

Literature in English: Modern Period III (A005259)

Due to Covid 19, the education and evaluation methods may vary from the information displayed in the schedules and course details. Any changes will be communicated on Ufora.

Course size (nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)
Credits 5.0 Study time 150 h Contact hrs 45.0 h

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2020-2021

A (semester 2)	English	Gent	online discussion group	7.5 h
			guided self-study	7.5 h
			seminar	25.0 h
			online seminar	5.0 h

Lecturers in academic year 2020-2021

Craps, Stef LW07 lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2020-2021

	crdts	offering
Master of Science in Teaching in Languages (main subject Linguistics and Literature)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject Dutch - English)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject English)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject English - German)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject English - Greek)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject English - Italian)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject English - Latin)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject English - Scandinavian Studies)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject English - Spanish)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature (main subject French - English)	5	A
Exchange Programme Linguistics and Literature	5	A

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

Climate change, ecocriticism, contemporary literature in English

Position of the course

This advanced course aims to explore how contemporary literature in English addresses the aesthetic, ethical, and existential challenges posed by climate change. Position of the course in terms of language proficiency: In the master programme in English, students are expected to progress from an initial CEFR C1 level to a first-stage C2 level ("Mastery").

Contents

Imagining Climate Change

Climate change, arguably the defining issue of our time, is usually treated as a strictly scientific, economic, or technological problem. However, it also raises profound questions of meaning, value, and justice, as it challenges taken-for-granted ways of seeing and inhabiting the world. The early twenty-first century has witnessed the

emergence of a wave of literary texts that reject or reinvent conventional modes of representation in an attempt to capture and convey the nature and meaning of climate change and the urgency required to tackle it. This course explores how contemporary literature in English is grappling with the challenges posed by a warming planet. It pays particular attention to the formal innovations demanded by climate change, a phenomenon whose sheer magnitude and complexity defy familiar forms of narrative, and to the ways in which creative writers address inequalities in the global distribution of responsibility for and vulnerability to climate change in their work. A selection of recent humanities scholarship theorizing climate change and its cultural framings and impacts will provide a background for the discussion of a wide range of literary responses across different genres, from novels, stories, and comics to essays, poems, and plays.

Initial competences

Students must be highly proficient in English (CEFR C1 level ("Expert"/"Effective operational" proficiency)) and familiar with literary-analytical methods.

Final competences

- 1 To have acquired insight into literature about climate change.
- 2 To critically assess different theories, concepts, and approaches proposed in humanities scholarship to make sense of (literary responses to) climate change.
- 3 To apply climate change criticism to analyse literary texts.
- 4 To be thoroughly familiar with the inner workings of a range of literary responses to climate change.
- 5 To independently formulate an original research question in relation to climate change literature and to answer it.
- 6 To report insights and research results orally and in writing in an academically appropriate form.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is determined after successful competences assessment

Conditions for exam contract

Access to this course unit via an exam contract is unrestricted

Teaching methods

Guided self-study, online discussion group, seminar, online seminar

Extra information on the teaching methods

Interactive classes, on campus and/or via Zoom. Students are expected to come to class having done the assigned reading. Collaborative learning through ongoing engagement with an online discussion forum.

Learning materials and price

- Octavia Butler, *Parable of the Sower*
- Caryl Churchill, *Escaped Alone*
- Cormac McCarthy, *The Road*
- Ian McEwan, *Solar*
- Richard McGuire, *Here*
- Jeff VanderMeer, *Annihilation*

Estimated total cost: 90 euros. Shorter texts will be made available in digital form via Ufora.

References

- Timothy Clark, *Ecocriticism on the Edge: The Anthropocene as a Threshold Concept*
- Amitav Ghosh, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*
- Axel Goodbody and Adeline Johns-Putra, *Cli-Fi: A Companion*
- Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*
- Adam Trexler, *Anthropocene Fiction: The Novel in a Time of Climate Change*

Course content-related study coaching

Interactive teaching in the classroom, office hours

Evaluation methods

end-of-term evaluation and continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the first examination period

Oral examination

Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the second examination period

Oral examination

Examination methods in case of permanent evaluation

Participation

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent evaluation

examination during the second examination period is possible in modified form

Extra information on the examination methods

Periodic evaluation: oral examination. Students answer two questions testing their knowledge and understanding of the course content and give a short presentation on a text not discussed in class, chosen in advance in consultation with the instructor.

Non-periodic evaluation: over the course of the semester students post a small number of short response pieces on an online discussion forum. In these responses they engage substantively with key concepts and ideas from the primary or secondary readings, identify and analyse striking passages or motifs, raise questions or topics for discussion, and/or respond to posts by others. If possible, one of the response pieces takes the form of a reflection on the creation of a climate change story by an established writer, a process in which the students will be involved as a focus group or sounding board. Non-participation will result in a fail for this part of the evaluation. Students who fail the non-periodic evaluation will be given a second chance in the form of an alternative assignment due by the start of the resit examination period.

Calculation of the examination mark

Periodic evaluation counts towards 70% of the final mark, non-periodic evaluation towards 30%.

Facilities for Working Students

Possible rescheduling of the examination to a different time in the same academic year. Feedback can be given by email or telephone or in a meeting during office hours. For more information concerning flexible learning, contact the tutoring service of the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy.