice, literature, postcolonialism, gender, postmodernism

#### 2. Reading List

##### 2.1 Compulsory Readings (\*tentative list)

(Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)

1.	Borges, Jorge Luis. <i>Labyrinths</i> (selections)
2.	James, Henry. <i>The Turn of the Screw</i>
3.	Kingston, Maxine Hong. <i>The Woman Warrior</i>
2.	Rhys, Jean. <i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i>
4.	Other set texts, including poetry and prose, are to be distributed by the instructor

##### 2.2 Additional Readings

(Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)

1.	Barthes, Roland. <i>Mythologies</i> . London: Vintage, 2000.
2.	Bennett, Andrew & Nicholas Royle. <i>An Introduction to Literature, Criticism and Theory</i> . London and New York: Routledge, 2014.
3.	Belsey, Catherine. <i>Critical Practice</i> . London and New York: Routledge, 2002.
4.	Butler, Judith. <i>Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity</i> . London and New York: Routledge, 2010.
5.	During, Simon. <i>The Cultural Studies Reader</i> . London: Routledge, 1993.
6.	Eagleton, Terry. <i>Literary Theory: An Introduction</i> . Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008.
7.	Frow, John. <i>Genre</i> . London and New York: Routledge, 2015.
8.	Highmore, Ben. <i>Everyday Life and Cultural Theory: An Introduction</i> . London: Routledge, 2002.
9.	King, Bruce. <i>The Internationalization of English Literature</i> . Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
10.	Leitch, Vincent (Ed.). <i>The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism</i> . London and New York: Norton, 2001.
11.	Lentricchia, Frank and Thomas McLaughlin. <i>Critical Terms for Literary Study</i> . Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1995.
12.	Lodge, David. <i>The Art of Fiction</i> . London: Vintage Books, 2011.
13.	Onega, Susanna and Christian Gutleben (Eds.) <i>Refracting the Canon in Contemporary British Literature and Film</i> . Amsterdam; New York: Rodopi, 2004.
14.	Pope, Rob. <i>The English Studies Book: An Introduction to Language, Literature and Culture</i> . London and New York: Routledge, 2002.
15.	Poplawshi, Paul. <i>English Literature in Context</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
16.	Williams, Raymond. <i>Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society</i> . London: Fontana Press, 1983.