# **English Literature**

# **Module Descriptions 2024/25**

# **Level C (i.e. First Year) Modules**

Please be aware that all modules are subject to availability.

For many of these modules, some experience of studying English Literature may be required, and you should remember this when choosing your modules.

Please note that at the time this document has been prepared (March 2024) the following information is provisional, and there may be minor changes between now and the beginning of 2024/25 academic year.

**Please note: Forms of assessment are currently undergoing review for 2024/25, and as a result the assessment information listed within this handbook may be subject to change.**

# **SEMESTER 2 MODULES**

## **Theory for English Literature**

MODULE CODE: 33542

CREDITS: 20

ASSESSMENT METHOD: 1,000 word essay (30%); 2,000 word essay (70%)

SEMESTER: 2 (Summer term only)

**DESCRIPTION**

This module will introduce students to the questions and arguments, events and vocabularies that shape study in our discipline and which will come up again and again throughout your undergraduate degree. It has two aims: i) to ensure that when you undertake your own research and read technical books and journals in your field that you will find the language less daunting (i.e. you’ll have a good understanding of what “hegemony,” “intersectionality,” “postmodernism,” or “historicism” mean and why they might be important) and ii) to help you to build and use your own vocabulary for discussing art, identity, culture, and politics. The module will focus on theoretical texts and the ways in which writers have tried to describe the effects of culture and society, but it will also emphasise how these ways of thinking have specifically used literary, filmic, and other artistic texts as subjects, examples, and evidence. For as long as artworks have been studied there have been critics and theoreticians who have tried to explore and explain their effects: how and why does a text make us feel this way? What role does art play in shaping society? What role does society play in shaping art? What makes something a novel, or a poem, or beautiful? Can we learn more about a time or place by exploring the works produced then or there? Can we learn something about what it means to be a human being from the texts that we read and watch and play? What does art and culture do to me? Topics may include:

* Psychoanalysis
* Feminism and Queer Theory
* Marxism and Materialism
* Postcolonialism
* Reader Response Theory
* Disability Studies
* Digital Studies
* Poetics, Aesthetics, and Narratology
* Animal Studies
* Ecocriticis

## **Dystopia**

MODULE CODE: 37160

CREDITS: 20

ASSESSMENT METHOD: 1,000 word essay (30%); 2,000 word essay (70%)

SEMESTER: 2 (Summer term only)

**DESCRIPTION**

This module introduces students to twentieth-century and contemporary dystopian narratives with an emphasis on questions of genre and form. Problems at the foreground include things like: What are dystopias? How can we interpret them? What do they do, narratively speaking? And why do they matter? The goal is to establish and to help students identify key generic markers in dystopian texts and films that will a) give them a grounding in this important narrative mode; b) help them grasp how these generic conventions can be challenged; and c) serve students well if they return to the study of dystopian texts in later years at UoB.

## **Poetry**

MODULE CODE: 26838

CREDITS: 20

ASSESSMENT METHOD: Portfolio, 1,000 word (30%); Essay 2,000 words (70%)

SEMESTER: 2 (Spring term only)

**DESCRIPTION**

The key aim of the module will be to develop skills in close reading, informed by a sampled knowledge of the historical and geographical varieties of verse written in English. Each week’s work will be structured around a key text, or group of texts, which will form the basis of that week’s lectures; in seminars, these key texts will be related to, or contrasted with, a variety of extension texts, some suggested by the module convenor in the form of ‘flat pack’ teaching plans, and others by the seminar leaders’ own interests and enthusiasms. The key texts will be grouped by three themes, each of which will form the basis of three weeks’ work: Love, Loss and Location, allowing the students to shape arguments about change and variety in English verse around an idea of shared attention to related topics. Detailed attention to and development of the skills in close reading, and the conversations between poems that these enable, will be the chief outcome (and pleasure) of the module; its key technical and historical vocabulary will provided by a critical course book such as John Lennard, The Poetry Handbook, 2nd edn (Oxford, 2005), and its primary texts will be drawn from a commercial anthology.