

Seminar in Period Studies of British Literature

ENGL 233

Fall 2025 Section 80 Fully Online 4 Unit(s) 08/20/2025 to 12/08/2025 Modified 08/28/2025

Course Information

Course Description:

This course focuses on British literature in the 20th century and beyond. At the beginning of the 20th century, Britain was the most powerful empire in the world, the British monarch ruled over a quarter of the world's population, and my ancestors on the Indian subcontinent were British subjects, some engaged in anticolonial struggles against Britain. By end of the 20th century, Britain had fought two world wars, lost its empire, become part of the EU, and experienced an influx of immigrants from former colonies while the English language became the dominant lingua franca of the world. Twenty-five years into the 21st century, Britain has Brexit-ed the European Union in an assertion of nationalism, voted for a Prime Minister of Indian origin, and opposes Russian imperialism in Ukraine while registering nostalgia for

its own empire. What do these massive transformations and contradictions tell us about the changing nature of British identity and what role has literature played in creating, propagating, reinforcing, challenging or subverting changing representations of national identity? We will seek answers to these questions by exploring the relationship between nation and narration. Our discussions will revolve around the following core topics: (i) Literature, Empire, War (ii) Work and the Working Class (iii) The Woman/Gender Question (iv) Language, Power, and the Book, (v) Modernism and its discontents.

Lecture/Discussion

M 7-9:45

Online

Class Days/Time:	M 7.00-9.45 (synchronous meeting via zoom)
Classroom:	Canvas Online

Course Description and Requisites

Focuses on specific periods in British Literature. Possible periods may include Medieval, Early Modern, Restoration, Romantic, Victorian, etc.

Satisfies Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR).

Repeatable for credit for up to 8 units with program approval.

Prerequisite(s): Upper division standing.

Grading: Letter Graded

Classroom Protocols

Classroom Protocol

Zoom: All class meetings will be held synchronously via zoom. Not ideal. But we'll try to make the best of it. In order to simulate a face-to-face, in-person class environment, I request you to join class meetings with your camera on and your face visible to others (unless you're having technical difficulties with the video); feel free to use zoom virtual background setting.

Attendance & Participation: Regular attendance and active participation in class discussions are extremely important. You are responsible for all materials assigned, presented and discussed. You are encouraged to take notes in class, but you should have studied the materials before class begins. Poor attendance/participation will have negative effects on your final grade. Since most classes will be based on group discussions, presentations and workshops it is crucial for you to keep up with the readings and take an active as well as thoughtful role in all classroom activities. Your questions, comments, insights, and interpretations are valuable no matter how outlandish they may seem. So, do speak up!

Communicating: Good communication is key to class success, especially in an online environment. So please maintain regular communication with your classmates and with me. Seek timely advice and assistance on any difficulty you may be having with the materials, assignments, canvas, zoom or other aspects of the course. I am completely open to criticism and suggestions because the only way I can fix things is if I know what is wrong.

Submitting work: All work must be turned in exactly as and when indicated in the schedule. All readings are listed against dates they will be discussed in class; so, when you come to class you should have already read the materials and be prepared to discuss them

Program Information

Program Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the MA English program, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an appropriate level of expertise in literary history, literary theory, and rhetoric.
2. Demonstrate high-level proficiency in literary research and in the synthesis of research
3. Demonstrate critical and analytical skills in the interpretation and evaluation of literary texts.
4. Demonstrate a command of written academic English, including the abilities to
 - a. organize and present material in a cogent fashion,
 - b. formulate and defend original arguments,
 - c. employ effectively the language of their discipline and
 - d. write under time constraints.
5. Demonstrate a reading knowledge of at least one foreign language.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

Course Student Learning Objectives

1. Demonstrate familiarity with materials and methods of literary research
2. Demonstrate familiarity with major theorists/critics/texts associated with major schools
3. Understand and use the key concepts and terms associated with major schools of literary criticism.
4. Apply different critical theories to analyze various literary texts and cultural/artistic products.
5. Communicate ideas/analysis in cogent, critical language, both orally and in writing.

Department Information:

Department Name: English and Comparative Literature

Department Office: FO 102

Department Website: www.sjsu.edu/english (<https://www.sjsu.edu/english>)

Department email: english@sjsu.edu (<mailto:english@sjsu.edu>)

Department phone number: 408-924-4425

Course Materials

Course Materials:

- Broadview Anthology of British Literature Volume 2C: *The Twentieth Century and Beyond*, ISBN: 9781551116143 / 1551116146
- Selected Readings on Canvas

Course Requirements and Assignments

One Unit Course Credit Enhancement:

Because this is a 4-unit course, students can expect to spend a minimum of twelve hours per week preparing for and attending classes and completing course assignments. Specifically, the following 1-unit enhancement is integrated into this course: **Increased course content and/or collateral readings** (10% of course grade). Students will read additional primary and secondary materials to write a publishable-

quality research article. Following MLA guidelines and my guidance, students will peer review and edit drafts of the research article. I will also conduct workshops to provide detailed comments draft papers. Based on feedback, students will revise and edit their papers.

Assignments: All assignments must be submitted in Canvas on dates indicated in the schedule. Unless you have received prior permission from me, late assignments will be automatically reduced one letter grade for each late day and no assignments will be accepted beyond a week after the due date.

1. Weekly Reader Response (RR): 150 points (15 points each)

Each week you will post a 250-300 word response to an assigned reading; you may choose to focus on any author/text assigned for the week. **You must submit a minimum of 10 responses to earn the full score.**

Your RR should be clearly divided into three sections as follows:

- (i) Connect the reading to at least one discussion topic (see list of topics above).
- (ii) illustrate or support your ideas by analyzing a significant quote from the text, and
- (iii) raise 1-2 questions for further discussion.

In addition to posting your own RR every week by Sat night, you will briefly (2-3 sentences) respond to a question for further discussion raised by a classmate before Mon's class meeting.

Scoring: based on evidence of thoughtful engagement with course materials, proper organization, number of RRs and responses to discussion questions submitted. (PLO 1)

1. Lead Two Class Discussions: 200 points (100 points each)

You will sign up to lead two in-class discussions. You may use your RR for the week as the basis for leading the discussion; elaborate on the points in your RR, raise questions, and respond to questions. To facilitate class discussion, you prepare a PPT with the main points stated clearly; you will share this in class and upload it to Canvas. Scoring: relevance of cultural commentary and quality of literary analysis (70 points); ability to interest and engage the class (30 points). (PLO 3)

1. Short Critical Analysis Essay: 250 points

You will write a short essay (1500 words) that presents a close reading analysis of one single work that we've discussed in class. The essay must articulate a clear thesis/argument supported with textual evidence or close reading of the text. Scoring: relevance, clarity, and insight of thesis, strength of supporting arguments/textual evidence, correct, clear, graduate level academic writing.

1. Seminar Paper: 350 points

You will write a publishable-quality research paper that presents a substantive study (about 3000 words/12 pages) of one of the five class discussion topics. Topic/authors/texts must be different from the short essay, although you may build on or extend topics/themes you've touched on. Your paper must engage with at least two major authors from the course and at least one significant primary text by each author; in addition, your paper must synthesize and cite information from a minimum of 7 secondary sources. The paper must be formatted as per MLA guidelines. You will complete this individual assignment in stages that include brainstorming, researching, preparing an annotated bibliography, outlining, drafting, revising and editing. Scoring: Outline + Annotated Bibliography (50 points), Peer Review (25 points), Final Paper with abstract and works cited (250 points), summary of revisions (25 points). (PLO 4).

✓ Grading Information

Grading: Total points 1000

Reader Response	150 (15x10)
Leading Two Class Discussion	250 (125x2)
Short Paper	250
Seminar Paper	350

This course is letter graded

980-1000 = A+

930-970 = A

900-920 = A-

880-890 = B+

830-870 = B

800-820 = B-

780-790 = C+

730-770 = C

700-720 = C-

>700 = F

The following statements have been adopted by the English department:

1. In English Department courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of ideas conveyed. All student writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs.
2. Grading Policy: The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the official SJSU Catalog ("The Grading System"). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A = excellent; B = above average; C = average; D = below average; F = failure. Courses graded according to the A,B,C, No Credit system shall follow the same pattern, except that NC, for No Credit, shall replace D or F. In A,B,C, No Credit courses NC shall also substitute for W (Withdrawal) because neither NC nor W affects students' grade point average.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9 \(PDF\)](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Course Schedule

Course Number / Title, Semester, Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to change with fair notice made available via canvas or mysjsu.

All readings are in the Broadview anthology, unless otherwise indicated.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	8/25	<p>Introduction to course/syllabus</p> <p>Introduction to The Early 20th century (xxxix-lxviii)</p> <p>The Late 20th C and beyond (612-633)</p> <p>Homework:</p> <p>Ø Reader Response #1 (on Conrad) Due 9/6; Respond to Discussion Question before next class.</p> <p>Ø Sign up to Lead Two Class Discussions</p>
2	9/1	<p>Labor Day – No Class</p>
3	9/8	<p>Joseph Conrad</p> <p>Bio</p> <p>Preface to The N of the N</p> <p>HoD : https://www.gutenberg.org/files/219/219-h/219-h.htm</p> <p>Achebe: An Image of Africa in HoD (809)</p> <p>Homework:</p> <p>Ø Reader Response #2 (on Hardy or War Poetry) Due 9/13; Respond to Discussion Question before next class.</p>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
4	9/15	<p>Thomas Hardy</p> <p>Bio</p> <p>Hap</p> <p>In Time of The Breaking of Nations</p> <p>War Poetry</p> <p>Brooke: The Dead, The Soldier</p> <p>Sassoon: They, Glory of Women</p> <p>Owen: Dulce et Decorum Est, Anthem of Doomed Youth</p> <p>Contexts: War and Revolution (124-142)</p> <p>Homework:</p> <p>Ø Reader Response #3 (on Yeats or Joyce) Due 9/20; Respond to Discussion Question before next class.</p>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
5	9/22	<p>The Irish Question</p> <p>The Struggle for Irish Independence (174-75)</p> <p>W.B. Yeats</p> <p>Bio</p> <p>Lake Isle of Innisfree,</p> <p>The Wild Swans,</p> <p>Among School Children,</p> <p>Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop,</p> <p>Sailing to Byzantium,</p> <p>Lapis Lazuli,</p> <p>The Circus Animals Desertion,</p> <p>No Second Troy,</p> <p>Leda and the Swan,</p> <p>Easter 1916,</p> <p>Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen</p> <p>James Joyce</p> <p>Bio</p> <p>Araby</p> <p>The Dead,</p> <p>Nausicaa from Ulysses</p> <p>In Context: Joyce's Dublin (366)</p> <p>Homework:</p> <p>Ø Reader Response #5 (on Eliot or Woolf) Due 9/27; Respond to Discussion Question before next class</p>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
6	9/29	<p>T.S. Eliot</p> <p>Bio</p> <p>Prufrock and Responses to Prufrock</p> <p>Waste Land and Responses to Waste Land</p> <p>Tradition & Individual Talent</p> <p>I.A Richards from Principles of Lit Crit (495)</p> <p>Virginia Woolf</p> <p>Bio</p> <p>From A Room of One's Own (ch 1, 2, 3)</p> <p>Mrs. Dalloway in Bond Street</p> <p>From Orlando (p 307)</p> <p>Modern Fiction</p> <p>Killing the angel in the house (excerpt from Professions for Women)</p> <p>Homework:</p> <p>Ø Reader Response #6 (on Kipling or Forster) Due 10/4; (Respond to Discussion Question before next class)</p>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
7	10/6	<p>Rudyard Kipling</p> <p>Bio</p> <p>The White Man's Burden</p> <p>Beyond the Pale: (Notes on the text of Beyond the Pale).</p> <p>The Strange Ride of Morrobie Jukes</p> <p>One View of the Question</p> <p>E.M. Forster</p> <p>Bio</p> <p>The Machine Stops</p> <p>The Road from Colonus</p> <p>From What I Believe</p> <p>From Terminal Note to Maurice (312)</p> <p>Consultation: short critical analysis essay (bring outline)</p> <p>Homework:</p> <p>Ø Reader Response #7 (on Greene) Due 10/11; Respond to Discussion Question before next class</p>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
8	10/13	<p>Graham Greene</p> <p>Bio</p> <p>The Basement Room</p> <p>George Orwell</p> <p>Bio</p> <p>Shooting an Elephant</p> <p>Elephants in Asia</p> <p>Politics and the English Language</p> <p>WW II (588-614)</p> <p>End of empire (752-793)</p> <p>Homework:</p> <p>Ø Short Critical Analysis Essay Due 10/17</p>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
9	10/20	<p>Language, Power, and the Book</p> <p>https://sites.broadviewpress.com/bablonline/log-in/?reg=https%3A%2F%2Fsites.broadviewpress.com%2Fbablonline%2F</p> <p>(need Access code that comes with the book)</p> <p>Agard: Listen mister Oxford Don (poem)</p> <p>Work and the Working Class (414-440)</p> <p>Homework:</p> <p>Ø Reader Response #8 (on Thomas, Auden, Larkin or Heaney) Due 10/25; Respond to Discussion Question before next class</p>
10	10/27	<p>W. H. Auden : Musee des Beaux Arts, The Sheild of Achilles, The Truest Poetry is the Most Feigning</p> <p>Dylan Thomas: The Force that through..., Fern, Hill, Do not go gentle...</p> <p>Seamus Heaney: Digging, Englands of the Mind</p> <p>Philip Larkin: Days, Annus Mirabilis, Aubade</p> <p>Homework:</p> <p>Ø Reader Response #9 (on Beckett or Pinter) Due 11/1; Respond to Discussion Question before next class</p>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
11	11/3	<p>Samuel Beckett: Waiting for Godot</p> <p>Harold Pinter: The Homecoming</p> <p>Homework:</p> <p>Ø Reader Response #10 (on Munro or Atwood) Due 11/8; Respond to Discussion Question before next class</p>
12	11/10	<p>Alice Munro: The View from Castle Rock</p> <p>Margaret Atwood: The Immigrant, Thoughts from Underground, The Handmaid's Tale and Oryx and Crake in context</p> <p>Conference: seminar paper (bring outline)</p> <p>Homework:</p> <p>Ø Reader Response #11 (on Walcott or Ondaatje) Due 11/15; Respond to Discussion Question before next class</p>
13	11/17	<p>Derek Walcott: A far cry from Africa</p> <p>Michael Ondaatje: (877-882)</p> <p>Conference on seminar paper: bring annotated bibliography</p> <p>Homework:</p> <p>Ø Reader Response #12 (on Ishiguro or Rushdie) Due 11/22; (Respond to Discussion Question before next class)</p> <p>Ø Outline + Annotated Bibliography Due 11/23</p>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
14	11/24	<p>Kazuo Ishiguro: A Village after Dark</p> <p>Salman Rushdie: Is Nothing Sacred?</p> <p>Workshop: bring draft of seminar paper</p> <p>Homework:</p> <p>Ø Reader Response #13 (on Kureishi or Smith) Due 11/29; Respond to Discussion Question before next class</p>
15	12/1	<p>Hanif Kureishi: My son the fanatic</p> <p>Zadie Smith: Hanwell in Hell</p> <p>Conference: finalize seminar paper</p> <p>Homework: submit draft of seminar paper for peer review; due in Canvas 12/5 by 11:59; Peer reviews should be completed by 12/7</p>
16	12/8	<p>Course Review</p> <p><u>Round robin:</u> share abstract and discuss peer review revisions</p>
	12/12 MON	<p>Submit Final Seminar paper in Canvas by 11:59 pm on 12/12 Fri</p> <p>Final Paper must include the following in a single document (</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Abstract 2. Full Paper 3. Works Cited (min 7 secondary sources) 4. One-page summary of revisions (based on feedback from peer editing)

