

Department of English
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

ENGE1610 Introduction to Literature

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Course Description

This course will introduce students to the methods of reading and interpreting literary texts from the primary genres of poetry, fiction, and drama. Students will be familiarised with foundational literary terms and concepts and study a variety of literary texts written in different historical and geographical contexts. The emphasis in the course will be on close reading—paying attention to the nuances of language and analysing how the meaning of a literary text is informed by its formal elements and literary conventions. At the same time, the course will also give students an awareness of the interaction between text and context, insight into creative writing and critical reception, and an understanding of the inheritance and transformation of literary traditions.

Course E-Learning Platform

Our online platform for this course is Blackboard. An orientation to the site and how it will be used in the course will be given during the first week of classes. All announcements and course materials (lecture ppts, readings) will be posted here: [link]

Course Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this course should be able to:

- ◇ read literary texts purposefully and generate informed interpretations of them;

- ◇ understand the literary texts and concepts introduced in the course;
- ◇ compose focused, well-organised essays that demonstrate knowledge of literary texts and concepts and apply skills of critical thinking and analysis;
- ◇ create a multimodal presentation that communicates a perspective on a literary text to a broad audience;
- ◇ develop an appreciation of literature and a sensitivity to the nuances of language that will extend beyond the classroom.

Course Content	Course Concepts
Introduction to Literature	Literary language; authors and readers; texts and contexts; literary canons.
Poetry	Rhythm, diction/voice, poetic speakers and personas, poetic forms, themes, and literary devices, such as metaphor, symbolism, imagery
Fiction	Plot, theme, setting, narrative point-of-view, dialogue, character
Drama	History and major genres of drama; dramatic elements; stage conventions and aspects of live performance
World Literature	Understanding literature written in times and places different from one's own

Learning Activities

Teaching and learning activities in this course will consist of lectures that deliver content and background knowledge through a combination text, audio, and visual media and tutorials that engage students in a variety of interpretive activities. Lectures will be interactive and invite frequent contributions from students through questions and small-group activities. Since a key component of this course involves developing the thinking and writing skills central to analysing literary texts, students will have ample opportunities in tutorials to engage with the course readings through guided discussions, collaborative activities, and

formative writing tasks. A variety of structured thinking routines will be offered to students to help them work through the readings and formulate interpretations of them, while at the same time developing a habit of mind that will remain after the completion of the course.

The weekly workload schedule below may help you allocate your time this term:

Lecture	Interactive tutorial	Reading	Writing/ Revising	Preparing presentations	Discussion
In class	In class	Out of class	Out of class	Out of class	Out of class
2 hrs.	1 hr.	2 hrs.	2 hrs.	1-2 hrs.	1 hr.
M	M	O	O	O	O

M = Mandatory O = Optional (but highly recommended)

Assessment Scheme		
Task	Description	Weighting
Tutorial participation	Active, informed contributions to discussions that demonstrate preparedness and developing knowledge of literary texts and concepts; constructive interactions with peers that demonstrate skills of listening, reflecting, and responding to others.	10%
Presentation	<p>In small groups (2-3), students will prepare and present a 5-7 mins, multimodal analysis of a poem, play, or story that they have not written on for their essays. This a chance to delve more deeply into a particular genre. It is also an opportunity to explore creative ways to interpret literature by using audio and/or visual elements to extend the meanings of the written text and communicate to a broader audience. Presentations can take the form of a video essay, Pecha Kucha presentation, vlog episode, or podcast, for example.</p> <p>Your presentations should respond to the following question:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Why is this poem/story/play relevant today?</i></p>	20%

	A selection of additional texts will be provided in a folder on Blackboard should students wish to work on a literary text beyond the required readings.	
Three short essays	<p>Written essays analysing one or more text from each of the three genres studied in the course: poetry, fiction, and drama. Length of each essay is 750 words, or approx. 3 pages.</p> <p>Paper 1: poetry (20%) Choose a poem (or compare two poems) and analyse how one or more literary concepts (i.e. poetic form, rhythm, diction/voice, metaphor, imagery) contributes meaning and develops a theme.</p> <p>Paper 2: fiction (25%) Choose a story (or compare two stories) and analyse how setting, character, dialogue, or narrative point-of-view contributes meaning and develops a theme.</p> <p>Paper 3: drama (25%) Choose a play and analyse how one or more dramatic elements (i.e. plot, character, language, rhythm, theme, spectacle) develops conflict and contributes meaning to the play (as a text and/or performance).</p> <p>All essays should use the MLA style guide, 9th edition and follow the standard essay structure: a cohesive introduction and focused thesis statement; well-developed paragraphs that make a clear point and balance citations from the literary texts with independent analysis; and a conclusion that reaffirms the main points developed in the essay and articulates a summative judgement.</p>	70%

Course Schedule			
Week	Topic	Readings	Due Dates
Week 1	Introduction: What is literary language? Authors and readers, texts and contexts; formation of literary canons.	William Blake, "London"; Mark Thompson, "I am a Cultural Chameleon" (distributed in class)	

Week 2	Poetry: poetic form, poetic speaker, metaphor	John Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn"; Li Bai, "A Poem of Changgan"; Edgar Allen Poe, "The Raven"; Emily Dickinson, "Hope is the Thing with Feathers"	
Week 3	Poetry: rhythm, diction/voice, sound devices	Paul Laurence Dunbar, "We Wear the Mask"; James Weldon Johnson, "Lift Every Voice and Sing"; Langston Hughes, "Harlem"	
Week 4	Poetry: imagery, symbolism, theme	Percy Bysshe Shelley, "Ozymandias"; Imtiaz Dharker, "Tissue"; Rita Dove, "Demeter's Prayer to Hades"; Rabindranath Tagore, "Freedom"	Submit Paper 1 (poetry) by Sunday midnight
Week 5	Fiction: plot, character, setting	Margaret Atwood, "Happy Endings"; Kate Chopin, "Story of an Hour"; Amy Tan, "A Pair of Tickets"	
Week 6	Fiction: dialogue, narration, point-of-view	Liu Yichang, "Intersection"; Ernest Hemingway, "Hills Like White Elephants"	
Week 7	Fiction: theme	Ursula Le Guin, "The Ones Who Walked Away from Omelas"	Submit Paper 2 (fiction) by Sunday midnight
Week 8	Drama: introduction to the history and	Sophocles, <i>Antigone</i> (read to line 465)	

	major genres of drama; six elements of drama (Aristotle); theory and structure of tragedy		
Week 9	Drama: tragedy	Sophocles, <i>Antigone</i> (read from line 465 to end)	
Week 10	Drama: tragicomedy	Samuel Beckett, <i>Waiting for Godot</i> , Act 1	
Week 11	Drama: tragicomedy	Samuel Beckett, <i>Waiting for Godot</i> , Act 2	Submit Paper 3 (drama) by Sunday midnight
Week 12	Student presentations!		Submit presentations by Sunday midnight

Learning Resources

All readings listed in the course schedule will be available on Blackboard. The following resources will also be available for students to consult:

Eagleton, Terry. *How to Read Literature*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013.

Griffith, Kelley. *Writing Essays about Literature: A Guide and Style Sheet*. Boston Mass: Wadsworth, 2011.

“Writing about Literature.” *The Norton Introduction to Literature*, Tenth Edition, edited by Alison Booth and Kelly J. Mays. Norton, 2010, pp. 1845-1897.

Feedback for evaluation

At the end of the term, students will have an opportunity to complete evaluations of the course. Students are also welcome to give feedback on the course at any

time during the term. They can do so by communicating with the professor directly or by email, or by talking to or emailing the course TAs.

Academic honesty

Veriguide:

Each student must upload soft copies of all their essays to the plagiarism detection engine Veriguide. The system will issue a receipt that also contains a declaration of honesty (see below). The declaration should be signed and the receipt attached to and submitted with the assignment. Assignments without the receipt or signed declaration of honesty will not be graded.

University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations, may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/> . With each assignment, students will be required to submit a statement that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures.

Statement:

I declare that the assignment here submitted is original except for source material explicitly acknowledged. I also acknowledge that I am aware of University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and of the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations, as contained in the website <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>

Signature

Date

Name

Student ID

Course code Course title

Course Grade Descriptors

Grade A / Excellent: Outstanding performance on ALL learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to synthesize and apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would surpass the normal expectations at this level and typical of standards that may be common at higher levels of study. The 'A'

grade should be reserved for truly excellent work that exceeds the level expected for the majority of students and are expected to be achieved only by a small minority.

Grade A- / Very Good: Generally outstanding performance on ALMOST ALL learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to synthesize and apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would fully fulfil the normal expectations at this level and occasionally reaches standards that may be common at higher levels of study.

Grade B+ / Good (Plus): HIGH performance on all learning outcomes, OR HIGH performance on some learning outcomes which compensates WELL for slightly less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance. Demonstrates the ability to apply WELL the principles or skills learned in the course in a comprehensive manner that would sufficiently fulfil the normal expectations at this level WELL.

Grade B / Good: SUBSTANTIAL performance on all learning outcomes, OR SUBSTANTIAL performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for slightly less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance. Demonstrates the ability to apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a MORE COMPREHENSIVE manner that would sufficiently fulfil the normal expectations at this level.

Grade C+ / Satisfactory (Plus): SATISFACTORY performance on all learning outcomes, OR SATISFACTORY performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for slightly less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall satisfactory performance. Demonstrates the ability to apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a SATISFACTORY manner that would sufficiently fulfil the normal expectations at this level.

Grade C / Satisfactory: ACCEPTABLE performance on all learning outcomes, OR ACCEPTABLE performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for slightly less acceptable performance on others, resulting in overall acceptable performance. Demonstrates the ability to apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would sufficiently fulfil the normal expectations at this level.

Grade D / Unsatisfactory: Pass. UNSATISFACTORY performance on all learning outcomes, OR UNSATISFACTORY performance on most learning outcomes so there is little room for compensation, resulting in overall unsatisfactory performance. Does not sufficiently demonstrate the ability to apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would sufficiently fulfil the normal expectations at this level.

Grade F / Poor: Fail. POOR performance on all learning outcomes, OR POOR performance on most learning outcomes. Does not demonstrate the ability to

apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would sufficiently fulfil the normal expectations at this level.