

MODULE SPECIFICATION FORM

Module Title: The Contemporary Novel	Level: 6	Credit Value: 20
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Module code: HUM625	Cost Centre: GAHN	JACS3 code: Q321
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Trimester(s) in which to be offered: 2	With effect from: September 2014
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Office use only: To be completed by AQSU:	Date approved: July 2014 Date revised: - Version no: 1
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Existing/New: New	Title of module being replaced (if any): HUM616 Postmodern Writing
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Originating Academic Department: Creative Industries	Module Leader: Debbie Hayfield
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Module duration (total hours): 200	Status: core/option/elective (identify programme where appropriate): Core for English and Optional for all other programmes
Scheduled learning & teaching hours: 60	
Independent study hours: 140	
Placement hours: 0	

Programme(s) in which to be offered: BA (Hons) English BA (Hons) English & Creative Writing BA (Hons) English and History	Pre-requisites per programme (between levels): None
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Module Aims:

This module aims to:

- Enable the development of reading and understanding of a range of contemporary fiction from the 1980s to the present and consider them within debates about innovation in modern fiction.
- Investigate some of the theoretical, philosophical and critical concepts that inform contemporary fiction and explore the relationship between them.
- Introduce and encourage reflective use of diverse theoretical perspectives, critical approaches and the associated terminology.
- Examine and critically analyse a selection of contemporary literature in the light of these theories and debates.

Intended Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this module, students will be able to:

1. Identify and evaluate the key features of contemporary fiction. (KS1,3,4,5,6,9)
2. Describe and analyze some of the theoretical and philosophical concepts which underpin contemporary fiction. (KS1,3,4,5,6,9)
3. Apply and evaluate theoretical ideas which contribute to an understanding of the texts. (KS1,3,4,5,6,9)
4. Critically analyze and interpret specific novels and the issues they raise, demonstrating awareness of what makes them 'contemporary'. (KS1,3,4,5,6,9)

Key skills (KS) for employability

1. *Written, oral and media communication skills*
2. *Leadership, team working and networking skills*
3. *Opportunity, creativity and problem solving skills*
4. *Information technology skills and digital literacy*
5. *Information management skills*
6. *Research skills*
7. *Intercultural and sustainability skills*
8. *Career management skills*
9. *Learning to learn (managing personal and professional development, self-management)*
10. *Numeracy*

Assessment:

In Assessment one student will be required to undertake a critical analysis of the work of two chosen texts in relation to theories, themes and issues covered in the module.

Assessment two will be an unseen examination requiring students to provide two answers to two questions chosen from a range and apply them specific texts. The questions are designed to demonstrate understanding of the ideas and issues covered in this module, and the ability to analyze in relation to specific material and texts.

Assessment number	Learning Outcomes to be met	Type of assessment	Weighting	Duration (if exam)	Word count (or equivalent if appropriate)
1	1,2,3,4	Essay	50%		3000
2	1,2,3,4	Examination	50%	2 hours	

Learning and Teaching Strategies:

Following introductory lectures which will provide students with information regarding theoretical and aesthetic ideas which underpin the contemporary novel, texts will be taught in two session blocks and will consist of a lecture in the first and a seminar in the second. The lecture will provide information about context, theoretical approaches and critical interpretations of the text. The second session will be a tutor-led discussion, for which students will be expected to prepare, about the text and the ideas and issues it raises.

Indicative Syllabus outline:

Trends in the contemporary novel such as:

- The retro-Victorian novel
- Magic realism
- Formal experimentation
- Postmodernism
- The historical novel
- Representations of the future
- Themes within the contemporary novel such as its questioning stance towards identity, truth, history, and meaning.

Specific texts may varied from year to year but texts studied may include:

Margaret Atwood, *Alias Grace* (1996)
 Italo Calvino, *If on a winter's night a traveller* (1979)
 Don DeLillo, *White Noise* (1984)
 Peter Ackroyd, *Chatterton* (1987)
 A S Byatt, *Possession* (1990)
 Paul Auster, 'The City of Glass' from *The New York Trilogy* (1987)
 Laura Esquivel, *Like Water for Chocolate* (1989)
 Brett Easton Ellis, *American Psycho* (1991)

David Mitchell, *Cloud Atlas* (2004)
Sarah Waters, *Fingersmith* (2002)

Bibliography:

Indicative reading

Gasiorek, Andrzej, *Post-War British Fiction: Realism and After* (London & New York: Edward Arnold, 1995)

Sarup, Madan, *An Introductory Guide to Post-Structuralism and Postmodernism* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993)

Waugh, Patricia, *Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction* (London and New York: Routledge, 1984)

Connor, Steven, *The English Novel in History* (London & New York: Routledge, 1996)

Electronic Resources

Project Muse - <http://muse.jhu.edu>