



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

Institute of Continuing Education

Undergraduate Certificate in English Literature: Texts and Contexts

2021 – 2022

Course code: 2122CCR120

COURSE GUIDE

Welcome to the **Undergraduate Certificate in English Literature: Texts and Contexts (previously called the Undergraduate Certificate in English Literature I)**, a University of Cambridge award offered by the Institute of Continuing Education (ICE). The Certificate is taught and awarded at FHEQ level 4 (i.e. first-year undergraduate level) and attracts 60 credits. The award is completed in one academic year. For further information about academic credit please see our website: <http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/studying-with-us/information-for-students/qualifications-that-we-offer>.

The course offers three termly units and a syllabus and reading and resource list for each of these units are included in this course specification.

The programme aims to:

1. introduce students to a broad range of writing in English
2. enable students to gain a critical understanding of established and less well-known texts;
3. introduce students to different literary and cultural perspectives;
4. provide opportunities for the study of individual authors and genres;
5. provide opportunities for progression to further study in the area of literary studies.

Transferable skills for further study and employability

- The capacity for independent thought and judgement
- The development of independent learning, study and time management skills
- The deployment of skills in critical reasoning
- The development of competence in using IT to support one's work
- The ability to work with others, productively and equitably
- The qualities necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility and the demonstration of high levels of motivation and personal commitment through part-time study

Study hours

The award of academic credit is a means of quantifying and recognising learning and within the UK, one credit notionally represents 10 hours of learning¹. Each of the units in this course attracts 20 credits so students should expect to need to study for approximately 200 hours in total to complete each unit successfully. However, it is recognised that students study at different paces and use a variety of approaches, so this is a recommendation, rather than a hard-and-fast calculation.

1 'Academic credit in higher education in England – an introduction'. The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, 2009

Teaching staff

Academic Director

Dr Jenny Bavidge

Jenny Bavidge is University Senior Lecturer and Academic Director for English at ICE. She is a member of the University of Cambridge English Faculty and a Fellow of Murray Edwards College, Cambridge. Jenny took her BA in English Literature and Language at Worcester College, Oxford and then an MA and PhD at Royal Holloway, University of London. She is President of the [Literary London Society](#) and a member of the [English Faculty's Contemporaries group](#). She was made a Fellow of the English Association in 2017. Jenny teaches within a wide range of areas, including 19th and 20th-century American and British literature, close reading and critical theory, and has also taught on film.

Tutors

Paul Crossley

Paul Crossley teaches dramatic literature to students in Cambridge and London in topics featuring Shakespeare and Jacobean playwrights to courses on Harold Pinter and Samuel Becket. He has taught a Certificate course entitled 'Shakespeare in his time and Ours' for the Institute of Continuing Education (ICE) on several occasions. He has also taught a Diploma course entitled 'Thomas Middleton: a Comic and Tragic Intelligence' which will study this major playwright and his contemporaries.

Paul has a particular interest in the pivotal emergence of the New Theatre in Britain from 1890 to 1914, and has written a dissertation on the plays of Harley Granville Barker, a leading playwright and director of the time. He has also designed a series of lectures on the plays and influence of Oscar Wilde. Paul has previously contributed to weekend schools on Edwardian Britain and on Anglo/American Culture between the Wars. He has contributed to a number of International Summer schools for ICE and Pembroke College, Cambridge, on both modern drama and Shakespeare Studies, and has taught a wide range of regional courses.

Paul's approach is not only to look at the play texts themselves but also to examine them in the context of changing social and cultural conditions. Paul is a playwright and his work has been produced at festivals in Edinburgh and Cambridge.

Dr Claire Wilkinson

Dr Claire Wilkinson is a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Cambridge. Her research interests lie primarily in the area of 'economic criticism', and she has published journal articles and book chapters on how literature has represented financial crisis since 1720. She teaches nineteenth and twentieth century literature at several Cambridge colleges, and particularly enjoys teaching Practical Criticism—also known as 'close reading'—to students in the final year of their undergraduate degrees.

Dr Andy Wimbush

Dr Andy Wimbush holds a BA and a PhD in English from the University of Cambridge. He specialises in the study of twentieth-century and contemporary literature, particularly experimental fiction, the relationship between literature, religion, and philosophy, and the work of Samuel Beckett and B.S. Johnson. He is the author of *Still: Samuel Beckett's Quietism* (Ibidem, 2020). Andy has taught at the University of Cambridge since 2013 and is an Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

Administrative staff

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Institute of Continuing Education

The Institute of Continuing Education's administrative headquarters are at Madingley Hall, an elegant country house built in the 16th century and set in gardens of about seven acres, designed in the 18th century by Capability Brown. Please visit www.ice.cam.ac.uk and www.madingleyhall.co.uk for further information.

Contact details of ICE

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Please also refer to the 'information for students' section on our website <http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/studying-with-us/information-for-students> and the 21/22 Student Handbook for further information and guidance relating to all aspects of the course including study skills, assignments, assessment and moderation. The Course Information and Help and Guidance section of the ICE VLE will also contain valuable information specific to your course.

Information correct as at 02 August 2021

Syllabus for first unit
Michaelmas term 2021

Close reading and context

Start date	20 October 2021	End date	8 December 2021
Day	Various (see session list below)	Time	Various (see session list below)
Venue	Remote delivery		
Tutor	Dr Claire Wilkinson Dr Jenny Bavidge	No of meetings	Introduction and 6 live teaching/open sessions plus pre-recorded lectures

Aims

- To develop students' skills in the close study of poetry and prose.
- To raise students' awareness of the importance of context in reading and evaluating literature.
- To increase students' confidence in discussing and writing about literary texts.
- To enhance students' enjoyment of literature.

Content

This unit explores approaches to understanding poetry and fiction, employing both close reading and contextualisation as methods of interpretation. We will read a range of literature together, and enjoy lively discussion alongside lectures and teaching exercises designed to introduce you to critical vocabulary and analysis. In each session, we will ask how the relation between literary form, context and meaning shapes our understanding and evaluation of the text.

Presentation of the unit

The unit will be taught in a series of pre-recorded lectures and 'live' teaching sessions via Zoom. Live teaching will involve directed discussion and reading, with short talks from tutors and small-group work in breakout rooms. There will be comfort breaks during each session and opportunities for general Q&A with the tutor.

Please also look at the VLE for each block's dedicated **discussions** and **forum activities** which are designed to guide your reading and to introduce you to relevant contextual and critical resources.

Teaching Sessions

For each block pre-recorded lectures will be available a week before the live teaching session.

Live teaching sessions will be on **Saturdays between 13.00-15.00 and 16.00-18.00 pm GMT.**

Please watch each lecture before the live sessions and follow the discussion forums on the VLE. Classes will be taught with the expectation that students will have read the texts in full in advance.

Introduction	Wednesday 20 October 2021 19.00 – 20.00	Hello and welcome A chance to meet your classmates and tutor and to become familiar with the online classroom environment.
Block One	Saturday 23 October 2021	What does it mean to ‘read closely’? A general introduction to reading poetry, prose and drama from an academic perspective; workshop on developing close reading skills; an introduction to the correct terminology for discussing poetry.
Block Two	Saturday 6 November 2021	Poetry Poetic form; Faith, Doubt and Science in Victorian Poetry (Tennyson and Arnold); Pre-Raphaelite poems and pictures.
Open Session	Wednesday 10 November 2021 7.00pm – 8.00pm	An open session for informal discussion, chat and questions about coursework.
Block Three	Saturday 20 November 2021	Short Stories The structure of the short story; Joyce’s <i>Dubliners</i> ; Katherine Mansfield, <i>Collected Short Stories</i> ; John Barth’s <i>Lost in the Funhouse</i>
Block Four	Saturday 4 December 2021	Novels Introduction to longer prose; Charles Dickens’s <i>Great Expectations</i> ; Peter Carey’s <i>Jack Maggs</i>
Open Session	Wednesday 8 December 2021 7.00pm – 8.00pm	An open session for informal discussion, chat and questions about coursework

Learning Outcomes

As a result of the unit, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to show:

- (i) a developing response to the ways writers use distinctive features of language, form and structure;
- (ii) an understanding of the main techniques of close reading and critical evaluation;
- (iii) an awareness of some of the theoretical and practical issues concerning applying close reading to the study of texts.

Student assessment

Assessment is by two pieces of written work:

- 1. A piece of close-analysis of between 700-1000 words on a short extract.
- 2. An essay on one of the questions below of 2500-3000 words.

Essay titles

- 1. Compare and contrast the nature of the form and style of any two or more of the course texts
- 2. Discuss the nature of the 'voice' of any one of the authors you have encountered on the course
- 3. 'I sometimes hold it half a sin / To put in words the grief I feel' (TENNYSON, *In Memoriam*). Discuss the nature of self-expression in any one or more of the Victorian poets we have studied. You may refer to Tennyson if you wish, but you are not obliged to.
- 4. Explore the relationship between painting and poetry in the work of any of the Pre-Raphaelite poets/painters we have studied as part of the course.
- 5. What is the relationship between setting and mindset in Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations*? You may also discuss *Jack Maggs* if you wish, but you do not need to.
- 6. 'By an epiphany he meant a sudden spiritual manifestation, whether in the vulgarity of speech or of gesture or in a memorable phase of the mind itself. He believed that it was for the man of letters to record these epiphanies with extreme care, seeing that they themselves are the most delicate and evanescent of moments' (JOYCE, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*). Explore the 'epiphany' in the work of one or more short story writers you have encountered during the course.
- 7. '... don't imagine I mean by this knowledge let-us-eat-and-drink-ism. No, I mean 'deserts of vast eternity.' [...] I couldn't tell anybody bang out about those deserts: they are my secret. I might write about a boy eating strawberries or a woman combing her hair on a windy morning, and that is the only way I can ever mention them. But they must be there. Nothing less will do.' (MANSFIELD). How do Mansfield's stories encompass the 'vast' within the small?
- 8. The OED defines 'metafiction' as 'fiction in which the author self-consciously alludes to the artificiality or literariness of a work by parodying or departing from novelistic conventions' (OED). How far is 'metafiction' a useful label for thinking about any of the course texts?
- 9. How does *Jack Maggs* rewrite *Great Expectations*?

Students may wish to create their own titles by adapting the suggestions in this list, or in relation to an area of particular interest covered by the course. New questions must be discussed and agreed with the course tutor, in writing, before they are attempted

*Closing date for the submission of assignments: **Wednesday 5 January 2022 by 12.00 noon GMT****

*Greenwich Mean Time

Reading and resource list

Primary Texts

The poems for Block Two, and other relevant material for Blocks One to Four, will be available on the VLE in advance of the class in which they are discussed. The most important aspect of this course is the primary texts. You should read the short stories and novels listed below and get to know them well. When you write your essay(s), you may wish to use some secondary criticism, and you can ask your tutor to recommend relevant essays and chapters in critical books.

You will need to purchase copies of the following novels and bring them to the relevant class:

Author	Title	Publisher and date
Barth, John	<i>Lost in the Funhouse</i>	Doubleday
Carey, Peter	<i>Jack Maggs</i>	Faber, 1997
Dickens, Charles	<i>Great Expectations</i>	Any edition (Penguin or Oxford World's Classics is recommended)
Joyce, James	<i>Dubliners</i>	Any edition (Penguin or Oxford World's Classics is recommended)
Mansfield, Katherine	<i>Collected Short Stories of Katherine Mansfield</i>	London: Penguin, 2007

Though there is no need to buy a copy of the Victorian poetry we will study, if you wish to do so, Francis O'Gorman's *Victorian Poetry: An Annotated Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004) is recommended. All poetry discussed from this volume will be made available ahead of the class.

The following two critical sources will be referred to during the course. You may wish to buy a paper copy but you will also have free, unlimited access to online editions via the University Library:

Author	Title	Publisher and date
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Lennard, John	<i>The Poetry Handbook</i>	Oxford: Oxford University Press
Mullan, John	<i>How Novels Work</i>	Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006

You may find the following books interesting to look at before the course, **but you do not need to buy them**:

Author	Title	Publisher and date
Bennet, Andrew & Royle, Nicholas	<i>An Introduction to Literature, Criticism and Theory</i>	Harlow: Pearson, 2004
Eagleton, Robert	<i>Doing English: A Guide for Literature Students</i>	London: Routledge, 2002
Young, Tony	<i>Studying English Literature: A Practical Guide</i>	Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008

You may also find a glossary of literary terms useful. Many are available, for example A.H. Abram's and G.G. Harpham's *Glossary of Literary Terms* (Eleventh Edition)

Syllabus for second unit
Lent term 2022

American Literature: Movements and Motifs

Start date	15 January 2022	End date	2 March 2022
Day	Various (see session list below)	Time	Various (see session list below)
Venue	Remote delivery		
Tutor	Dr Andy Wimbush	No of meetings	6 live teaching/open sessions plus pre-recorded lectures

Aims

- To introduce students to a range of American literature, from the nineteenth century to the present.
- To provide students with an opportunity to explore a nation's literary tradition in relation to historical events, and a range of theoretical, political and philosophical issues.
- To develop students' critical skills in the study of diverse literary genres.

Content

This course will offer an introduction to American literature and a taste of some of its most beloved and exciting texts, from novels, plays and poems to memoirs and essays. We will look at texts from the nineteenth century to the present, covering a wide range of writers, from Emily Dickinson and Herman Melville through Jack Kerouac to Toni Morrison and George Saunders. We will examine how our chosen texts address questions fundamental to the American psyche, including issues of wilderness, faith, race, cultural politics, the Civil War, individualism, consumerism, work, wealth, and, of course, the American dream. Throughout the course, students will be encouraged to draw links between the texts we are reading, their wider interests in the writing of the USA, historical events, and a range of theoretical, political and philosophical issues.

Presentation of the Unit

The unit will be taught in a series of pre-recorded lectures and 'live' teaching sessions via Zoom. Live teaching will involve directed discussion and reading, with short talks from tutors and small-group work in breakout rooms. There will be comfort breaks during each session and opportunities for general Q&A with the tutor.

Please also look at the VLE for each block's dedicated **discussions** and **forum activities** which are designed to guide your reading and to introduce you to relevant contextual and critical resources.

Teaching Sessions

For each block pre-recorded lectures will be available a week before the live teaching session.

Live teaching sessions will be on **Saturdays 13.00-15.00 and 16.00-18.00 pm GMT.**

Please watch each lecture before the live sessions and follow the discussion forums on the VLE.

Block One	Saturday 15 January 2022	Transcendentalism Key texts: <i>Walden</i> by Henry David Thoreau and poems by Emily Dickinson
Block Two	Saturday 29 January 2022	<i>Moby-Dick</i> by Herman Melville
Open Session	Wednesday 2 February 2022 7.00pm – 8.00pm	An open session for informal discussion, chat and questions about coursework
Block Three	Saturday 12 February 2022	The Harlem Renaissance (1920-1930) Key text: <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i> by Zora Neale Hurston The Beat Generation (The 1950s) Key text: <i>The Dharma Bums</i> by Jack Kerouac
Block Four	Saturday 26 February 2022	Contemporary American fiction and the Civil War: Toni Morrison's <i>Beloved</i> and George Saunders's <i>Lincoln in the Bardo</i>
Open Session	Wednesday 2 March 2022 7.00pm – 8.00pm	An open session for informal discussion, chat and questions about coursework

Learning Outcomes

As a result of the unit, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

- (i) demonstrate an understanding of major American literary movements
- (ii) 'close read' texts in relation to larger concerns like politics and historical change
- (iii) appreciate the uniquely American concerns and perspectives of our set texts

Student assessment

This course will involve a lot of reading and, in the case of *Walden*, *Moby-Dick*, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, *The Dharma Bums*, *Beloved* and *Lincoln in the Bardo* especially, reading the set texts well ahead of time. Students will be required in each seminar to discuss the set text(s), and to draw links between the reading for each block. Relevant set texts should be brought to the live sessions to facilitate close reading exercises.

Assessment is by two pieces of written work:

1. A piece of close-reading of between 700-1000 words on a short extract.
2. An essay on one of the questions below of 2500-3000 words.

Essay questions:

*Closing date for the submission of assignments: Wednesday 23 March by 12.00 (noon) GMT**

*Greenwich Mean Time

1. What is the meaning of 'place' and/or 'home' in American literature? Discuss in relation to any text.
2. "I celebrate myself." – WALT WHITMAN. Discuss the presentation of self and/or the use of autobiography in Thoreau, Dickinson, Melville, Hurston, or Kerouac.
3. 'Let America be America again.
Let it be the dream it used to be.
Let it be the pioneer on the plain
Seeking a home where he himself is free.

(America never was America to me.)' – LANGSTON HUGHES. Discuss in relation to any author we have studied.
4. 'I have written a wicked book and I feel spotless as the lamb.' – HERMAN MELVILLE in a letter to Nathaniel Hawthorne in 1851. How is *Moby-Dick* wicked?
5. 'We can consider the possibility that Melville's "truth" was his recognition of the moment in America when whiteness became ideology.' – TONI MORRISON. Discuss the presentation of race in *Moby-Dick*.
6. "Ordinary spectrality [...] concerns phantoms and spectres as haunting reminders of the victims of historical violence, of those who have been excluded or extinguished from the formation of a society." – MARTIN HÄGGLUND. How is American literature haunted by America's past (and present)?
7. 'The Civil War is a crucible for a heroic American identity: fearful but unflagging; hopeful even in tragedy; staggering, however tentatively, toward a better world.' — COLIN WHITEHEAD. Discuss in relation to any of the texts we have studied on this course.
8. "I was convinced that poetry was about, by, and from, the meat, that poetry was the product of flesh brushing itself against experience. [...] It is by our touches that we become ourselves — as our ancestors became us and as we became our maturing, sharpening, brightening selves." – MICHAEL MCCLURE. Discuss in relation to any of the texts we have studied (including prose texts).
9. "Love, I find, is like singing. Everybody can do enough to satisfy themselves, though it may not impress the neighbors as being very much." – ZORA NEALE HURSTON. Discuss the presentation of love (of any form) in any of the texts we have studied.

Students may wish to create their own titles by adapting the suggestions in this list, or in relation to an area of particular interest covered by the course. New questions

must be discussed and agreed with the course tutor, in writing, before they are attempted

Reading and resource list

The course's set texts can be found in various editions. The following editions are all available from local bookshops and libraries, and should be brought to the requisite seminars:

Author	Title	Publisher and date
Henry David Thoreau	<i>Walden</i>	Penguin, 2016
Emily Dickinson	<i>The Complete Poems</i>	Faber, 2016
Herman Melville	<i>Moby-Dick: Third Critical Edition</i>	Norton, 2018
Zora Neale Hurston	<i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i>	Virago Press, 2020
Jack Kerouac	<i>The Dharma Bums</i>	Penguin, 2000
Toni Morrison	<i>Beloved</i>	Vintage, 2007
George Saunders	<i>Lincoln in the Bardo</i>	Bloomsbury, 2017

Other short texts will be provided as handouts.

The following texts will be of more general interest, particularly in preparing for the course. There is no need to buy them, as they should be available in local libraries, the English Faculty Library or the University Library:

Author	Title	Publisher and date
Avila, Eric	<i>American Cultural History: A Very Short Introduction</i>	Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018
Michael J. Davey	<i>Moby-Dick: A Sourcebook</i>	Routledge, 2004
Gray, Richard	<i>A Brief History of American Literature</i>	Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011
Ann Charters (ed.)	<i>The Portable Beat Reader</i>	Penguin Classics, 1992
David Lewis (ed.)	<i>The Portable Harlem Renaissance Reader</i>	Penguin, 1995
Sterritt, David	<i>The Beats: A Very Short Introduction</i>	Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013

Wall, Cheryl A	<i>The Harlem Renaissance: A Very Short Introduction</i>	Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016
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Syllabus for third unit Easter term 2022

Shakespeare in his Time and Ours

Start date	26 March 2022	End date	18 May 2022
Day	Various (see session list below)	Time	Various (see session list below)
Venue	Remote delivery		
Tutor	Paul Crossley	No of meetings	6 live teaching/open session plus pre-recorded lectures

Aims

- To introduce students to a range of Shakespeare's plays, and to highlight some of the central issues in Shakespeare studies.
- To provide students with an opportunity to explore Shakespeare's work in the context of his own time and ours.
- To develop students' critical skills in the study and discussion of texts.
- To enhance the enjoyment and appreciation of Shakespearean drama.

Content

Each age creates Shakespearean drama in its own image. This unit will focus on the contrasts between Shakespeare's plays seen in the context of his own day and that of the 21st century. We will look at the difference between viewing the plays as literature and as dramatic events - between experiencing the play in the theatre (or on screen) and reading the work on the page. We will examine a number of approaches to Shakespeare's work, including questions of genre, as we critically assess histories, comedies, tragedies and romances in our day- schools.

Presentation of the Unit

The Unit will be taught in a series of pre-recorded lectures and 'live' teaching sessions via Zoom. Live teaching will involve directed discussion and reading, with short talks from tutors and small-group work in breakout rooms. There will be comfort breaks during each session and opportunities for general Q&A with the tutor.

Please also look at the VLE for each block's dedicated **discussions** and **forum activities** which are designed to guide your reading and to introduce you to relevant contextual and critical resources.

Teaching Sessions

Live teaching sessions will be on **Saturdays 13.00-15.00 and 16.00-18.00 pm GMT**. Please watch each lecture before the live sessions and follow the discussion forums on the VLE.

Session	Date	Content
Block One	Saturday 26 March 2022	<p>Staging History: Kings, crowns and performance</p> <p>We will look at issues involved in studying Shakespeare today. We shall survey his career in the burgeoning, and innovative, theatre industry of his time.</p> <p>We will explore the vital genre of history in Shakespeare's early career by analysing the two different (but related) plays of <i>Richard III</i> and <i>Henry IV part I</i>. The dynamics of Kingship and power (as well as stage presence) are integral to both plays. We will examine how Shakespeare seeks to dramatize history for his audience, and look at the contentious relationship of these dramas to his own changing society, and possibly to ours.</p>
Block Two	Saturday 9 April 2022	<p>Laughter, Pain and a State of Illyria: Shakespeare's Comic Journey</p> <p>Shakespearean comedy as a genre can be both fascinating and provoking, and in Day-school two we will pursue this idea in our study of <i>Much Ado about Nothing</i> and <i>Twelfth Night</i>. Both plays remain vastly popular in performance, and bring forth complex themes around the pivotal role of women in comedy, the nature of identity, community, madness, exclusion, and of course, the journey to love. We will compare and contrast the two plays, and review the role of comedy in Shakespeare's work as a whole.</p>
Open Session	Wednesday 13 April 2022 7.00pm – 8.00pm	An open session for informal discussion, chat and questions about coursework
Block Three	Saturday 30 April 2022	<p>No Exit – Shakespearean Tragedy and Performance</p> <p>Shakespeare wrote a range of compelling tragedies in the first part of the 17th century. In appreciating the nature and dynamics of Shakespearean tragedy we will examine the vast scope of <i>King Lear</i> one of Shakespeare's greatest tragedies – a challenge to readers, actors and directors alike. In Day-school Three we will consider the power, political choices and intertwining domestic relationships that culminate in tragedy here. Additionally, we will assess the</p>

		relevance of this work to Shakespeare's turbulent times, and to our own.
Block Four	Saturday 14 May 2022	The Gift of Redemption – Shakespeare Last Stage Here we will assess Shakespeare's later development as he continues to adapt to a new century - and to changing fashions in drama - through a study of a romance (or late play) <i>The Tempest</i> where the past momentarily impacts upon the present. This play is one of his most enigmatic works and is widely reinterpreted for the stage. We will extract major themes, characters and plot through a close analysis of text, and place this final burst of artistic achievement within the context of his career.
Open Session	Wednesday 18 May 2022 7.00pm – 8.00pm	An open session for informal discussion, chat and questions about coursework

Learning Outcomes

As a result of the unit, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to show they can:

- (i) Reveal an increased understanding of some of the central issues in studying Shakespeare and Shakespearean theatre today;
- (ii) Demonstrate that they have developed skills in the close study of Shakespearean drama;
- (iii) Display a critical appreciation of the plays in question by reference to a range of sources;
- (iv) Show that they have understood how different contexts shape the ways in which Shakespeare's plays have been received from the 17th century to the present day.

Student assessment

The unit is assessed by a single essay of 3,000-4,000 words or two essays of 1,500-2000 words.

Sample Essay Titles:

1. Do you see *Richard III* as primarily a personal play or one about kingship and political power? Discuss Shakespeare's play in light of this question.
2. Compare Shakespeare's treatment of kingship and power in *Richard III* and *Henry IV, part I*.
3. How much do you consider *Henry IV, part 1* a history or a comedy play?
4. Compare the role of women in *Much Ado About Nothing* and/ or *Twelfth Night*. Do these plays challenge social convention or essentially confirm it?
5. How pivotal do you see the role of the outsider in *Twelfth Night*?

6. Consider the issue of identity in *Twelfth Night*. How important is this theme within the play?
7. What does reading and seeing *King Lear* suggest to you about Shakespeare's vision of tragedy in this play?
8. *King Lear* 'is as much a play about relationships as it is about power'. What is your assessment of this statement in relation to this tragedy.
9. 'This thing of darkness, I acknowledge mine' is a widely quoted statement from Prospero. Does Prospero's remark in *The Tempest* inform the entire play?
10. *The Tempest* is a play about a range of themes including family, forgiveness, ruling, treachery and magical powers. Which of these elements do you consider are at the heart of this play?

Students may wish to create their own titles by adapting the suggestions in this list, or in relation to an area of particular interest covered by the course. New questions must be discussed and agreed with the course tutor, in writing, before they are attempted

*Closing date for the submission of assignments: Wednesday 8 June 2022 by 12.00 noon BST**

* British Summer Time

Reading and resource list

Individual play texts are available in many forms. The Arden Editions and that of Cambridge University Press give scholarly introductions and also notes on performance history. There are also excellent editions from Oxford World's classics and Penguin with introductions on key themes.

The *Cambridge Companion* series and those of the *Blackwell Guides* to criticism offer a range of essays covering different topics and perspectives in one volume. Palgrave Casebook editions give collections of critical essays on the plays and genres.

The VLE provides access to recorded theatre performances via the Digital Theatre and other sites and we can say more about what is available during the course.

There are numerous critical works on Shakespeare in multiple categories, and the reading list below is purely a selection from a vast and growing collection that you might care to consult. After the reading list below I suggest a few recommended websites and podcasts that students might wish to access at some stage.

Author	Title	Publisher and date
ALEXANDER, M	<i>Reading Shakespeare</i>	Palgrave, 2005
BEVINGTON, D	<i>Shakespeare: The Seven Ages of Human Experience</i>	Blackwell, 2005

CHERNAIK, W	<i>The Cambridge Introduction to Shakespeare's Histories</i>	Cambridge: CUP, 2007
DANSON, L	<i>Shakespeare's Dramatic Genres</i>	Oxford: OUP 2000
GARBAR, M	<i>Shakespeare After All</i>	Anchor Books 2005
HINDLE, M	<i>Studying Shakespeare on film</i>	Palgrave, 2007
LEGGATT, A	<i>Shakespeare's Political Drama: The History Plays and the Roman Plays</i>	Routledge, 1989
LEGGATT, A	<i>The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare's Comedies</i>	Cambridge: CUP, 2002
LYNE, R	<i>Shakespeare's Late Work</i>	Oxford: OUP, 1995
MAGUIRE, Laurie	<i>Studying Shakespeare</i>	Blackwell, 2004
McCEACHERN, C	<i>The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare's Tragedies</i>	Cambridge: CUP, 2002
McDONALD, R	<i>The Bedford Companion to Shakespeare</i>	Bedford: St Martins, 2001
RACKIN, P	<i>Shakespeare's Women</i>	Oxford: OUP, 2005
RYAN, K	<i>Shakespeare</i>	Palgrave, 2001
SMITH, E (ed)	<i>Shakespeare's Comedies</i>	Blackwell, 2003
SMITH, E (ed)	<i>Shakespeare's Tragedies</i>	Blackwell, 2003
STERN, T	<i>Making Shakespeare: From Page to Stage</i>	Routledge, 2004
WELLS, S & DE GRAZIA (eds)	<i>The New Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare</i>	Cambridge: CUP, 2010

Websites:

Shakespeare Birthplace Trust – a range of informative background resources and links - www.shakespeare.org.uk

Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) – The latest production and archive material from previous one – www.rsc.org.uk

Podcasts:

Approaching Shakespeare by Emma Smith, Oxford University – stimulating broadcast lectures on each of the plays by Dr Smith - <https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/series/approaching-shakespeare> or via iTunes University.

TIMETABLE

All Saturday live sessions run from 13.00-15.00 and 16.00-18.00

Michaelmas 2021: **Close reading and context**

Introduction Session	Wednesday 20 October 2021
Block One	Live session Saturday 23 October 2021
Block Two	Live session Saturday 6 November 2021 Open session Wednesday 10 November 2021 – 7.00pm-8.00pm
Block Three	Live session Saturday 20 November 2021
Block Four	Live session Saturday 4 December 2021 Open session Wednesday 8 December 2021 – 7.00pm-8.00pm

Lent 2022: **American Literature: Movements and Motifs**

Block One	Live session Saturday 15 January 2022
Block Two	Live session Saturday 29 January 2022 Open session Wednesday 2 February 2022 – 7.00pm-8.00pm
Block Three	Live session Saturday 12 February 2022
Block Four	Live session Saturday 26 February 2022 Open session Wednesday 2 March 2022 – 7.00pm-8.00pm

Easter 2022: **Shakespeare in his Time and Ours**

Block One	Live session Saturday 26 March 2022
Block Two	Live session Saturday 9 April 2022 Open session Wednesday 13 April 2022 – 7.00pm-8.00pm
Block Three	Live session Saturday 30 April 2022
Block Four	Live session Saturday 14 May 2022 Open session Wednesday 18 May 2022 – 7.00pm-8.00pm

Assignment submission dates are normally 3 weeks after final teaching session of term.

Whilst every effort is made to avoid changes to this programme, published details may be altered without notice at any time. The Institute reserves the right to withdraw or amend any part of this programme without prior notice.

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