City University of Hong Kong Course Syllabus

offered by Department of English with effect from Semester A 2024/25

Part I Course Over	view
Course Title:	Critical Approaches to Literature
Course Code:	EN6508
Course Duration:	One Semester
Credit Units:	3 Credits
Level:	P6
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

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Part II Course Details

1. Abstract

The course aims to introduce students to major theoretical concepts and critical practices in literary studies. Students will explore and discuss—specific writers, genres or themes in the context of literary history and criticism. The critical perspectives that this course explores include structuralism, gender studies, postcolonialism, narratology, psychoanalysis, postmodernism and reader-response theory. Through applying these different theoretical perspectives to the literary texts covered in this course, students will acquire the interpretative and critical analytical skills that are crucial to literature research and writing. Students will generate critical, analytical 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)	currici learnin	very-enulum re alum re ng outco e tick	lated omes
			Al	A2	A3
1.	Identify key critical approaches to literature	NA	V	V	
2.	Analyse the characteristics of the set texts in the context of relevant theories and criticism.	NA	V	V	V
3.	Apply literary theories to interpret selected literary texts	NA	V	V	V
4.	Apply and develop critical reading, thinking, and writing, and research skills to interpret literary texts and situate them within the relevant critical contexts.	NA	V	V	V
5.	Examine the social, cultural and political influence on the development of critical practices in literary studies	NA	V	V	V
	<u>'</u>	100%		1	ı

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 real-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.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)
(LTAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

LTA	Brief Description	CIL	O No	Э.			Hours/week
	•	1	2	3	4	5	(if applicable)
Interactive lectures and discussion	Each week students will discuss key topics and major critical approaches with their peers in small groups and in response to questions raised by the instructor.	V	V	V	V	V	
Composition and critical analysis of key concepts and ideas	Students will apply their knowledge of the critical approaches covered in class and their literary interpretative skills to compose short writings and a critical essay on selected topics.	V	V	V	V	V	
Application of knowledge through presentation and discussion	Students will demonstrate their critical engagement with selected texts and theories through presentations and discussion.	V	V	V	V	V	
Test	Students will apply their knowledge of course materials and analytical skills to address questions raised in the test at the end of the course.	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	CII	LO N	0.			Weighting	Remarks
	1	2	3	4	5		
Continuous Assessment: 100	%						
Final Test	V	V	V	V	V		
The final test will evaluate						4.50 /	
student's knowledge and						45%	Individual assessment
understanding of literary							
theories and literary texts							
covered in this course and							
their skills of literary analysis							
and interpretation. This test							
will take place at the end of							
the course.							
Group Presentation	V	V	V	V	V		
Students will form small						25%	Group assessment
groups to give a presentation							
on selected literary criticisms,							
their application and							
limitations.							
Analysis Paper	V	V	V	V	V	20%	Individual assessment
Students will write a short							
textual analysis paper in							
response to one of the set							
questions on selected literary							
texts covered in this course.							
Class Participation and	V	V	V	V		10%	
Discussion							
Students will be required to							
participate actively in class							
discussion and activities, as							
well as demonstrate their							
reading preparation.							
Examination: 0 % (duration:			, if a	pplic	cable))	1

100%

5. Assessment Rubrics

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

Applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent	Good	Fair	Marginal	Failure
		(A+, A, A-)	(B+, B, B-)	(C+, C, C-)	(D)	(F)
Analysis Paper	Thesis and Argumentation	Thesis is clear and	The responses contain	Elements of B and D	The topic is clear but	The essay appears to be
		appropriate for the	sharp ideas that are		there is little originality	off topic or only
		writing task. There is a	clearly expressed,		in the way that the	loosely related to the
		sense of originality in	original, and		writer has answered the	task. The writer may
		the way the writer has	thoughtfully supported.		question. Ideas are not	have misunderstood the
		answered the question.			always supported.	question.
		Ideas are well			There is little sense of	
		supported and			progression as the	
		conclusions reveal a			paper develops.	
		progression of ideas				
	Engagement	Sophisticated critical	The discussion of the	Elements of B and D	Some discussion of the	Very little if any
		reading and	primary texts and		primary texts and	engagement with the
		interpretative skills	secondary source		secondary source	primary texts.
		apparent.	materials is appropriate		materials, but mostly in	
			and sufficiently		general and broad	
			detailed. There is a		terms. The selection of	
			sense of the writer		the texts may not be	
			critically engaging with		appropriate for the task.	
			the texts.			
	Organisation	Organization supports	Organization clearly	Elements of B and D	There maybe abrupt or	Ideas are not clearly
		thesis in a logical and	supports thesis.		illogical shifts in ideas.	marked or

		compelling way. The	Transitions between		Parts of the response	contextualised.
					1	contextuansed.
		organization between	ideas are clear and are		may be illogically	
		sentences, paragraphs,	appropriately		connected or tangential.	
		and ideas is cohesive	expressed.		Mechanical and	
		and effective in terms			inappropriate use of	
		of advancing the			transitional phrases.	
		writer's arguments.				
	Language	Exceptionally well	Strong control of	Effective and	There is a high density	Almost every sentence
		composed. Words are	language and a wide	functional control.	of errors, causing strain	has some kind of error,
		used with precision and	lexical range.	Basic ideas are	for the reader. The	which causes serious
		accuracy. A wide	Grammatical structures	communicated	meaning is sometimes	problems for the
		variety of sentence	are varied and well	effectively. Errors	lost or unclear	reader. The meaning is
		structures are used.	constructed. Small	cause minimal		often lost or distorted.
			errors may persist but	distraction.		
			the meaning is sharp			
			and clear.			
Participation		Makes significant	Makes occasional	Seldom makes	Little evidence of	Fails to complete in-
		contribution to in-class	contribution to in-class	contribution to in-class	participation in class;	class tasks or
		discussion and	discussion and	group discussion and in	completes very few in-	participate in class
		completes tasks	completes the tasks	class tasks.	class tasks.	discussions.
		satisfactorily.	satisfactorily.			
Group Presentation	Content	The topic is well-	Good research skills	Elements of B and D	Content is lacking	The content is
		researched, and	apparent. Content is		details or consideration.	insufficient and/or
		analysis and	thoughtful. There		Research appears to be	substantially lacking in
		explanation are	maybe some lack of		superficial.	detail. Lacking
		supported by details.	details.			evidence of research.

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		Ideas are insightful and				
		original.				
	Language and Delivery	Exceptionally well	Strong control of	Elements and	There is a high density	There are serious
		presented. Ideas are	language and	functional control of	of errors, causing strain	problems in
		communicated with	effectively	presentation. Basic	for the audience. The	comprehension for the
		precision and accuracy.	communicated. Small	ideas are	meaning is sometimes	audience. The meaning
		Excellent non-verbal	errors persist but the	communicated	lost or unclear. Non-	is often lost or
		communication.	meaning is clear.	effectively. Errors	verbal communication	distorted.
			Effective non-verbal	cause minimal	is weak.	
			communication.	distraction. Satisfactory		
				non-verbal		
				communication.		
	Organization	Visually appealing and	Visually appealing and	Elements of B and D.	Lacking in clear	The organization is
		highly effective team	effectively organized		organization. Design is	confusing, unclear, or
		management. Smooth	with some		inappropriate and/or	non-existent. There is
		and effective	inconsistencies. Good		ineffective. Team	an obvious lack of
		transitions and strong	transitions and sense of		management may	teamwork and
		cohesions.	cohesion. Good team		appear uneven.	cohesion.
			management is		Presentation appears	
			apparent.		fragmented and lacking	
					in cohesion.	
Final test	Content and Analysis	Shows an excellent	Shows a good	Shows a fair	Shows little	Failed to fulfil the
		understanding of	understanding of	understanding of	understanding of	requirements of the test
		selected literary texts,	selected literary texts,	selected literary texts,	selected literary texts,	questions, or show a
		main concepts,	main concepts,	main concepts,	main concepts,	complete lack of
		theoretical approaches	theoretical approaches	theoretical approaches	theoretical approaches	understandings of

	and their application.	and their application.	and their application.	and their application.	selected literary texts,
	The argument and ideas	The argument and ideas	The argument and ideas	There is minimal	main concepts, or
	are fully supported by	are well supported by	are partially supported	attempt to provide	theoretical approaches.
	relevant examples and	relevant examples and	by relevant examples	support or examples to	
	analyses.	analyses.	and analysis.	substantiate the claims	
				and analysis.	

Applicable to students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent	Good	Marginal	Failure
		(A+, A, A-)	(B+, B)	(B-, C+, C)	(F)
Analysis Paper	Thesis and Argumentation	Thesis is clear and	The responses contain sharp	The topic is clear but there is	The essay appears to be off
		appropriate for the writing	ideas that are clearly	little originality in the way that	topic or only loosely related
		task. There is a sense of	expressed, original, and	the writer has answered the	to the task. The writer may
		originality in the way the	thoughtfully supported.	question. Ideas are not always	have misunderstood the
		writer has answered the		supported. There is little sense of	question.
		question. Ideas are well		progression as the paper	
		supported and conclusions		develops.	
		reveal a progression of ideas			
	Engagement	Sophisticated critical reading	The discussion of the primary	Some discussion of the primary	Very little if any engagement
		and interpretative skills	texts and secondary source	texts and secondary source	with the primary texts.
		apparent.	materials is appropriate and	materials, but mostly in general	
			sufficiently detailed. There is	and broad terms. The selection	
			a sense of the writer critically	of the texts may not be	
			engaging with the texts.	appropriate for the task.	

	Organisation	Organization supports thesis	Organization clearly supports	There maybe abrupt or illogical	Ideas are not clearly marked
		in a logical and compelling	thesis. Transitions between	shifts in ideas. Parts of the	or contextualised.
		way. The organization	ideas are clear and are	response may be illogically	
		between sentences,	appropriately expressed.	connected or tangential.	
		paragraphs, and ideas is		Mechanical and inappropriate	
		cohesive and effective in		use of transitional phrases.	
		terms of advancing the			
		writer's arguments.			
	Language	Exceptionally well	Strong control of language	There is a high density of errors,	Almost every sentence has
		composed. Words are used	and a wide lexical range.	causing strain for the reader. The	some kind of error, which
		with precision and accuracy.	Grammatical structures are	meaning is sometimes lost or	causes serious problems for
		A wide variety of sentence	varied and well constructed.	unclear	the reader. The meaning is
		structures are used.	Small errors may persist but		often lost or distorted.
			the meaning is sharp and		
			clear.		
Participation		Makes significant	Makes occasional	Little evidence of participation	Fails to complete in-class
		contribution to in-class	contribution to in-class	in class; completes very few in-	tasks or participate in class
		discussion and completes	discussion and completes the	class tasks.	discussions.
		tasks satisfactorily.	tasks satisfactorily.		
Group Presentation	Content	The topic is well-researched,	Good research skills	Content is lacking details or	The content is insufficient
Presentation		and analysis and explanation	apparent. Content is	consideration. Research appears	and/or substantially lacking
		are supported by details.	thoughtful. There maybe	to be superficial.	in detail. Lacking evidence of
		Ideas are insightful and	some lack of details.		research.
		original.			
	Language and Delivery	Exceptionally well presented.	Strong control of language	There is a high density of errors,	There are serious problems in
		Ideas are communicated with	and effectively	causing strain for the audience.	comprehension for the

		precision and accuracy.	communicated. Small errors	The meaning is sometimes lost	audience. The meaning is
		Excellent non-verbal	persist but the meaning is	or unclear. Non-verbal	often lost or distorted.
		communication.	clear. Effective non-verbal	communication is weak.	
			communication.		
	Organization	Visually appealing and highly	Visually appealing and	Lacking in clear organization.	The organization is
		effective team management.	effectively organized with	Design is inappropriate and/or	confusing, unclear, or non-
		Smooth and effective	some inconsistencies. Good	ineffective. Team management	existent. There is an obvious
		transitions and strong	transitions and sense of	may appear uneven. Presentation	lack of teamwork and
		cohesions.	cohesion. Good team	appears fragmented and lacking	cohesion.
			management is apparent.	in cohesion.	
Final test	Content and Analysis	Shows an excellent	Shows a good understanding	Shows a fair understanding of	Failed to fulfil the
		understanding of selected	of selected literary texts,	selected literary texts, main	requirements of the test
		literary texts, main concepts,	main concepts, theoretical	concepts, theoretical approaches	questions, or show a
		theoretical approaches and	approaches and their	and their application.	complete lack of
		their application. The	application. The argument	The argument and ideas are	understanding of selected
		argument and ideas are fully	and ideas are well supported	partially supported by relevant	literary texts, main
		supported by relevant	by relevant examples and	examples and analysis.	concepts, or theoretical
		examples and analyses.	analyses.		approaches.

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, psychoanalysis

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.	Barry, Peter, Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory						
2.	Castle, Gregory. The Literary Theory Handbook (selections)						
3.	Rivkin, Julie and Michael Ryan. Literary Theory: An Anthology. London: Blackwell, 2017						
	(selections)						

2.2 Additional Readings

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

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