



Universidad
de Alcalá

GUÍA DOCENTE

Género, raza y naturaleza en la
literatura contemporánea en
lengua inglesa / Gendered, Racial
and Earth *Others* in Contemporary
Literature in English

Grado en *Estudios Ingleses*
Grado en *Lenguas Modernas y*
Traducción

Universidad de Alcalá

Curso Académico 2018/2019

3º y 4º Curso – Primer Cuatrimestre

GUÍA DOCENTE

Nombre de la asignatura:	Género, raza y naturaleza en la literatura contemporánea en lengua inglesa / Gendered, Racial and Earth Others in Contemporary Literature in English
Código:	251058
Titulación en la que se imparte:	Estudios Ingleses / Lenguas Modernas y Traducción
Departamento y Área de Conocimiento:	Filología Moderna; Filología Inglesa
Carácter:	Optativa
Créditos ECTS:	8
Curso y cuatrimestre:	3º y 4º curso, primer cuatrimestre
Profesorado:	Carmen Flys Junquera
Horario de Tutoría:	Por determinar
Idioma en el que se imparte:	Ingles

1. MODULE DESCRIPTION

This course is based on a series of theoretical tenets from philosophy, sociology, literary and cultural studies which analyse the construction of the *other* and the implications of mainstream cultural assumptions. The course will analyze literary representations (mostly short stories, some novels and films) of multiple *others* such as women, LGTBIQ, racial and ethnic minorities, animals and nature. The course is predicated on the notion that literature has the ability to give a voice to these discriminated subjects and return to them their subjecthood and agency. Students will engage the texts, developing critical reading skills; moreover, the course will emphasize argumentative writing skills and academic conventions in referencing sources, thus preparing students for their final thesis. By forcing the reader into a dialogical relationship with these marginalized *others*, students will learn to listen and understand other subjecthoods, thereby promoting greater tolerance and respect for the *other* and understanding that diversity, whether human, cultural diversity or biodiversity, is a necessary benefit for our world.

Prerequisites and recommendations:

The class will be taught in English, so a high level of competency is required. Following the guidelines issued by the Department of Modern Philology, students are expected to have acquired a level C1 in all four skills at the end of their 4th year. Students in their 3rd year, for their part, will be expected to be well on their way to achieving this advanced level of English in all four communicative skills.

ERASMUS students or those choosing this elective, will be required a B.2 level or higher in their oral and written production in English and must be able to do all the readings and follow the class.

2. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Generic competences:

1. To develop and articulate independent and critical thinking on the construction of otherness.
2. To develop critical reading skills and the capacity to synthesize and interpret information.
3. To appreciate the role literature and the humanities play in current cultural debates.
4. To further develop the capacity for writing, speaking and debating in English at a near C.1. level or higher.
5. To further develop the skills of argumentative writing and effective use of sources to support claims.
6. To show respect for cultural diversity, different opinions and tolerance for any *others* in our world and the ability to establish relationships between different cultural frameworks.
7. To adequately use bibliographic and specialized sources, emphasizing academic honesty and documenting sources MLA style.
8. To enhance team work and the capacity of autonomous learning.

Specific competences:

1. To adopt a critical position when dealing with a literary text and to be able to relate any literary production with *others* and with their socio-historical contexts.
2. To develop analytical skills as effective readers of literature in English.
3. To become familiar with critical theories and terminology which are used in contemporary debates and to be able to apply these theories in the interpretation of literary and cultural texts.
4. To recognize the importance of interdisciplinarity in dealing with complex issues.

5. To adopt a critical and independent position in dealing with cultural diversity and its literary and cultural manifestations.
6. To increase understanding and awareness of cultural paradigms which marginalize and oppress specific groups.

3. CONTENTS

Units	Schedule
1. The construction of otherness. Sociological, philosophical and cultural theories.	3 weeks
2. Gendered <i>others</i> : women and LGTBQ. Coming into voice.	3 weeks
3. Racialized <i>others</i> and ethnic minorities. Civil rights, cultural identities, <i>mestizaje</i> .	3 weeks
4. Nature as <i>other</i> . Ecocriticism, ecofeminism, environmental justice and eco-justice. The agency of the non-human "other".	3 weeks
5. Re-conceptualizing what being human means. New concepts of community and relationship with human and earth others. Valuing diversity. The role of literature in shaping new realities.	3 weeks

4. METHODOLOGY AND CLASS ACTIVITIES

The class will be based on the format of a participative seminar; therefore, students must prepare all readings prior to the class and be ready to discuss them in depth in class. Each section begins with theoretical readings (philosophy, sociology, literary theory). There will be some common basic reading for all and each pair of students will choose one additional theoretical essay and present it to the class. These readings will be followed by literary texts which will be analyzed in detail in class. There will be very brief activities on the virtual teaching platform on these issues and texts as well as several debate forums and an observation journal. There will be several short written assignments to develop argumentative skills and effective use of sources. Students will be given several heuristics in order to help them analyze the texts. Students, in groups, will also prepare a project or debate to present to the class. Students will prepare and practice these aspects in workshops. A 1500-2000 word critical research paper on an additional novel, chosen

from a list will also be required. Students will have tutorials with the professor to prepare their group project and their research paper. Regular class attendance (a minimum of 80%) is compulsory.

4.1. Student workload: 200 hours

Class contact hours:	54 contact hours: 45 hours class sessions 4 one-hour workshops 2 group tutorials for project (30 min ea) 2 individual tutorials for paper (30 min ea) 3 hours for debate forums
Independent study hours:	146
Total hours:	200

4.2. Learning activities, materials and resources

Class sessions:	Presentation of concepts and theories and detailed discussion of texts. The class will take the format of a participative seminar, so students should bring all readings and assignments prepared in order to participate. Student presentations.
Workshops:	Workshops will be devoted to developing skills. The topics will be: 1) Writing a critical paper (developing a thesis and structuring an argument); 2) Using sources effectively (integrating quotes and paraphrases); 3) MLA reference style; 4) Debating skills (critical listening and arguing).
Tutorials:	Preparation of the specific group project and individual research paper.
Debate forum:	There will be a debate forum for each of the units.
Independent study:	Reading texts, preparing and writing assignments, doing research for paper and group project, activities on the virtual

Reading list (the shorter texts will be scanned on the virtual platform, but students should manage to access a copy of the novels).

Theory:

Peter Barry. *Beginning Theory*. Chapters 6 (Feminism), 7 (Lesbian/Gay Criticism) and 13 (Ecocriticism).

Peter Wenz. *Environmental Ethics*. Chapter 9

Houston A. Baker, Jr. from *Blues, Ideology, and Afro-American Literature: A Vernacular Theory*

G. Anzaldúa. Chap. 7 "La conciencia de la mestiza: Towards a New Consciousness" from *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*

A. Leopold. "Concepts of Community" from *Sand County Almanac*
"Literature in Qualitative Research" *Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. 2008.

One additional theoretical essay to choose from a list provided in class.

Literary:

Novels:

M. Atwood. *The Handmaid's Tale*

T. Morrison. *The Bluest Eye*

P. Dickinson. *Eva*

And one more novel to choose from a list for the critical research paper

Short Stories: TBA

5. ASSESSMENT

Assessment criteria:

- Demonstrate the capacity to form and articulate independent critical thinking on the construction of otherness and diversity, both orally and in writing, with the required level of English.
- Demonstrate the capacity to read critically and analytically literary and cultural texts.
- Recognize and understand a diversity of critical theories and be able to apply them in discussions about relevant issues and in the literary analysis of texts.
- Demonstrate the capacity to effectively write a critical paper on a literary text in English (at a near C.1 level or higher), using appropriate terminology and adequate support.
- Ability to find, use effectively and cite correctly a variety of bibliographic and specialized sources in MLA style.
- Show an awareness, respect and tolerance of different opinions, values and lifestyles and demonstrate active class participation and an effective compliance with assignments.

Important: Students are warned that plagiarism will not be tolerated. The ideas from other sources, regardless of whether they are quoted, summarized or paraphrased, must be documented adequately. According to article 34 of the University regulation on evaluation, any plagiarism found in the final version of a paper will be penalised and could result in the failure of the course. The teacher will provide students with assessment cover sheets for written work, which certifies that their submitted work is entirely their own or appropriately referenced.

Grading criteria:

Excellent (SB)

- Clearly shows independent and critical thinking, being able to analyze texts and identify their bias or faulty logic. Shows a depth of understanding of critical theories and the ability to argue effectively and write a critical paper in English, using appropriate terms, theories and support from diverse sources. Is able to effectively support claims with different sources, referencing them correctly. Clearly shows respect and tolerance for alternative opinions, values and lifestyles. Lively class participation, producing quality work.

Very Good (N)

- Shows critical thinking and is able to analyze texts, identifying their bias. Understands critical theories and can argue a point in English as well as write a critical paper, using some specialized terms, theories and sources. Is able to support claims with different sources, although not always very effectively, referencing them correctly. Shows respect and tolerance for alternative opinions, values and lifestyles. Active class participation with effective task compliance.

Satisfactory (A)

- Shows some ability for critical thinking, being able to analyze the basic aspects of a given text. Understands the basic point of some critical theories and can construct an argument in an acceptable English and write a very basic paper, using some related theory and sources. Shows the intention of supporting claims adequately and referencing sources, but not always correctly. Shows respect for alternative opinions, values and lifestyles. Has participated in class, though not actively and has complied with the minimum class assignments.

Fail (S)

- Unable to neither think critically nor analyze the basic aspects of a text, or to do so in a very limited manner. Tends to a simplified summary of critical theories and is not able to apply them meaningfully to the construction of an argument in English. Research paper is limited to a descriptive plot or character analysis with limited sources. Use of English is limited, below expected level. Use of sources is limited and mechanical and often incorrect. May respect alternative opinions. Class participation has been very limited and task achievement very weak. Commits plagiarism.

Assessment procedures:

The course will be marked by continuous assessment except for those students who are granted evaluation by final exam, according to the University regulations. Students who follow the continuous assessment process will be assessed by:

- Participation in class, workshops and tutorials.
- Written assignments.
- Critical research paper.
- Group project and class presentations
- Teaching Platform activities (writing activities, quizzes, debate forum, journal).

Students must read all the texts, submit all of the written and oral assignments and attend a minimum of 80% of the classes. Likewise, students must prepare and attend the workshops and tutorials. Failure to comply with class assignments and activities will result in failing the continuous evaluation. Students who fail the continuous evaluation will be asked to take the make-up exam in the second period in June.

Students who, after having requested the overall final exam option and having received the authorization to do so, will be evaluated by a comprehensive final exam covering all the material of the course. The exam will consist of essay questions and a critical research paper on a novel, turned in on the exam date. Students who plan to take the overall exam should contact the professor early on in the course in order to obtain specific information about the paper and exam, since it will assess all the competences stated in the syllabus.

The make-up exam will follow the same format as the overall final exam (research paper and essay questions) for students who have not succeeded in the first exam period.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Basic Bibliography:

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Booth, Wayne, Gregory Colomb, Joseph Williams, Joseph Bizup and William Fitzgerald. *The Craft of Research*. 4th ed. University of Chicago Press, 2016.

Graff, Gerald and Cathy Birkenstein. *They Say, I Say. The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*. 3rd ed. Norton, 2016.

Leitch, Vincent. General Ed. *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. New York: Norton, 2001.

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- Albelda Raga, J., JM Parreño Velasco y JM Marrero Henríquez, coord. *Humanidades Ambientales. Pensamiento, Arte y Relatos Para el Siglo de la Gran Prueba*. Catarata, 2018.
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Web sources:

Voice of the Shuttle: <http://vos.ucsb.edu/>

Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment:
<http://www.asle.org>

Ecozon@. European Journal for Literature, Culture and Environment:
<http://www.ecozona.eu>

MLA guide: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>