

## EN 383: AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE

### COURSE SPECIFICATIONS

Title EN 383: AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE

Course Coordinator Dr. Sharon Clarke

### COURSE SYNOPSIS

This course is designed to introduce students to the literature of Australia through an eclectic collection of texts covering diverse forms and genres of writing. A critical exploration of these texts will be undertaken in terms of Australia's cultural formation/evolution. Aspects and contexts of history, geographical location, urban and rural landscape, climate, and people will inform this exploration. Where possible, relevant guest speakers will be invited to address classes. Critical material will be introduced to discussions in which all students are expected to participate. Where appropriate, videotaped footage will also be used and discussed as another form of critical appraisal of a text.

### FORMAT

For this course, formal lectures, group tutorials and seminar presentations have been organised. Attendance at all sessions is compulsory. While lectures will offer certain readings of texts - as well as providing the historical, geographical, social and environmental background to these texts - such readings should be considered by no means exclusive. In seminar presentations, students will be encouraged to explore other meanings and to develop their own textually-based and research-based analytical and evaluative skills. All students will be expected to contribute to all class discussions and therefore need to prepare for each class by completing the reading designated in the following schedule, and by allowing all possible time for the consideration of issues raised in preparatory material provided in advance. **Each student will also be expected to partake in a seminar. This presentation should take the form of a prepared informed address, developed around a particular aspect of a text, chosen from the list marked 'Presentation Topics**. The presentation should offer the class an analysis or 'reading' of the text by the group in combination. It is important that presenters do not merely read a paper; they can use palm notes to cover the topic. What should be foremost in a presentation is a willingness to undertake a close textual analysis.

Relevant Australian writers will be invited to participate in the teaching of this course as Guest Lecturers. Attendance at such lectures is also compulsory as is attendance at off campus classes and excursions. Where relevant, secondary material will include videotaped footage. Every attempt will be made to ensure that both the Guest Lectures, any excursions and such screened material will occur within the normal class schedule but hours to be made up because of public holidays will be flagged asap so that students can adjust their timetables.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students will need to meet the following requirements for the completion of this course. Failure to meet any of these requirements, therefore, will be viewed as a failure to meet the requirements specified for the completion of this course.

### **Attendance**

Attendance at all scheduled classes, excursions and field trips is mandatory. Unexplained absence, or absence for an unsatisfactory reason, will be viewed as a failure to meet the requirements specified for the completion of this course.

### **Participation in Classes**

That students participate in class is significant to the calculation of their grade in this element of the assessment outlined for this course. The degree to which they do so *proficiently* will determine the value of their score, just as in the other elements of course work evaluation.

### **Written Assignments**

All written work must be submitted punctually on dates specified. Failure to submit written work will be viewed as a failure to meet the requirements specified for the completion of this course. The coordinator is required to adhere to Program policy that no written work will be accepted later than the specified time for submission, in fairness to those students whose work is submitted punctually.

### **Plagiarism**

All students are responsible for having read the Boston University statement on plagiarism, which is available in the Academic Conduct Code. Students on a BU Program are advised that the penalty for cheating on examinations or for plagiarism may be "...expulsion from the program or the University or such other penalty as may be recommended by the Committee on Student Academic Conduct, subject to approval by the Dean".

### **Examination**

A compulsory two-hour examination, with an additional reading-time allowance of ten minutes, has been scheduled. Details of the examination date, time and rules will be published separately.

### **LIST OF TEXTS**

EN 383: Study Kit including Lawson's short stories, historical and modern Australian poetry collections; excerpt from Elliott's *Edens Lost* ; screenplay of *Muriel's Wedding* and many secondary sources.

Lawler, Ray. *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*. Sydney: Currency Press, 1978

Elliott, Sumner Locke. *Careful, He Might Hear You..* Sydney: Pan Books, 1997.

Franklin, Miles. *My Brilliant Career*, Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1994.

Rayson, Hannie. *Hotel Sorrento*. Sydney: Currency Press, 2001.

Drewe, Robert. *The Shark Net*. Camberwell, Victoria: Penguin Books, 2004.

Bovell, Andrew, unpubl. Screenplay: *Lantana* 2001 (available for reading)

Handouts

#### Other Reading:

The following selection of texts may prove useful as secondary sources throughout this course of study. These texts are available within the State Library of New South Wales.

Wilde, Hooton, Andrews (eds.). *The Oxford Companion to Australian Literature*

Brooks, D. & Walker, B (eds.). *Poetry and Gender: Statements and Essays in Australian Women's Poetry and Poetics*. St. Lucia: Uni of Queensland Press, 1989.

Cantrell, Leon (ed.). *Bards, Bohemians and Bookmen: Essays in Australian Literature*.

St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1976

Coleman, Verna. *Miles Franklin in America: Her Unknown (Brilliant) Career*. Sydney: A&R (Sirius Books), 1981.

Dutton, Geoffrey (ed.) *The Literature of Australia*. Melbourne: Penguin, 1976.

— *The Innovators: the Sydney alternatives in the rise of modern art, literature and ideas*. Melbourne: Macmillan, 1986.

Gibson, Ross. *The Diminishing Paradise: Changing Literary Perceptions of Australia*. Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1987.

Goodwin, Ken. *A History of Australian Literature*. Melbourne: Macmillan, 1986.

Hooton, Joy. *Stories of Herself When Young*. Melbourne: Oxford Uni Press, 1990.

Hergenhan, Laurie et al. (ed). *The Penguin New Literary History of Australia*. Melbourne: Penguin, 1988.

Holloway, Peter (ed). *Contemporary Australian Drama*. Sydney: Currency Press 1987

Rees, Leslie. *A History of Australian Drama vols I and II*. Sydney: A&R, 1978.

Schaffer, Kay. *Women and the Bush Forces of Desire in the Australian Cultural Tradition*. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Much of the critical discussion of Australian writing is conducted within major journals concerned with Australian literary culture and affairs. Among these journals are *Australian Literary Studies*, *Meanjin*, *Southerly*, and *Westerly*. Copies can be found in The State Library of NSW. Other reference material available in the State Library can be sourced in the CLC, DLB, and other indexes, as well as the Aust.Lit. CD Rom database. AustLit is strongly recommended as a CD Rom/online database.

## ASSESSMENT

To complete the 'Assessment' component of the requirements for this course, it is necessary to perform the following tasks:

### 1) Annotated Bibliography (10%)

**NB: No more than one credible internet source is acceptable for this assignment. (Wikipedia is not acceptable)**

**A criteria sheet for this assessment is published separately.**

### 2 Seminar Presentation (20%)

Based on a topic chosen from the list marked "Seminar Presentation Topics", this presentation will be carried out during relevant classes as indicated in the course schedule. **A Criteria Sheet for this presentation is published separately.**

### 3) General participation in class discussions (5%)

It is expected that all students will participate in all tutorial and seminar discussions and should be prepared each lesson to contribute their ideas. This will necessitate a prior familiarity with the text/s under consideration.

### 4) A 2,000-2,500 word term paper (40%)

This should address a chosen topic from the list marked "Term Paper Topics". As the major piece of 'considered' writing for this course, this is a **researched paper** which should follow the rules and practices of a formal essay. **A Criteria Sheet for this essay is published separately.**

### 5) A two hour examination (25% of overall grade)

**Grading**

A	94-100	A-	90-93
B+	87-89	B	83-86
B-	80-82	C+	77-79
C	73-76	C-	70-72
D	60-69	F	below 60

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

Although the following schedule is intended to be final, it may, from time to time, be necessary to alter it. Should changes be needed, students will be given adequate time to accommodate them.

**Order of Classes and Proposed Teaching Dates**

WEEK ONE	Voices and stories: mapping identity *The course and its texts: an introduction and allocation of seminar topics and dates for presentations *Themes and recurring characters/images in Australian Literature * Identity: personal, national, the family. * <u>Autobiography and the Bildungsroman</u> *Oral and written traditions *The Bush, The City, The Coast: arc of consciousness Lawson and Paterson.
WEEK TWO	Miles Franklin: <i>My Brilliant Career</i> A sense of place: exterior and interior landscapes
WEEK THREE	Study of a Major Australian Novelist: Sumner Locke Elliott: <i>Careful, He Might Hear You</i> . A sense of place: exterior and interior landscapes: *The urban landscape as character Field trips will be undertaken during our study of this novelist, considering the living landscape of the setting.
WEEK FOUR	Study of a Major Australian Novelist: Sumner Locke Elliott: <i>Edens Lost</i>
WEEK FIVE	Milestones on Stage: Lawler's <i>Summer of the 17th Doll</i> Characters or caricatures? Life in a postwar landscape - uncertainty and confusion. Screening of clips from Play in Performance.
WEEK SIX	Modern Australian Poets: Les Murray and Judith Beveridge Confronting the stereotypes: gender as a double-edged sword

## WEEK SEVEN

*The Shark Net* Robert Drewe:

A non-fiction memoir in which a sense of place again reflects both exterior and interior landscape. Other aspects to consider are: isolation (cultural and personal) adolescent rites of passage; sex and death.

## WEEK EIGHT

*Hotel Sorrento* by Hannie Rayson

\*The beach and the coastal town as social microcosm

\*A new order takes shape

*Lantana*

Screening of the film.

Points to ponder in this discussion:

What is the significance of the film's title?

Is there a sense of resolution offered by this film/film script?