ENGL203
Contemporary Literature
S1 Day 2016
Dept of English

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
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Credit points
3

Prerequisites
ENGL120

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
This unit explores the role of literature in the twenty-first century. It focuses on how writing in a range of genres participates in contemporary debates and controversies, including discussions over race, globalisation, terrorism, climate change, ethics, and other major contemporary issues. We will consider how the circumstances in which literature is written affect how writers engage in these debates, looking at the influence of creative writing programmes, digital media, and literary celebrity.

Important Academic Dates
Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates

Learning Outcomes
On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- Analyse and compare literary texts across a range of genres, including the novel, the essay, poetry, and hybrid genres, using a sound critical vocabulary and scholarly research
- Explain and reflect on key features of the contemporary literary field, including the role of literary celebrity, creative writing programmes, and digital media, and analyse how these
features impact on literary texts
Reflect on the role of critical writing and essays in the contemporary literary field
Explain and analyse how literature participates in debates in the public sphere, including discussions over race, immigration, ethics, history, and the representation of disasters
Develop well-reasoned arguments about literary texts, and support these arguments orally and in writing

General Assessment Information
Please read The Preparation and Presentation of Essays in the unit handbook for information about the presentation of written work.

All written assessments should be submitted electronically through Turnitin on the iLearn site, by 11:59pm on the due date.

Late submission of written work, without prior approval and supporting documentation (e.g., a medical certificate) will attract a penalty of 2% per day or part thereof (including weekends).

Assessment Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Research Essay</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Friday, 8 April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criticism in Public</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Friday, 17 June</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tutorial Participation
Due: Ongoing
Weighting: 20%

Attendance, preparation and participation in tutorials

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Analyse and compare literary texts across a range of genres, including the novel, the essay, poetry, and hybrid genres, using a sound critical vocabulary and scholarly research
- Explain and reflect on key features of the contemporary literary field, including the role of literary celebrity, creative writing programmes, and digital media, and analyse how these features impact on literary texts
- Reflect on the role of critical writing and essays in the contemporary literary field
- Explain and analyse how literature participates in debates in the public sphere, including
discussions over race, immigration, ethics, history, and the representation of disasters
• Develop well-reasoned arguments about literary texts, and support these arguments orally and in writing

Short Research Essay
Due: Friday, 8 April
Weighting: 30%
1500-word essay, drawing on two texts and additional research

On successful completion you will be able to:
• Analyse and compare literary texts across a range of genres, including the novel, the essay, poetry, and hybrid genres, using a sound critical vocabulary and scholarly research
• Explain and reflect on key features of the contemporary literary field, including the role of literary celebrity, creative writing programmes, and digital media, and analyse how these features impact on literary texts
• Explain and analyse how literature participates in debates in the public sphere, including discussions over race, immigration, ethics, history, and the representation of disasters
• Develop well-reasoned arguments about literary texts, and support these arguments orally and in writing

Criticism in Public
Due: Friday, 17 June
Weighting: 50%
Critical essay, discussing two texts on this unit, written for a general audience (1500-2000 words); plus short reflective essay explaining relationship of essay to scholarship (500-1000 words)

On successful completion you will be able to:
• Analyse and compare literary texts across a range of genres, including the novel, the essay, poetry, and hybrid genres, using a sound critical vocabulary and scholarly research
• Explain and reflect on key features of the contemporary literary field, including the role of literary celebrity, creative writing programmes, and digital media, and analyse how these features impact on literary texts
• Reflect on the role of critical writing and essays in the contemporary literary field
• Explain and analyse how literature participates in debates in the public sphere, including
discussions over race, immigration, ethics, history, and the representation of disasters

- Develop well-reasoned arguments about literary texts, and support these arguments orally and in writing

## Delivery and Resources

### Required Texts

- J. M. Coetzee, *The Lives of Animals*
- Junot Díaz, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*
- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Americanah*
- Ben Lerner, *Leaving the Atocha Station*

A selection of shorter texts, available through iLearn and/or the library (see unit schedule for more information)

### Key Secondary Reading

- Mark McGurl, *The Program Era*

Additional reading, related to specific texts and topics, is available for each week and listed in the unit schedule

## Unit Schedule

See details on iLearn.

## Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central. Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Consideration Policy.

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the Learning and Teaching Category of Policy Central.

**Student Code of Conduct**

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: [https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)

**Results**

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in *eStudent*. For more information visit [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au).

**Student Support**

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit [http://students.mq.edu.au/support/](http://students.mq.edu.au/support/)

**Learning Skills**

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://mq.edu.au/learningskills)) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- **Workshops**
- **StudyWise**
- **Academic Integrity Module for Students**
- **Ask a Learning Adviser**

**Student Services and Support**

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

**Student Enquiries**

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au)

**IT Help**

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit [http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/](http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/).

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.
Graduate Capabilities
Creative and Innovative
Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Analyse and compare literary texts across a range of genres, including the novel, the essay, poetry, and hybrid genres, using a sound critical vocabulary and scholarly research
- Explain and reflect on key features of the contemporary literary field, including the role of literary celebrity, creative writing programmes, and digital media, and analyse how these features impact on literary texts
- Reflect on the role of critical writing and essays in the contemporary literary field
- Explain and analyse how literature participates in debates in the public sphere, including discussions over race, immigration, ethics, history, and the representation of disasters
- Develop well-reasoned arguments about literary texts, and support these arguments orally and in writing

Assessment tasks

- Tutorial Participation
- Short Research Essay
- Criticism in Public

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative
We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Analyse and compare literary texts across a range of genres, including the novel, the essay, poetry, and hybrid genres, using a sound critical vocabulary and scholarly research
• Explain and reflect on key features of the contemporary literary field, including the role of literary celebrity, creative writing programmes, and digital media, and analyse how these features impact on literary texts
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• Explain and analyse how literature participates in debates in the public sphere, including discussions over race, immigration, ethics, history, and the representation of disasters
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Assessment tasks
• Tutorial Participation
• Criticism in Public

Commitment to Continuous Learning
Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes
• Explain and reflect on key features of the contemporary literary field, including the role of literary celebrity, creative writing programmes, and digital media, and analyse how these features impact on literary texts
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Assessment tasks
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Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills
Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where
relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able
to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific
knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary
solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Analyse and compare literary texts across a range of genres, including the novel, the
  essay, poetry, and hybrid genres, using a sound critical vocabulary and scholarly
  research
- Explain and reflect on key features of the contemporary literary field, including the role of
  literary celebrity, creative writing programmes, and digital media, and analyse how these
  features impact on literary texts
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  discussions over race, immigration, ethics, history, and the representation of disasters
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  orally and in writing

**Assessment tasks**

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- Short Research Essay
- Criticism in Public

**Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking**

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate
and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to
critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and
systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to
have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Analyse and compare literary texts across a range of genres, including the novel, the
  essay, poetry, and hybrid genres, using a sound critical vocabulary and scholarly
  research
- Explain and reflect on key features of the contemporary literary field, including the role of
  literary celebrity, creative writing programmes, and digital media, and analyse how these
  features impact on literary texts
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• Criticism in Public

**Problem Solving and Research Capability**

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

• Analyse and compare literary texts across a range of genres, including the novel, the essay, poetry, and hybrid genres, using a sound critical vocabulary and scholarly research
• Explain and reflect on key features of the contemporary literary field, including the role of literary celebrity, creative writing programmes, and digital media, and analyse how these features impact on literary texts
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**Assessment tasks**

• Tutorial Participation
• Short Research Essay
• Criticism in Public
Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Analyse and compare literary texts across a range of genres, including the novel, the essay, poetry, and hybrid genres, using a sound critical vocabulary and scholarly research
- Explain and reflect on key features of the contemporary literary field, including the role of literary celebrity, creative writing programmes, and digital media, and analyse how these features impact on literary texts
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**Assessment tasks**

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- Short Research Essay
- Criticism in Public

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Explain and reflect on key features of the contemporary literary field, including the role of literary celebrity, creative writing programmes, and digital media, and analyse how these
features impact on literary texts
• Reflect on the role of critical writing and essays in the contemporary literary field
• Explain and analyse how literature participates in debates in the public sphere, including discussions over race, immigration, ethics, history, and the representation of disasters
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Assessment tasks
• Tutorial Participation
• Criticism in Public

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible
We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes
• Explain and reflect on key features of the contemporary literary field, including the role of literary celebrity, creative writing programmes, and digital media, and analyse how these features impact on literary texts
• Reflect on the role of critical writing and essays in the contemporary literary field
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