

## **ELECTIVE CLASSES FOR 2ND YEAR** (Alphabetical order of teachers)

### **Utopias and Dystopias in Contemporary Literature**

**Cristina Băniceru, Senior Lecturer PhD.**

The purpose of this course is to analyse dystopian themes in contemporary fiction (some short stories and a selection of well-known dystopian novels). The course also investigates how an utopian society, thus a perfect one, can turn into its exact opposite, as the line between utopia and dystopia can be really blurry. Not only does dystopian literature reflect our deepest fears and anxieties about the future, but also some of the most vexing social, cultural, ethical and philosophical problems we are facing today.

We will discuss a variety of texts, starting with H.G Wells' novel *The Time Machine*, which will take us to some dark, disquieting places, and moving to Huxley's *Brave New World*, George Orwell's *1984*, Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange*, Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* and Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*. We will also analyse some famous science fiction texts, such as William Gibson's *Neuromancer*, a seminal work in the cyberpunk genre, or Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* The post-apocalyptic sub-genre will not be neglected, as we will discuss Cormac McCarthy's harrowing vision of our future in *The Road*.

It will be interesting to see how all these authors create dark worlds that best reflect our worst nightmares and try to answer questions about the future of humankind.

#### **Assessment:**

- 10 base points
- 40 points - attendance (4 attendances minimum) + active participation during the courses, discussing and debating important dystopian themes in the selected texts
- 50 points - response paper written in classroom on 2 novels of your choice, in the first semester, and 3 novels, in the second semester (you'll have to choose books we discussed during the seminars)

### **Media Discourses in the US and the UK**

**Diana Mădroane, Associate Professor**

Media culture is, at present, the most widespread form of culture we are exposed to every day, but also actively engaged in. We answer media calls to participate in protests or make donations, we create online profiles on social media networks, we enjoy infotainment and we occasionally take part in public debates. For all these activities, we need to be equipped with media literacy skills, which allow us to be selective and critical media users.

This class aims to teach you how to analyse media discourse, or, broadly speaking, to identify how the media employ language to inform, persuade, manipulate or mobilise publics in different contexts. We will be looking at aspects such as interaction with audiences (elements of rhetoric) and construction of identities (migrants, celebrities, ordinary people) in various media genres and formats (news stories, columns, television shows, advertisements, fan forums, Facebook etc.). We will analyse both written and visual discourse. The examples will be drawn from American and British media culture (newspapers, television, advertising, online forums and platforms), but we will also consider how certain formats have become global and can be found in the Romanian media. The classroom sessions will be focused on practice (analysis of texts, discussion, group work) and you will also be invited to bring examples from your daily encounters with the media.

The course brings together discourse analysis (**applied linguistics**) and cultural studies (**media**).

#### **Assessment:**

- 10 points - active, consistent participation in class activities (debates, short assignments)
  - 30 points - the analysis of a media text (to be submitted by a specified deadline on the Moodle platform - elearning.e-uvv.ro)
  - 60 points - written test on the Moodle platform (elearning.e-uvv.ro) in the final session of the course
- (Attendance according to UVV requirements is a prerequisite)

### **Professional Approaches to ELT**

#### **Valentina Mureşan, Senior Lecturer PhD**

Often looked down upon in our country, the field of teaching is one which requires the working professionals to be equipped with competences that can be transferred to fields such as human resources, public relations or personnel training. Professional approaches to ELT aims on the one hand to compensate what you study in the pedagogical module and help you re-consider the skills that a good teacher needs and, on the other hand, to help you see how this training is an advantage for future jobs in other fields.

The course is thus designed as a series of workshops where in the first semester we focus on the changes in the educational system, differences between educational systems around the world, the different learner profiles in the 21st century, the young or adult learners and different approaches in ELT and the teaching career. In the 2nd semester we focus on problems related to course design, motivation and self-esteem, managing a classroom - managing time and resources, prevention and/or solving problems and then we dedicate a session to discuss how teacher competences can be useful in other fields/professions.

#### **Assessment:**

- 10 base points
- 30 points - attendance (4 times minimum) and participation (class discussion based on recommended reading, homework) + 1 semestrial assignment (oral presentation or written)
- 60 points - final exam - written/oral

### **Canadian Literature**

#### **Andreea Şerban, Senior Lecturer PhD**

“All stories are about wolves. All worth repeating, that is.” (Margaret Atwood)

As the motto suggests, the CanLit class introduces you to the interdisciplinary study of Canada, at the crossroads of literature, (popular) culture, history and geography, by relying on a plurality of stories, voices, and “wolves” -- be they real or fictional. The CanLit course’s objective is to help you understand Canada’s mosaic and to expand your knowledge of Canadian culture and English Canadian literature.

In the first semester we explore essential Canadian cultural and literary terminology, including the Canadian understanding of and relationship with space/wilderness, cultural icons and stereotypes, Canadian “language”, aboriginals and colonizers, and major literary themes. We discuss them all in relation to a selection of literary texts by Canadian writers who are famous not only for their contributions to the Canadian literary canon, but also to world literature. In the second semester we focus on developing your literary analysis and comparative skills, especially in connection to the British and American literary canons which you’ve already been introduced to. Some of the authors to be used in class are, in alphabetical order: Margaret Atwood, Tomson Highway, Thomas King, Yann Martel, Alice Munro (winner of the 2013 Nobel Prize for Literature), Susanna Moodie, Sinclair Ross, etc.

#### **ASSESSMENT (3 components)**

Continuous assessment:

- Attendance = **10%** of the final mark (4 attendances minimum);
- Midterm test (some questions related to issues discussed in class + text analysis) = **30%** of the final mark;
- Final written exam (longer text analysis or an essay) – **60%** of the final mark.