



RHODES UNIVERSITY
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ENGLISH HONOURS

COURSE GUIDE

2023

Department of Literary Studies in English

Course Coordinator: Dr Deborah Seddon

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WELCOME TO ENGLISH HONOURS

We trust you will have a challenging and fulfilling year. This course guide is to help you with every aspect of the Honours course and to assist you in adjusting post-graduate life, its expectations and privileges. We hope it will prove useful to you as you enjoy this once-in-a-lifetime experience. You will need to work hard and manage your reading, writing, and your time in a mature fashion in order to keep pace with the demands of the course. Please contact the Course Coordinator, Dr Deborah Seddon, if you have any questions or problems. Please keep this document for reference throughout the year. The Department of Literary Studies in English seeks to stimulate and develop the imaginative and critical faculties of its students. In both its teaching and research activities, it is guided by the goals of cultural enrichment and social justice. In particular, the Department is committed to:

- developing a South African-centred curriculum which nevertheless sees English as a world language and seeks to include a wide range of literature in English from other parts of the world;
- situating the detailed study of individual literary works and authors within a more general inquiry into matters of cultural history, genre and language;
- exposing students to a variety of critical and scholarly orientations and fostering appropriate argumentative skills;
- promoting correctness, clarity and precision of expression in student speech and writing;
- sustaining a challenging learning environment through the provision of reading, discussion, and blended learning.

Contents

| | | |
|-------|--|----|
| 1. | STAFF | 4 |
| 2. | Postgraduate studies in English | 5 |
| 2.1 | Teaching & Learning | 5 |
| 2.2 | Consultations | 6 |
| 3. | PAPER DESCRIPTIONS AND PRESCRIBED WORKS | 6 |
| 4. | SEMINAR SCHEDULE | 15 |
| 5. | ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS..... | 18 |
| 6. | CLASS ATTENDANCE | 19 |
| 7. | COURSEWORK ESSAYS..... | 19 |
| 7.1 | Submission of Essays | 19 |
| 7.2 | Essay Topics | 20 |
| 7.3 | Essay Proposals..... | 20 |
| 7.4 | Essay format | 21 |
| 7.5 | Getting your Assignment Back..... | 21 |
| 8. | DULY PERFORMED (DP) REQUIREMENTS | 23 |
| 8.1 | DP requirements..... | 23 |
| 8.2 | Leave of absence (LOA) applications | 24 |
| 8.3 | LOAs and missed seminars | 24 |
| 8.4 | LOAs and extensions for assignments | 24 |
| 9. | LONG ESSAYS..... | 25 |
| 9.1 | Independent research | 25 |
| 9.2 | Format of long essay proposals | 25 |
| 9.3 | Honours Long Essay Proposals Assessment Criteria | 26 |
| 10. | EXAMINATIONS | 26 |
| 11. | ESSAY PROPOSAL AND SUBMISSION DATES..... | 27 |
| 12. | WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION | 28 |
| 12.1 | Departmental marking notch system | 28 |
| 13. | PLAGIARISM..... | 30 |
| 14. | USING THE LIBRARY | 32 |
| 13. 1 | Humanities Faculty Librarians..... | 32 |
| 13.2 | Periodicals section | 33 |
| 13.3 | English Subject Guide | 33 |
| 15. | WEEKLY SEMINAR TIMETABLE..... | 34 |

1. STAFF

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2. POSTGRADUATE STUDIES IN ENGLISH

The English Honours course covers a range of literary periods and genres, from nineteenth-century America to contemporary South Africa, from poetry and short stories to literary theory. The Honours degree is taken over one year of full-time study or two years of part-time study, and it can be combined with papers from other departments. Students choose *five* papers in total from several possible fields of study, one of which may be a long essay. Postgraduate studies in English are designed to meet individual student interests. The Honours degree is a requirement for entry into a Master's degree in English. It is also recommended for entry into the Master's degree in Creative Writing. Students who wish to proceed to a Master's degree are strongly advised to choose at least two papers in the field in which they intend to specialise, and to apply for the option of writing a long essay. The Master's degree by supervision is taken over two years of full-time study or three years of part-time study. The Doctoral degree is normally taken over three years of full-time study or five years of part-time study.

Students taking English Honours are expected to build on the skills developed in their undergraduate study and demonstrate:

- A sophisticated understanding of the conventions by which texts produce meaning, e.g. the combination of choices in genre, form, specificities of differently located language use, and the influence of various historical, socio-political, and literary ideas.
- A clear grasp of a range of theories which inform the ways in which we read and interpret literature.
- An appreciation of the historicity of meaning and of the acts of interpretation which produce it.
- A capacity for increasingly independent work including the capacity to set and explore your own choice of essay topic, by means of an essay proposal, and the use of a range of relevant critical, historical, and theoretical materials.
- Demonstrate critical thinking and the ability to construct arguments, both oral and written, especially in response to developing your own arguments with the support of theoretical and other secondary critical material.
- Demonstrate an ability to pursue independent thought and self-motivated participation (using online materials and media) in relation to seminar tasks, including devising your own individual topics for essays and presentations, where required.

2.1 Teaching & Learning

As English Honours is an exit-level courses, teaching will be mainly through face-to-face seminars in the Honours Room. We will follow a weekly timetable (see the end of this Course Guide for the seminar timetable). Seminars for each paper consist of one double period per week and they are designed so that you, your lecturer, and your peers can connect and have opportunity for discussions. If unforeseen circumstances prevent a face-to-face or online class from taking place, the class will be re-scheduled. This is called synchronous teaching and learning, and will usually (but not

always) occur at the start of a paper or a set of seminars. At other times, you will be expected to read, participate in forum discussions, listen to podcasts, and do self-study based on critical materials provided on RUConnected, interact with your lecturer or peers, and prepare your essay proposals and your essays in your own time. This is called asynchronous teaching and learning. Seminar courses for each paper will be run by individual lecturers, who will provide you with details as to how their particular component will be organised. Each individual lecturer will determine their own approach to teaching, so please read emails and course outlines on RUConnected very carefully.

Students can access RUConnected and the English Department's website via the Rhodes' website (under "Academic" – "Departments"), or directly at: <http://www.ru.ac.za/english/>. The website contains information about staff and courses. At present the main teaching and learning resource is RUConnected. **Ensure that you check RUConnected regularly as it is the main mode of communication with students.**

2.2. Consultations

Consultations with lecturers may be arranged in advance. Communicate with lecturers via e-mail, if you have an urgent query or wish to arrange a meeting.

3. PAPER DESCRIPTIONS AND PRESCRIBED WORKS

(N.B. THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN BRACKETS REFERS TO RECOMMENDED EDITIONS)

An English Honours student may choose up to a total of five papers. The papers listed below may be combined with papers in other disciplines or with a research or long essay (which counts as a full paper). All the papers are offered throughout the year. This means there will be a seminar of one to one-and-a-half hours for each paper each week throughout the teaching year. Students who obtained 65% or higher as a final mark for English III may choose to do a research or long essay, on a topic of their choice, in place of one of these papers, pending the approval of their long essay proposal. The long essay proposal is to be submitted via email to the Honours course coordinator Dr Deborah Seddon (d.seddon@ru.ac.za). See guidelines for the long essay proposal below.

Paper 1: Literary Theory (Coordinator: Mike Marais)

Paper 3: American Literature (Coordinator: Aretha Phiri)

Paper 4: Global Modernisms (Coordinator: Jamie McGregor)

Paper 5: Africa in the World (Coordinator: Sam Naidu)

Paper 6: Imaginings of Place in South African Literature (Coordinator: Aretha Phiri)

Paper 1: Literary Theory (Coordinator: Mike Marais)

(Mike Marais, Nomonde Ntsepo)

The first semester of this paper focuses on the linguistic turn, power, the space of ethics, language, violence, and the racialisation and sexualisation of the body. Some of the theorists who will be dealt

with in this semester include Saussure, Derrida, Althusser, Foucault, Levinas and Butler. In the second semester, the seminars will focus on Constructions of Gender, Sexuality, and Embodied Subjectivities and encompass topics such as Heteronormativity and the Body, Queer Bodies, Disability and the Body, Trauma Theory, Black and African Feminisms, Rereading Black Bodies, the Body and Desire, Consumer Bodies. Selected films will be used to ground some of the seminar discussions: the Winterfilm Collective's *Winter Soldier*, Guy Nattiv's *Skin*, Pedro Amodovar's *The Skin I Live In*, Celine Sciamma's *Portrait of a Lady on Fire*.

The material required for this paper will be made available to students through various means.

Paper 2: Early Modern Literature (not on offer in 2023)

Paper 3: American Literature (Coordinator: Aretha Phiri)

(Sam Naidu, Aretha Phiri, TBC)

This paper ranges from some of the classic nineteenth-century texts of American literature to the twenty-first century. In the first term, students will engage with and interrogate the formative, democratic ideologies and ideals of the American nation pre- and post-Civil War (1861-1865).

The autobiographical *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself* (1845) highlights slavery as a fundamental impediment to the attainment of individual and familial life for African Americans, and attests to the incommensurable and exclusory character of the American ideal. Decades later, Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885) presents a bold critique of American democracy, while also intimating its potential. The novel represents the relationship between a young white boy, Huck Finn, and a runaway slave, Jim, on their journey across the Mississippi River.

In the second term, students focus on the poetry of Emily Dickinson (1830- 1866), widely considered to be one of America's greatest poets. Labelled a Transcendentalist, a late Romantic, a pre-Modernist, and a feminist by scholars, Dickinson was an unconventional and unique individual and poet. Her poetic style and form are idiosyncratic, setting her apart from other poets of her time and since then. This component of the paper will consider Dickinson's portrayal of American life, including her responses to the American Civil War, and will then zoom out to reflect on some of the universal themes of her poetry, including her tragic sense of the brutalities which life imposes on the individual and her philosophical uncertainties about a world which struck her as a place of mystery, ambiguity and obscure horrors.

In the third term, students will examine some seminal texts of the twentieth-century that interrogate the American Dream. Reflecting the anxieties and injustices of post-World War II and anticipating the universally turbulent civil rights movements of the 1960s and 1970s, Ralph Ellison's experimental modernist form, in *The Invisible Man* (1952), explores the mechanisms of America's marginalised subjectivities and existences. Raymond Carver's collection of short stories, *Where I'm Calling From* (1988), extends the theme of disenchantment by focusing on blue-collar, working-class Americans whose mundane lives are fittingly expressed in his minimalist narrative style.

In the fourth term, students encounter 'queer women writing' by examining the lives, poetry, and prose of five of America's finest women writers: Elizabeth Bishop, Adrienne Rich, Audre Lorde, Alice Walker, and Nicky Finney. All five women may be identified as queer, but each has a distinctive way of understanding and articulating the intersection of her personal life with her poetry. Widely regarded as one of the most important poets of the twentieth century, Bishop did not wish to be defined as either "woman" or "lesbian," while Rich defiantly identified herself in deliberate contradistinction to patriarchal norms and to what she described, in an important essay, as the "compulsory heterosexuality" demanded by American culture. In her essay collection, *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose* (1983), Walker articulates a feminism more attuned to the lives and experiences of black women, and Lorde famously identified herself as "black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet," exhibiting an openness about her own personal life that eased the way for younger queer black women writers coming after her. One of these women writers, Finney, won the National Book Award for Poetry in 2011 for poems that reveal a keen attention to the history of African Americans, from the slave past, through the struggle for Civil Rights, to racialised government responses to contemporary human disasters such as Hurricane Katrina.

Semester 1

Term 1: (AP)

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*.

Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

Term 2: (SN)

Emily Dickinson, *Collected Poems of Emily Dickinson*

Semester 2

Term 3: (AP)

Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man* (Penguin 9780140287578)

Raymond Carver, *Where I'm Calling From: Selected Stories*

Term 4: (TBC)

Queer Women Writing: Prose and poetry readings to be provided

Paper 4: Global Modernisms (Coordinator: Jamie McGregor)

(Sam Naidu, Deborah Seddon, Jamie McGregor, Sue Marais, Thando Njovane, Mike Marais)

This paper covers wide-ranging and often contrasting literary responses to modernity from the opening years of the twentieth century to the first decades of the twenty-first. The texts on offer also present a remarkable variety of settings, subjects, and styles. Joseph Conrad's infamous novella, *Heart of Darkness* (1902), will be studied mainly for its representation of the relationship between Africa and Europe in the late nineteenth century. Attention will also be paid to the novella's unusual narrative situation, its problematisation of 'truth', its self-reflexivity, its questioning of the role of art and 'civilisation', and its existential themes.

Henry James's *The Ambassadors* (1903) is one of James's late great works and his own favourite of his novels. It follows the experience of the aging American Lambeth Strether, sent to Paris by his fiancé Mrs Newsome, to rescue her son Chad and bring him home to run the family business. While in Paris, Strether falls under the spell of Chad and his circle of friends. His provincial American worldview breaks down, so much so that he begins to renege on his assignment and rethink his entire life.

Turning to a range of Virginia Woolf's most acclaimed works, the paper continues, first, with Woolf's proto-feminist polemic *A Room of One's Own* offers further insights into her fiction, as well as a rare opportunity to appreciate the literary merits of essay writing. We then turn to her novel *Mrs Dalloway* (1925), a notable early attempt at the stream-of-consciousness narrative subsequently developed in *To the Lighthouse*, but no less remarkable for its evocation of the human connection linking total strangers, despite differences in age, sex, life experience, social class, and even sanity, and also for its scathing indictment of the mental health profession. Lastly, her most advanced novelistic experiment, *The Waves* (1931), documents the lives of six characters from early childhood to old age as a series of interlinked and overlapping monologues, rendered with extraordinary psychological insight and moving poetic lyricism.

In Manuel Puig's 1976 novel, *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, two cellmates in an Argentinian penitentiary converse on a range of topics in order to pass the time. Initially seeming opposites, Molina, a transgender woman (and informant), and Valentin, a political activist, form an intimate bond, and even briefly become lovers – but their developing trust is hazardous, under the circumstances. The novel is deeply experimental, since it consists of a main plot, several sub-plots, paratextual disquisitions on a range of topics, and lengthy paraphrases of the plots of five romantic films that Molina recounts to Valentin. Moreover, readers are confronted throughout with pure dialogue, interspersed with passages of interior monologue, and must decide for themselves who is 'speaking' or 'thinking'.

The third term is reserved for the diurnal urban Hibernian odyssey of James Joyce's sprawling mock-epic *Ulysses* (1922), both parody of Homer and affirmatory human comedy. While its ostensible plot details a single day, 16 June 1904, in the lives of Jewish advertising canvasser Leopold Bloom, his wife Molly, and the young intellectual Stephen Dedalus (from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*), with a large cast of supporting characters (including several first introduced in the stories of *Dubliners*), the text's encyclopaedic range is perhaps better indicated by each of its eighteen episodes having its own narrative technique and set of symbols (including a dedicated colour, branch of knowledge, and organ of the body). It is also, despite its undoubted challenges to the reader, flowing over with lyricism, humour, and unsurpassed linguistic invention.

After an extra week on Joyce (introducing students to the first page of his 'unreadable' final masterpiece, *Finnegans Wake* (1939), described by a baffled George Bernard Shaw as "utter madness"), the fourth term continues with French existentialist philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre's first novel, *Nausea* (1938), a now classic expression of mid-twentieth century disgust and disillusionment at the perceived banality and emptiness of life.

At one point in David Mitchell's *Cloud Atlas* (2004), Sonmi-451 reflects that "Our lives are not our own. From womb to tomb, we are bound to others, past and present. And by each crime and every kindness, we birth our future." Our reading of this novel will reflect on its critique of the violence concomitant on Western notions of autonomous subjectivity and its invitation to its readers to try and "inhabit the alterity of the other". We will also reflect on this text's preoccupation with the unsaid and unsayable, with that which exceeds its own paradigms of understanding.

Since modernist fiction is grounded in an epistemological crisis, it is hardly surprising that one of its principal concerns has been negotiating conceptual room for those whom we fail to know. Our reading of *Warlight* (2018) will focus on Michael Ondaatje's development of the modernist work of unknowing in this text.

Semester 1:

Term 1

Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (SN)

Henry James, *The Ambassadors* (DS)

Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (JM)

Term 2

-----, *Mrs Dalloway* (JM)

-----, *The Waves* (JM)

Manuel Puig, *Kiss of the Spider Woman* (SM)

Semester 2:

Term 3

James Joyce, *Ulysses* (JM)

Term 4

Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea* (TN)

David Mitchell, *Cloud Atlas* (MM)

Michael Ondaatje, *Warlight* (MM)

Paper 5: Africa in the World (Coordinator: Sam Naidu)

(Sam Naidu, Thando Njovane, Deborah Seddon, Lynda Spencer)

Term 1: 21st Century African Diasporas (SN)

This component of the paper will focus on literature which represents contemporary African diasporic experiences. Of particular interest are the different modes of representation, the relationship between Africa/Africans and the world (the diasporic homes), and the impact of increasing transnationalism or globalisation on so-called African identities and cultures. To begin we will look at Jonny Steinberg's *Little Liberia: An African Odyssey in New York*. This text, a hybrid of history, reportage and personal biographies, describes the Liberian diasporic community which exists in the Park Hill neighbourhood of Staten Island, New York. Steinberg's multi-faceted story is a poignant comment on war-torn Liberia, the migrants who are forced to flee its brutal civil war, and the troubled relationship between America and West Africa. We then move onto Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's latest novel, *Americanah*, which is a humorous, transnational, intergenerational epic tale about the experiences of Nigerian immigrants in America and the UK, and the exigencies of their return to the homeland. We will also look at Igbo-Tamil author, Akwaeke Emezi's debut novel, *Freshwater*, which explores various forms of border-crossing. In addition to reading and discussing the prescribed texts, you will be expected to: familiarise yourself with relevant theories; compare and contrast creative non-fiction with fiction; and, present research papers in seminars.

In addition to reading and discussing the prescribed texts, you will be expected to familiarise yourself with relevant theories and present research papers in seminars.

Primary Texts

Jonny Steinberg, *Little Liberia: An African Odyssey in New York* [out of print, we will make a plan]

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Americanah*

Akwaeke Emezi, *Freshwater*

Term 2: The Contemporary African Novel (TN)

In this component of the paper, we examine a variety of contemporary African novels in relation to issues of form. While the African novel has tended to be predominantly realist, however, recent novels have taken a more experimental approach, ranging from variations on the epic tradition to meditations on a postapocalyptic Africa. As a result, this module traces the trajectory of these experimental forms in relation to their intertexts and the traditions in which each of the selected novels is steeped. We begin by reading Peter Kimani's *Dance of the Jakaranda* as a historical novel which not only gestures towards its colonial predecessor, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, but also opens up a conversation about the possibilities of writing which may be regarded as African epics. This is followed by a reading of A. Igoni Barrett's *Blackass* and Alain Mabanckou's *African Psycho*, both of which borrow from Bret Easton Ellis' *American Psycho* and Franz Kafka's "The Metamorphosis", respectively. These intertexts therefore grant us a point of entry into the entanglements between the African novel and world literature.

Primary Texts

Peter Kimani, *Dance of the Jakaranda*

A Igoni Barrett, *Blackass*

Alain Mabanckou, *African Psycho*

Term 3: Irates of the Caribbean (TBC)

The Caribbean was one of the earliest sites of European colonialism and slavery. The focus of this component will be on how literature and ideas generated from, or about, the Caribbean, function in the global imaginary. We will begin with three texts by a giant of Afro-Caribbean literature, Aimé Césaire: first, *Cahier d'un Retour au Pays Natal (Notebook of a Return to My Native Land)* (1939), written as Césaire determined to leave Europe for his native Martinique. As Césaire attempts to forge a new poetic language adequate to his own experience, his poem gives voice to his influential notion of "Negritude": a philosophy and aesthetic that continues to have resonance and wide-ranging influence on African and African-American conceptions of identity and literature. We will read *Notebook* alongside Césaire's *Discourse on Colonialism* (1955), which contains the key ideas of Césaire's political thought, some of which later inspired the writing of Frantz Fanon, who was Césaire's pupil in Martinique. As the African-American historian Robin Kelley suggests, *Discourse on Colonialism* is rather like "a historical prose poem" and articulates "a poetics of anticolonialism." We will then turn to an English translation of *Une Tempête* (1969), Césaire's French language reworking of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, as a starting point to examine the connections between Shakespeare's play and the many rewritings and responses it has generated. The *Tempest* has long been claimed by postcolonial thinkers as a canonical work that enables them to confront their entangled history. It is recognized as early modernity's most extensive engagement with the vexing

issues of colonialism – race, dispossession, language, displacement, occupation, and European disregard for other cultures. Lastly, we will explore Toni Morrison’s novel *Tar Baby* (1981), which is a complex engagement with Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* as well as the African-American folktale of the tar baby appropriated by Joel Chandler Harris in his Uncle Remus stories. Into the isolated setting of a fictional Caribbean island, Morrison brings together a cast of characters who represent a microcosm of the gendered and racial stratifications of contemporary American society. Setting her novel in the Caribbean, however, allows Morrison to take into full account how such disparities of power function on a global level, particularly between the global south and the world’s overdeveloped nations.

Primary Texts

Aimé Césaire, *Notebook of a Return to My Native Land*. Translated by Mireille Rosello with Ann Pritchard, Tarsset: Bloodaxe Books, 1995.

Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*. Translated by Joan Pinkham, New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000.

Aimé Césaire, *A Tempest*. Translated by Richard Miller, New York: TCG Translations, 2002.

William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*. Edited by Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan, London: Arden, 2000.

Toni Morrison, *Tar Baby*. London: Vintage, 1981.

Term 4: Wartime women: Revisiting war in narratives by Eastern African Women Writers (LS)

This component looks at two novels by contemporary Eastern Africa women writers who inhabit two worlds, Maaza Mengiste (Ethiopia/ USA) and Nadifa Mohamed (Somaliland/ Britain). These worlds provide them with a unique perspective on the traumatic intersection of history and everyday experience, the impact of tradition and modernity on the body, the contradictions, tensions and ambivalences of the gendered experience. As part of the Africa in the World paper, this section aims to introduce students to Eastern Africa imaginaries and women’s narratives of war. These revisionist accounts of war are an attempt to reclaim women’s voices from the margins of history and foreground their contribution during war, while underscoring the various forms of agency and resistance that women take on. Some of the questions raised by these revisionist narratives include: how do the authors reflect on the experiences of the individual, the family unit and the community? How do the writers represent the experience of violence and the disintegration of the home and the nation-state? Do these narratives reveal how and why do women construct new forms of agency during times of repression? We will draw on historical, postcolonial theories, African and transnational feminisms, to understand theories of the everyday, experiences of war and repressive regimes.

Primary Texts

Maaza Mengiste, *The Shadow King*

Nadifa Mohamed, *The Orchard of Lost Souls*

Paper 6: South African Imaginings of Place (Coordinator: Aretha Phiri)

(Sue Marais, Nomonde Ntsepo, Aretha Phiri, Kimmera Pillay)

Term 1: Identity, Community and Place: (Re-)Inventing Our Selves/Ourselves in the “Storm Years” (SM)

At this moment of transformation in the country ... what we hope for is not so much fictions which imagine the future in detail, but narrative structures that embrace choice or, if you will, stories that juggle and mix generic options. (Elleke Boehmer)

In the context of the climate of anticipation that occurred in South Africa in the early nineties, and particularly the hope emanating from many quarters that, in the future, “better writing ... which registers response to a decentred and less symbolically simplified society” (Cornwell 17) would emerge, it is significant that a number of critics were identifying texts that had already appeared in the eighties as emblematic of this shift in direction – such as Njabulo Ndebele’s *Fools and Other Stories* (1983), Zoë Wicomb’s *You Can’t Get Lost in Cape Town* (1987), and Ivan Vladislavić’s *Missing Persons* (1989). Their assessment was premised not only on the texts’ treatment of the politically vexed issue of identity in this country and their refusal to be constrained by the reiteration of “an epistemology in which reality is conceived purely in terms of a total polarity of opposites” (Ndebele 58), but also on their adoption of a reflexive mode of narration and innovative use of generically hybrid formats. In this opening section of the course, we shall focus on why these texts’ representations of the intersections between identity, community and place might be viewed as capturing or perhaps heralding a new sense of this nexus at the time they were produced – a especially intransigent decade in this country’s history.

Primary Texts

Njabulo Ndebele, *Fools and Other Stories*.

Zoë Wicomb, *You Can’t Get Lost in Cape Town*.

Ivan Vladislavić, *Flashback Hotel*.

Term 2: Intimate Spaces (NN)

In this component of the paper, we examine the configuration of the home in anti-apartheid and post-apartheid writing. We read the home as a site in which broader political questions of labour and love are engaged on an intimate, personal level, blurring the distinctions between public and private, past and present, home and elsewhere.

Primary Texts

Sindiwe Magona, selected short stories from *Living, Loving and Lying Awake at Night*. Interlink Book, 1991 (material to be provided).

Zoë Wicomb, selected short stories from *The One that Got Away*. The New Press, 2009 (material to be provided).

Yewande Omotoso, *The Woman Next Door*. Random House, 2016.

Term 3: Apartheid landscapes (AP)

Examining selected autobiographies, memoirs, as well as meditations, short stories and essays of prominent Drum writers of the 1950s Sophiatown generation, this section explores their concerns with situated and exilic restlessness, the interracial frontiers and unreal realities of apartheid landscapes.

Primary Texts

Nat Nakasa, *The World of Nat Nakasa* (Ed. Essop Patel). Picador, 2007.

William 'Bloke' Modisane, *Blame Me on History*. Simon and Schuster, 1990.

Bessie Head, *The Cardinals: With Meditations and Short Stories*. Heinemann Educational Books, 1995.

Term 4: Home and dislocation (KP)

Home and dislocation. [. . .] Building and demolition. Roots and rootlessness. No wonder we are given to extremes of behaviour. In between is a void. They have a long history, these extremes of behaviour. Is a country of so much dislocation a home? Winnie, there were many who hoped that the sight of you and Nelson walking hand-in-hand down the street would represent the beginning of the reconciliation of extremes; the end of dislocation. (Njabulo Ndebele, *The Cry of Winnie Mandela* 68)

This section attempts to address the question "Is a country of so much dislocation a home?" It focuses on three post-apartheid texts, two of which are fictional, and one a blend of history, cultural ecology and personal memoir. In each, various experiences of 'unhomedness' are confronted. We shall examine the extent to which these texts interrogate the notion of a "reconciliation of extremes" and an "end [to] dislocation" in the 'disenchanted democracy' that is South Africa today, and what the texts have to offer in terms of prognoses for the future.

Primary Texts

Njabulo Ndebele, *The Cry of Winnie Mandela*. Revised ed. Pan Macmillan, 2013.

Ivan Vladislavić, *Double Negative*. Umuzi, 2011.

Jacklyn Cock, *Writing the Ancestral River*, Wits UP, 2018

4. SEMINAR SCHEDULE

This is a broad outline for each paper. For details of how seminars will be organised in terms of teaching, reading, presentations etc, please read the information communicated by individual lecturers by email and on RUConnected.

Paper 1: Literary Theory

(The material required for this paper will be made available through various means.)

Semester 1

Language and the Body (MM)

Week 1: Introduction

Week 2: The Enlightenment Subject

Kant (Read: § 1.: The Judgement of Taste Is Aesthetical; § 6.: The Beautiful Is That Which Apart From Concepts Is Represented As the Object of a Universal Satisfaction; § 8.: The Universality of the Satisfaction Is Represented In a Judgement of Taste Only As Subjective; § 9.: Investigation of the Question Whether In the Judgement of Taste the Feeling of Pleasure Precedes Or Follows the Judging of the Object; § 11.: The Judgement of Taste Has Nothing At Its Basis But the Form of the Purposiveness of an Object (Or of Its Mode of Representation); § 25.: Explanation of the Term “ Sublime ”; § 26.: Of That Estimation of the Magnitude of Natural Things Which Is Requisite For the Idea of the Sublime.)

Week 3: Adorno and Horkheimer on enlightenment (Read the chapter entitled “Odysseus or Myth and Enlightenment”)

Week 4: The Linguistic Turn

Saussure (Read pp. 6-33; 65-79; 101-23 of Saussure’s *Course*)

Week 5: Derrida (Read “Signature Event Context”)

Weeks 6-7: Power

Althusser and power (Read “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses”); Foucault and discipline (Read his lectures on power)

Weeks 8-9: The Space of Ethics

Levinas (“Philosophy and the Idea of Infinity”); Butler (“Precarious Life” – that is, the last chapter in *Precarious Lives*)

Weeks 10-11: Language and Violence

Žižek, Steiner, Butler on language, representation and the human; the Winterfilm Collective’s *Winter Soldier*

Weeks 12-13: The racialisation of the body

Fanon, Melissa Steyn, Sander Gilman; Guy Nattiv’s *Skin*

Semester 2

Language and the Body continued (MM)

Week 14-15: The sexualisation of the body [Bordo, Butler]

Weeks 16-17: Laura Mulvey, Pedro Amodovar: *The Skin I Live In*, Celine Sciamma: *Portrait of a Lady on Fire*

Week 18-19: The Space of Aesthetics

Lyotard (“Defining the Postmodern”), Blanchot (“The Gaze of Orpheus”), Adorno (*Aesthetics*), Butler.

Constructions of Gender and Sexuality & Embodied Subjectivities (NN)

Week 20: Heteronormativity and the Body (NN)

Week 21: Queer Bodies (NN)
Weeks 22-23: Disability and the Body (NN)
Week 24-25: Trauma Theory and the Body (NN)

Paper 3: American Literature

Semester 1

Term 1: Classic Nineteenth-Century Texts (AP)

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

Term 2: Emily Dickinson (SN)

Semester 2

Term 3: The American Dream (AP)

Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*

Raymond Carver, *Where I'm Calling From: Selected Stories*

Term 4: Queer Women Writing (TBC)

Elizabeth Bishop, Adrienne Rich, Audre Lorde, Alice Walker, Nicky Finney

Paper 4: Global Modernisms

Semester 1

Term 1

17/24 Feb -- *Heart of Darkness* (SN)

2/9/16 March -- *The Ambassadors* (DS)

23 March -- *A Room of One's Own* (JM)

Term 2

7 April -- falls away (Good Friday)

14/21 April -- *Mrs Dalloway* (JM)

28 April/5 May -- *The Waves* (JM)

12/19 May -- *Kiss of the Spider Woman* (SM)

Semester 2

Term 3

14/21/28 July/4/11/18 August -- *Ulysses* (JM)

Term 4

1 Sept -- Joyce bonus week (JM)

8/15 Sept -- *Nausea* (TN)

22/29 Sept -- *Cloud Atlas* (MM)

6/13 Oct -- *Warlight* (MM)

Paper 5: Africa in the World

Semester 1

Term 1: Twenty-First Century African Diasporas (SN)

Jonny Steinberg, *Little Liberia: An African Odyssey in New York*

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Americanah*

Akwaeke Emezi, *Freshwater*

Term 2: The Contemporary African Novel (TN)

Peter Kimani, *Dance of the Jakaranda*

A. Igoni Barrett *Blackass*

Alain Mabanckou *African Psycho*

Term 3: Irates of the Caribbean (DS)

Aimé Césaire, *Notebook of a Return to My Native Land*

Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*.

William Shakespeare, *The Tempest* & Aimé Césaire, *A Tempest*

Toni Morrison, *Tar Baby*

Term 4: Contemporary Eastern African Women Writers (LS)

Maaza Mengiste, *Beneath the Lion's Gaze*

Nadifa Mohamed, *The Orchards of Lost Souls*

Paper 6: Imaginings of Place in SA Literature

Semester 1

Term 1: Identity, Community and Place (SM)

Njabulo Ndebele, *Fools and Other Stories*.

Zoë Wicomb, *You Can't Get Lost in Cape Town*.

Ivan Vladislavić, *Flashback Hotel*.

Term 2: Intimate Spaces (NN)

Sindiwe Magona, selected short stories from *Living, Loving and Lying Awake at Night*. (Material to be provided).

Zoë Wicomb, selected short stories from *The One that Got Away*. (Material to be provided).

Yewande Omotoso, *The Woman Next Door*.

Semester 2: (AP, KP)

Term 3: Apartheid Landscapes (AP)

Nat Nakasa, *The World of Nat Nakasa*

William 'Bloke' Modisane, *Blame me on History*.

Bessie Head, *The Cardinals: With Meditations and Short Stories*.

Term 4: Home and Dislocation (KP)

Njabulo Ndebele, *The Cry of Winnie Mandela*

Ivan Vladislavić, *Double Negative*

Jacklyn Cock, *Writing the Ancestral River*

5. ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

PLEASE NOTE: Students are not allowed to repeat any material in essays. You may NOT write on the same text/author or for the same lecturer, (unless s/he covers a huge section of the course) more than once. **For exam essays you may NOT use material already included in your term essays, nor write on texts on which you have already prepared essays during term time.** We keep copies of all your essays: essays that repeat material will be disqualified and given 0%.

Unlike our practice in the undergraduate years, in Honours we weight the Class Record at 60% and the Exam Mark at 40%. Exams will be held in June and November. The details of the format that exams will take (sit-down or take-home etc) will be made available closer to the time via an exam statement posted on RUConnected.

Paper 1: Literary Theory

Coursework: 2 ESSAYS, ONE PER SEMESTER.

Examination: ONE examination essay submitted during the exam period in November.

Paper 3: American Literature

Coursework: 2 ESSAYS, ONE PER SEMESTER

Examination: TWO examination essays, one submitted during the exam period in June, and the other during the exam period in November. During each exam period, students will be required to answer ONE question from a range of questions provided in advance. In each case, students will be required to write an examination essay on the components of the course that they did not cover for individual term essays.

Paper 4: Global Modernisms

Coursework: 2 ESSAYS, ONE PER SEMESTER.

Examination: TWO examination essays, one submitted during the exam period in June, and the other during the exam period in November. During each exam period, students will be required to answer ONE question from a range of questions provided in advance. In each case, students will be required to write an examination essay on the components of the course that they did not cover for individual term essays.

Paper 5: Africa in the World

Coursework: 2 ESSAYS, ONE PER SEMESTER

Examination: TWO examination essays, one submitted during the exam period in June, and the other during the exam period in November. During each exam period, students will be required to answer ONE question from a range of questions provided in advance. In each case, students will be required to write an examination essay on the components of the course that they did not cover for individual term essays.

Paper 6: Imaginings of Place in SA Literature

Coursework: 2 ESSAYS, ONE PER SEMESTER

Examination: TWO examination essays, one submitted during the exam period in June, and the other during the exam period in November. During each exam period, students will be required to answer ONE question from a range of questions provided in advance. In each case, students will be required to write an examination essay on the components of the course that they did not cover for individual term essays.

6. CLASS ATTENDANCE

Records will be kept of all students' attendance of seminars and their participation in seminars by means of individual or group presentations, or through written work and participation in discussion forums on RUConnected. 100% attendance at seminars is a requirement of the course. If you are going to be absent from a seminar you need to apply for an LOA in advance of the online class (see page 23 for information on LOAs).

7. COURSEWORK ESSAYS

7.1 Submission of Essays

The schedule for the due dates of essay proposals and essays is available in Section 10 of the course guide.

All coursework essays must be submitted electronically on RUConnected by 11:59 pm on the Mondays when the essays are due. Every essay will first be introduced by the student by means of an essay proposal on email two weeks before the due date

Submission procedure: Essays are submitted electronically on RUconnected, where they are accessed and downloaded by your marker.

Submission period: Essays are submitted on 11:59 on Mondays throughout the year (*except when the Monday is a public holiday. Refer carefully to the list of due dates in your schedule in section 10*). Essays will be accepted if they are overdue but the precise period of time that it is overdue will be recorded in days and hours.

Lecturers may NOT grant essay extensions nor Leave of Absences (LOAs) to students. If you cannot make an essay deadline please contact the Office Administrator to arrange for an LOA and an extension (see page 23).

PLEASE NOTE: If there are any outstanding first-semester essays AFTER the end of June/July exam period, the student will have their DP removed.

7.2 Essay Topics

Suggestions for essay topics may be provided by members of staff in charge of a paper component. In every instance, these will be on texts prescribed for the course: you are NOT free to write on any text that takes your fancy. Other staff members may prefer students themselves to identify a topic, **which must be approved by the member of staff marking the essay before you begin writing the essay**. Sometimes class presentations can be developed into essays, or finished essays can be offered as presentations in class. In all cases, the lecturer's approval must be obtained and confirmed, along with feedback on your proposal to tighten the focus or improve the preparatory reading that you should do.

Essays should be a minimum of 2500 words and should not exceed 3500 words.

Every essay topic must be confirmed in writing by means of an ESSAY PROPOSAL (For the deadlines for all proposals and essays please see the schedule on page 26). No exceptions will be permitted. The process of finalizing an essay topic may take place by e-mail or in face-to-face discussion with the lecturer marking the work.

Essay proposals should be set out as described below, and must include your proposed topic, a 250-300 word abstract, and a working bibliography. Essay proposals follow a strict schedule of due dates and must be submitted before or on the day that the essay proposal is due. All essay proposals **must be emailed to english@ru.ac.za for administrative records, AND to the lecturer who will be marking the essay, and who will provide feedback on the proposal.**

Lecturers reserve the right not to mark essays they receive for which no proposal has been submitted in advance. In that case the essay will receive 0%.

7.3 Essay Proposals

The proposal must include the following. If it does not, it is *not* an essay proposal.

1. Working title of the essay
2. A brief outline of the main argument or focus. This may include a draft introduction or an outline of 3 main points to be covered. This section should comprise 250-300 words.
3. A working bibliography (this is a proposal – a working bibliography will demonstrate the research you have done around your chosen topic, and thus should include a list of all the books and articles you have already read and those that you intend to read in order to complete the essay).

The purpose of the essay proposal is twofold: to clarify your own thinking about your topic and form a point of reference to use as you write the essay, and to serve as a means of convincing your lecturer that you have a project that is do-able within 2500-3500 words and in the time required.

NB: This is a topic *proposal*. It is not the argument of the essay but an outline of the ideas and materials on which your argument will be based. It sets out the parameters of the problem or issue you intend to explore; it does not necessarily come to definitive conclusions about the issue, though it may suggest a possible conclusion or hypothesis. Your lecturer should provide you with detailed, clear, and preferably written feedback on your proposal to help you formulate your topic and delimit

it. You need his/her written approval before you begin to write the essay. Lecturers have the right to refuse to mark essays for which they have received no proposal.

Submission of both the proposal and the essay will be recorded. Failure to submit the full quota of essays by the final dates in each semester may result in DP withdrawal and exclusion from the course.

Only the HoD has the prerogative to waive or change any of these rules or to grant extensions.

7.4 Essay format

It is essential that you familiarise yourself with the Department's *Guide to Essay Writing*. This booklet provides valuable information on formatting, referencing and the correct use of both short and long quotations. It also has useful pointers to common errors of grammar and style, and describes the pitfalls of plagiarism. It also indicates what the front page of the essay should look like. Essays must be correctly formatted for submission or marks will be deducted.

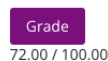
7.5 Getting your Assignment Back

Assignments are now marked online on RUConnected using a GRADING function. You can access your marked assignments here. If you have queries, please consult the individual lecturer concerned to discuss your assignment.

Assessment and feedback: Your lecturer annotates and assesses your essay electronically, using track changes and comment boxes. The marked essay is available on RUConnected within two weeks of submission, where you will be able access it and scrutinise the feedback.

How to Access Assignment Feedback

Your essay mark will be recorded as a percentage in the "Grade" block on RUConnected (RUC).



Feedback on your essays may be posted in a number of ways, and markers (whether lecturers or tutors) will inform you which system they have used. **IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU READ THIS FEEDBACK, SO THAT YOU IMPROVE YOUR ESSAY WRITING SKILLS!** To access feedback, click on the purple grade block, and you will encounter various options:

1. Brief comments may be typed into the "Comments" or "Feedback Comments" blocks below "Grade", or recorded orally/video-ed and uploaded in the latter. Your marker should date and initial this feedback.

▶ Comments (0) Tuesday, 23 November 2021, 08:31
 Good grasp of issues, but should have said more about the framing device.

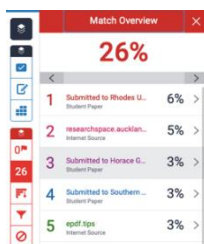
OR

2. The essay may be uploaded as a file (Word document, PDF or scan) in the “Feedback Files” block below “Feedback Comments”. When you click on the file, the identity of the marker is revealed, and when you download it, you will find that feedback has been provided via comments and/or track changes.

 Johnson.docx
 19 November 2021, 6:49 AM

OR

3. Comments/feedback may be provided in the Turnitin report, when you click on the blue pen next to the Similarity Index block, and then on the similarity percentage. A Turnitin report looks like this:



:

The top right-hand column indicates:



= instructor’s comments



= quick marks: track changes and commonly used abbreviations, with explanations (see below)



= quick comment, either recorded orally or written as text



= rubric/grading form. We do not use a standardised template, however, apart from the

Commonly used abbreviations:

Awk – awkward expression

C/S – comma splice (see 7.2 in the Departmental Guide to Essay Writing)

Citation needed – provide a source/reference for this claim (see “Section 3: Referencing your Essay” in the Guide to Essay Writing)

Commonly confused words e.g. affect for effect, disinterested for uninterested

Del – delete/omit

Improper citation – use the correct referencing style (see “Section 3: Referencing your Essay” in the Guide to Essay Writing)

Insert – add a word

Missing “,” – missing comma

P/V – passive voice e.g. “This essay will argue that ...” for “I will argue that ...”

Run-on – a sentence containing two or more independent clauses which need to be separated with a full-stop or semicolon

Sp – spelling

Support – provide evidence to support this claim

Vague – unclear

WC – word choice error

Weak transition – the logical connection between these paragraphs (or sentences) is not clear.

N.B. Markers may use additional abbreviations e.g. p – punctuation; SS – sentence structure; S – essay has not been logically structured with a clear introduction, body and conclusion; PC – paragraph construction is not logical (you should have one main point per paragraph).

8. DULY PERFORMED (DP) REQUIREMENTS

8.1 DP requirements

The term “Duly Performed” or “DP” indicates that you have completed sufficient work to allow the English Honours credit to be awarded. The Department has three DP requirements for English Honours:

- submission of all Continuous Assessment essays;
- submission of all June and November Summative Assessments/ Examinations
- Attendance of Honours seminars

NB. Attendance of seminars means that you actually attend in person, or if necessary, via an online platform, or you submit written work if this is required for a seminar. Your individual lecturers will specify what is meant by attendance for their component of a paper. You are permitted to miss TWO seminars during the course of the year, but if you miss any more you are required to apply for Leave of Absence (LOA).

8.2 Leave of absence (LOA) applications

If, on medical, compassionate or other valid grounds, you are unable to submit an essay proposal, or submit an essay assignment by the due date, a Leave of Absence (LOA) form must be obtained from the Office Administrator, Walter Peters, completed (supported by relevant documentation e.g. doctor's certificate, letter from counsellor/parent/ warden, notification from sports body), and returned to her. She will then inform you whether your LOA has been granted. No LOAs will be approved without valid supporting documents.

N.B. Failure to submit LOA applications will result in the loss of your DP, and you will not be permitted to continue the course or to write the examinations.

8.3 LOAs and missed seminars

Normally an LOA application will only be considered if it is submitted **before** the scheduled seminar. Under exceptional circumstances, however, an LOA application submitted after the seminar has taken place will be considered, provided this application is received within ONE WEEK of the missed seminar.

N.B. It is YOUR responsibility to contact the Office Administrator to inform her that you are/were unable to attend a seminar: LOAs submitted retroactively (i.e. after seven days) will not be accepted.

At the end of each term, an email will be sent to students who have failed to attend the required seminars and have not submitted LOA applications. The email will indicate that they have lost their DPs, and have one week in which to appeal against this ruling by submitting a DP Appeal form (available from the Office Administrator). This will be forwarded to the HOD, who will then inform students about the outcome of their appeals.

8.4 LOAs and extensions for assignments

Normally an LOA application will be considered if it is submitted before the due date of the relevant assignment. **Extensions and LOAs should be applied for in advance of the due date for an essay.** Under exceptional circumstances, however, an LOA application submitted after the due date will be considered, provided this application is received within ONE WEEK of the due date. An application for an LOA does not automatically grant a student an extension for a written assignment.

Extensions are for emergencies only and will only be granted on medical grounds or other valid reasons. Your lecturer is not empowered to grant you an extension, only the Office Administrator, Walter Peters. Email him at w.peters@ru.ac.za

No extensions will not be granted on Summative Assessments/ Examinations. It is your responsibility to ensure that you submit your exams in time for the deadlines.

Should you fail to submit an essay on the due date, and have not submitted an LOA application, you will receive an email from the Office Administrator indicating that the relevant essay and LOA application must be submitted within one week. An essay submitted after this deadline with an LOA

application will incur a penalty of 20% for every subsequent week that it is late. An essay submitted without an LOA application will be accepted for DP purposes but it will receive a mark of '0'.

Students who do not submit essays will lose their DPs at the end of the term. They have one week in which to appeal against this ruling by completing and submitting the relevant DP Appeal form (available from the Office Administrator), who will then inform them of the outcome of their appeals.

9. LONG ESSAYS

9.1 Independent research

The long essay option will appeal to students whose literary interests extend beyond the coursework options or who have a passion to develop a given topic. The option is intended to promote independent research and is recommended for students who intend to proceed to a Master's degree.

Students considering the option of writing a long essay need to send a proposal to the course coordinator, Dr Deborah Seddon. The proposals are assessed by all the teaching staff according to the criteria below. Once a proposal has been approved, a supervisor will be appointed, the proposal is finalized, and the focus of the project agreed upon no later than the end of the first term.

The following timetable must be STRICTLY adhered to:

| | |
|---|------------------------|
| Long Essay Proposal Due | Friday 17 Feb |
| Long Essay Proposal Finalised | Friday 24 March |
| Long Essay Half Draft Due (+-5000 words) | Monday 8 May |
| Long Essay Full Draft Due (+-10 000 words) | Monday 17 July |
| Long Essay Draft Returned with Feedback | Mon 31 July |
| Final Long Essay Submitted (10 000 words) | Mon 2 October |

The Long Essay MAY NOT exceed 10 000 WORDS.

Students doing a long essay will need to devote at least two weeks of the June/July vacation to completing their draft.

9.2 Format of long essay proposals

The long essay proposal should not be longer than 2 A4 pages and should include the following:

- Name and student number.
- Date.
- Working title of long essay.
- Brief description of the essay if the title is not self-explanatory.
- The context of the essay, briefly making clear why the topic is worth addressing; also, the theoretical framework within which the essay will be written. You should describe the area of research into which you intend to insert your study and outline the general issue/ problem and field, in a way that allows you to position yourself within the latter.

- Question/s to be addressed by the essay may be included, as well as a preliminary plan for the titles and contents of the chapters or sections.
- A working bibliography indicating what primary texts will be studied, together with the reference, critical, and theoretical texts which are to determine the shape of the essay. This is a map of territory to be explored (books and articles you intend to read in the course of the research): it is not a statement of material read already but what you intend to read for your research.

9.3 Honours Long Essay Proposals Assessment Criteria

1. Does the preliminary proposal evince the degree of familiarity required at Honours level with key studies, ideas, and previously published scholarship in the field within which the proposed project falls?
2. Does the working bibliography provide evidence of some adequate preliminary reading or a developing sense of the field?
3. Is the thesis statement/proposed core argument clearly formulated?
4. Does the preliminary proposal evince the ability to organize and structure thoughts/ideas into a coherent proposal format?
5. Is the theoretical framework clearly outlined and does the applicant have an adequate grasp of the concepts and theories used? In other words, are concepts properly introduced and defined for the purposes of the proposed project?
6. Does the applicant possess the critical skills requisite to perform pertinent literary analysis of the selected primary texts?
7. Is this a feasible project in terms of scope and breadth for a ten-thousand-word thesis?
8. Does the preliminary proposal suggest that the applicant is able to develop a coherent argument over ten thousand words? (In other words, how much intervention will be required by the supervisor?)
9. Does the Department have the capacity to supervise a project of this nature? If so, who would you suggest as a possible supervisor?

10. EXAMINATIONS

Please refer to the detail in Section 5, which deals with the different assessment requirements of each paper. The details as to the form exams will take and the format for each exam will be made clear in an examination statement posted on RUConnected.

11. ESSAY PROPOSAL AND SUBMISSION DATES

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Mon 13 Feb | Start Term 1 |
| Fri 17 Feb | Submit Long Essay Proposal to d.seddon@ru.ac.za |
| Mon 27 Feb | Submit Essay 1 Proposal to marker |
| Mon 13 March | Submit Essay 1 |
| Wed 15 March | Submit Essay 2 Proposal |
| Wed 22 March | Essay Writing Workshop |
| Fri 24 March | Submit Finalised Long Essay Proposal to supervisors |
| Mon 3 April | Start Term 2: Submit Essay 2 |
| Wed 5 April | Submit Essay 3 Proposal |
| Mon 17 April | Submit Essay 3 |
| Wed 19 April | Submit Essay 4 Proposal |
| Tue 2 May | Submit Essay 4 |
| Mon 8 May | Submit Long Essay First Draft (+-5000 words) |
| Wed 10 May | Submit Essay 5 Proposal |
| Mon 22 May | Submit Essay 5 |
| Fri 26 May | Examinations begin |
| Mon 10 July | Start Term 3 |
| Mon 17 July | Submit Long Essay Draft to Supervisor (+-10 000 words) |
| Mon 24 July | Submit Essay 6 Proposal |
| Mon 31 July | Long Essay Draft Feedback returned by your supervisors |
| Mon 7 Aug | Submit Essay 6 |
| Mon 14 Aug | Submit Essay 7 Proposal |
| Mon 28 Aug | Start Term 4: Submit Essay 7 |
| Wed 30 Aug | Submit Proposal 8 |
| Mon 11 Sept | Submit Essay 8 |
| Wed 13 Sept | Submit Essay 9 Proposal |
| Tues 26 Sept | Submit Essay 9 |
| Thurs 27 Sept | Submit Essay 10 Proposal |
| Mon 2 Oct | Submit Final Long Essay (10 000 words) |
| Mon 9 Oct | Submit Essay 10 |
| Fri 20 Oct | Examinations begin |

12. WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

12.1 Departmental marking notch system

Your essays will be marked according to the following scheme, which the Department uses to ensure that the standard of marking is consistent, despite students having different markers. On your scripts, markers will allocate ONLY the percentages listed in the right-hand column below; for example, an essay assessed at 2.2- is always allocated 62%, and so on. However, although only certain percentages are used (and not the full range), your final percentage for the year will most likely fall somewhere within the entire range from 0 – 100, and it is on this basis that you will be confirmed as, for example, an upper second on your official academic record for the year.

DEPARTMENTAL MARKING NOTCH SYSTEM

| Symbol | Equivalent |
|---------|--|
| 1 | 100 |
| 95 | |
| 92 | |
| 88 | |
| 82 | |
| 1.1 78 | |
| | (The range for the first class is 75-100%) |
| 2.1 72 | |
| 2.2+ 68 | |
| 2.2-62 | |
| | (The range for the second class is 70-74% for an upper second and 60-69% for a lower second) |
| 3+ 58 | |
| 3- 52 | |
| | (The range for the third class is 50-59%) |
| F 45 | |
| 40 | |
| 35 | |
| 30 | |
| 25 | |
| 15 | |
| 0 | |
| | (Anything below 50% is a failure) |

The following gives an indication of what the Department expects of an essay graded according to these categories:

1 82-100

Highly original thought; thought-provoking and independent argument; evidence of independent reading; critical attitude towards text and secondary reading; comprehensive and focused answer to the question; virtually flawless expression, organisation and presentation, accurate referencing.

1.1 78

Unusually competent if not entirely original; strong evidence of secondary reading; evidence of a critical, thought-provoking and independent argument; excellent command of detail of text; high level of conceptualisation; very polished if not entirely flawless expression and organisation; accurate referencing.

2.1 72

Very competent; not necessarily original, but well-marshalled argument; accurate knowledge of, and attention paid to, details of the text; possibly but not necessarily (depending on year of study) some treatment of secondary works; strong conceptualisation; lucid expression and organisation containing only a sprinkling of errors; strongly nuanced vocabulary; accurate referencing.

2.2 62-68

Good knowledge of and attention paid to text; some argumentative assertions viable, but possibly arguable or bordering on inaccurate; relatively little use of (or over-dependence on) secondary works; expression and organisation generally lucid, containing some errors but not such as to destroy sense; accurate referencing.

3 52-58

Shows basic knowledge of text, despite a few misreadings or factual errors; shows some effort at argument and remaining relevant to the question, though not entirely successfully; relatively little use of (or over-dependence on) secondary works; expression and organisation regularly flawed but almost always intelligible; accurate referencing.

F 45

Almost passable, but too flawed by lack of adequate knowledge of the basics of the text; does not address the topic; lacks coherent argument; expression and organisation regularly flawed to the extent of obscuring sense; little evidence of familiarity with literary terminology; relatively little use of (or over-dependence on) secondary works; inaccurate referencing.

35 etc.

Seriously lacks basic knowledge of the mechanics of the text and shows little/no evidence that primary text/s has/have been read;factual errors; sense consistently lost in errors of language and expression; no argument; fundamentally flawed expression; inaccurate referencing.

13. PLAGIARISM

Rhodes University defines plagiarism as “taking and using the ideas, writings, works or inventions of another, from any textual or internet-based source, as if they were one’s own.” Learning to cite primary and secondary material correctly is key not only to avoiding allegations of plagiarism, but also to developing the academic skills of reading, analysing, writing and evaluating. As a Department we endeavour to teach all our students how to use and cite primary and secondary material correctly so as to avoid plagiarism. Through the course of your studies, we will guide you regarding the nature of plagiarism and its consequences.

The Department’s lecturers will typically provide lists of recommended readings and encourage you to do your own research. Making use of relevant source material when writing an essay or paper is a sure sign of mature, professional academic practice. Such usage must, however, always be acknowledged. Acknowledging your sources is an indication of careful and considered scholarship, and ensures that anyone reading your work will be able to trace the ideas back to their original source and use the same texts as you have in their own research if they so wish. This practice is one of the building blocks of good research. Thus, citing or referencing all the sources for your arguments is essential.

- Consult the Departmental **Guide to Essay Writing** on RUConnected for detailed guidelines on how to reference appropriately.

In addition to other conventional methods, the Department employs Turnitin, a text-matching or similarity software programme that aids in the detection of possible plagiarism. However, each assignment flagged by Turnitin or deemed to have been generated by computer system Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (such as ChatGPT), will be checked to ascertain whether the highlighted text is in fact plagiarised, or whether it has been properly referenced.

We also require that students sign a Plagiarism Declaration when submitting an essay: this official, binding declaration asserts that you know what plagiarism is, have referenced all primary and secondary material, and that all the other ideas in your essay are original. The **Plagiarism Declaration** form is available under the section entitled “Continuous Assessment” on the course page on RUConnected.

- You can access the full Rhodes University “Common Faculty Policy and Procedures on Plagiarism” at the following link:
https://www.ru.ac.za/media/rhodesuniversity/content/deanofstudents/documents/Common_Faculty_Policy_and_Procedures_on_Plagiarism.pdf

This document is useful, not only because it provides definitions and examples of plagiarism, but also because it explains the procedures that must be followed when a student is accused of plagiarism. You should familiarise yourself with this document, as it outlines your rights in cases where the Department alleges plagiarism. As the document points out, there are various forms of plagiarism, some worse than others, but none is acceptable. For this reason, you should note that all forms of plagiarism may elicit penalties that may jeopardise your university studies. These penalties range

from the deduction of marks to the removal of your DP (DPWP – Duly Performed Certificate Withdrawn for Plagiarism) and, in very serious cases, exclusion from the university.

The Department's objective is not punitive but developmental. We require that students familiarise themselves with academic conventions of writing and produce well-researched and independent work. Through the course of your studies, we will guide you regarding the nature of plagiarism and its consequences by:

- ❖ providing you, in your course material, with relevant information regarding appropriate academic resources and departmental referencing protocols.
- ❖ undertaking dedicated formal training at all academic levels in lectures and/ or tutorials or in specialised sessions designed for this purpose.
- ❖ reminding you of the nature and seriousness of plagiarism and the disciplinary procedures in place.

****Consult the Department's plagiarism slides on RUConnected.***

Penalties for various types and categories of plagiarism (*See the University Policy or Section 8 in the Departmental Guide to Essay Writing on RUConnected).

When a marker detects evidence of direct or indirect plagiarism, the offence is categorised as:

1. Class A (first-time minor infringements)
2. Class B (repeated offences of a minor nature, more senior level than first year, involving the Departmental Plagiarism Committee)
3. Class C (major serious infringements, involving Departmental Plagiarism Committee and the Senate Standing Committee on Plagiarism).

The plagiarism policy takes into account that plagiarism may arise from a misunderstanding of the protocols of academic writing, and that an academic development approach should be followed, particularly at first-year level. In the Department, key considerations in adjudicating plagiarism include:

- the significance of the plagiarised content in the work submitted for assessment
- the extent and seriousness of the plagiarism in the submitted work

For Class A offences certain penalties may be imposed. These may include remedial or educative steps (discussion of the nature of the problem with the student concerned, followed by the possibility of re-writing and resubmission of the assignment), or a **mark penalty**. In more serious Class A offences the script will be referred to the Course Co-ordinator who, in consultation with the HoD and the lecturer concerned, will apply a more **severe penalty**.

Depending on the type of assessment (Continuous Assessment or Summative Assessment), the extent of the transgression, the nature of the plagiarism, the year level, and any previous offences, students may be **penalised up to 100% (i.e. be awarded a mark of 0%)**. For Class B and Class C offences, the university's Plagiarism Policy will be followed and the Departmental Plagiarism Committee will be convened. This latter process may result in the student having their DP revoked or being suspended from the university.

- **N.B. ALL cases of plagiarism (including Category A) will be reported to the University Plagiarism Officer (UPO), and a DP removed for plagiarism will be indicated as DPWP (Duly Performed Certificate Withdrawn for Plagiarism) and communicated to the Registrar's Division.**

14. USING THE LIBRARY

Aside from relevant knowledge and skills imparted in lectures and tutorials, an obvious resource for the completion of assignments and the writing of examinations is the library. The library website is available via the *RU Library* link on the Rhodes website. *Search All* (via the *Search* box in the middle of the homepage) is a discovery platform where users can search across all print and electronic resources available through the library. If you are working off campus, remember to *Login to your Library account* in order to be recognized as a Rhodes user and have full access to all the electronic resources. Some of the secondary, critical material you need will be provided on RUConnected but otherwise you are expected to access the online library resources yourself as this is an important research skill. Even though you may be directed by a lecturer to specific critical works, you are advised to concentrate on getting to know and understand your set texts really well. There is no substitute for such knowledge. Useful approaches to the set works are suggested in seminars. What is expected in discussions and essays at Honours level, however, is your own response to the text in the light of this guidance, not a summary of critical opinions derived from other readers and commentators. Even though you may be directed by a lecturer to specific critical works, you are advised to concentrate on getting to know and understand your set texts really well. There is no substitute for such knowledge. Useful approaches to the set works are suggested in seminars. What is expected in discussions and essays at Honours level, however, is your own response to the text in the light of this guidance, not a summary of critical opinions derived from other readers and commentators.

Books and print material may be accessed in term of the Covid-19 protocols at the University Library.

13. 1 Humanities Faculty Librarians

If you need help with finding books or retrieving online information, please contact the Humanities Faculty Librarians.

Cartwright, Linda (Level 4)

Principal Librarian: Humanities

E-mail: L.Cartwright@ru.ac.za

Tel (046) 603-7341

Chikafa, Molly (Level 4)

Librarian: Humanities

E-mail: m.chikafa@ru.ac.za

Tel (046) 603-8466

13.2 Periodicals section

Most journals are now available online, so always check for the title and location via the *Search* box on the library homepage. Online journal articles can also be accessed via databases such as JSTOR, EBSCOhost and Gale Literary Sources. Always consult lists of recommended reading prepared by lecturers. You may not always be required to seek out journal material yourself as links to individual online articles will be placed on the English Honours courses on RUConnected and on the English subject guide (see below) for your use.

13.3 English Subject Guide

The English Subject Guide, which is located under *Quick Links* on the left hand side of the library website (*Subject Guides*), contains a wealth of useful and interesting information such as links to relevant online resources, a referencing tab with examples of MLA style references and links to Library workshop handouts.

**ENGLISH HONOURS
SEMINAR TIMETABLE**

| | TIME | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WED | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
|---|-------------|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 7:45-8:30 | | | | | |
| 2 | 8:40-9:25 | | | | IMAGININGS OF PLACE IN SA LIT | GLOBAL MODERNISMS |
| 3 | 9:35-10:20 | TUTORS' MEETING | | | | |
| 4 | 10:30-11:15 | STAFF MEETING | | | | |
| 5 | 11:25-12:10 | | AFRICA IN THE WORLD | | LIT THEORY | |
| 6 | 12:20-1:05 | | | | | |
| 7 | 2:15-3:00 | | AMERICAN LIT | RESEARCH SEMINAR | | |
| 8 | 3:10-3:55 | | | | | |
| 9 | 4:05-4:50 | | | | | |

15. WEEKLY SEMINAR TIMETABLE