

EN2L4-30 Literature in Theory

21/22

Department

English and Comparative Literary Studies

Level

Undergraduate Level 2

Module leader

Rashmi Varma

Credit value

30

Module duration

20 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

Literature in Theory aims to examine the very object of study in the students' undergraduate degree—literature and literary studies. Questions about what we study when we say we study literature will be aligned with an examination of topics such as the institutionalisation of literature as a discipline, issues of literary and cultural “value”, literature’s relationship to other fields of cultural production, as well as its place in the wider constitution of humanities in the university today. The module will provide a set of concerns common to all students in Q300, thus deepening a sense of intellectual community, as well as fostering a culture of critical thinking. Further, it will prepare students to face the challenges confronting the study and practice of humanities today and the crises of the public university globally. Indicative readings include works by theorists such as Terry Eagleton ('What is Literature?') and Pascale Casanova ('The World Republic of Letters') as well as films, poetry and novels such as J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace* and Sally Rooney's *Normal People*.

Module aims

The aim of the module is to build on knowledge introduced in the level 4 module, “Modes of Reading”, by encouraging students to situate texts within their wider social, material and institutional contexts. While also reflecting on key debates in the field, students will be encouraged to see these as applicable to their own work in other modules, and to gain a sense of the discipline

in all its variety with a view to developing these ideas at level 6, particularly in the core research module (Selected Topics; or Dissertation).

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

The syllabus is comprised of 8 units taught over the course of the year.

The units for 2021-22 will be:

Term 1

What is Literature?

Disciplining Literature

Literary and Cultural Value

Literary Markets

Term 2

The State of Literature

Institutions of World Literature

Literature as media / technology / data / intellectual property

University and Universalism

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Situate texts in relation to the material and institutional contexts shaping their production at regional, national and global levels
- Engage confidently in critical analysis, online research and presentations on topics relating to the production, distribution, institutionalisation and marketing of literary and cultural texts
- Participate in discussions and exercises concerning the role of literature and the humanities in relation to other disciplines and media
- Make an informed choice about level 6 module options and dissertation supervisors

Indicative reading list

[Reading lists can be found in Talis](#)

Research element

Research task: convenors will determine assignment options.

Interdisciplinary

Discussion of film, anthropology/ethnography, travel narrative, social media, sociology and digital

humanities in addition to literary texts and critical theory.

International

Discussion of texts from around the world (such as Antigua, Japan, Egypt, India, South Africa, Ireland)

Subject specific skills

- Effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms, including essays, seminar presentations, and other research tasks (such as book reviews or analyses of literary prize winners)
- Approach texts in ways that are sensitive to the politics and power dynamics governing their production, distribution and reception
- Assess key debates concerning the current make-up of the professional disciplinary boundaries of the study of English

Transferable skills

- Read texts independently with greater confidence than before taking the course
- Use a range of techniques to initiate and undertake the analysis of data and information in the set critical reading
- Situate literary texts in relation to other media and disciplines

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	18 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Seminars	18 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Private study	264 hours (88%)
Total	300 hours

Private study description

Reading, note taking from lecture, independent research, consultation with tutor

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Essay 1 Assessed Essay	35%		Yes (extension)
Reassessment component is the same			
Assessment component			
Research Essay	30%		Yes (extension)
An independent research essay which will invite students to reflect on theories of literature covered in module readings via their own research into a contemporary issue in literary culture. (Tasks may include: an analysis of book covers, research into a publisher, analysis of prize winners, research a debate surrounding a literary 'heritage' figure or monument, annotate/create a 'decolonised' syllabus, etc).			
Reassessment component is the same			
Assessment component			
Essay 2 Assessed Essay	35%		Yes (extension)
Reassessment component is the same			

Feedback on assessment

Written comments and one-to-one meetings in office hours

Availability

Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 2 of UENA-Q300 Undergraduate English Literature