Faculty of Humanities

Course title: INTRODUCTION TO LITERARY STUDIES

ECTS credit allocation: 2 ECTS credits

Semester: autumn

Level of study: ISCED-6 - first-cycle programmes (EQF-6)

Branch of science: Humanities

Language: English

Number of hours per semester:  15 hours of classes and 15 hours of lectures

Course coordinator/ Department and e-mail:  Halszka Leleń / Department of English Philology, halszka.lelen@uwm.edu.pl

Type of classes: classes and lectures

Substantive content

CLASSES:

Analysing the following literary texts in relation to the knowledge/skills/social competence acquired in the lectures of the corresponding number:

| Topic of classes | Lecture that introduces focus points |
|---|---|
| 'Breath', 'Neither' by S. Beckett, 'Baby Shoes' by E. Hemingway | 1, 2 |
| 'Easter Wings' by G. Herbert, 'Digging' by S. Heaney Fragments from: 'Sredni Vashtar' by Saki, and Erewhon by S. Buttler | 3, 4 |
| 'The Lion' by H. Bellock, 'Break, break, break' by A. Tennyson, 'The Time Machine' (a fragment) by H. G. Wells, 'The Tiger' by W. Blake | 5, 6 |
| Test 1, 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci' by J. Keats | 7, 8 |
| 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci' by J. Keats | 9, 10 |
| 'The Apple' by H. G. Wells | 11, 12 |
| Test 2, 'Waiting for Godot' by S. Beckett | 13,14 |
| 'Waiting for Godot' by S. Beckett | 15 |

LECTURES:

| Lecture number | Topic of lecture | Points covered: |
|---|---|---|
| 1, 2 | Primary Terms and Notions | Literature/art and process of communication, main spheres of the world phenomena, experience vs communication, direct and indirect cognition, sign - signal - meaning, sign in code - repertoire - utterance, cognition and communication, symptom and sign, system, code and language, structure, hierarchy of structures |
| 3, 4 | Functions in the Process of Communication | Utterance in the process of communication, utterance (message), addresser (sender), addressee (receiver), language (code), contact, context; Roman Jakobson's language functions: poetic (auto-referential), emotive, conative, metasystemic, phatic, referential; dominance of poetic function in a literary text; device of equivalence in a literary text; problem with division into form and content; autoreferentiality of a literary text; the problem of realism; |

| 5, 6 | Systemic Aspects in Literary Studies | the literary supercode; interpretative procedure; difference of literary code from other codes; superimposed rules of literary organization; poetics as a branch of studies; literary utterance as means of communicating a world-model; means of communicating a world model in a literary text; a literary text as the object of literary studies; as poetic function dominates, other Jakobson's functions as pseudo-functions; levels of communication in a literary text; categories of implied author-implied reader; literary modes: lyrical, epical, dramatic and their coexistence in poetry, drama, fiction; text as a syncretic utterance; literary ways of communicating: epical (telling); dramatic (presenting), lyrical (expressing, suggesting, implying); role of addressee - epical (listener), lyrical (participant), dramatic (observer). |
|---|---|---|
| 7, 8 | Patterns in a Poetic Text | Test 1, Patterns evoked by the nature of a supercode as a unique code; literary text as a phenomenon to be experienced; task(s) of a literary scholar; patterns characteristic of poetry: sound patterns, semantic function of sounds, equivalences between signs, onomatopoeia, mood-suggesting sound patterns, relation between sound and meaning, rhymes, alliteration, conventionalized patterns, signal(s) of literariness; literary tropes: metaphor, allegory, symbol |
| 9, 10 | Patterns in a Narrative Text | The spheres of phenomena in a narrative text, fictitious nature of the presented reality, the perspective assumed by the personal reader, the point of view of the implied author. Semantic patterns in prose texts and in poetry, a literary character as a pattern of signs, poetic patterns in fiction; action vs plot; stages of action/plot: Vorgeschichte, exposition, inciting moment, action proper, turning points, climax, denouement, Nachgeschichte; multi-plot action, texts resigning from some stages of action. Time relations in a narrative text: time levels, time of narration, time of the fictional world; narrative distance; types of narrators: first-person narrator, third-person narrator; hidden narrator; omniscient and omnipresent narrators; leading character - focalizer; main narrator, secondary narrators, embedded patterns of narration, box story structure, reliable and unreliable narrator; naive narrator, intrusive narrator. Modes of discourse: direct speech, indirect speech, free indirect speech; |
| 11, 12 | Drama as the Opposition of Functions | How is a dramatic text different from other kinds of literature, points of view in a dramatic text, constituents of a dramatic text, actualizing techniques in prose vs. dialogue in drama; opposition of functions supercode vs codex; dramatic text as a supercode and dramatic text as a codex; supercode as a unique code vs. codex as a draft of numerous potential performances; other codices in culture - Ordo Missae, letter writing manuals; theatrical codex as a paradigmatic order - canonically metasystemic function; drama as a textual phenomenon - supercode as a different paradigmatic order; the audience in a dramatic text, levels of communication in a dramatic text, interpreting procedures resulting from opposition of functions in drama: the supercode function and the codex function. |
| 13,14 | Test 2 | open questions (definitions, explaining some relations in a literary text); closed questions (true-false, multiple-choice) |
| 15 | Patterns in a Literary Text - Extension | linguistic superorganisation, fictionality, visuality, correspondence of the arts, intertextuality, mimesis, autothematic quality. |

Learning purpose: introducing to the students the basic framework of theoretical conceptualisation within the area of literary studies. Showing the connection between literature, theory of literature, language, with elements of linguistics and other disciplines. Teaching students the fundamental aspects of literary analysis with the use of literary theory, applying them to representatives of literary kinds: lyrical texts, prose texts and drama. Showing individual patterns of literary texts, the supercode, and the common or shared features of literary texts

On completion of the study programme the graduate will gain:

Knowledge: Student will know and understand the basic methods of analysing, interpreting various types of the texts of culture, especially literary texts, from the area of the literature of the English speaking countries. Student will be able to apply the basic aspects of the theory of fiction, poetry and drama.

Skills: Student can search for, analyse, judge, evaluate, select and apply information, using various sources and various methods. Student develops capacity of topic-focused argumentation, using the perspective of other literary scholars. Student can draw conclusions. Student masters the basic skills in research and analysis, that comprizes formulating and analysing theoretical research problems, student can select the methods and the tools for analysis, student can present the results of his research to others, student is able to solve problems within the area of humanities, especially within the area of philology. Student can recognise various genres and sub-genres of literary texts, can define them, can identify the systemic features within the literary texts and compare them between the literary texts. Student can conduct critical analysis and interpretation using the typical methods, doing this individually or in groups.

Social Competencies: Philology: student is aware of the level of his/her knowledge and skills in the area of the studied discipline, he/she understands the need of lifetime learning and development in the area of the chosen discipline. The student is capable of self-evaluation of his/her competence, including the communicative competence in the studied subject. Student is ready to develop his competence therein, he/she decides on the direction of self-development and further studies.

Basic literature:

Jonathan Culler. Literary Theory: Very Short Introduction, Oxford University Press, 1997. Andrzej Zgorzelski." Drama as the Opposition of Functions" [in:] *Studies in Drama*. Gdańsk University Press, 1986. Andrzej Zgorzelski, *Construction and Sense*, Gdańsk University Press.

Supplementary literature:

Wiesław Krajka and Andrzej Zgorzelski. *On the Analysis of the Literary Text*. Warsaw 1984. Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe

The allocated number of ECTS points consists of:

Contact hours with an academic teacher: total of 32 hours

taking part in classes: 15 hours

taking part in lectures: 15 hours

individual consulting with an academic teacher: 2 hours

Student's independent work: total of 28 hours

reading the texts set for the classes: 14 hours

getting ready for major tests in lectures and in classes: 14 hours