



LT312 LITERATURE AND PLACE

IES Abroad London

DESCRIPTION:

This course provides students with an opportunity to critically explore London's literature by examining ground-breaking fiction and non-fiction, both Modernist and contemporary. The course considers some of the ways in which writers depict place and key themes such as migration, displacement, interwar trauma, feature heavily, alongside discussion of description, community, and the changing city e.g. London: a welcoming city; London: a student's city. In addition, class sessions encourage the discussion of gender, race, social class, and queer identities in the texts, some of which are also the source of adaptations. This is a literature course and students are primarily asked to engage with primary texts as the principal work of the course.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 30 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: Students will not be expected to have any prior acquaintance with these texts, but they must be prepared to engage with an intense reading and learning experience and to approach the material with an open mind.

ADDITIONAL COST: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

- Lecture
- Individual exercises
- Open discussion
- Field Trips
- Debates

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- General participation 10%
- Mid-term writing assignment 30%
- Presentation 20%
- Final essay 40%

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course students will have:

- Gained a good understanding of the texts studied: specifically, the authors' style and strategies in depicting 'place'
- London - from different historical periods and different cultural perspectives.
- Students will have a broad picture of literary London from the 1930s to the present day, and will have developed their own writing and presentation skills through the three assignments and class work.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Regular class attendance is mandatory. Irregular attendance may result in a lower grade in the course, and/or disciplinary action. The IES Abroad London class attendance policy does not allow for unexcused absences, and grades will be docked one-half letter grade for each such absence. Rare exceptions will be made for the following reasons:

- The student is too sick to attend class. In this instance, the student must call the IES Abroad Centre before class to notify any of the IES Abroad staff. It is not sufficient either to email, send a message with a friend or call the Centre after the class has started.
- A serious illness or death in the immediate family requiring a student to travel home. This requires written approval from the

Centre Director before departure.

Arriving more than 10 minutes late to class may count as an unexcused absence. Immigration laws in the UK are extremely strict, and we jeopardize our legal status in hosting students who do not regularly attend class. Students who do not attend class regularly will be reported to the appropriate officials and risk dismissal from the program and deportation from the UK. If a student incurs absences representing 25% of the total class hours, they will be contacted by the Academic Programme Manager (APM) and Centre Director (CD). If these absences are made up exclusively of unexcused non-attendance, this will trigger a disciplinary review. If these absences are made up of excused non-attendance, a meeting will be held to discuss the underlying reasons for lack of attendance, and to discuss ways it can be maintained for the duration of the term. If the 25% threshold is reached due to a mixture of excused and unexcused absences, students will also be asked to attend a meeting to discuss.

CONTENT:

Week	Content	Assignments (Reading, homework, project due dates, exams)
1	A welcome and introduction to 'Literature and Place' Exploring the course content, specifically the development of the canon, a broad sweep of London literature and the use of 'place' in fiction Introducing ourselves, ways of working together, methods and reading.	There is no set text for this session but students will be encouraged to start reading <i>Mrs Dalloway</i> by Virginia Woolf.
2	Over the next weeks we will be reading Woolf's Mrs Dalloway, (1925) exploring the text set in interwar London, its depiction of the city, the impact of war, issues of gender, and class in this Modernist fiction.	We will be discussing the characters, plot and setting of Virginia Woolf's Mrs Dalloway .
3	Field Trip – British Library/ Bloomsbury	Visiting the BL exhibition on 'Treasures' and considering how the Bloomsbury set lived and represented the city. Themes to consider - the writing life, community, class and inter war London. https://www.britishlibrary.cn/en/articles/virginia-woolfs-london/
4	The Voyage in the Dark by Jean Rhys. (1934) The Caribbean writer, Jean Rhys, is a major voice in fiction. Mostly known for her novel, <i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i> , she nevertheless conveyed the migration of a woman - making the transition from the colonies to Britain - in her earliest fiction, set in 1930s London.	Text: <i>Voyage in the Dark</i> by Jean Rhys.
5	Zadie Smith's novel, NW,(2012) forms part of a burgeoning literature examining race and social inequalities in Britain.	Students are required to read the first half of Smith's NW .

	Lecture and class discussion of video extracts.	
6	Focus on Zadie Smith's NW (2012) a critical and commercial success, hailed for its analysis of class and race.	Zadie Smith's novel, NW. https://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/aug/01/zadie-smith-nw-book-club We will be exploring the book's many strengths: the characters, plot, the form, and considering its relationship with earlier fiction - Woolf, Joyce and others, using stream of consciousness.
7	Adaptations On Chesil Beach (2007) - a littoral location Ian McEwan's historical, romantic novel, is charged with social commentary and made into a film.	MIDTERM PAPER DUE. Students are expected to read the entire Mcwan novel. Discussion of the presentation requirements.
8	Normal People (2021) - an Irish novel Sally Rooney's Millennial fiction set in Ireland has been hugely successful as a novel and as a TV series. We explore her style, the characters and themes.	Beyond the Narrative Arc - The Paris Review
9	Student Presentations	Students will choose what aspects of the novels/ adaptations to discuss. They might be considering what criteria apply to the different art forms; how significant changes between the two impact on the narrative and will present to the group for 10 minutes.
10	Field Trip - Tate Britain - Visual Art and Literature	A visit to Tate Modern. The session will involve looking at representations of London and discussion of the Tate publication by queer poet and essayist, Jay Bernard.
11	Xialou Guo's Concise Chinese-British Lover's Dictionary (2007) We will be exploring the form of this comic romance, the use of language and cultural themes - displacement and migration and asking whether the places - UK and China are really different. . https://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/jan/27/featuresreviews.guardianreview33 Review, Revision and Goodbyes	A class to prepare for the upcoming final paper, doing group revision and reviewing the whole course. Reading for the future!

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Virginia Woolf, Mrs Dalloway, Penguin Press, 176 pages
- Jean Rhys, Voyage in the Dark, Penguin Press, 176 pages
- Sally Rooney, Normal People, Faber and Faber, 288 pages



- Zadie Smith, *NW*, Penguin Press, 480 pages
- Ian McEwan *On Chesil Beach* Vintage Press, 176 pages
- Xailou Guo, *The Concise Chinese-British Lover's Dictionary*, Penguin, 331 pages
- Jay Barnard, *Complicity*, Tate Publications. 6 pages

All the set texts must be read in full in advance of the relevant class. Moreover, handouts from relevant critical works, newspaper articles, and reviews will be made available as necessary on Moodle.