

## General Information

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|--------------------|--|---------------------|---------------|
| <b>Course name</b> | British Literature - Selected Chapters | <b>ECTS Credits</b> | <b>3</b>      |
|                    |  | <b>Semester</b>     | <b>summer</b> |

## Aims

This course is designed to help students explore British popular fiction, i.e. the texts that are not studied in traditional literature history classes, as they stand outside the canon. It is the aim of this course to teach students to critically examine and analyse the significance and cultural impact of texts they would normally consider leisure reading. Also, the course poses questions such as: What is the difference between high and low culture? What is the place of popular fiction within literature? Can popular fiction be analysed in the same manner as literature? What is genre and how is it significant for popular fiction?

## Contents

Course Structure: The course consists of an introduction and 4 two-week blocks dedicated to different genres of popular fiction. Each block is divided into two parts. During the first week, students read theoretical texts, study the characteristics and history of the respective genre and acquire a critical outlook on the genre. During the second week, students read specific works of the genre and attempt to apply the acquired theoretical concepts in class discussions, as well as in written home assignments. Seminar Topics:

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION. Basic information: assessment, readings, etc. Online tests, how to log into Moodle. A note on plagiarism. Can/should we analyse popular fiction? What is cultural studies?

WEEK 2: Gothic Novel 1 / Text: Clive Bloom "Now Welcome the Night: The Origins of Gothic Culture"

WEEK 3: Gothic Novel 2 / Texts: Ann Radcliff *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (excerpt); Jane Austen *Northanger Abbey* (excerpt)

WEEK 4: Detective Fiction 1 / Text: John G. Cawelti "The Formula of the Classical Detective Story"

WEEK 5: Detective Fiction 2 / Texts: Sir Arthur Conan Doyle "The Final Problem"; Agatha Christie "The Market Basing Mystery"

WEEK 6: Science Fiction 1 / Text: Adam Charles Roberts "Defining Science Fiction"

WEEK 7: READING WEEK 1 (This is your time to get through the first compulsory novel!)

WEEK 8: TUTORIALS

WEEK 9: Science Fiction 2 / Text: Douglas Adams "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy", Book 1 (whole novel)

WEEK 10: Chick Lit 1 / Text: Cris Mazza "Who's Laughing Now? A Short History of Chick Lit and the Perversion of a Genre"

WEEK 11: READING WEEK 2 (This is your time to get through the second compulsory novel!)

WEEK 12: Chick Lit 2 / Text: Helen Fielding "Bridget Jones's Diary" (whole novel)

Week 13: ONLINE CREDIT TEST (via Moodle)

Week 14: TUTORIALS

## Evaluation

Continuous Assessment:

1. Attendance All classes throughout the summer semester will be held online, through MS Teams, according to the schedule. Seminar attendance is compulsory. The maximum number of absences is 2. In case that a student misses more than 2 seminar sessions, they will be awarded an FX-fail for the course, irrespective of their exam/presentation/paper

results. Failing to attend the WEEK 1 introductory session is ALSO COUNTED AS AN ABSENCE. Not logging into an online class is COUNTED AS AN ABSENCE. Students must be on time for class.

2. Active participation, completed homework assignments (15 points) Students are required to do their best with respect to active participation in seminar sessions. Students are expected to bring their own ANNOTATED copies of the required materials, complete the assigned tasks and exercises (available on UPJS OneDrive/MS Teams and during the lessons) and participate in class discussions. Active participation will amount to 15% of the final mark.

3. Bi-weekly Assignments (40 points) After each topic, students are required to submit a short paper of 250-500 words. Each student will hand in a total of 4 such papers. Paper topics and deadlines will be announced during the seminars. Papers must conform to the guidelines of academic writing and must NOT be plagiarised. Plagiarised papers will be awarded 0 points. Students will not be given the option of rewriting plagiarised seminar papers. The assignments will amount to 40% of the final mark.

4. Credit Test (45 points) Students will sit an online credit test in WEEK 13. The credit test will be held via the Moodle elearning platform. Detailed instructions on how to log into Moodle will be provided during the introductory seminar. The test will amount to 45% of the final mark. There are NO RETAKES. If you are unable to attend the online credit test for valid reasons (e.g., medical emergency), contact the teacher as soon as possible, or in advance if possible. To pass the course, the SUM of all points (active participation + assignments + credit test) must be no less than 65 points.

Grading scale: Mark %

A93–100 B86–92 C78–85 D72–77 E65–71 FX64-0

## Bibliography

Bennett, T. (ed): Popular Culture: Past and Present Bennett, T. (ed): Popular Fiction: Technology, Ideology, Production, Reading (Popular Fiction Series) Gelder, K.: Popular Fiction: The Logics and Practices of a Literary Field Glover, D.: The Cambridge Companion to Popular Fiction

Hoppenstand, G.: Popular Fiction: An Anthology Swirski, P.: From Lowbrow to Nobrow  
Compulsory reading: theoretical essays and works of popular fiction uploaded to UPJS SharePoint