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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Lecturer
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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://students.mq.edu.au/important-dates

Learning Outcomes

1. 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
2. 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
3. Reflect on the role of critical writing and essays in the contemporary literary field
4. Explain and analyse how literature participates in debates in the public sphere, including discussions over race, immigration, ethics, history, and the representation of disasters

5. 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>
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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>
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<tr>
<td>Criticism in Public</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Friday, 17 June</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Tutorial Participation**

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **20%**

Attendance, preparation and participation in tutorials

This Assessment Task relates to the following 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
Short Research Essay

Due: Friday, 8 April  
Weighting: 30%

1500-word essay, drawing on two texts and additional research

This Assessment Task relates to the following 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
• 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)

This Assessment Task relates to the following 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

**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](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:


In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](http://mq.edu.au/policy) 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.

**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 Enquiry Service**

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

**Equity Support**

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the Disability Service who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

**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. The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

**Graduate Capabilities**

**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
- 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
- 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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- 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

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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- 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

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
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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
• 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

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

Assessment tasks

• Tutorial Participation
• 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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Assessment tasks

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- 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
- 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
- Criticism in Public
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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**Assessment tasks**

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- Short Research Essay
- Criticism in Public