World Literature in English II: Australia, New Zealand and the Asia-Pacific

Class code
ENGL-UA 9164

Instructor Details
Dr. Chiara Gamboz
cg127@nyu.edu
Consultations by appointment.
Please allow at least 24 hours for your instructor to respond to your emails.

Class Details
World Literature in English II: Australia, New Zealand and the Asia-Pacific

Tuesday, 9:00 – 12:00pm
September 2 to December 9
Room 306
NYU Sydney Academic Centre

Prerequisites
None

Class Description
This course is an introduction to the literatures of Australia, New Zealand and the Asia-Pacific region, with a focus on Indigenous, migrant and diasporic writing. In addition to major texts from Australia and New Zealand, we will also encounter a range of works from Singapore, Hawaii and other Pacific islands. Some questions we will tackle include: How have the cultural, historical, and economic processes of colonialism, diaspora and migration connected and shaped this diverse region? How have different authors addressed these processes in their literary works? How have issues of race and indigeneity been central to various discourses of nationalism? What is the place of these issues in early and more contemporary postcolonial literary works in English? What particular roles have Australia and New Zealand, as colonial powers in their own right, played in the region? Finally, what can the latest generation of migrant writing from Australia show us about new forms of interconnections across the globalising Asia-Pacific?

Students in this course will examine novels, poetry, films and theoretical texts to develop their critical thinking, reading and writing skills. Along the way, they will gain a solid grounding in the concepts of post-colonialism, race, diaspora, indigeneity, nationalism and multiculturalism.

This class will be run as a weekly 3-hour seminar with required readings and class participation every week.
As a result of successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

- Develop an understanding of the cultural context of Australian, New Zealand, and Asia-Pacific literature.
- Develop critical analysis, reading and writing skills.
- Develop an understanding of postcolonial concepts and theories, and apply these to literary texts.
- Develop an understanding of the concepts of race, diaspora, indigeneity, multiculturalism, nationalism and national identity and their relevance to Australia, New Zealand and the Asia-Pacific.

**Assessment Components**

- **10%: Attendance and Class Participation**
  This is a seminar class, so active participation is required. This assessment will be formalised in Session 7 and 14.

- **15%: Presentation (beginning week 3)**
  You will be responsible for a 10-15 minute presentation on one of the texts. Details released in Session 1 (including assessment guidelines and marking criteria).

- **25%: Midterm paper. 4-6 pages**
  This is a short paper based on one of the literary texts read. Details Released in Session 2 (including question and marking criteria). Due Session 5 (before the mid-term break).

- **10% Proposal for final paper. 1-2 pages**
  The Proposal for the final paper should include a) a draft introduction; b) bullet points outlining the content of the paragraphs constituting the body of the paper and developing a cohesive and coherent argument; c) a draft conclusion. Due Session 12.

- **40%: Final paper. 12-15 pages**
  This is a research paper that should go beyond the scope of the class, but include at least two readings from the syllabus. Details Released in Session 8 (including questions and marking criteria). Due before 5pm, Friday 12 December

*Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component will result in failure of the class.*

**Assessment Expectations**

- **Grade A:** Excellent performance showing a thorough knowledge and understanding of the topics of the course; all work includes clear, logical explanations, insight, and original thought and reasoning. Written work is of a highly sophisticated standard.
**Grade B:** Good performance with general knowledge and understanding of the topics; all work includes general analysis and coherent explanations showing some independent reasoning, reading and research. Written work is of a superior standard.

**Grade C:** Satisfactory performance with some broad explanation and reasoning; the work will typically demonstrate an understanding of the course on a basic level. Written work is of an acceptable standard.

**Grade D:** Passable performance showing a general and superficial understanding of the course’s topics; work lacks satisfactory insight, analysis or reasoned explanations. Written work is of a basic standard.

**Grade F:** Unsatisfactory performance in all assessed criteria. Written work is weak, unfinished or unsubmitted.

**Grade Conversions**

NYU Sydney uses the following scale of numerical equivalents to letter grades:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
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<td>B-</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>65-66</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 65</td>
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</tbody>
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**Late Submission of Work**

Written work due in class must be submitted to your instructor during class time.

Late work should be submitted in person to the Assistant Director, Academic Programs during regular office hours (9:00am-5:00pm, Monday-Friday). In the absence of the Assistant Director, Academic Programs, another member of the administrative staff can accept the work in person. The NYUS staff will mark down the date and time of submission in the presence of the student. Students must also submit an electronic copy of late written work to Turn-It-In within 24 hours.

Work submitted after the submission time without an agreed extension receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100-point scale (for the assignment) for each day the work is late.

Written work submitted beyond five (5) weekdays after the submission date without an agreed extension fails and is given a zero.
Plagiarism Policy

The academic standards of New York University apply to all coursework at NYU Sydney. NYU Sydney policies are in accordance with New York University’s plagiarism policy. The presentation of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

Any coursework must be submitted as a hard copy AND in electronic form. All students must submit an electronic copy of each piece of written work to turn-it-in via NYU Classes. Instructions will be provided to you in class.

Penalties for confirmed cases of plagiarism are severe and are dealt with by the Director, NYU Sydney, not your instructor. Your home school will be notified and you will be dealt with according to the standards of that school. The codes of conduct and academic standards for NYU’s various schools and colleges are outlined in the respective school’s academic resources.

Attendance Policy

Study abroad at Global Academic Centres is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centres is mandatory, and unexcused absences will affect students’ semester grades. The class roster will be marked in the first five minutes of class and anyone who arrives after this time will be considered absent. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence.

For courses that meet once a week, one unexcused absence will be penalized by a two percent deduction from the student’s final course grade. For courses that meet two or more times a week, the same penalty will apply to two unexcused absences. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure.

Classroom Expectations

This is a seminar subject and requires the active participation of all students. It also requires engaged discussion, including listening to and respecting other points of view. Your behaviour in class should respect your classmates’ desire to learn. It is important for you to focus your full attention on the class, for the entire class period.

- Arrive to class on time.
- Once you are in class, you are expected to stay until class ends. Leaving to make or take phone calls, to meet with classmates, or to go to an interview, is not acceptable behaviour.
- Phones, digital music players, and any other communications or sound devices are not to be used during class. That means no phone calls, no texting, no social media, no email, and no internet browsing at any time during class.
- Laptop computers and tablets are not to be used during class except in rare instances for specific class-related activity expressly approved by your instructor.
The only material you should be reading in class is material assigned for that class. Reading anything else, such as newspapers or magazines, or doing work from another class, is not acceptable.

Class may not be recorded in any fashion – audio, video, or otherwise – without permission in writing from the instructor.

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**Required Texts**

- *Refugee Art Project Zine #4, #5 or #6* (provided by NYUS)

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**Supplemental & Recommended Texts (Available in NYUS Library)**


**Films**
- *Once Were Warriors* (dir. Lee Tamahori) 1994
- *Boy* (dir. Taika Waititi) 2010
- *The Stuart Hall Project* (dir. John Akomfrah) 2013

### Session 1  Introduction: Postcolonial Literature in the Asia-Pacific

#### Tuesday September 2

**Required Reading:**

**Assessment Details:**
- Details and criteria for participation and presentation assessment items released and discussed.
- Presentation topics and weeks allocated.

### UNIT 1: INDIGENOUS AND SETTLER LITERARY PRODUCTION – AUSTRALIA (WEEKS 2-5)

### Session 2  Protest Poetry

#### Tuesday September 9

**Required Reading:**

**Recommended Reading:**
Questions to guide your reading:

- What major themes and issues can you trace in these works?
- In what way are such themes and issues addressed in protest poetry?

Assessment Details:

- Questions released for midterm paper (including marking criteria).

Session 3  Writing Aboriginality in Postcolonial Australia – Kim Scott and David Unaipon – A Comparison
(Field Trip State Library of New South Wales)

Tuesday September 16

Required Reading:

- Kim Scott, *True Country*
- A tale of your choice from ‘Legendary Tales of Australian Aborigines’ by David Unaipon

Recommended Reading:


Questions to guide your reading:

- How does the novel represent conflict, difference and cooperation within and between white and Indigenous Australian people?
- How does the novel relate to the past? To the future?
- How does Scott develop multiple Aboriginal voices within the text?

Required field trip/excursion: NSW State Library

We will receive guidance of different research tools at the library and look at the manuscripts of *Native Legends* by David Unaipon.

Assessment Details:

- This week is available as a presentation week.

Session 4  Indigenous Identities: Tony Birch

Tuesday September 23

Required Reading:

- Tony Birch, *Blood*

Recommended Reading:

Questions to guide your reading

- How does this book confound the reader’s expectations of ‘Aboriginal literature’?
- What is the relationship between indigeneity, place and belonging in Blood, as compared to True Country?
- How can we understand Indigenous identities in relation to concepts such as hybridity?

Assessment Details:

- This week is available as a presentation week.

Session 5  White Identity in a Settler Society – Andrew McGahan

Tuesday September 30

Required Reading:

- Andrew McGahan. The White Earth (part 1)

Questions to guide your reading:

- How does McGahan’s work treat whiteness?
- Can this book be said to be postcolonial?
- How does McGahan position his reader in terms of race, nation and power?

Assessment due: Midterm Paper (25%), 4-6 pages

FALL BREAK: October 6-10

UNIT 2: INDIGENEITY IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND (WEEKS 6-7)

Session 6  Introducing Maori Aotearoa

Tuesday October 14

End of Unit 1 Required Reading:

- Andrew McGahan. The White Earth (part 2)

We will focus on historical narratives and differing formations of national identities in the novel.

Required Reading:

- Selected short stories by Patricia Grace and Witi Ihimaera

Questions to guide your reading:

- How is Indigeneity expressed in these works? What role does language (Te Reo Maori) play in them
Session 7  Maori Masculinities - Representations of Culture and Violence
Tuesday October 21

Required Films:
- Lee Tamahori, dir. *Once Were Warriors*. 1994
- Taika Waititi, dir. *Boy*. 2010

Please note: You must have watched these films before class. Copies are available in the NYUS Library.

Recommended Reading:
- Excerpts from Alan Duff’s *Once Were Warriors* will be discussed in class.

Questions to guide your viewing:
- How do these films negotiate representations of cultural damage and cultural strength in Maori communities?
- How does gender work to complicate issues of race and power in these particular texts?

UNIT 3: RACE AND COLONIALISM IN THE PACIFIC (WEEKS 8-10)

Session 8  Postcoloniality in the Pacific – Epeli Hau’ofa
Tuesday October 28

Required Reading:
- Epeli Hau’ofa. *Tales of the Tikongs*.
- Epeli Hau’ofa. ‘Our Sea of Islands’, ‘The Writer as an Outsider’ in *We Are the Ocean*.

Questions to guide your reading:
- How does Hau’ofa relate to history, modernity and development?
- How does geography impact on Hau’ofa’s writing and the sense of cultural identity conveyed in the text?
- How does postcolonial literature and culture differ in a non-settler society?

Assessment Details:
- This week is available as a presentation week.
- Questions released for final paper (including marking criteria).

Session 9  Polynesian Poetry (Field Trip to Bronte Beach)
Tuesday November 4

Required Reading:
- Michelle Keown. ‘Introduction: Voyaging Through the Pacific.’ *Pacific Islands Writing*.
- Robert Sullivan and Albert Wendt, eds. *Whetu Moana: Contemporary Polynesian Poetry in English* (selected poems will be workshopped in front of the sea, at Bronte)
Questions to guide your reading:
- What is the significance of writing in English for Polynesian poets?
- What, if any, are the distinguishing features of postcolonial poetry?
- How does poetry communicate issues to do with race and colonialism differently to prose fiction?

Required field trip/excursion: Bronte Beach

Session 10  Rewriting the Canon
Tuesday November 11

Required Reading:
- Llyod Jones, Mister Pip.

Questions to guide your reading:
- How and to what effect is a classic belonging to the ‘canon’ used in this novel?

Assessment Details:
- This week is available as a presentation week.

UNIT 4: POSTCOLONIAL ASIA: DIASPORA, MIGRATION, HYBRIDITY (WEEKS 11-12)

Session 11  Singaporean Voices: Nation, Belonging and Migration
Tuesday November 18

Required Reading:
- Selected essays from Kim Chen Boey, Between Stations: Essays
- Selected poems by Edwin Thumboo and Arthur Yap

Assessment Details:
- This week is available as a presentation week.

Session 12  Writing the Asian Diaspora – Balli Kaur Jaswal
Tuesday November 25

Required Reading:
- Balli Kaur Jaswal, Inheritance.

Questions to guide your reading:
- What does Jaswal’s novel tell us about nationhood?
- How does Singapore’s contemporary identity arise out of its colonial past?
- How does Jaswal negotiate issues of race and power within her novel?
Assessment Details:
- This week is available as a presentation week.

UNIT 5: WHITENESS, RACE AND DIFFERENCE IN CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIA (WEEKS 13-14)

Session 13  Multiculturalism in Australia: Identity (Field Trip to Cabramatta, western Sydney)
Tuesday December 2

Required Reading:

Questions to guide your reading:
- What does ‘multiculturalism’ mean in Australian public discourse?
- How do these writers negotiate their difference in varying ways?
- What is the role of language in these writers’ identities?

Required field trip/excursion: Cabramatta, western Sydney

Session 14  Multiculturalism in Australia: Migrating as a Refugee
Tuesday December 9

Required Reading:
1 Zine of your choice from the following 3:
- Refugee Art Project Zine #4 by Murtaza Ali Jafari
- Refugee Art Project Zine #5 - recent collections of drawings, poems and interviews with refugees in detention
- Refugee Art Project Zine #6 – a women’s issue

Final Paper (40%) due by 5pm, Friday 12 December

Your Instructor
Dr. Chiara Gamboz (Ph.D., University of New South Wales) completed her PhD in English Literature with a thesis on Aboriginal petitions and the emergence and negotiations of Indigenous authorship and writings. She has taught Introduction to Aboriginal literature and Reading Indigenous Writings at the University of Sydney, Introduction to English: Literary Genres at UNSW, World Literature in Translation and Italian language courses at the University of Western Sydney.