COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
20th Century English Novel: From Modernism to Postpostmodernism / XX a. anglų romanas: nuo modernizmo iki postpostmodernizmo	

Lecturer(s)	Department(s) where the course unit (module) is delivered
Coordinator: Dr. Linara Bartkuvienė	Department of English Philology Faculty of Philology

Study cycle	Type of the course unit (module)
MA	Compulsory

Mode of delivery	The period when the course unit (module) is delivered	Language(s) of instruction
Face-to-face	Spring	English

Requirements for students	
Prerequisites: English C 1	**Additional requirements (if any):**

Course (module) volume in credits	Total student workload	Contact hours	Self-study hours
5	150	32	118

Purpose of the course unit (module): programme competencies to be developed
This research-oriented MA course examines how the Anglophone novel responds to changing conceptions of the self, truth, memory, authorship and reality from literary Modernism through Postmodernism to contemporary writing after Postmodernism. Rather than treating these formations as a simple, linear succession of periods, the course approaches them as historically situated, overlapping and contested aesthetic and intellectual paradigms. Students investigate what contemporary fiction inherits, rejects, revises, or reactivates, and critically assess whether terms such as post-postmodernism, metamodernism, and New Sincerity adequately describe recent literary developments. Organised around two connected research problems – the self in transition and truth in transition - the course explores fragmented subjectivity, gendered and embodied identity, alienation, vulnerability, relationality, narrative authority, unreliable narration, historical memory, simulation, media environments and the limits of representation. The course combines close reading with advanced literary and cultural theory, engagement with current scholarship, and independent student research. Students formulate researchable questions, situate arguments within critical debates, justify theoretical approaches and produce an original, appropriately scoped interpretation.

The course uses Modernism and Postmodernism as historical and aesthetic foundations for examining contemporary literary and cultural thought. Film, visual culture and digital media may be considered comparatively where they illuminate the central research problems.

The students should develop the following generic competences (as per the aims of the English Studies programme):

1. ability to find, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate data needed for studies, professional, cultural, and creative activities; integrate knowledge, apply the acquired knowledge in practice, recognize problems, and propose possible solutions;
2. ability to generate ideas and knowledge, independently find appropriate forms of expressing them, seek new knowledge and skills and apply them in solving tasks in a new environment and the implementation of innovations.
3. ability to identify differences between one's own and other's cultural identities and attitudes, explore others' ideas despite cultural differences, express one's ideas in ways that are understandable and acceptable to different people;
4. ability to understand and value the common public interest, work in a team to achieve a common goal, cooperate with people of various cultures, and take responsibility for the quality of one's own and the team's activities and its improvement.
5. ability to set realistic goals, identify all the steps and effective strategies needed to fulfil such goals within the time available; meet deadlines, make necessary decisions, and flexibly adapt to the circumstances;
6. ability to take initiative and carry out one's activities, rationally assess the strengths and weaknesses of one's work, reflect and be responsible for one's decisions and actions, and be aware of the impact of one's activities and their outcomes on society and the environment.

Subject-specific competences (as per the aims of the English Studies programme):

1. ability to comprehend literary and cultural studies as independent yet interconnected disciplines and define their objects of inquiry; become acquainted with literary and cultural theories, their historical development, and the socio-cultural factors involved in that process; be able to define and use appropriate terminology within the fields of literary and cultural studies;
2. comprehension of the intricacies of the Anglophone literary canon and British culture as highly complex phenomena; be able to demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the development of Anglophone literature and the factors involved in that process; will be able to discuss comprehensively the processes and problems of contemporary literature;
3. ability to analyze and evaluate Anglophone literary and cultural texts of various genres in relation to their historical, social, and other contexts;
4. ability to independently formulate a relevant research question in linguistics, literature, culture, or interdisciplinary studies and design a research study; ability to critically evaluate the application of research methods and approaches and selection of the theoretical framework(s), methodology, and empirical material;
5. ability to conduct a research study by adopting innovative methods of data collection and processing, interpret findings of the study, draw conclusions, and evaluate the results of the research within the context of other studies;
6. ability to present the results of research in writing and orally to a variety of audiences and demonstrate the ability to provide logical arguments in discussions.

Learning outcomes of the course unit (module)	**Teaching and learning methods**	**Assessment methods**
By the end of the course, students will be able to: Contextualise selected Anglophone novels in relation to Modernist, Postmodernist and contemporary debates, recognising the limits of fixed periodisation. Analyse how narrative form constructs and destabilises selfhood, truth, memory, authorship and reality, using precise textual evidence. Evaluate and apply relevant concepts from modernist aesthetics, metafiction, poststructuralism, feminist and postcolonial criticism, narrative ethics, affect theory and debates on metamodernism. Compare fragmented chronology, interior monologue, unreliable narration, intertextual	Research-led seminars, close-reading workshops, student-led discussions, short theoretical briefings, comparative textual analysis, collaborative concept mapping and research colloquia. Students complete primary reading before class and engage with selected theoretical and scholarly texts. Seminar work tests interpretations against textual evidence, compares critical positions and refines research questions. Independent study (118 hours) includes primary reading, theoretical reading, scholarly database searches, annotated bibliography development, research-	**Assessment Methods** **1. In-Class Essays (2 total)** **Weight: 30% each → 60% total** Description: After each unit, students will write a short analytical essay (800–1000 words / ~2–2.5 A4 pages) in class. Purpose: To assess students' close reading skills, understanding of the primary text, and ability to apply and synthesize theoretical concepts. Note Policy: Students may bring printed copies of the fictional and theoretical texts.

rewriting, metafiction and digital or multimodal experimentation. Produce an independent literary analysis that situates its argument in existing scholarship and acknowledges interpretive limitations. Present and defend research findings in clear academic English, responding constructively to questions and alternative interpretations.	project drafting and revision, and essay preparation.	Further note-taking rules (e.g., permitted summaries or marginalia) will be announced before the first essay. Rationale: These essays offer authentic, focused insight into students' critical thinking under time constraints, encouraging preparation and synthesis over memorization. **2. Two small-scale research projects (2 x 20 %).** Your review of 1 selected article (or 2 selected articles) must be written in advance and shared in class electronically, i.e., I will upload it on the e-mokymai for the class to follow during its presentation (no PowerPoint expected). The article you choose for analysis should be a scholarly research article—ideally 10 pages or more—that offers substantial academic discussion on the text of your choice. Reviews or short editorial pieces, such as 1-page reviews, would not be sufficient for this assignment. Further instructions for the assignment: In your review, please: Identify the research problem(s) or question(s) raised in the article; Summarize the main arguments provided in the article; Specify the conceptual or theoretical framework (i.e., methodology) used in the article; Consider the conclusions drawn by the author; Provide your evaluation of the article: students must identify at least one limitation, assumption or unresolved problem in the scholarly

		article and explain how they would develop or challenge its argument.

Content: breakdown of the topics	Contact hours							Self-study work: time and assignments	
	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Exercises	Laboratory work	Internship/work [illegible]	Contact hours	Self-study hours	Assignments
February 10. Introduction to the course: Modernism, Postmodernism and Literature after Postmodernism as overlapping paradigms.									Review course outline and introductory theoretical material
UNIT 1. The Self in Transition: Fragmentation, Identity, and the Search for Connection This unit investigates changing literary constructions of subjectivity, from modernist inwardness and alienation to postmodern challenges to stable identity and contemporary emphases on vulnerability, relation and care.									
Modernism and its legacy: Jean Rhys, *Good Morning, Midnight* (1939). Fragmented consciousness, alienation, memory, gender and the urban subject.									Analysis and discussion of the texts indicated in the Content segment ← Research-based discussions
Postmodernism: J. M. Coetzee, *Foe* (1986). Authorship, narrative authority, rewriting, silence, gender and colonial representation.									Analysis and discussion of the texts indicated in the Content segment ← Research-based discussions
Literature After postmodernism/metamodernism: Ali Smith, *How to Be Both* (2014). Selected substantial sections or complete novel. Vulnerability, relationality, affect and ethical selves. Comparative bridge text: Ruth Ozeki, A Tale for the Time Being (2013), studied through selected sections on transnational identity, temporal distance, vulnerability, reading, witnessing and ethical relation.									Analysis and discussion of the texts indicated in the Content segment ← Research-based discussions
Student research and discussion – Unit 1. Small-scale research 1 into critical debates on identity, subjectivity, vulnerability and relationality.									Prepare and share a critical review of a scholarly article.
In-class essay 1.									Prepare primary and theoretical texts; essay written in class. Research integrity and academic expectations Students must

									distinguish their own claims from those of critics, cite borrowed ideas and language, and use reliable scholarly sources. Any use of generative AI or other digital tools must comply with current University policy and be transparently acknowledged where required. Digital tools must not replace primary-text reading, source verification or independent analysis.
UNIT 2. Truth in Transition: Narrative Uncertainty, Simulation, and the Ethics of Representation. This unit asks how fiction represents truth under conditions of war, surveillance, mass media, consumer culture, technological mediation and historical uncertainty. Students consider whether contemporary fiction restores trust in narrative, transforms postmodern scepticism, or exposes the continuing instability of representation.									
Modernism and its legacy: Selected chapters from Elizabeth Bowen, *The Heat of the Day* (1948). Memory, surveillance, historical uncertainty and competing versions of truth.									Analysis and discussion of the texts indicated in the Content segment ← Research-based discussions
Postmodernism: Don DeLillo, *White Noise* (1985). Simulation, consumer culture, media, technological mediation and the instability of reality.									Analysis and discussion of the texts indicated in the Content segment ← Research-based discussions
Literature after postmodernism/ metamodernism: Selected chapters from Jennifer Egan, *A Visit from the Goon Squad* (2010). Digital narrative, memory and ethical responsibility. Comparative extracts from Ruth Ozeki, *A Tale for the Time Being* (2013), in relation to testimony, mediation and the ethics of reading.									Analysis and discussion of the texts indicated in the Content segment ← Research-based discussions
Student research 2 and discussion – Unit 2. Small-scale research into postmodernism, metamodernism, contemporary narrative and truth.									Prepare and share a critical review of a scholarly article.
In-class essay 2.									Prepare primary and theoretical texts; essay written in class. Research integrity and academic expectations Students must distinguish their own claims from those of critics, cite borrowed ideas and language, and use reliable scholarly sources. Any use of generative AI or

									other digital tools must comply with current University policy and be transparently acknowledged where required. Digital tools must not replace primary-text reading, source verification or independent analysis.
Total: 32			**32**				**32**	**118**	

Generative AI Policy

Using generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, and similar applications) is not permitted in this course. All coursework and assessed tasks must reflect students' own knowledge, understanding, critical thinking, and independent analytical skills. Students are expected to engage directly with the primary literary texts and theoretical and scholarly readings, formulate their own interpretations, and develop their arguments independently.

All compulsory fictional texts must be read in their original form. AI-generated summaries, plot descriptions, interpretations, or other AI-produced materials must not be used as substitutes for reading the assigned literary works. Direct engagement with the texts is essential to developing the close-reading, interpretative and analytical skills required at MA level.

Students complete the in-class essays under controlled classroom conditions without using generative AI or other AI-assisted tools. Research projects and article reviews must likewise represent students' own independent intellectual work, including their reading, analysis, evaluation and argumentation.

Assessment strategy	**Weight,%**	**Deadline**	**Assessment criteria**
Continuous assessment → see assessment criteria	→ See the assessment criteria	Throughout the term (see the course contents for the dates ↑)	Your final grade is cumulative and is structured around four core components that develop your skills in close reading, critical analysis, research, and academic writing In-Class Essay 1 30% In-Class Essay 2 30% Research Project 1 20% Research Project 2 20% **Attendance Requirement** Attendance is compulsory (70%). Regular participation in seminar discussions is essential for this MA-level course. Active engagement in dialogue, group workshops, and close reading exercises deepens your understanding of literature and theory.

Author	**Year of publication**	**Title**	**Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication**	**Publishing place and house or web link**
Compulsory reading				
Barthes, Roland		*"The Death of the Author" (1967; English translation 1977).*		Will be provided
Bowen, Elizabeth	1989	*The Heat of the Day*		London: Penguin Books
Coetzee, J. M.	1988	*Foe*		London: Penguin Books
DeLillo, Don.	1986	*White Noise*		London: Penguin Books
Egan, Jennifer	2011	*A Visit from the Goon Squad*		London: Vintage
Felski, Rita	2008	*Uses of Literature.*		Oxford: Blackwell

Huber, Irmtraud	2014	*Literature After Postmodernism. Reconstructive Fantasies*		London, New York: Palgrave Macmillan
Hutcheon, Linda	2003	*A Poetics of Postmodernism. History, Theory, Fiction*		London, New York: Routledge
Hutcheon, Linda	2002	*The Politics of Postmodernism*		London, New York: Routledge
James, David	2012	*Modernist Futures: Innovation and Inheritance in the Contemporary Novel*		Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
Rhys, Jean	1999	*Good Morning, Midnight*		New York City: W. W. Norton & Company
Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky	2003	*Touching Feeling*		Durham: Duke University Press
Smith, Ali	2015	*How to Be Both*		London: Penguin Books
Timotheus Vermeulen and Robin van den Akke	2010	"Notes on Metamodernism"		https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.3402/jac.v2i0.5677
Waugh, Patricia	1984	*Metafiction. The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction*		London, New York: Routledge
Optional reading				
Butler, Christopher	2023	*Early Modernism: Literature, Music, and Painting in Europe, 1900-1918*		Oxford: Oxford University Press
Childs, Peter	2005	*Contemporary Novelists. British Fiction Since 1970*		London: Palgrave
Stierstorfer, Klaus (ed.)	2003	*Beyond Postmodernism. Reassessments in Literature, Theory, and Culture*		Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter

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