**English Language and Literature (Year 3, First-level Degree) – English Literature (Second-level Degree)**

Proff. Valentina Varinelli, Francesco Rognoni

***First Module: Prof Valentina Varinelli***

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to study British women’s literature through a selection of works that exemplify its forms and themes and reveal its being fundamentally distinct from the male tradition. Furthermore, it aims to introduce students to feminist literary theory and women’s studies and to offer an overview of the development of British literature until the early twentieth century.

At the end of the course, students will have enriched their knowledge of the subject and developed their communication and argumentation skills as well as their ability to use the appropriate, discipline-specific terminology and carry out an independent critical analysis of literary works. They will also have built the skill to read secondary texts and dialogue with the ongoing scholarly debate.

***COURSE CONTENT***

Women and Fiction

The course will focus on women’s writing in nineteenth- and twentieth-century British literature and on the relation between gender and genre. Students will study Virginia Woolf’s essay *A Room of One’s Own*, which is not only the foundational text of modern feminist criticism, but also the first history of women’s literature in Britain. The analysis of the essay will be complemented with complete or selected reading of works by Mary Wollstonecraft, Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot as well as Woolf.

***READING LIST***

For all students:

Jane Austen, *Persuasion*, Edited by James Kinsley, With a new Introduction and Notes by Deidre Shauna Lynch, Oxford World’s Classics, 2013 (reading of the entire book).

Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One’s Own* and *Three Guineas*, Edited with an Introduction and Notes by Anna Snaith, Oxford World’s Classics, 2015 (complete reading of *A Room of One’s Own*).

Extracts from the works that will not be read in their entirety will be made available in a course pack.

Details of secondary reading will be provided in class and on Blackboard.

Additionally, only for students of the *laurea magistrale*:

Complete reading of *Three Guineas* by Virginia Woolf, included in the edition listed above.

Complete reading of the following texts in preparation for the teaching unit plan development required in the second module (see below).

1) Joanne Collie – Stephen Slater, *Literature in the Language Classroom: A Resource Book of Ideas and Activities*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1987.

2) Paola Della Valle, *Riflessioni su una didattica della letteratura inglese per la scuola secondaria superiore*, «RiCOGNIZIONI. Rivista di Lingue, Letterature e Culture Moderne», 1 (2014), pp. 107-116 (uploaded on Blackboard).

***TEACHING METHOD***

Frontal lectures held in English.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Oral exam in English aimed to assess the students’ knowledge of the topics treated during the course and their critical and language skills. Assessment criteria: relevance and accuracy of the answers, ability to present an argument in a structured and coherent way, clarity of expression, use of the appropriate, discipline-specific terminology, ability to carry out an independent critical analysis of the primary texts, ability to identify links between them, awareness of the ongoing scholarly debate, and ability to take a position with respect to it.

Students of the *laurea magistrale* will also be asked to develop a personal critical reflection starting from an excerpt of their choice from *Three Guineas*.

Only for third-year students: the final mark will result from the weighted average between the interim oral and written tests.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Non-attending students are invited to contact the lecturer to define a reading list for the final exam.

There are no prerequisites for attending the course. However, students should show interest in the subject and have an advanced level of English (≥ B2+).

Only for students of the curriculum in *Lingue per la traduzione specialistica ed editoriale* (*laurea magistrale*): during the year you will attend 10 practice-based seminar hours led by Dr Monica Pareschi that aim to introduce you to English to Italian literary translation strategies and methods. Seminar attendance counts towards the final mark, which results from the average of the marks of the first and second module. Students who will not be able to attend the seminars must contact Dr Pareschi to make alternative arrangements.

*Consultation hours*

Prof. Varinelli meets with students by appointment.

***Second Module: Prof Francesco Rognoni***

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to study a work at the very centre of the English canon, i.e. Shakespeare’s tragedy *Hamlet*, as well as its critical and reception history and some of its contemporary recreations. It will be shown that *Hamlet* not only carries inexhaustible meaning, which is constantly renovated through time, but can also be reinvented by different authors in a never-ending feast of the imagination that generates new, original works.

At the end of the course, students will have acquired a deeper knowledge of the subject and complemented it with an understanding of critical and reception history and contemporary fiction. They will have developed their communication and argumentation skills as well as their ability to use the appropriate, discipline-specific terminology and carry out an independent critical analysis of literary works. They will also be able to identify intertextual references between texts belonging to different periods and translate poetry and prose excerpts into Italian.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course will focus on Shakespeare’s well-known tragedy *Hamlet*, which will be considered both within the historical and literary context in which it was written and first performed and in relation to its varied, yet uninterrupted fortune in Western culture, paying special attention to its reinvention in contemporary novels. The analysis of the tragedy will be complemented with complete reading of Maggie O’Farrell’s recent bestseller, *Hamnet* (2020), inspired by the short life of Shakespeare’s son, and John Updike’s *Gertrude and Claudius* (2000), an elegant *divertissement* in which the great American writer imagines the true love between the ‘bad guys’ of the tragedy, i.e. the adulterous mother and fratricide uncle.

***READING LIST***

William Shakespeare, *Hamlet: Revised Edition*, Edited by Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, The Arden Shakespeare, Bloomsbury, 2016 (complete reading).

Maggie O’Farrell, *Hamnet*, Tinder Press, 2020 (complete reading).

John Updike, *Gertrude and Claudius*, Penguin Modern Classics, 2001 (complete reading).

Details of secondary reading will be provided in class and on Blackboard.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Frontal lectures held in English and in Italian.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Oral exam in English and in Italian. Students will first be asked to read out, identify and translate a passage from *Hamlet*. Then they will be asked questions aimed to assess their ability to draw connections between the different parts of the tragedy and between the latter and the other works studied in the module. Assessment criteria: thoroughness and relevance of the answers, communication and argumentation skills, use of the appropriate, discipline-specific terminology, clarity of expression, ability to carry out an independent critical analysis of literary works, ability to translate them into Italian, and intellectual curiosity.

Students of the *laurea magistrale* will also be asked to develop a teaching unit plan on one of the authors or works studied in either the first or the second module. The assessment of the project will contribute to the final mark.

Only for third-year students: the final mark will result from the weighted average between the interim oral and written tests.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

The syllabus is the same also for non-attending students.

There are no prerequisites for attending the course. However, students should show interest in the subject and have an advanced level of English (≥ B2+).

*Consultation hours*

Prof Rognoni’s consultation hours can be found on his personal webpage.