

**COURSE DATA****Data Subject**

Code	44228
Name	Shapes of hope: Utopian and dystopian fiction
Cycle	Master's degree
ECTS Credits	3.0
Academic year	2020 - 2021

Study (s)

Degree	Center	Acad. year	Period
2196 - M.D. in Advanced English Studies	Faculty of Philology, Translation and Communication	1	First term

Subject-matter

Degree	Subject-matter	Character
2196 - M.D. in Advanced English Studies	5 - Shapes of hope: utopian and dystopian fiction	Obligatory

Coordination

Name	Department
MARTINEZ LOPEZ, MIGUEL	155 - English and German

SUMMARY

This course proposes a journey through utopian, anti-utopian and dystopian thought in Western literature from its origins until the present day. By reading, analysing and debating over some of the main works of literature of these subgenres in the English language, a reflection will be made about the utopian undertones of political action. Likewise, the parameters of the search for a better social design will be studied as a basis of the theories of the Modern state and the welfare state; we will focus on the anticipatory character of the utopian and dystopian texts in their prophecy about the metamorphosis of the dream of happiness into a totalitarian nightmare, and of idealism into rationalism through satire. The exploration of the answers of utopian/dystopian literature to the scientific, technological, economic, moral and political crises of the different periods will conclude with an analysis of several utopias, as well as the reception of the post-contemporary re-writing of the apocalypse in narratives about terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, preventive/preemptive wars and the robotics revolution.



PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE

Relationship to other subjects of the same degree

There are no specified enrollment restrictions with other subjects of the curriculum.

Other requirements

OUTCOMES

2196 - M.D. in Advanced English Studies

- Students should apply acquired knowledge to solve problems in unfamiliar contexts within their field of study, including multidisciplinary scenarios.
- Students should be able to integrate knowledge and address the complexity of making informed judgments based on incomplete or limited information, including reflections on the social and ethical responsibilities associated with the application of their knowledge and judgments.
- Students should communicate conclusions and underlying knowledge clearly and unambiguously to both specialized and non-specialized audiences.
- Students should demonstrate self-directed learning skills for continued academic growth.
- Students should possess and understand foundational knowledge that enables original thinking and research in the field.
- Advanced ability to understand from a more complex perspective than that of undergraduate studies those concepts, principles, theories, or models related to different areas of English Studies.
- Advanced ability to understand from a more complex perspective than that of undergraduate studies the methodology required for solving problems specific to the field of English Studies.
- Ability to publicly present from an advanced and more complex perspective than that of undergraduate studies experiences, ideas, or reports within the field of English Studies.
- Ability to make informed judgments using established criteria and personal reflections. Achievement of proficiency in academic and scientific-technical English, both in written and oral forms.
- Ability to identify fundamental methodologies, theories, topics, and terminological, theoretical, formal, and ideological principles necessary for initiating linguistic or literary research in English Studies.
- Ability to interpret and analyze texts that represent the linguistic and cultural diversity of contemporary English-speaking societies. Students should be able to reflect on their significance, considering their sociolinguistic, historical, political, and cultural contexts, as well as the impact of globalization on culture, within the field of English Studies.
- Ability to apply theoretical knowledge and skills to conduct critical, rigorous analysis using various tools, including printed and digital formats (ICT), within English Studies.



- Ability to develop autonomy in learning, including resource and information search, and to access bibliographic and documentary sources in different areas of English Studies.
- Ability to organize, structure, and develop ideas in various academic documents, such as essays, technical reports, and advanced research projects masters theses within the field of English Studies.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to critically assess utopian, anti-utopian and dystopian texts found in literatures in the English language, from the origins of the subgenre in English renaissance literature to the distinctly dystopian contemporary novel. Likewise, they will be able to analyse and debate over the social function of this literature in its different approaches to the possible solutions to political, socioeconomic, ethical and cultural crises, as well as the contingencies of human nature through various conceptual and rhetorical viewpoints. They will be capable of applying the knowledge acquired and reflect upon similar texts that present the opportunities to find happiness through an improvement of the political, economic and moral orders of contemporary societies.

DESCRIPTION OF CONTENTS

1. Th. Mores Utopia: the template for utopian/dystopian literature

- 1.1. Morphology and grammar of a literary genre.
- 1.2. Utopian happiness
- 1.3. Capital, labour and the just war

2. Utopia, anti-utopia and dystopia in Swifts Gullivers Travels

1. Dystopia and satire. Swifts personas
2. Foolish experimentation. On war, science and technology
3. Scatology, relativity and alienation
4. Hard and soft interpretations of Book IV
5. Reason, the vulnerability of human nature and Don Pedros role play

3. The death of utopia: Orwells 1984

1. War, power, and politics: freedom and social classes
2. At war with desire and hope: The Golden Country
3. Ingso and doublethink: Newspeak as duckspeak

**4. Biological catastrophe: a forerunner of nanotech dystopia**

1. Visions of a post-Apocalyptic world: Gardeners and viral pandemics
2. The hopeless existence of survivors, while affection, friendship, loyalty and love survive
3. Irrational hope in the midst of doom?

5. The debate on postcontemporary utopias/dystopias: Chinua Achebes African trilogy

1. Facing the political and economic crisis: the utopian approaches.
 2. The new apocalyptic tales of the present/future: terrorism, WMD, and the transition from preemptive wars to preventive wars.
 3. Nanotech scenarios: the what if approaches.
- N.B. Oral presentations begin.

6. Assessment. Speaking and writing about utopia and dystopia today

1. Academic writing on utopian/dystopian literature. (Written section of the course assessment).
2. Oral presentations on utopian and dystopian literary topics. Q&A session

WORKLOAD

ACTIVITY	Hours	% To be attended
Theory classes	24,00	100
Attendance at events and external activities	5,00	0
Study and independent work	12,00	0
Readings supplementary material	6,00	0
Preparation of practical classes and problem	10,00	0
Resolution of case studies	18,00	0
TOTAL	75,00	

TEACHING METHODOLOGY

-Introduction of theoretical content, texts and contexts, through lectures, with IT support when relevant.

-Discussion of set readings: autonomous reading of set texts and classroom discussion. Primary sources are to be read in advance and brought to class. Two movies will be watched and a selection of secondary sources and artistic portrayals of utopia/dystopia will be discussed.



-Preparation of individual/group oral presentations will also be supervised during class time.

EVALUATION

ASSESSMENT BREAKDOWN FOR FIRST CALL:

***Student attendance and active participation (20% of the final grade):** in-class discussions; Q&A sessions. Active class participation is key to obtaining a high grade in this course. **2/10**

***Final written exam (30% of the final grade):** It will consist in 1) a theoretical component in which students will answer questions on theoretical issues discussed in class 2) a practical component in which students will (2a) identify and briefly comment on texts previously close-read in class. (2b) Students will write an essay-like commentary on one of two suggested topics. **3/10**

*** Oral presentation (50% of the final grade):** 10-minute oral presentation on a topic chosen by the student, followed by a Q&A session. **5/10**

ASSESSMENT BREAKDOWN FOR SECOND CALL (There are no make-up activities for continuous assessment elements of the first call –oral presentations, attendance, participation, etc.-):

Final written exam (100% of the final grade): It will consist in 1) a theoretical component in which students will answer questions on theoretical issues discussed in class 2) a practical component in which students will (2a) identify and briefly comment on texts previously close-read in class. (2b) Students will write an essay-like commentary on one of two suggested topics.

N.B. Please, note that plagiarism will not be tolerated; it is a serious academic offence. Any student who is found to have committed plagiarism in his/her work for the course will face serious consequences, which will lead to failing the whole subject.

REFERENCES



Basic

- More, Thomas. *Utopia*. Suggested editions: Penguin Classics (2012), or Norton Critical Edition (2010)
- Swift, Jonathan. *Gullivers Travels*. Suggested edition: Norton Critical Edition (2002)
- Orwell, George. *Nineteen Eighty Four*. The Annotated Ed. Penguin Classics (2013).
- Atwood, Margaret. *The Year of the Flood*. Penguin (2010)

Additional

- Gordin D., Michael et al (eds.) *Utopia/dystopia: conditions of historical possibility*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton U.P., 2010.
- Gottlieb, Erika. *Dystopian Fiction East and West: Universe of Terror and Trial*. Montreal: McGill-Queens University, 2001.
- Hynes, Samuel (ed.) *1984: A Collection fo Critical Essays*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1971.
- Kumar, Krishan. *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1987.
- Labudova, Katarina. *Power, Pain and Manipulation in Margaret Atwoods Oryx and Crake and the Year of the Flood*. *Brno Studies in English*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (2010), pp. 134-146. Web. 15 Feb 2011.
[http://www.phil.muni.cz/plonedata/wkaa/BSE/BSE%202010-36-1/BSE%202010-36-1%20\(135-146\)%20Labudova.pdf](http://www.phil.muni.cz/plonedata/wkaa/BSE/BSE%202010-36-1/BSE%202010-36-1%20(135-146)%20Labudova.pdf)
- Manuel, Frank E., and Fritzie P. Manuel. *Utopian Thought in the Western World*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979.
- Martínez López, Miguel, *The idea of a commonwealth according to the Essenes and Thomas Mores Utopia*, chapter in A. Cousins & D. Grace (eds.), *Mores Utopia and the Utopian Inheritance*, New York: University Press of America, 1995, p. 53-68.
- Popper, Karl R. *The Open Society and Its Enemies*. 4th rev. ed. 2 vols. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962. (Originally published in 1945.)
- Sargent, Lyman Tower. *British and American Utopian Literature, 1516-1985: An Annotated, Chronological Bibliography*. New York: Garland, 1988.
- Webster, Richard. *The Diminutive Insect. Gullivers Travels, Original Sin and the Imagery of Size*. April 12 2014.
<http://www.richardwebster.net/gulliverstravelsandoriginalsin.html>

ADDENDUM COVID-19

This addendum will only be activated if the health situation requires so and with the prior agreement of the Governing Council



HYBRID LEARNING MODE (BLENDED)

1. Contents

The contents of the course syllabus remain unchanged.

2. Workload and teaching schedule

The workload expected from students remains unchanged.

3. Methodology

1. Face-to-face sessions + BBC videoconference
2. Face-to-face sessions + Materials uploaded to UVEG's Virtual Classroom
3. Face-to-face sessions + Moodle quizzes and tasks available at UVEG's Virtual Classroom

4. Assessment

Assessment criteria and instruments remain unchanged.

5. Bibliography

The bibliographical selection for the course remains unchanged.

DISTANCE (ONLINE) LEARNING

1. Contents

The contents of the course syllabus remain unchanged.

2. Workload and teaching schedule

The workload expected from students remains unchanged.

3. Methodology

1. Online instruction via BBC videoconference
2. Materials uploaded to UVEG's Virtual Classroom
3. Moodle quizzes and tasks available at UVEG's Virtual Classroom



4. Assessment

The assessment criteria remain unchanged.

N.B. Assessment in this modality (100% online) will be via Moodle and BCU videoconference at UVEG's Virtual Classroom.

5. Bibliography

The bibliographical selection for the course remains unchanged.