

MODULE CODE: CSEN7027
TITLE: Bodily Distempers and Passions of the Mind; Shakespeare and Donne
DATED: 27/02/2012
LEVEL: 7
CREDITS: 20
JACS CODE: Q320

AIM(S)

- To enable students to demonstrate a detailed and critical understanding of the representation of bodily, mental, and ethical disorder primarily in the work of William Shakespeare and John Donne, and secondarily in a range of relevant and contemporaneously influential prose non-fiction and non-literary works of the period, by the use of appropriate historical, scholarly and theoretical approaches.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon the successful completion of this module, the student should be able to demonstrate:

- advanced and sustained knowledge and understanding of a wide range of texts of early modern literature;
- a critically and historically informed understanding of a selection of texts of early modern medicine, ethics, psychology, and literary and non-literary anatomy;
- a theoretically informed understanding of the importance of genre in the literature of the period;
- the ability to display an independent critical assessment of secondary literature, including a range of history and literary criticism and theory;
- a high level awareness and appreciation of the cultural and historical nature and importance of the literary response to ideas of body and mind, and of temperance as a defence against “distempers” and passions, ideas which come from early modern anatomy, medicine, psychology, theology, ethics, philosophy and politics.

INDICATIVE CONTENT

- The module will explore the representation of bodily, mental, and ethical disorder by focusing upon the literary work William Shakespeare (1564-1616) and John Donne (1572-1631). Students will consider aspects of style and engage with writing in a variety of genres, including the sermon, meditation, tragedy, erotic love sonnet, religious sonnet, and other kinds of lyric. Additional literary and non-literary works by these and other contemporary writers will provide context and scope for comparison.
- Some or all of the following will be considered:
 - Narcissism and heroic (or ascetic) temperance as a defence against “a sick man’s appetite”.
 - Distempers of the Body Politic and physical, psychological, and political “feeding”.
 - Bodily sickness, dying, and devotion.
 - Religious melancholy.
 - Passion and (erotic) love melancholy.
 - Mourning, melancholy, and imagery of disease and hidden infectious corruption.

- “Cut to the Brains”: Familial bodily distempers, cholera and madness.
- Students will consider the variety of literary expression of these themes and how they relate to relevant ideas in early modern anatomy, medicine, and psychology, as well as aspects of theology, ethics and politics, in order to build a deep historical understanding of the imaginative responses to these ideas that we find in some of the most sophisticated literary achievements of the English Renaissance. Shakespeare and Donne will serve as centre-pieces for discussion in seminars. In order to facilitate theoretical and historical interdisciplinary understanding of the chosen themes, the related reading will be wide ranging and will include influential and seminal prose non-fiction and non-literary works of the period from relevant disciplines.

LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGY

Tutorials and **seminars** are used to support the discussion and critical evaluation of what has been learned, normally in a smaller group size than a lecture.

Guided independent study allows students to further their independent learning skills with appropriate support provided by the module tutor(s) (e.g. preparation for lectures and seminars, follow-up work, background reading, revision, completion of assessment tasks).

The allocation of teaching to deliver the module is:

| Activity type | Hours | Percentage |
|----------------------|------------|-------------|
| Scheduled learning | 20 | 10% |
| Independent learning | 180 | 90% |
| Placement learning | | |
| TOTAL | 200 | 100% |

ASSESSMENT

Assessment Component 1 – 100%

4000 word assignment

Exemplar: The topic of the assignment is chosen by the student in consultation with the module tutor but must be related to the content of the module. E.G. Explore the resonance between the heart's intractable sinfulness, as we find it represented in Donne's *Holy Sonnets*, and the doubtfulness and inscrutability of the heart's anatomy as described in the seventh book of John Banister's *The Historie of Man*. What do you think can be inferred from any similarities in conception that you find between these works? You may wish to broaden your inquiry to any other works you have read on this course, such as Donne's *An anatomy of the World*.

Assessment Summary

| Activity type | Percentage |
|---------------|-------------|
| Written exam | |
| Coursework | 100% |
| Practical | |
| TOTAL | 100% |

EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (ESD)

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|---|-----|
| Does the module contribute to ESD? | Yes |
| <p>If yes please provide brief details (no more than 100 words):</p> <p>This module is designed in line with 2 of the 5 pedagogic approaches to sustainable development identified by UNESCO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Critical and Creative thinking Critical and creative thinking enables people to explore new ways of thinking and acting, make informed decisions, and create alternatives to present choices. It involves reflecting on how people interrelate with one other, understanding cultural differences and creating alternative ways to live together.• Systemic thinking Thinking systemically is essential to sustainable development, as piecemeal approaches have proved not to work - instead resolving one issue while creating other problems. Sustainable development requires approaches which go beyond analysis in terms of 'problem-solving' and/or 'cause-effect'. | |