

MA English Literature

Module Information

Course Breakdown

Full-Time

MA English Literature: English Literature (180 credits)	MA English Literature: Literature and Culture 1700-1900 (180 credits)	MA English Literature: Modern and Contemporary (180 credits)	MA English Literature: Postcolonial and Global Literatures (180 credits)
Dissertation (60)	Dissertation (60)	Dissertation (60)	Dissertation (60)
The Production of Texts in Context (30)	Literature and Culture 1700-1900: Junctures and Transitions (30)	Text, Media, Theory: 1900 to Now (30)	From the Postcolonial to the Global: Literature and Theory (30)
ONE elective module (30) in semester one, and TWO elective modules (30 x 2) in semester two.	ONE elective module (30) in semester one, and TWO elective modules (30 x 2) in semester two.	ONE elective module (30) in semester one, and TWO elective modules (30 x 2) in semester two.	ONE elective module (30) in semester one, and TWO elective modules (30 x 2) in semester two.

Part-Time (over 2 years)

MA English Literature: English Literature (180 credits over 2 years)	MA English Literature: Literature and Culture 1700-1900 (180 credits over 2 years)	MA English Literature: Modern and Contemporary (180 credits over 2 years)	MA English Literature: Postcolonial and Global Literatures (180 credits over 2 years)
Dissertation (60) taken in year 2	Dissertation (60) taken in year 2	Dissertation (60) taken in year 2	Dissertation (60) taken in year 2
The Production of Texts in Context (30)	Literature and Culture 1700-1900: Junctures and Transitions (30)	Text, Media, Theory: 1900 to Now (30)	From the Postcolonial to the Global: Literature and Theory (30)
TWO elective modules (30 x 2), one in each semester for 4 semesters i.e. 2 academic years	TWO elective modules (30 x 2), one in each semester for 4 semesters i.e. 2 academic years	TWO elective modules (30 x 2), one in each semester for 4 semesters i.e. 2 academic years.	TWO elective modules (30 x 2), one in each semester for 4 semesters i.e. 2 academic years

Key Modules

All pathways

ESH7000 MA Dissertation Semester 2

ESH7000 Dissertation offers students an opportunity to develop and demonstrate their research and writing skills while engaging with a topic suggested by their work on the core and option modules. The research topic must be feasible, academically sound, and related to the concerns of the programme.

The dissertation project must develop an appropriate research methodology and demonstrate an advanced understanding of historical and/or theoretical issues. It must also demonstrate an ability to analyse and present complex evidence and to shape and sustain a coherent, persuasive critical argument at master's level. It must observe appropriate stylistic and bibliographic conventions. To support the independent study that is the mainstay of this module, students attend a number of skills-based structured workshops in addition to one-to-one supervision from their allocated supervisors.

English Literature

ESH7001 The Production of Texts in Context Compulsory English Literature - Semester 1 - 30 credits

This is the compulsory core module for students taking the MA in English Literature. By focusing on the production of texts in a range of historical periods, and by considering different genres of writing, the module is designed to prepare you for the three special options you will choose from across the spectrum of the Department's postgraduate taught programmes.

The Production of Texts in Context investigates selected historical case studies in order both to provide you with an advanced understanding of the material and social conditions in which texts are produced, disseminated, and read, and to prompt you to reflect critically upon the significance of literary-historical enquiry for the present-day interpretation of texts. The module will thereby equip you with a sound historical and conceptual preparation for the further study of literary writing at Masters level and beyond, whether or not your interests are specific to a particular period.

Literature and Culture 1700-1900

ESH7106 Literature and Culture 1700-1900: Junctures and Transitions - Semester 1 – 30 Credits

This module serves as an introduction to graduate study of the eighteenth century, Romantic and Victorian periods. It is structured around five key historical dates, each of which is used to open up important questions and debates. By juxtaposing a wide range of literary and cultural texts published around those dates, it explores seminal developments in philosophy, politics, and culture, whilst interrogating the relationship between these forms of knowledge. Crucial moments of historical transition are set alongside revolutions in literary history, enabling productive new avenues for discussion of poetry, fiction, drama and other genres. These historical moments could include 1710 (the first publication of Addison and Steele's *Spectator*), 1819 (the Peterloo massacre), and 1895 (the year of Wilde's trial).

Modern and Contemporary

ESH7105 Text, Media, Theory: 1900 to Now - Semester 1 – 30 Credits

This compulsory module for the pathway MA Modern and Contemporary explores modernist and contemporary writing in relation to broad ideas about twentieth-century and twenty-first century history, the historical present, the problems of periodization, and the changing cultural context of literary writing. Special attention is devoted to questions of technology, innovation and social change that alter and bring into question the category of writing itself, its role in theoretical debates, its place in modern and contemporary philosophy. The module has a strand that explores technological innovation and its social effect in the twentieth century, and digital cultures in the twenty first century. There is also a broad engagement with social theory and philosophy, and the, the module aims to offer a detailed survey of issues that relate to the definition of modernism, the nature of modernity and the notion of the contemporary, both in academic contexts and in lived social experience.

Postcolonial and Global Literatures

ESH7070 From the Postcolonial to the Global: Literature and Theory - Semester 1 - 30 Credits

Peripheral Modernities seeks to explore how entry to the modern world, or how exclusion from the modern world, is experienced, perceived and explained from the global peripheries. In so doing, it aims to reverse the usual perspective from which modernity itself is considered. The module opens by a conceptual consideration of how we might begin to theorize a 'peripheral' modernity. It is then followed by a range of texts which will focus (variously) on the Caribbean, South Africa/Africa, southern Asia, the Middle East and on those instances of peripheral modernities which underwrite the erstwhile metropolitan nations.

Elective Modules (We hope to offer for 2020/21)

ESH7010 State of the Novel elective Semester 1

This module will enable students to explore a turbulent period of innovation, reformation, and artistic self-consciousness across which writers reconsidered the cultural status, aesthetic potential and political mission of the novel. Deliberately chronological in organization, the syllabus will move from the late-1960s to the present, in order to chart the evolution of key phases in the way we retrospectively frame late-twentieth-century writing, from postwar social realism, postmodernism and beyond. Students will thus have the opportunity to engage not only stylistically but also historically with discrete moments of and transitions in novelistic experiment. They will be reading important essays from writers themselves (Iris Murdoch, David Lodge, Jeanette Winterson, J. M. Coetzee, Salman Rushdie, Caryl Phillips) and allowing the questions they raise to inform close readings of form. The selected novelists will be framed by topics ranging from early debates about the future of experimentalism in the 1970s, the relation between style and social critique in the 80s, the renaissance of historical fiction in the 90s, and finally the new directions in formal innovation that have emerged since 2000.

ESH7030 Aestheticism and fin-siecle literature elective Semester 1

This module introduces students to developments in the literature of the late Victorian period with an eye to its possible influences on modernist writing. Students are encouraged to explore such issues as the construction of the self and personality, representation of the body, the role of the artist with reference to gender and sexuality, Decadence, and the 'New Woman', as well as making a more general survey of aesthetics, style, and the visual and literary imagination in the writings of the period. Students study a variety of different kinds of writing including poetry, drama, art and literary criticism, and the novel. Writers included are Swinburne, Pater, Wilde, and Hardy, and lesser known figures such as Vernon Lee and Charlotte Mew.

ESH7040 Reading Shakespeare Historically elective Semester 2

One of the central skills required of a postgraduate in Renaissance and Early Modern studies is to be able to put texts in historical contexts. This module aims to help Masters students acquire this skill by examining a range of ways in which Shakespeare's plays can be contextualised. Although there may be occasion to talk critical trends such as new historicism, the new bibliography, interdisciplinarity, intertextuality, genre criticism, Bakhtinian dialogism, psychoanalysis, rhetoric studies, material culture, intellectual and cultural history (well, maybe not all of them!), the principal objective is not to arm students with labels. It is to test various models of contextualisation against specific plays, as well as to provide contexts from the secondary literature that students can themselves begin to apply.

ESH7057 Queer Theory and Contemporary Fiction elective Semester 2

This module will offer an opportunity to study key thinkers and debates in the field of queer theory, while also exploring how sexuality is narrated in contemporary culture. The module will be grounded in theoretical material but alongside this theoretical grounding, the module will consider a number of literary and visual cultural texts. Throughout, we will consider the relationship between cultural texts, politics, and theory, asking: What kind of object is sex and sexuality? What is 'queer' about queer theory? How is queerness narrated in contemporary literature and cultural texts? The module will be structured as four blocks: 'Gender Trouble', 'Queer Temporalities/Queer Histories', 'Queer Affect', and 'Queer Liberalism?'. Beginning with foundational texts by Eve Sedgwick and Judith Butler, we will cover topics including queer performativity, female masculinity, queer history, queer affect, homonormativity and homonationalism, queer intersectionality, and trans* theory. This module offers an opportunity to engage in debates central to queer theory, while also develop skills in literary and cultural analysis of contemporary fictions of sexuality.

ESH7061 Romanticism and genre elective Semester 2

Studying a wide range of texts from 1760 to 1830, this module examines the formal innovations of Romantic literature but also the fascination with archaic genres such as ballad, epic and national song, whose revival and transformation made Romanticism a 'retro' movement as well as a revolutionary one. The module analyses Romantic theories of genre alongside historical examples, while investigating too the 'poetics of the book': the publishing processes and paratextual practices through which experiments with form and format took concrete shape.

ESH7067 Reading the Middle East elective Semester 2

This MA module will introduce you to key texts (in translation), and key debates, from or about the Middle East (defined broadly to include Iran, Turkey and North Africa). The module aims to ask questions about the role of race, religion, regional geo-politics, sectarian and other violence, gender and sexuality. It will allow you to explore these and other topics through some of the most interesting, iconic, or controversial writing to come from, or engage with, the region in the 20th and 21st centuries. The question of translation (literal, cultural, metaphorical) is at the centre of the module's approach to these texts. At a time when it feels as though the Middle East and its people have never been so demonised, nor so victimised, this module seeks to interrogate the work that such texts do in the university and beyond to represent, challenge representations, or 'translate' their cultures of origin, and to shed light on the many prisms through which we analyse, understand, and perceive the Middle East, its people, languages and cultures today.

ESH7069 What is World Literature? elective Semester 1

This module allows students to engage with key examples of texts that might be regarded as belonging to a notional nascent 'canon' of 'World Literature', as well as those that might trouble its boundaries. 'What is World Literature?' begs other questions: has the category displaced the postcolonial as a critical term, or reinforced its purchase?; how does the term engage questions of translation, let alone aesthetics (what is 'Literature'), politics (whose 'world'), and philosophy (what, after all, is a 'world')? We will read excerpts from theoretical works that have helped stake a claim for--or critiqued--the field's constitution in an attempt to find some answers.

ESH7071 Literatures of Sensation elective Semester 2

This module explores the nature of aesthetic pleasure. Is our delight in language an embodied or an intellectual pleasure? How and why do people read? Is it a good thing to find oneself engaged in a 'willing suspension of disbelief' (Coleridge) or transported via a 'spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings' (Wordsworth)? Beginning with late-eighteenth-century cults of Sensibility and their detractors, the module will survey the full range of nineteenth-century writing on sensation, including Romantic balladry, the Gothic, melodrama, sensation fiction, and literatures of decadence. One aim will be to understand what links this heterogeneous body of writing together; an abiding interest in the nature of power, desire and the numinous that crosses genres, media, ideologies and national traditions. While addressing questions of genre and cultural context, the module will also consider post-structural, affective and sociological approaches to Sensation's identities, histories and tendencies.

ESH7072 Creative and Critical Writing Creative Writing open to all Semester 1

This optional module for the English MA explores creative and critical writing across multiple literary forms, including nonfiction, fiction, poetry, and dramatic and visual writing. The module focuses on the ways in which the co-mingling of criticism and creative forms can produce new expressive and epistemological modes and genres. It introduces students to theoretical, methodological, and practical frameworks for understanding and producing creative and critical texts, and texts operating at the intersection of multiple disciplinary fields. It will combine seminar-style discussion and writing workshops.