**Hong Kong Shue Yan University**

**Department of English Language & Literature**

Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Cultural Studies

2019-2020

**Course Title** : Anthropocene Reading in Anglo-American Literature

**Course Code** : ENG 515

**Number of Credits** : 3

**Duration in Weeks** : 15

**Contact Hours Per Week** :Seminar (3 Hours)

**Pre-requisite(s)** : NIL

**Prepared by** : Dr. Amy CHAN

**Course Aims**

In this geological epoch termed by scientists as the Anthropocene, humanity is seen as playing a such pivotal role in the planet’s ecology that we rival the forces of nature. Literary texts present an excellent repertoire for exploration into the complex networks of ideas in the Anthropocene: history, scientific ideas, politics, social practices, cultural norms and ritual, religious beliefs, gender and sexuality, human and non-human, and the matter of everyday life. Literary works as texts for Anthropocene reading , including poetry, short stories and novels, will be selected from the 18th century to 21st century Anglo-American literature. Drawing on an array of conceptual tools and theories, including psychoanalysis, deconstruction, gender theories, postmodernism, postcolonialism, posthumanism, ecocriticism, environmental humanities and elemental humanities, etc., students will be guided to construct interdisciplinary reading strategies in the context of the Anthropocene.

**Course Outcomes, Teaching Activities and Assessment**

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| **Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)** | |
| Upon completion of this course students should be able to: | |
| **CILO1** | describe the complex networks of ideas in selected literary texts |
| **CILO2** | delineate the human and non-human relationship represented in selected literary texts |
| **CILO3** | analyse the key issues in the Anthropocene with illustration from cultural texts |
| **CILO4** | construct interdisciplinary reading strategies of Anglo-American literature in the context of the Anthropocene |

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| **Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)** | |
| **TLA1** | Discussion – the course will adopt the format of a seminar, with students take turn to lead discussion on the required readings |
| **TLA2** | Presentation – students are required to apply the concepts acquired in the course in analyzing literary texts. |

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| **Assessment Tasks (ATs)** | | |
| **AT1** | Presentation  *Students are to deliver an individual oral presentation on a specific topic which can demonstrate their understanding of the issue(s) and concepts(s) discussed in this course. Also, at the end of the presentation there will be time for class discussion.* | 30% |
| **AT2** | Participation  *Students are to take an active part in class discussion.* | 20% |
| **AT3** | Term Paper  *Students are to write a research paper which can demonstrate a solid grasp of theories and concepts taught in the course. The research paper has to be a critical analysis of specific topic and adopt an interdisciplinary approach which can demonstrate students’ ability of critical thinking and analysis.* | 50% |
|  | TOTAL | 100% |

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| **Alignment of Course Intended Learning Outcomes, Teaching and Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks** | | |
| **Course Intended Learning Outcomes** | **Teaching and Learning Activities** | **Assessment Tasks** |
| CILO1 | TLA1,TLA2 | AT1, 2, 3 |
| CILO2 | TLA1,TLA2 | AT1, 2, 3 |
| CILO3 | TLA1,TLA2 | AT1, 3 |
| CILO4 | TLA1,TLA2 | AT1, 3 |

**Course Schedule**

**Week 1 Introduction: What is the Anthropocene?**

Menely, Tobia & Taylor, jesse Oak. (2017) “Introuction.” *Anthropocene Reading: Literary History in Geologic Times*. Edited by Tobia Menely and Jesse Oak Taylor. Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press. pp.1-24.

Mentz, Steve. (2017) “Enter Anthropocene, Circa 1610.” *Anthropocene Reading: Literary History in Geologic Times*. Edited by Tobia Menely and Jesse Oak Taylor. Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press. pp. 43-58.

**Week 2 Romantic Ecology**

Selected poems from Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley and Keats

Wordsworth, *The Prelude*

Coleridge, “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner”

Keats, “To Autumn”

Shelley, “Mont Blanc”

Tomalin, Marcus. (2016) “Ecological Horology: the Nature of Time During the Romantic Period.” *Romantic Ecocriticism: Origins and Legacies*. Edited by Dewey W. Hall. Lanham: Lexington Books. London: Lexington Books. pp. 21-42.

Goodbody, Axel. (2014) “Ecocritical Theory: Romantic Roots and Impulses from Twentieth-Century European Thinkers.” *The Cambridge Companion to Literature and the Environment*. Edited by Louise Westling. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 61-74.

**Week 3 New World Romantic Ecology**

Thoreau, Henry David. (1854) *Walden.*

Morton, Timothy. (2010). “Thinking Big.” *The Ecological Thought*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. pp. 20-58.

**Week 4 Posthumanism and the Ecology Without Nature**

Shelley, Mary. (1818) *Frankenstein*.

Noble, Shalon. (2016) “An Uncertain Spirit of an Unstable Place: *Frankenstein* in the Anthropocene.” *Romantic Ecocriticism: Origins and Legacies*. Edited by Dewey W. Hall. Lanham: Lexington Books. London: Lexington Books. pp. 123-140.

Clark, Timothy. (2011) *The Cambridge Introduction to Literature and the Environment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Ch. 6 pp. 63-73.

**Week 5 & 6 Elemental Ecology**

Brontë, Emily. (1847) *Wuthering Heights*.

Morton, Timothy. (2015). “Elementality.” *Elemental Ecocriticism: Thinking with Earth, Air, Water, and Fire*. Edited by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and Lowell Duckert. Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press. pp. 271-285.

**Week 7 Reading Week**

**Week 8 & 9 Scale framing**

Hardy, Thomas. (1873) *A Pair of Blue Eyes*.

Clark, Timothy. (2015) “Scale Framing.” *Ecocriticism on the Edge: The Anthropocene as a Threshold Concept*. London: Bloomsbury. pp. 71-96.

**Week 10 & 11 Alienation with Environment**

Faulkner, William. (1929) *The Sound and the Fury*

**Week 12 &13 *Old Man and the Sea***

Hemingway, Ernest. (1952) *Old Man and the Sea*.

**Week 14 Postcolonial Eco(in)justice**

Coetzee, J.M. (1980) *Waiting for the Barbarians*.

Nixon, Rob. (2015) “Environmentalism and Postcolonialism.” *Ecocriticism: The Essential Reader*. Edited by Ken Hiltner. London & New York: Routledge. pp. 196-210.

Clark, Timothy. (2011) *The Cambridge Introduction to Literature and the Environment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Ch. 12 pp. 120-126.

Wenzel, Jennifer. (2017) “Stratigraphy and Empire: *Waiting for the Barbarians*, Reading Under Duress.” *Anthropocene Reading: Literary History in Geologic Times*. Edited by Tobias Menely and Jesse Oak Taylor. Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press. pp. 167-183.

**Week 15 Reading Week**

**Principal Readings\***

Brontë, Emily. (1847) *Wuthering Heights*.

Coetzee, J.M. (1980) *Waiting for the Barbarians*.

Faulkner, William. (1929) *The Sound and the Fury*

Hardy, Thomas. (1873) *A Pair of Blue Eyes*.

Hemingway, Ernest. (1952) *Old Man and the Sea*.

Shelley, Mary. (1818) *Frankenstein*.

Thoreau, Henry David. (1854) *Walden.*

Selected poems from Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley and Keats

\*The date cited refers to the date of original publication.

**References**

Clark, T. (2011). *The Cambridge Introduction to Literature and the Environment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Clark, T. (2015) *Ecocriticism on the Edge: The Anthropocene as a Threshold Concept*. London: Bloomsbury.

Cohen, J. J. & Duckert, L. (Eds.). (2015). *Elemental Ecocriticism: Thinking with Earth, Air, Water, and Fire*. Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press.

Hall, D.W. (Ed.). (2016)*. Romantic Ecocriticism: Origins and Legacies*. Lanham: Lexington Books. London: Lexington Books.

Hiltner, K. (Ed.). (2015). *Ecocriticism: The Essential Reader*. London & New York: Routledge.

Huggan, G. & Tiffin, H.(2015). *Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment*. 2nd edition. London & New York: Routledge.

Menely, T. & Taylor, J.O. (Eds.). (2017). *Anthropocene Reading: Literary History in Geologic Times*. Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press.

Morton, T. (2010). *The Ecological Thought*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Morton, T. (2013). *Hyperobjects: Philosopny and Ecology after the End of the World*. Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press.

Trexler, A. (2015). *Anthropocene Fictions: The Novel in a Time of Climate Change*. Charlottesville & London: University of Virginia Press.

Westling, L. (Ed.). (2016). *The Cambridge Companion to Literature and the Environment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Zarf, H. (2017*). Literature as Cultural Ecology: Sustainable Texts.* London: Bloomsbury.

**Assessment Rubric for Oral Presentation**

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| **Criteria** | **Exemplary** | **Satisfactory** | **Developing** | **Unsatisfactory** |
| **Communication Skills** | Consistently speaks with appropriate volume, tone, and articulation. | Generally speaks with appropriate volume, tone, and articulation. | Has difficulty speaking with appropriate volume, tone, and articulation. | Does not speak with appropriate volume, tone, and articulation. |
| Consistently employs appropriate eye contact and posture. | Frequently employs appropriate eye contact and posture. | Employs infrequent eye contact and/or poor posture. | Makes no eye contact. |
| Adheres to prescribed time guidelines. | Adheres to prescribed time guidelines. | Violates prescribed time guidelines. | Violates prescribed time guidelines. |
| Employs creative use of visual aids that enrich or reinforce presentation. | Employs appropriate visual aids that relate to presentation. | Employs ineffective visual aids. | Uses no visual aids. |

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| **Content and Coherence** | Effectively defines a main idea and clearly adheres to its purpose throughout presentation. | Adequately defines a main idea and adheres to its purpose throughout presentation. | Insufficiently defines a main idea and adheres to its purpose throughout presentation. | Does not define a main idea or adhere to its purpose. |
| Effectively illustrates the ideas with critical analysis of cultural texts. | Adequately illustrates the ideas with critical analysis of cultural texts. | Insufficiently illustrates the ideas with critical analysis of cultural texts. | Fails to illustrate the ideas with critical analysis of cultural texts. |
| Employs a logical and engaging sequence which the audience can follow. | Employs a logical sequence which the audience can follow. | Employs an ineffective sequence confusing to the audience. | Lacks an organizational sequence. |
| Demonstrates exceptional use of supporting details/ evidence. | Demonstrates sufficient use of supporting details/ evidence. | Demonstrates insufficient supporting details/ evidence. | Demonstrates no supporting details/evidence. |
| **Responses to questions** | Confidently, politely, and accurately responds to instructor’s or classmates’ questions and comments. | Politely and accurately responds to instructor’s or classmates’ questions and comments. | Ineffectively responds to instructor’s or classmates’ questions and comments. | Unacceptably responds/does not respond to instructor’s or classmates’ questions and comments. |

**Assessment Rubric for Class Participation and Discussion**

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| **Criteria** | **Exemplary** | **Satisfactory** | **Developing** | **Unsatisfactory** |
| **Preparation** | Arrives fully prepared at every class session | Arrives mostly, if not fully, prepared (ongoing) | Preparation is  inconsistent | Rarely or never  prepared |
| **Initiative** | Questions asked focus, clarify and summarize discussion | Occasionally ask good questions | Raise questions only when asked by lecturer | Demonstrates a  noticeable lack of interest |
| **Response** | Quality of response reflects knowledge, comprehension and application of readings | Quality of response reflects knowledge, and some comprehension of readings | Quality of response occasionally reflects knowledge of readings | Quality of response shows a lack of knowledge of readings |
| **Discussion** | Quality of response extends the discussion with peers and reflects analysis, synthesis and evaluation | Quality of response extends the discussion with peers | Quality of response is poor | Unable to participate in discussion |
| **Group**  **Dynamics** | Group dynamic and level of discussion are  often better because of candidate’s  presence | Group dynamic and level of discussion are occasionally better, but not worse, because of candidate’s presence | Group dynamic and level of discussion are  sometimes disrupted  by candidate’s  presence | Group dynamic and level of discussion are  often disrupted by candidate’s presence |

**Assessment Rubric for Term Paper**

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|  | **Exemplary** | **Satisfactory** | **Developing/ Emerging** | **Unsatisfactory** |
| **Focus** | Presents an insightful and focused thesis statement. | Presents a thesis statement with adequate insight and focus. | Presents a thesis statement with minimal insight and focus. | Presents a thesis statement with no insight or focus. |
| Draws strong and clear connections between the thesis and significant related ideas. | Draws adequate connections between thesis and related ideas. | Draws insufficient connections between thesis and related ideas. | Shows no understanding  of connections between thesis and related ideas. |
| **Organization** | Effectively provides a logical  progression of related ideas and supporting information in the body of the paper. | Adequately provides a progression  of ideas and supporting information  in the body of the paper. | Provides a poorly organized progression of ideas and supporting information in the body of the paper. | Does not provide a progression  of ideas and supporting information in the body of the paper. |
| Effectively  uses transitions to connect supporting information clearly. | Adequately  uses transitions to connect supporting information. | Ineffectively uses transitions to connect supporting information. | Does not use transitions to connect supporting information. |
| Arrives at a  well-documented, logical conclusion, involving critical thinking. | Arrives at an adequately-documented conclusion. | Arrives at an insufficiently documented conclusion. | Does not arrive at a documented conclusion. |
| **Support/ Elaboration** | Effectively synthesizes complex ideas from research sources. | Sufficiently synthesizes ideas from research sources. | Ineffectively synthesizes ideas from research sources. | No evidence of synthesizing ideas from research sources. |
| Demonstrates exceptional selection of supporting information clearly relevant to the thesis and its related ideas. | Demonstrates sufficient selection of supporting information clearly relevant to the thesis and its related ideas. | Demonstrates insufficient selection of supporting information clearly relevant to the thesis and its related ideas. | Lacks supporting information clearly relevant to thesis and its related ideas. |
| Provides a meaningful presentation of multiple perspectives. | Provides an adequate presentation of multiple perspectives. | Provides a limited presentation of multiple perspectives. | Does not present multiple perspectives. |
| Effectively balances use of quotations and student paraphrasing. | Adequately balances use of quotations and student paraphrasing. | Insufficiently balances use of quotations and student paraphrasing. | Does not balance use of quotations and student paraphrasing. |
| **Style** | Exhibits skillful use of language, including effective word choice, clarity, and consistent voice. | Exhibits good use of language, including some mastery of word choice, clarity, and consistent voice. | Exhibits ineffective use of language, including weak word choice, limited clarity, and inconsistent voice. | Exhibits severely flawed use of language, including weak word choice, no clarity, and no voice. |
| Demonstrates exceptional fluency through varied sentence structure, paragraphing, flow of ideas, and transitions. | Demonstrates sufficient fluency through sentence structure, paragraphing, flow of ideas, and transitions. | Demonstrates limited fluency through sentence structure, paragraphing, flow of ideas, and transitions. | Lacks fluency through sentence structure, paragraphing, flow of ideas, and transitions. |
| **Conventions** | Demonstrates a sophisticated use of the prescribed format (MLA or APA), including title page, pagination, and citations. | Demonstrates adequate use of the prescribed format (MLA or APA), including title page, pagination, and citations. | Demonstrates limited use of the prescribed format (MLA or APA), including title page, pagination, and citations. | Demonstrates  no use of the prescribed format (MLA or APA), including title page, pagination, and citations. |
| Consistently uses standard writing conventions  in grammar, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and usage. | Generally  uses standard writing conventions  in grammar, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and usage. | Minimally  uses standard writing conventions  in grammar, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and usage. | Does not use standard writing conventions in grammar, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and usage. |
| **Information Literacy** | Conscientiously and consistently demonstrates integrity in citing practices. | Generally demonstrates integrity in citing practices. | Inconsistently demonstrates integrity in citing practices. | Does not demonstrate integrity in citing practices. |
| Effectively employs an extensive variety of primary and secondary sources, including a significant amount of  current information. | Adequately employs a sufficient variety of primary and secondary sources including a sufficient amount of current information. | Employs a limited variety of primary and secondary sources including an insufficient amount of current information. | Does not employ a variety of primary and secondary sources and/or does not include current information. |
| Demonstrates strong evaluation skills in determining resource credibility and reliability. | Demonstrates sufficient evaluation skills in determining resource credibility and reliability. | Demonstrates limited evaluation skills in determining resource credibility and reliability. | Demonstrates no evaluation skills to determine resource credibility and reliability. |