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**Course Overview and Expectations**

In “Not Your Grandad’s Brit Lit” we will read, hear, and discuss nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first century poetry, drama, non-fiction, and fiction from England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, as well as former colonies of Great Britain in Africa, Asia, North America, and the Caribbean. We will also listen to music and view films, TV, and even stand-up comedy. We will regard “Great Britain” as a multiethnic, multilingual, and multicultural matrix of traditions. We will explore ways our own cultural and literary world both reflects and diverges from the periods under consideration. We will also delve into ways that historical movements shape literary norms.

While this course was not listed as web-based, Covid 19 has affected the way that the course will be taught. You have received notice of the various modalities that courses will use. This course will be “Online Live.” That means that we won’t meet face to face, but will conduct regular zoom meetings. As you’ll see from the course curriculum, each week you will hear online lectures, films, readings, performances, interviews, and explications; and you will follow links to online texts. All required material is available in electronic links in the curriculum. In order to foster class discussion, the course will host an online Blackboard Discussion Board. While there is no attendance requirement, I will host Zoom meetings during parts of our scheduled class time to answer questions and moderate discussion. I hope that with Zoom meetings and Blackboard resources we can maintain regular and robust exchanges. For this reason, it is essential that you complete each week’s assignments on time. Meeting deadlines each week will require you to manage your time effectively. Do not wait until the last minute to finish your work. I recommend that you set up your own personal schedule for logging in and completing assignments. If each of us commits to keeping up with readings, viewings, postings, and assignments, we will build a stimulating community. There is a considerable amount of reading and listening in this course. It is backloaded, and not every week will require the same amount of reading time. Don’t wait to get started. The first three weeks are light—use them to read ahead.

**Course Objectives**

I am of two minds. There are bullet points, citing “increased critical reading abilities” and “broader knowledge of British Literature” and “mastery of literary modes and genres” and “deeper familiarity with historical movements.” These are worthy goals. But “education” has a [double Latin etymology](#): *educare*—to train; but also *educere*—to lead out of. Often, courses focus only on the first meaning. But *educere* suggests that if you know the outcome in advance, it’s not education. I have no idea what will result from your encounter with the great literature of the past. [Rainer Maria Rilke](#) has [this](#) to say. [Donald Hall](#) proposes a lone objective, “Be as good as [George Herbert](#). Take as long as you like.” Finally, there’s the story of poet [Gary Snyder](#)’s days in Japan studying Zen. “Remember those lectures by the elderly Zen Master who spoke so softly we couldn’t hear?” he asked a former classmate, many years afterward. “I’m hearing them now.”

**Requirements**

There are three main requirements.

1. Discussion board posts. At the end of each week, you will find two assignments. Address each in a posting of at least 200 words. Also, in a third post of at least 100 words, you must reply to **one** post by a classmate, amplifying, questioning, riffing off, or respectfully disagreeing with their post. The

deadline for assignment posts is Thursday at 5:00 PM. The deadline for reply posts is Monday of the following week by 5:00 PM. While these posts will not be judged for style or grammar, to receive credit they must make a good faith effort to address the prompt; they must demonstrate that you have read the works in question; they must meet length requirements; and they must meet the deadlines.

2. Read and respond to one text from the course list. The list contains over 200 titles from nineteenth to twenty-first century British literature, in many modes and sub-genres, from fantasy to historical novels to science-fiction to detective novels to romances to social realism to comedy to epics to memoir to drama to lyrical novels. While the list includes many of the most noted works of the last two centuries, it is not strictly canonical, but quirky and eclectic. Still, you must choose from the list—substitutions are not permitted. By Friday of Week 2 at 5:00 PM, you will submit **three** titles from the list in order of preference. If two students submit the same first choice, the student who submits their titles first will get preference, and other students will be assigned their second or third choice. In a written presentation of at least 600 words, you will introduce your assigned novel to your classmates on the Discussion Board. You will present theme, style, plot, and character, including brief quotations and historical background. You will offer reasons why your classmates should or should not read the novel. You will also share links to three readings, explications, comments, interviews, reviews, or videos of the work. Your presentation will be due during the week that we discuss the time period when the book was written. So, a presentation on Charles Dickens *A Tale of Two Cities* is due in Week 6; Kevin Barry's *Nightboat to Tangiers* is Week 14.
3. Learn by heart and recite 60 lines of poetry or a similar length passage of prose (to be negotiated) from the course texts. You must recite (in a Zoom meeting or video recording) all 60 lines at the same time. They can comprise several poems, or part of one long poem. The recitation can be scheduled for anytime during the term and does not need to occur during the week the poem is being studied. However, don't leave this till the end. If you are not used to learning poems by heart, you may find it takes longer than you think. The rationale behind this requirement can be found [here](#). Inspiration can be found [here](#).

### **Required Texts and Material**

No textbook purchase is required. All readings are available by links in the curriculum. Three full length films are required, and they each rent for \$3.99. See links.

### **Recommended Material**

A portable USB drive may come in handy if you don't favor email or cloud storage of files.

### **Assignments and Percentage Values**

1. **45 Discussion Board Posts**= 50% of final grade
2. **Novel Presentation**= 25% of final grade
3. **Recitation of 60 lines**=25% of final grade

A = 90%-100%; B = 80%-89%; C = 70%-79%; D =60%-69%; F = 0-59%

### **Late Work Policy**

No credit will be awarded for late work. In the case of Discussion Board Posts, you must submit the Assignment for the week by Thursday at 5:00 PM and Reply to a Classmate by the following Monday at 5:00. This policy is not meant to be punitive, but rather to facilitate discussion.

## **Policies on Technology, Software, and Personal Responsibility**

If you experience any technical glitches with Blackboard, contact the [YSU Tech Desk](#). They can be reached by phone at 330.941.3244 or by email at [IDDC@ysu.edu](mailto:IDDC@ysu.edu) for tech assistance.

You will need regular access to a high-speed internet connection and a computer to participate in this course. If you do not have access to any of the above, plan well ahead of time to locate and work within a campus computer lab. You are responsible for carefully following all instructions for uploading assignments to our course Blackboard.

## **Academic Dishonesty**

All assignments completed in English 3711 must be the product of your own thought, inquiry, and artistry.

Plagiarism means presenting words, ideas, or information found in works written by others as if they were your own. Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, all forms of cheating, as well as receiving inappropriate assistance from others in completing an assignment.

The penalty for plagiarism ranges from failing the assignment to receiving an NC in the course. For more information, please see [the YSU Student Code of Conduct](#).

## **Incompletes**

An incomplete grade will only be given in accordance with University policy. For more information on guidelines and procedures for incompletes, [view the relevant university policies and procedures page here](#).

## **Additional Recommendations for Success**

- Writing is a process. Save your all drafts carefully. Back up your files on a hard drive or in cloud storage. If you write notes or drafts by hand prior to typing your post, carefully store and secure all hard copy materials you work with.
- Adhere to a spirit of compassion and civility in your writing on our course Blackboard, particularly when responding to the thoughts of others. Anyone who disrupts our online learning environment will be referred to YSU Student Conduct.

## **Campus Resources**

- The [YSU Writing Center](#) is an invaluable resource. Student consultants are available to help you with any stage of the writing process in this or any class. For our purposes, consultants can help especially with understanding this syllabus and assignment prompts, drafting ideas, and revising. To register and schedule a free appointment, visit the Writing Center website or call 330.941.3055.
- [Student Counseling Services](#) is available to provide high-quality, short term, confidential mental health counseling, consultation, outreach (educational training), and referral services to all currently enrolled YSU students. Contact them by phone at 330.941.3737.
- The [Center for Student Progress](#) offers academic coaching, tutoring, and many other services and programs to YSU students. Visit them at their location near Dunkin Donuts. Contact them by phone at 330.941.3538.
- For help with Blackboard, the YSU Distance Education Office Help Desk e-mail is [IDDC@ysu.edu](mailto:IDDC@ysu.edu). Phone is 330-941-3244.
- [Click here](#) to learn about additional free campus resources available to all registered students.

## **Students with Disabilities**

In accordance with University procedures, if you have a documented disability and require accommodations to obtain equal access in this course; please contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. You must be registered with the Center for Student Progress Disability Services, located at 275 Fifth Avenue, and provide a

letter of accommodation to coordinate reasonable accommodations. You can reach CSP Disability Services at 330.941.1372.

**Statement of Non-Discrimination**

Youngstown State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, disability, age, religion or veteran/military status in its programs or activities. Please visit [YSU's page on accessibility compliance](#) for contact information for persons designated to handle questions about this policy.