

**Contemporary English Literature**

Code: 100238  
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2500245 English Studies	OT	3	2
2500245 English Studies	OT	4	2

### Contact

Name: David Owen  
Email: david.owen@uab.cat

### Use of Languages

Principal working language: english (eng)  
Some groups entirely in English: Yes  
Some groups entirely in Catalan: No  
Some groups entirely in Spanish: No

### Prerequisites

Contemporary British Literature is a demanding course that reads a number of recently published British novels in a close and intensive manner.

An essential requirement is a C2 level of English in accordance with the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*.

A level of English at C2 allows students to understand the texts in question; to summarise information from distinct spoken and written sources; to reconstruct arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation; and to express themselves spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in the most complex situations.

Knowledge acquired in the first year subject, History and Culture of the British Isles and other compulsory literature subjects throughout the degree will be relevant in this subject.

### Objectives and Contextualisation

This subject provides an approximation to contemporary British literary culture, through the multiple postmodern perspective of identity (*Identity & the Family; Identity: Lost, Stolen and Forgotten; Identity: Place or Ethnicity*).

The basic objective of the course is to come to a fuller understanding of particular aspects of postmodern Britain through the study of six recent novels, attempting to comprehend the concerns and leitmotifs that may be generally applicable in these novels to the culture as a whole, with the aim of attaining a closer conception of the cultural parameters currently at work in contemporary British society.

### Competences

English Studies

- Critically assessing the scientific, literary and cultural production in the English language.
- Demonstrate a comprehension of the relationship between factors, processes and phenomena of linguistics, literature, history and culture, and explaining it.

- Develop critical thinking and reasoning and knowing how to communicate effectively both in your mother tongue and in other languages.
- Distinguish and contrast the various theoretical and methodological models applied to the study of the English language, its literature and its culture.
- Identify the main literary, cultural and historical currents in the English language.
- Produce clear and well structured and detailed texts in English about complex topics, displaying a correct use of the organisation, connection and cohesion of the text.
- Rewrite and organize information and arguments coming from several sources in English and presenting them in a coherent and summarised way.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills in order to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.

## Learning Outcomes

1. Analysing and interpreting in an advanced level secondary texts about the contemporary English literature (United Kingdom, United States, and other territories).
2. Applying appropriate secondary academic sources to text comments and argumentative essays about contemporary English literature (United Kingdom, United States, and other territories).
3. Carrying out oral presentations using secondary academic sources in relation to the contemporary English literature (United Kingdom, United States, and other territories).
4. Communicating in the studied language in oral and written form, properly using vocabulary and grammar.
5. Comparing and relating in an advanced level various topics and texts of the contemporary English literature (United Kingdom, United States, and other territories).
6. Comparing in an advanced level the methodologies of literary criticism applied to contemporary English literature (United Kingdom, United States, and other territories).
7. Demonstrate a master of the specific methods of individual academic work that prepare the student for a postgraduate specialised education in the same or a different field of study.
8. Describing in detail and in an academic way the nature and main traits of the contemporary English literature (United Kingdom, United States, and other territories).
9. Distinguishing the main ideas from the secondary ones and summarising the contents of primary and secondary texts about contemporary English literature (United Kingdom, United States, and other territories).
10. Drawing up academic essays of medium length, using secondary academic sources in relation to the contemporary English literature (United Kingdom, United States, and other territories).
11. Effectively communicating and applying the argumentative and textual processes to formal and scientific texts.
12. Explaining in detail and in an academic way the diachronic and synchronic evolution of the topics and texts of the contemporary English literature (United Kingdom, United States, and other territories).
13. Localising secondary academic sources in the library or on the Internet related to the contemporary English literature (United Kingdom, United States, and other territories).
14. Mastering the advanced knowledge and scientific methodologies related to linguistics, literature, history and culture that prepare the student for a postgraduate specialised education in the same or a different field of study.
15. Students must be capable of comprehending advanced academic or professional texts in their own language or the another acquired in the degree.
16. Students must be capable of precisely arguing ideas and opinions in their own language or another acquired in the degree.
17. Students must reflect on and give their opinion about primary texts of the contemporary English literature (United Kingdom, United States, and other territories).
18. Summarising the content of academic primary and secondary sources about contemporary English literature (United Kingdom, United States, and other territories).

## Content

## Unit 1. Identity & the Family

- Sally Rooney: *Normal People* (2018)
- Poppy Adams: *The Behaviour of Moths* (2008)

## Unit 2. Identity: Lost, Stolen, Forgotten

- Maggie O'Farrell: *The Hand that First Held Mine* (2010)
- Emma Healey: *Elizabeth is Missing* (2014)

## Unit 3. Identity: Place or Ethnicity

- Zadie Smith: *NW* (2012)
- Marina Lewycka: *Two Caravans* (2007)

## Methodology

1 ECTS credit = 25 teaching/learning hours > 6 credits = 150 hours

Classes are seminar-oriented; students' active participation in class discussions is expected. Consequently, students must read all the set novels before the unit in which they are studied.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

## Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Class Discussions	15	0.6	
Lectures	30	1.2	
Type: Supervised			
Bibliographical Search	8	0.32	
Essay writing	14.3	0.57	
Type: Autonomous			
Personal work	24.7	0.99	15
Reading	55	2.2	

## Assessment

Assessment is based on the following items:

1. Two essays (2 x 45%) = 90%
  2. Attendance and participation in class debates = 10%
- Definitive dates for each of the above exercises will be published at the start of the course.
  - On carrying out each assessment activity, lecturers will inform students (on Moodle) of the procedures to be followed for reviewing all grades awarded, and the date on which such a review will take place.

- All exercises are COMPULSORY

Students will obtain a Not assessed/Not submitted course grade unless they have submitted more than two thirds of the assessment items.'

#### Reassessment conditions

- Students whose final average mark of the two exams is between 3,5 and 4,9 are eligible for re-assessment.
- The specific re-assessment activity will be confirmed by the lecturer in question.
- The maximum possible final mark is a 5.
- In case students cannot take the exam on the date set up by the teacher for justified medical reasons, a different date can be agreed on with the lecturer.
- Reassessment is available ONLY to students who have failed the initial assessment; it is NOT available to students who have passed but wish to improve their final grade.

#### Plagiarism

In the event of a student committing any irregularity that may lead to a significant variation in the grade awarded to an assessment activity, the student will be given a zero for this activity, regardless of any disciplinary process that may take place. In the event of several irregularities in assessment activities of the same subject, the student will be given a zero as the final grade for this subject.

### Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Attendance and Participation in Class Discussions	10%	1	0.04	1, 16, 5, 9, 3, 4, 17
Essay 1	45%	1	0.04	1, 2, 16, 6, 5, 15, 14, 7, 8, 9, 12, 11, 4, 13, 10, 17, 18
Essay 2	45%	1	0.04	1, 2, 16, 6, 5, 15, 14, 7, 8, 9, 12, 11, 4, 13, 10, 17, 18

### Bibliography

#### Critical Studies

- Ashley, Bob (ed), *Reading Popular Narrative. A Source Book*, Leicester University Press, 1997.
- Boxall, Peter, ed. *Twenty-First-Century Fiction: A Critical Introduction*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Caserio, Robert L., ed. *The Cambridge Companion to the Twentieth-Century English Novel*. Cambridge Companions to Topics. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Eagleton, Mary. *Feminist Literary Theory: A Reader*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.
- English, James F., ed. *A Concise Companion to Contemporary British Fiction. Blackwell Concise Companions to Literature and Culture*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006.
- Ferguson, Mary Anne. *Images of Women in Literature*. Boston: Wadsworth, 1991.
- Gąsiorek, Andrzej. *Post-war British Fiction: Realism and After*. London: Edward Arnold, 1995.
- Head, Dominic. *The State of the Novel: Britain and Beyond*. Blackwell Manifestos. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008.
- Hill Collins, Patricia. *Black Feminist Thought. Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment*. London & New York: Routledge, 2000.
- Lane, Richard J., Rod Mengham, and Philip Tew, eds. *Contemporary British Fiction*. Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2003.
- Leader, Zachary, ed. *On Modern British Fiction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

- Moi, Toril. *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory*. Oxford: Routledge, 1985.
- Morrison, Jago. *Contemporary Fiction*. London: Routledge, 2003.
- Plain, Guill and Susana Sellers. *A History of Feminist Literary Criticism*. Cambridge: CUP, 2007.
- Robinson, Sally. *Engendering the Subject: Gender and Self-Representation in Contemporary Women's Fiction*. Albany: SUNY, 1991.
- Showalter, Elaine. *A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Brontë to Lessing*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.
- Stevenson, Randall. *The Oxford English Literary History. Vol. 12, 1960-2000: The Last of England?* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Warhol-Down, Robyn and Diane Price Herndl (Eds.) *Feminisms Redux: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*. New Jersey: Rutgers UP, 2009.

#### Downloadable Studies

- [The Cambridge Introduction to Modern British Fiction 1500-2000](#) (Dominic Head)
- [Consciousness and the Novel, pp. 61-72](#) (David Lodge)
- [The Cambridge Companion to British Fiction since 1945](#) (Kevin R. McNamara, Ed.)

#### Software

None associated with this academic subject