School of Arts
Department of English and Humanities

MA Cultural and Critical Studies
Student Handbook 2016-17
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This document is for reference only. Every effort was made to ensure that information was correct at time of online publication, but discrepancies may still occur due to the nature of this document. For current information and updates, always refer directly to the Birkbeck College website.
Introduction

When Birkbeck College was established in 1823, its principal mission was to provide education and training to working adults who earlier in life had lacked educational opportunity. Birkbeck now welcomes a diverse range of students, studying both full- and part-time at undergraduate and postgraduate level. A College of the University of London since 1920, Birkbeck is still highly committed to the concept of lifelong education, and especially within the world of work. Birkbeck and the other member colleges of the University of London have many research interests in common and share the same standards and degrees structures, but in one important respect Birkbeck is unique. Our mission is ‘to provide courses of study to meet the changing educational, cultural and training needs of adults who are engaged in earning their livelihood, and others who are able to benefit’ (Birkbeck College Charter).

Birkbeck College has built up special expertise in providing a stimulating, positive learning environment for adult, mature students. We award undergraduate degrees in a full range of disciplines, taught in full-time and part-time modes, and we have an unusually high proportion of students following taught Masters and MPhil/PhD courses.

Department

Welcome to the Department of English and Humanities in the School of Arts. You are joining a vibrant community of graduates, which includes over 200 MA and some 100 PhD students. We hope that you will feel at home in this intellectual community. This booklet contains the essential information about the MA Cultural and Critical Studies programme.

The Department of English and Humanities occupies houses in Gordon Square which are associated with the members of the Bloomsbury Group. 46 Gordon Square was the family home of Virginia Woolf, her brothers and her sister, Vanessa, until the latter’s marriage to the art critic Clive Bell in 1907. It was later occupied by the economist John Maynard Keynes.

Most School of English activities take place in 43 Gordon Square, with classes also held in Russell Square and in the Main Building on Malet Street (and occasionally in other University of London buildings). The Malet Street building is where the Library, computer rooms and the student bar (fifth floor of the extension) are situated. A snack bar is located on the ground floor of 43 Gordon Square. We are close to the bars and cafés of the University of London Union, the Institute of Education and the School of Oriental and African Studies: explore the area for the environment that suits you.

We aim to provide intellectual stimulus in a supportive environment. Some students find the transition to graduate work initially disorientating, but we have a lot of experience in helping mature students with heavy commitments elsewhere successfully to manage their postgraduate studies. If you do have any difficulties, please talk to your module tutor, your personal tutor, or to the Programme Director.
Starting your Course

Completing Your Enrolment
After receiving an offer of a place on the programme, you need to enrol as soon as possible. Enrolment is completed via your My Birkbeck Profile (see information below). You must complete your enrolment within the first 28 days of term by setting up a payment plan, or making a contribution to your fees. By completing your enrolment you can gain access to your student profile and programme documents.

Please ensure you read your contract of enrolment. Students who withdraw or take a break in their studies after the first two weeks will be liable for the full fees for that term. Click here to complete your enrolment via your My Birkbeck Profile.

My Birkbeck Home is your gateway to accessing student support services. Quick links to the most current information on a range of services including the Birkbeck Library, Moodle, Computing and IT Support, Career Services, Learning Support, Disability and Dyslexia Support, Counselling Service and more are listed.

My Birkbeck Profile
My Birkbeck Profile is the online facility that allows Birkbeck students to manage their relationship with Birkbeck online. You can log in to your My Birkbeck Profile to check and amend your contact details, order an ID card and keep track of your financial status and grades. You will use your My Birkbeck Profile to access your module and timetable information, Personal Tutor details and eRegister record of attendance. At exam time, you will also be able to access your personal examination timetable and your results once they are published.

It is essential to access your My Birkbeck Profile on a regular basis and keep your contact details up-to-date, to facilitate communication and access between yourself and the College. Email is the standard means of communication in the School of Arts.

Click here or go to http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/my-birkbeck-profile to login to your My Birkbeck Profile with your username and password. If you do not have your username and password, please contact ITS Reception in the main Malet Street building or by email at its-helpdesk@bbk.ac.uk.

Fees, Financial Support and Payment Details
College fees may be paid by many methods. Please click here to follow the link to the College website, for the most current information on fees, financial support and payment details. Whilst we have great sympathy with students who find difficulties in paying their fees, neither the programme director nor any of your tutors have the power to waive
fees or sanction delays in payment. The College Fees Office deals with all enquiries relating to payment of fees, including direct debit queries. Please communicate and negotiate with the College Fees Office directly.

**Fees Policy 2016/17**
You are strongly encouraged to read the Fees Policy Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document and the current Fees Policy. Refer to the FAQ document for answers to questions such as *What does fee liability mean? What is the last date I can enrol?* and *What should I do if I can’t pay my fees?* Students who fail to pay their fees may become ineligible to continue the course, unable to submit assessments or access their My Birkbeck Profile. Any student who has a debt to the College at the end of the year will not have their marks relayed to them.

**Moodle**
Moodle (Birkbeck’s Virtual Learning Environment Platform) is an online student portal. **You will be expected to upload and submit all assignment documents using Moodle throughout the duration of your study.** You can also use Moodle to access interactive tutorials, lecture slides, reading lists and recorded lectures, career management resources and your personal student record.

It is recommended all students watch this Introduction to Moodle tutorial to become familiar with how to access Moodle and submit coursework online. Please also access the Moodle Support for Students page for additional support. Login to Moodle with your Birkbeck College username and password.

**School of Arts Location**
The School of Arts is housed at 43 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PD, where you will find the administrative offices and individual staff offices. Teaching often takes place in our building, but your lectures may be held in any of the University of London or University College London buildings. Please login to your My Birkbeck Profile for access to your student timetable and links to maps of the buildings.

**The Administrative Office**
The School of Arts student advice desk is located in the foyer of 43 Gordon Square and is open selected weeks, usually during the beginning of the Autumn and Spring term, from 5.00pm to 6.00pm Monday to Thursday. Outside these hours, please contact your Programme Administrator by phone or email to discuss your query or to book an appointment. During term time, the Gordon Square entrance is staffed from 8.00am to 9.00pm, Monday to Friday and is open between 9.00am and 5.00pm on Saturdays (during term time only). Please access the student pigeonholes (located outside room G13) and deliver coursework to the essay box by reception, during these times.

**Attendance Requirements**
Taking a degree course at Birkbeck requires a high level of commitment, and it is important that you attend seminars consistently. Regular attendance is a requirement of
every course unit and you will be required to register your attendance each week. **It is your responsibility to make sure you sign in using the e-register (see below) at every class you attend.** It is accepted that through illness or exceptional pressure at home or at work you may have to miss occasional classes, but if you have to be absent from several classes, or you know that you are going to have difficulties in attending regularly, please inform the Programme Director, as many departments enforce a 75% attendance framework. **We do require notice of intended absence in writing (by email) to your module tutor AND your Programme Administrator.**

We are very sympathetic towards the problems encountered by students and we will do all that we can to help you through any difficulties you may have with your studies. Please do signal if you are having problems.

**Registering your attendance with eRegisters**
The eRegisters system allows students to keep track of and monitor their own attendance at teaching events. In Birkbeck teaching rooms, students will be expected to tap their Birkbeck student ID card onto a card reader at the beginning of each class. **Please remember it is your responsibility to bring your Birkbeck ID card to class to monitor your attendance. This is especially important for those of you that are Tier 4 students.** For further information on eRegisters please click [here](#).

**Programme Student Support**
Any matters that students want to discuss that are directly related to the content of the MA should be discussed with the appropriate lecturer. Lecturers will let students know the time and place of their office hours, although you may wish to make an appointment. Email can be a convenient way to do this. Any other matters concerning the course should be taken up with your personal tutor. You will be informed of which member of the course team will act as your personal tutor at the beginning of term. You may discuss medical and pastoral problems in strict confidence.

**Student Representation**
Each year, we also ask for two student representatives from the MA to represent your concerns to a staff-student committee. These representatives raise issues specific to your experience as an MA Contemporary student at Birkbeck. We’ll ask you to nominate representatives during the autumn term.

**Key personnel**

**Dr Mark Blacklock, Programme Director**
m.blacklock@bbk.ac.uk
020 7631 6195

**Sarah Walker, Programme Administrator**
sc.walker@bbk.ac.uk
020 3073 8381
## Term Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Autumn Term</th>
<th>Spring Term</th>
<th>Summer Term</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday 03 October to Friday 16 December 2016</td>
<td>Monday 09 January to Friday 24 March 2017</td>
<td>Monday 24 April to Friday 07 July 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>03-Oct-16</td>
<td>Week 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>10-Oct-16</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>17-Oct-16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>24-Oct-16</td>
<td>Week 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>31-Oct-16</td>
<td>Week 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Week</td>
<td>07-Nov-16</td>
<td>Reading Week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>14-Nov-16</td>
<td>Week 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>21-Nov-16</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>28-Nov-16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>05-Dec-16</td>
<td>Week 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>12-Dec-16</td>
<td>Week 11</td>
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College will close at 6pm on Thursday 22 December 2016, and normal services will resume from 9am on Tuesday 03 January 2017. Check for Library opening hours.

College will close at 6pm on Thursday 12 April 2017, and normal services will resume from 9am on Wednesday 19 April 2017. Check for Library opening hours.

01 and 29 May are Bank Holidays; if classes fall on these dates they may be rescheduled.

Please note: Week 6 each term is Reading Week – no classes are held during Reading Week unless specified by your module convenor.

Click [here](#) for full term dates and holiday closures.

Students are reminded that it is inadvisable to take holidays during term time.
Programme Description, Aims and Learning Outcomes

The MA in Cultural and Critical Studies explores cultural debates and questions of critical theory across disciplines and through the examination of work in a range of media - for example, film, photography, digital media, literature, and music. The course is designed to provide a grounding in the theoretical debates that inform contemporary investigations in a number of areas such as modernity, politics, identity, globalisation, digitalisation, ideology, forms of culture, society, subjectivity, ethnicity, gender, aesthetics, the everyday and cultural history. The insights, methods and analyses of nineteenth-, twentieth- and twenty-first-century forms of critique – such as Marxism, Critical Theory, Cultural Studies, psychoanalysis, deconstruction, postcolonial critique – are explored and applied. The course engages with old and new technologies, a variety of cultural forms and the recent forms of enquiry that have transformed the traditional disciplines. It studies the questions of reification and fetishism, theories of subjectivity and objecthood, visual perception and technologies of the gaze, the politics of sexuality, the ‘everyday’ and the ‘spectacle’, technology, the organisation of knowledge, questions of high and low culture, sensory perception, the notion of tradition and questions of cultural production and reproduction. A flexible modular scheme of option courses and independent research allows students to work on themes and problems in past and present theories, media and practices.

The aim of the course is to provide an introduction to and exploration of cultural and critical studies, with a diverse range of advanced options offering scope to configure a programme of study that meets individual needs. At the end of the course students will have gained knowledge predominantly of aspects of twentieth- and twenty-first century cultural and critical theory and an understanding of the historical context in which ideas develop. Students will be able to:

- Structure an understanding of various cultures and societies in the context of prevailing theoretical debates, thus reiterating the arrangement of theory and local knowledge.

- Read texts closely and critically and fathom arguments in close co-ordination with practice and experience.

- Choose original examples with which to interrogate and question theories and methods of enquiry.

- Consider a certain topic from a variety of viewpoints and to evaluate which of these is most appropriate.

- Communicate and discuss difficult ideas and engage with questions in front of audience and peers.
• Articulate a sustained line of argument in different types of writing.

• Identify a field of research and locate relevant readings through enhanced bibliographic research skills.

• Where appropriate, retrieve archival materials and engage in other types of primary research (such as interviews) with enhanced skills of data gathering.
# Programme Structure

## Part-time Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year One</th>
<th>Autumn</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core Module 1</td>
<td>Mondays: 6-9pm</td>
<td>Option Module 1</td>
<td>Project Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENHU003S7</td>
<td>ENHU004S7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Concepts in Cultural and Critical Studies: Part 1</td>
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<tr>
<th>Year Two</th>
<th>Autumn</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core Module 2</td>
<td>Thursdays: 6-7.30pm</td>
<td>Option Module 2</td>
<td>Project Presentations and Dissertation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENHU003S7</td>
<td>Dissertation Topic is due by Friday 17 March 2017</td>
<td>Preliminary consultation with dissertation supervisor by end of spring term</td>
<td>Submission of Dissertation: due Friday 15 September 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Concepts in Cultural and Critical Studies: Part 2</td>
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## Full-time Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year One</th>
<th>Autumn</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core Module 1</td>
<td>Mondays: 6-9pm</td>
<td>Option Module 1</td>
<td>Project Presentations and Dissertation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENHU003S7</td>
<td>ENHU004S7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Submission of Dissertation: due Friday 15 September 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Concepts in Cultural and Critical Studies: Part 1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Core Module 2 | Thursdays: 6-7.30pm | Option Module 2 | |
| ENHU003S7 | Dissertation Topic is due by Friday 17 March 2017 | Preliminary consultation with dissertation supervisor by end of spring term | |
| Key Concepts in Cultural and Critical Studies: Part 2 | | | |
Over the course of the degree the students complete:

- Two core modules: Key Concepts in Critical and Cultural Studies (Autumn)
- Two option modules (Spring)
- A set of activities, which include project presentations by students (Summer)
- A Dissertation – 15 000 words (submitted in Summer)

Most teaching is by seminar. The emphasis is on discussion, debate and the sharing and exploration of ideas. Core Course seminars take place on Monday evenings, 6.00–7.30 pm and (for full-time or second year part-time students) Thursday evenings, 6.00-7.30pm, in the Autumn Term. These will be followed by less formal sessions – which we call Second Half sessions - on selected Mondays at 7.40-9.00pm. Year One and Year Two students are strongly encouraged to attend these sessions (see more information below). These sessions are enhanced by a student-led MA Cultural and Critical Studies Reading Group, which usually meets on Fridays from 6.30-8.30pm (see more information below). Thereafter a day and time is agreed by participants. The days of the Summer term sessions will be announced closer to the time, but is likely to be Mondays and Thursdays. These take place in the first five weeks of the Summer Term.

Regular attendance at the Core course and Option course seminars is expected. A class register is circulated to monitor attendance. If you have to miss a class, please make sure you inform the Programme administrator or your seminar tutor. For extended periods of absence due to illness, a medical certificate will be required. Attendance is a course requirement and failure to attend a substantial proportion of a course without medical certification may lead to failing the course.

If you are experiencing difficulty attending seminars or keeping up with course requirements, for whatever reasons, please discuss this with the Course Director, who will be able to make helpful suggestions and give practical advice. In Birkbeck, we have a lot of experience of the difficulties that students face when they combine a rigorous programme of study with the busy everyday lives of work and family. We therefore endeavour to be responsive to student needs and flexible whenever possible.

Normally students will not be permitted to transfer courses after the start of term except under exceptional circumstances.
Assessment Schedule for 2016-17

Deadlines

Autumn Term
- **Monday 07 November 2016** (12:00 noon electronic submission)
  Core 1 Compulsory Critical Bibliography: 2000-word commentary on 4-6 pieces of Core 1 reading

Spring Term
- **Monday 09 January 2017** (12:00 noon electronic submission)
  Core 1 essay
- **Monday 09 January 2017** (12:00 noon electronic submission)
  Core 2 essay
- **Friday 17 March 2017** (12:00 noon electronic submission)
  In the second half of the Spring Term: full-time and part-time year 2 students will be asked to submit Dissertation title and abstract (see Appendix D).

Summer term
- **Monday 24 April 2017** (12:00 noon electronic submission)
  Spring Option Essays*

- **Friday 15 September 2017** (12:00 noon electronic submission)
  Dissertation due for Full-time students and part-time year 2

*Please note: this date is subject to change depending upon your module choice.
Core Course: Key Concepts in Cultural and Critical Studies I (ENHU003S7)

Key Concepts in Cultural and Critical Studies 1 is taken by Part-Time students in Year 1 and by Full-Time Students.

Module Convenors: Dr Stephen Clucas s.clucas@bbk.ac.uk and Dr Mark Blacklock m.blacklock@bbk.ac.uk
Module Code: ENHU003S7
Module Level: 7
Timetable: Monday 6-7.30pm, Autumn Term

Week 1 - Induction
This session is a plenary and all students (part-time and full-time) will convene for a general introduction to the course and its structure.

It would be useful to read Stuart Hall’s early-90s overview of the discipline of cultural studies and the interview with Steven Connor, ‘What Can Cultural Studies Do?’, though this is non-essential.


BLOCK A: Of Culture and Criticism
Dr Stephen Clucas s.clucas@bbk.ac.uk

This block will examine questions of criticism and culture in their historical and political formation.

Week 2: What is Culture?
This seemingly innocuous question will be probed in order to discover some of the debates and discussions around the term culture. The primary work of this session is to gather information on types of culture: high, low, mass, popular, global, human, non-human, and to consider all these in relation to questions of theory.

Seminar Texts:
Huysse, Andreas, ‘High/Low in an Expanded Field’, Modernism/modernity, 9:3
Further Reading:

Week 3: What is Criticism?
This session considers the outlines of three types of criticism, Enlightenment criticism, Romantic criticism and dialectical criticism, and the relationship between ‘critical theory’ as it was defined by the Frankfurt School and more traditional forms of criticism.

Seminar Texts:

Further Reading:

Week 4: Culture in Tatters
This session looks at how Walter Benjamin’s unfinished ‘Arcades project’ attempted to mobilise the cultural fragments of post-industrial Paris in order to forge a dialectical critique. Using the commentaries of George Dillon and Susan Buck-Morss we will consider the future possibilities of a cultural analysis which works by the juxtaposition and mobilization of material-cultural fragments.
Primary Texts:

Further Reading
For more Benjamin resources see: http://www.wbenjamin.org/walterbenjamin.html

Week 5: After ‘After Auschwitz’: Critical Pessimism and Beyond
This session considers the bleak postwar scene of cultural and critical pessimism, as voiced by Theodor Adorno, after Auschwitz. It looks at a limit case in order to reflect on contemporary possibilities for culture and criticism. We also look at Jacques Rancière’s recent attempt to insist upon a viable radical future for critical theory beyond ‘left wing melancholy’ and its adversaries.

Seminar Texts:
(This is also available in another translation Dennis Redmond, which is available online: http://members.efn.org/~dredmond/nd5.PDF)

Further Reading:
TW Adorno, Minima Moralia, Reflections from Damaged Life. (London: Verso, 1974)


Osborne, Peter, ed., *From an Aesthetic Point of View (Prisms)* (London: Serpent's Tail, 2001)

Young, James E., *Writing and Rewriting the Holocaust*, (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1988)


**Week 6 Reading Week: No Class**

**BLOCK B: Disintegrated Subjects**

Dr Mark Blacklock m.blacklock@bbk.ac.uk

In these four sessions we will reflect on how ideas of the subject and its relation to language, power and its environment have shifted over the course of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Through a focus on the different ways in which we might think the subject as a participant in and producer of culture we will open up routes into political and cultural critique.

**Week 7: Anti-Humanism and Cultures**

The traditional liberal, humanist subject is thought of as a free, active individual. In the 1960s and 1970s, this paradigm came under attack from a new school of thought that combined the Western Marxist and French Nietzschean traditions: theoretical anti-humanism. This strain of thought instead posited the subject as historically contingent and socially constructed, often enmeshed in power relations over which the individual has little or no control. Given the lingering focus on the romantic-genius, lone author that often predominates, anti-humanism has substantial implications for cultural production and reception.

**Seminar texts:**


Week 8: The Subject in Language and Media

In Jacques Lacan’s reading of Freudian psychoanalysis, both the conscious and unconscious are constituted within the structures of language and ideology. In this session we will explore Lacan’s reading of an Edgar Allan Poe short story to illustrate his theories of psychic construction and move on to consider how Friedrich Kittler develops these ideas within a techno-scientific context to describe a subject that has become a technological medium.

Seminar texts:

Further Reading:

Week 9: The Neoliberal Subject

This session will centre on a consideration of life under neoliberal conditions while exploring the mode of governmental practice known as “biopolitics”. This will culminate in reflections on the new conditions of subjection derived from a biopolitical interpretation of life and on how they impact on our understanding of culture as a space of critique and as a technology to administer power.

Seminar texts:

**Further Reading:**

**Week 10: From Subjects to Objects**
In the final week of this block we will explore how contemporary philosophers and sociologists of science have shifted towards thinking of the subject as enmeshed in networks with objects which themselves have agency. We will consider the implications of such ideas for how we constitute culture.

**Seminar texts:**

**Further reading:**
– *Pandora’s Hope* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1999)

**Week 11: Both groups merge for end of term review, film screening and presentation.**

**Assessment:**
Students should write one essay of 5000 words on a topic related to EITHER Block A or Block B.
Core Course: Key Concepts in Cultural and Critical Studies II (ENHU004S7)

Full-time and Year 2 part-time students take Core 2 on Thursdays 6.00-7.30pm

Module Convenors: Professor Esther Leslie e.leslie@bbk.ac.uk and Dr Grace Halden g.halden@bbk.ac.uk

Module Code: ENHU004S7
Module Level: 7
Timetable: Thursday 6-7.30pm, Autumn Term

Block C: Art, Autonomy, Activism, Alienation
Professor Esther Leslie e.leslie@bbk.ac.uk

This block considers culture, recuperation and resistance predominantly in the post-war, through some landmark texts. We start with Herbert Marcuse’s aesthetic theory, and his search for the new revolutionary agents during the counter-cultural 1960s – particularly his engagement with hippie culture and Surrealism. From here we move to Debord’s analysis of recuperation and resistance in and through culture; Fredric Jameson’s co-locating of finance capitalism and cultural form, and finishing with some of the debates that have arisen latterly about the role of art vis-à-vis politics, activism, labour, autonomy and social change.

Week 2
The Aesthetic Dimension: Herbert Marcuse

Primary Set Texts:
Herbert Marcuse, “Phantasy and Utopia” from Eros and Civilisation: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud (1956) [there are several editions of this text available, e.g. Ark Paperbacks, 1987]
Herbert Marcuse, The Aesthetic Dimension: Toward a Critique of Marxist Aesthetics (Boston: Beacon Press, 1978) [this is a short text, only 73 pages]

Recommended Secondary Reading:
Cooper, David (ed.). The Dialectics of Liberation (Middlesex: Penguin, 1968)
Marcuse, Herbert. *Counter-Revolution and Revolt* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1972) 30
Schiller, Friedrich, *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man* (1794) [this is in the public domain, so numerous editions are available]
http://www.marcuse.org/ [website of the International Herbert Marcuse Society]

Week 3

**Spectacle and the Pseudo-world**

**Primary Set Text:**

**Background Reading:**

**Week 4: Culture and Late Capitalism (Frederic Jameson)**

**Primary Set Text:**

**Background Reading:**
31
Arnowitz, Stanley, ‘Film: The Art Form of Late Capitalism’, *Social Text*, 1 (1979):
Mattick, Paul, ‘Ernest Mandel’s *Late Capitalism*,’

**Week 5**

**Art and Politics Today**

This session considers the ways in which politics and political aesthetics are de rigeur in the art world. It explores the variety of positions relating to autonomy and critical potential of art as they are examined in contemporary debates. The reading list is potentially very long. Here is one conversation that touches some of the points,

Other texts touching on art and politics, art and activism, art and labour include:
Clarke, Jo; Evans, Mel; Newman, Havley et al. (eds.): *Culture Beyond Oil*. London: Art Not Oil, Liberate Tate & Platform, 2011.
Staal, Jonas: Power?... To Which People?! Heijningen, 2010.
The Think Tank that has yet to be named (ed.): 31 Readings on Art, Activism & Participation (in the Month of January). An Art & Activism Reader. 2007. Online here. 32

Week 6 Reading Week: No Class

**BLOCK C: Technology and Cultural Theory**
Dr Grace Halden g.halden@bbk.ac.uk

This module focuses on a series of important topics examining the convergence of technology and cultural theory. By examining technological, political, and cultural change, we will consider how 20th and 21st century theory has interpreted the relationship between the human and the technologically saturated contemporary world. This interdisciplinary module forms links with history, science, and philosophy while maintaining a firm focus on cultural theory. The diverse range of topics will encourage students over the four-week course to debate and explore increasingly poignant ontological issues of the present and future world.

**General Reading**
For David Nye the technological sublime is the magnificence of geographical, industrial, or architectural structures, which conjure strong emotional responses, typically feelings of fascination, pleasure, or pain. In the work of Martin Heidegger, enframing can be defined as 'an apparatus' or 'skeleton' through which to view the natural world. While Heidegger is not opposed to technology itself, he challenges human reliance on it and how it disguises 'the truth of Being' and harms the relationship between the human and
the authentic world. How Nye’s work on the sublime supports or challenges Martin Heidegger’s early work on technological enframing will be discussed.

**Primary reading:**

**Secondary reading:**

**Week 8: Communication and Control in Animal and Machine: Cybernetics**

The cybernetic movement (as it is now known) emerged in 1948 and concerned the study of the processes and behaviours of organic and artificial systems. Cybernetics argues that everything is under the control of a working system. This week, focusing on the Norbert Weiner, we will examine the idea of cybernetic ‘system control’ and how this was being depicted in understandings of both human behavior and machine development. Why did this movement develop? What does the cybernetics theory suggest about technology, science, and state in the mid-twentieth century? How was behavior being reconsidered with this advance? Without delving into the mathematics behind the theory, we will examine the ways in which cybernetics reconsidered the relationship between human and machine.

**Primary Reading:**
Wiener, Norbert, ‘Cybernetics’, *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 3.7 (1950), 2-4

**Secondary Reading:**
George, F. H., *Cybernetics* (Kent: Hodder & Staughton, 1981) Harrington, Jan L., *Technology and Society* (London: Jones and Bartlett Publishers, 2009) [I suggest reading the introductions to these texts and avoiding the mathematics]
Week 9: Medium and Reproduction
Looking at Marshall McLuhan’s idea of ‘vanishing point’ and ‘global village’, we will explore how human presence has altered with the advent of new technologies. With contemporary discussions of augmented reality and virtual reality, it seems to be evident that what we call ‘reality’ is under pressure in the contemporary world. For Jean Baudrillard, who we will be discussing this week, the disappearance of ‘the real’ is a direct result of living in ‘the era of murder by simulation’. Baudrillard conceives of four levels of simulation that are progressively more dangerous than the last. For Baudrillard, the most pressing concern of our times is ‘the production and reproduction of the real’. How has technological development and cultural theory challenged the idea of the ‘real’ and ‘authentic’?

Primary Reading:
McLuhan, Marshall, The Medium is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects (Madera: Gingko Press, 2001)

Secondary Reading:
Coyne, Richard, ‘Heidegger and Virtual Reality: The Implications of Heidegger’s Thinking for
——— Understanding Media (London: Routledge, 2008)
Lane, Richard J., Baudrillard, 2nd edn (New York: Routledge, 2009)

**Week 10: Posthumanism and Singularity**

Posthumanity partly concerns our anxieties and enthusiasm for both technological and human evolution. The word ‘post’ suggests the death of the former biological template through the superseding of another. The notion that technological progression is moving towards a revolutionary event is widely articulated in the ‘Technological Singularity’ – a concept fixed by Vernor Vinge in the 1990s. The Singularity could manifest through one of the following breakthroughs: artificial intelligence, intelligent networks, the merging of organic and artificial ‘interfaces’, and biological engineering. How does cultural theory deal with the convergence of biological and technological evolution? How does cultural theory help us examine contemporary issues within cultural experience? When did the posthuman happen? Will the term ‘human’ be relevant in the future?

**Primary Reading:**


**Secondary Reading:**


**Week 11: end of term review, film screening, essay discussion**
Second Half Sessions

Timetable: Monday 7.40-9.00pm, Autumn Term

These events take place immediately after core module 1 on various weeks during the autumn term (in the “second half” of the Birkbeck evening, i.e., 7.40-9.00pm). They are not intended to be purely content driven, but relate, in the main, to research and study skills, as well as providing opportunities for social interactions. Although the study skills sessions are primarily aimed at first year part time and full time students, second year part-timers are welcome to attend. The schedule for these sessions will be circulated in Autumn Term.

- What is a Critical Bibliography?
- MA Spring options meeting – information and questions
- Library Induction with Subject Librarian (Seminar Room Birkbeck Library, Malet Street building).
- Essay writing skills: styles of cultural theory.
- Working with visual materials in cultural theory (workshop)
- Working with sound in cultural theory
- Doing a PhD: Q+A with current doctoral students
- Dissertation – What is expected in the proposal?
MA Cultural and Critical Studies Reading Group

This Reading Group is student-led: it is organised and convened by one or more students. It is an opportunity for you to choose and discuss texts of your choice in an informal environment with your peers, as well as foster dialogue and peer-support outside the taught courses. The Group usually meets in the Autumn term on an evening collectively agreed. After the Autumn term, participants may decide to move to another evening, depending on when options are attended. If you would like to be involved in this group you may also contact the Course Director, who will put you in touch with the Group organiser(s). Students have also established other groups such as reading groups – *Das Kapital* and Hegel’s *Phenomenology* are past examples. A Summer time dissertation discussion group has also been popular and useful in the past.

If you would like to participate, please contact Florence Uniacke (2nd year, part-time MACCS): florence.uniacke@gmail.com.

There are many other reading groups and seminars at Birkbeck and at the University of London, as well as in other institutions across the city (such as The School for Advanced Studies in Senate House, the ICA, Architectural Association, Tate Modern, etc). You are encouraged to participate. Look out for notices and posters or ask tutors if they know of any relevant events.
Spring Term: Option Modules in the English and Humanities Department

Reading lists and extended syllabai for option modules will be available in the Autumn term. You will be contacted by administrative staff from the English and Humanities department during the Autumn term, with instructions on how to make your Spring option module choice through Bristol Online Survey. Timetable information on options available in your current academic year will be listed online and circulated with the instructions on how to make your option choice. You will be asked to list a number of preferred options, in the event you are not allocated a place onto your first preference option. Please complete your option choices by the deadline specified by your department and note the following:

- Option modules are allocated on a first come, first served basis and places are competitive.
- If you require help with your module choices you should contact your personal tutor.
- Please be aware that modules vary from year to year. If you are a part-time student, you should take into account when you make your module choice that it is unlikely that the same selection of option modules will be available in your second year.

The options listed here are regarded as of particular interest to students on the MA Cultural and Critical Studies programme. If you would like to consider an option in another department in the School of Arts not listed in this handbook, please contact your programme director to check that it will contribute to a coherent MA profile.

Please note, modules can be subject to change or withdrawal due to staff leave and module uptake. When making module selections please ensure you consult the current list that will be made available to you in the Autumn term.
Thinking Time: Reading Time  
(Reading Time in the Twentieth Century)

Module Convenor: Dr Mark Blacklock m.blacklock@bbk.ac.uk  
Module Code: ENHU068S7  
Timetable: Thursday 6-7.30pm

Module Description

This option will take an interdisciplinary approach to reading time in twentieth and twenty-first century cultural texts. Drawing on theoretical resources from literary criticism, philosophy, political and scientific thought, we will examine canonical and popular modernist and postmodernist literary and visual texts, considering carefully how theme, narrative and form have responded to reconfigured notions of time.

We'll do most of the theoretical heavy-lifting in the first half of term so that we can put these important ways of thinking about time to work in our readings in the second half. Students will be encouraged to work in interdisciplinary ways, asking questions of, and making connections between, a broad range of philosophical and aesthetic responses to one of the twentieth century’s most pressing ontological questions. According to a message dated January 2027 and discovered in a redundant college email account in 2009, we will also have successfully constructed a time machine by the end of term.

General Introductory Reading

The best preparation for this course is to read David Couzens Hoy's *The Time of Our Lives: A Critical History of Temporality* and Stephen Kern's *Culture of Time and Space*.

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 Twenty-First Century Feminist Fiction and the World in Crisis

Module Convenor: Dr Heike Bauer h.bauer@bbk.ac.uk
Module Code: AREN116S7
Timetable: Tuesday 7.30-9.00pm

Module Description
This module examines the twenty-first century shape of feminism in and beyond fiction. Focusing on representations of 'crisis' in writings by women since 2000, it brings together current literary and theoretical concerns with the intersections between gender, representation and politics. In particular, the module engages with queer, postcolonial and feminist debates about the gendered politics of history, memory, trauma, and identity, and their cultural expressions. Texts discussed cover a wide range of contexts and genres, including well-established authors and recognized genres alongside new writers and emerging forms. What this material has in common is a renewed focus on the role of individual accounts in collective narratives of past and present, and a heightened awareness of the relationship between the local and the global.

Aims
1. To explore twenty-first century texts by women including consideration of what, if anything, connects writers writing from and across different cultural and national contexts.
2. In so doing, to trace the current shape of feminist debate in and through fiction.
3. To use this discussion to address broader questions about the changing shape of literature and its role in understanding and responding to social, political and cultural affairs.

Outcomes
On successful completion of this module a student will be expected to be able to:
1. Identify key themes and concerns in twenty-first century fiction by women
2. Relate the literary debates to major critical debates within postcolonial, queer and feminist theory
3. Articulate a critical understanding of the changing shape of the literary archive

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Narrating Nation after 9/11

Module Convenor: Dr Grace Halden g.halden@bbk.ac.uk
Module Code: AREN094S7
Timetable: Monday 7.30-9.00pm

Module Description

The attacks of September 11, 2001 sharpened and complicated debates about the supposed decline of the importance of the nation-state in an increasingly globalized world. This course explores the continued importance of the imaginative dimension of the nation-space after 9/11. The course will initiate a debate on articulations of national, religious and racial forms of belonging, as well as broader concepts of identity, and will reflect on the extent to which literary and cinematic representational strategies both support and undermine these endeavours. The course will also examine the importance and influence of other key developments, such as Web 2.0; and explore how virtual/online spaces complicate notions of identity, nationality, and conflict.

Aims and Objectives

- To introduce students to some of the aesthetic and theoretical debates that circulate around the ‘narration of nation’, including the concepts of postcolonialism, multiculturalism, diaspora and globalization.
- To engage students in debates about the conceptualization of 9/11 and its effects on the aesthetic and political underpinnings of literary and cinematic texts.
- To develop conceptual tools for analysing literary representations of gendered, national, racial and religious identity.
- To examine how other factors in the 21st Century, such as the development of Web 2.0, affected and problematized conceptualizations of nation and identity.

General Introductory Reading

There are many different ways in to this topic, depending on your own interests.

• Jeffrey Melnick, 9/11 Culture (Oxford: Blackwell, 2009)
• Sara Quay and Amy Damico, September 11 in Popular Culture (Oxford: Greenwood, 2010)
• Martin Randall, 9/11 and the Literature of Terror (Kingstom: Ithaca, 2008)
• Jacqueline Rose, Proust Among the Nations: From Dreyfus to the Middle East (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012).
• _____, The Last Resistance (London: Verso, 2007).
• _____, The Question of Zion (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 2005)
• Derek Rubin and Jaap Verheul, American Multiculturalism After 9/11 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009).
• George Shulman, American Prophecy: Race and Redemption in American Political Culture (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

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Freud in the World: Psychoanalysis, Literary Writing and the Legacies of History

Module Convenor: Professor Jacqueline Rose j.rose@bbk.ac.uk
Module Code: AREN197S7
Timetable: Tuesday 6-7:30pm (on specified weeks 6-9pm)

Module Description

Can psychoanalysis help us to understand the most intractable dilemmas of our time? What part does the unconscious play in our political lives? Starting with those texts by Freud which engage with civilisation and culture, this course will aim to examine the place and impact of psychoanalysis on our conception of the modern world. Freud is famous for his controversial views on sexuality but less so for his equally challenging engagement with the concerns of war, ethics and faith which were also at the heart of his work.

Psychoanalysis was born at the start of the twentieth century. Freud died as it ushered in the Second World War. In the second part of the course we will choose literary and other works which engage with some of the most troubling political moments of that history and its legacy in modern times: the Balkans in the 1930s, totalitarianism, and then the three partitions of 1948-1949 which followed the end of the war and in which the role of Great Britain was decisive – the creation of apartheid South Africa, the founding of the nation-state of Israel, and the partition of India/Pakistan. Our question throughout will be: how to understand today the links between inner and outer reality, between private and public worlds. If there is time, subject to discussion, I would like to add some writing that engages with the current migration crisis.

You need no previous knowledge of Freud, or indeed of any of these issues and histories, to take this course. For the vacation, I would suggest you read any work by Freud which attracts your interest and consider what interested and/or provoked you about it.

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*Please note: This module is based in the MA Modern & Contemporary Literature and priority will be given to students from that programme. The module is also shared with the School of Law and the School of Psychosocial Studies. Places on this module are thus at a premium. Students from other programmes (for example MA Contemporary) may apply for the module but should accept that places are restricted; unfortunately, it is likely that not every student nominating this module as first choice will be allocated a place.
The Horror, The Horror

Module Convenor: Professor Roger Luckhurst r.luckhurst@bbk.ac.uk
Module Code: AREN118S7
Timetable: Wednesday 7.30-9pm

Module Description

This course offers historical, theoretical and formal ways to think through horror fiction and film. Horror is a distinct genre of writing and visual culture that emerges from the Gothic tradition. It explores extreme emotional states, terror often collapsing into its opposite: hilarity. We will explore some the dangers and terrors of this very modern genre in both fiction and film, starting in the late 19th century with some of the foundational texts of the modern genre. We will end with an attempt to reflect on why such an extreme genre has steadily moved to the centre of contemporary culture in the 21st century.

General Reading

Ken Gelder, Horror: A Reader (London: Routledge, 2000) – selected samples of criticism, including quite a few of the works mentioned below.


Brigid Cherry, Horror (Routledge Film Guidebooks, 2009).

Fred Botting, Gothic (Routledge Critical Idiom, 1996) – good ‘theory’ intro


Andrew Smith, Gothic Literature (Edinburgh UP, 2007) – beginner’s guide.

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Modernity and Ethics

Module Convenor: Dr Peter Fifield p.fifield@bbk.ac.uk
Module Code: AREN211S7
Timetable: Monday 6-7.30pm

Module Description

This module examines a number of ethical flashpoints in the recent history of what Martha Nussbaum has called the “ancient quarrel” between literature and philosophy. Working chronologically and thematically, we will trace the development of modern literary aesthetics by examining philosophical and historical arguments around controversial or difficult ideas and texts. The instinct to read for moral guidance and the fear that such guidance might be harmful, is one of the most pervasive and powerful of cultural tensions. It is often the reader’s first instinct, and has been an apology for art; it can be the motivation for critical engagement, as well as legal and cultural suppression. Equally, the wish to assess the protagonists and speakers of literary texts according to moral precepts remains a source of affective depth for many: a source of readerly anxiety, disappointment, satisfaction and joy.

The experimentalism that characterises modern and contemporary literature is marked by the repeated return to moral and ethical arguments. Modern literature has frequently upset its audience by representing things previously withheld, in a way that is shocking and difficult to deal with. These innovations are so diverse, indeed, that it may better to identify modern literature with a capacity to cause anger, frustration or distress!

Learning Outcomes:
- To understand a range of literary and philosophical arguments about morality, ethics and literature.
- To learn about specific instances of literary controversy from the late C19th to the C21st, their theoretical and cultural basis, and their historical development.
- To consider the development of modernisms more widely, their forms and themes, why they are important and why they might be distressing.
- To develop a critical appreciation of the tensions between philosophy and literature, the restrictions and the openings that these provide in literary criticism.
- To provide a set of tools in close reading and research that can be used in future work.

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Post-Colonial Discourse and the Novel

Module Convenor: Dr Mpalive Msiska m.msiska@nbbk.ac.uk
Module Code: ENHU051S7
Timetable: Thursday 6-7.30pm

Module Description

The principal aim of the course is to examine literature from some of the commonwealth countries in the light of post-colonial cultural theory, focusing on concepts such as 'counter-discourse', 'hybridity', 'alterity', and 'national identity'. Among the writers the course will cover are the following: Chinua Achebe, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Erna Brodber, Bernadine Evaristo, Caryl Phillips, Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy and Rohinston Mistry. Secondary reading will include: Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth (1965); Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Decolonising the Mind (1981); Edward Said, Culture and Imperialism (1993); Homi Bhabha, The Location of Culture (1994); Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics (New York: Methuen, 1987); and Aijaz Ahmad, In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures (1992).

General Reading

It is strongly recommended that students acquire a personal copy of Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin (eds.), The Post-Colonial Studies Reader, 2nd Edition (London: Routledge, 2006). By the end of the course students will have acquired a comprehensive and advanced knowledge of the salient issues in the production and analysis of post-colonial literary texts.

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Spring Term: Option Modules in the School of Arts

In addition to choosing options in the Department of English and Humanities, you can take a range of options from across the School of Arts, subject to approval. Those available for spring 2017 are listed below. If you would like more details about these options please contact the module convenors.

Please note: These module options are subject to change and current information will be available at the time of module selection regarding what options are available.
Cultural Memory – Memory Culture

Module Convenor: Dr Silke Arnold-de Simine  s.arnold-desimine@bbk.ac.uk
Module Code: ARMC228S7
Timetable: Monday 6-9pm

Module Description

This module will explore theoretical concepts of ‘cultural memory’ and the interdisciplinary and dynamic field of memory studies. Over the course of the term we will look at social, cultural and political practices that produce ‘a sense of the past’ and are instrumental in the formation of identities, beliefs and ideologies. We investigate the relation between social and psychological dimensions of memory and between the politics and ethics of remembering and forgetting. We explore how memory content is produced, disseminated and secured with the help of case studies across a range of international locations and cultural forms. The main questions we will address are how memories travel across national, ethnic and religious borders in a global context; how the palimpsestic layers of a place inform an ‘archaeology of memory’; how contested versions of the past can create ‘memory wars’; if the creative potential of art and new media can help to subvert hegemonic memories, and if the memory boom of recent decades has contributed to a commercialization of ‘experiences of the past’ in the heritage industry.

Indicative Content

- Session 1: Cultural Memory – Theories and Concepts
- Session 2: Post-Memory
- Session 3: Transgenerational Haunting
- Session 4: Transcultural Memory and its Locations
- Session 5: Politics of Memory I (Gender, ‘Race’, Nation, Ethnicity)
- Session 6: Politics of Memory II
- Session 7: Memory, Matter and Place
- Session 8: Memory and Migration
- Session 9: Making Memories, Making Histories: Interpreting the Archive
- Session 10: Remediating Memory in a Digital Age

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Theoretical Perspectives on Media

Module Convenor: Dr Tim Markham t.markham@bbk.ac.uk and Dr Scott Rodgers s.rodgers@bbk.ac.uk
Module Code: ARMC172S7
Timetable: Thursday 6-9PM

Module Description

This module surveys recent theoretical analyses of media and the cultural industries, drawing on political, sociological, philosophical and cultural approaches. It aims to give students a thorough understanding of the various contexts in which media subsists and in which media practitioners work, in order to better understand the media industries and their place in society. Each session will be based around close readings of recent pieces of academic research, with the intention of simultaneously analysing media in conceptually advanced and abstract terms while identifying applications of the ideas discussed to professional and domestic encounters with media.

Indicative Content

- Media and democracy
- Media and politics
- Convergence and participatory media culture
- Phenomenology of software and networked media
- Professionalism, news values and professional identities and cultures
- Inside and outside the newsroom
- Precariousness and liquidity in media work
- Theorising media practice, power and ideology
- Theorising popular culture Media and the conflicted relationship between public and private
- Media, distant suffering and the global other

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Digital Cultures

Module Convenor: Dr Joel McKim jmckim@bbk.ac.uk
Module Code: ARMC222S7
Timetable: Wednesday 6-9pm

Module Description

This module will explore the influence of digital media technologies on contemporary culture. The current pervasiveness of digital images and information is undeniable, but the social, aesthetic and economic impact of this spread has only begun to be considered within academic discussions. How has the development and accessibility of digital technologies changed the way we create and communicate? What is the significance of the digital data and code that lie behind our contemporary images and interfaces? Has the production of art, media and culture been opened up or standardized by the spread of the digital?

The module will raise these and other questions and examine such themes as: the dynamics of online digital communities; the rise of the ‘age of data’; the aesthetics of the digital image; the growth of the digital gaming industry; and the establishment of digital art exhibitions and archives. The course is offered by the Department of Film, Media and Cultural Studies, but is open to MA students from across the School of Arts who have an interest in exploring issues related to digital culture.

Indicative Content

- The digital image: photography, cinema and beyond
- Digital economies / digital workers
- The Video Game Industry
- The age of data: big data, meta-data, and data visualisation
- Viral culture and meme production
- Digital politics and participatory culture Smart cities and augmented spaces
- Digital art exhibitions, collections and archives
- Software and code
- The Internet of things
- Online communities and identities

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Contemporary American Cinema

Module Convenor: Dr Andrew Asibong a.asibong@bbk.ac.uk, Dr Mike Allen m.allen@bbk.ac.uk
Module Code: AHVM015S7
Timetable: Monday 6-9pm

Module Description

This course explores the changes which have taken place, and are still taking place, in the production, distribution and exhibition of American film in the past four decades. These changes have occurred under the influence of emerging digital media technologies. Areas which might be covered therefore include the impact of computer-generated imaging on production processes, visual aesthetics, and notions of stardom; the significance of the growing use of the internet and World Wide Web as a means of distributing and viewing films; the implications of the shift from celluloid to digital media; the multiple-media (e.g., video games, DVD, merchandising) phenomenon of modern ‘blockbuster’ movies; and the relationship between the mainstream studios and the expanding independent arena. Bookending this core material will be two sessions considering the relationship of American cinema to American politics, both at the beginning of the 1970s and in contemporary times.

The course will be taught via the distribution of reading and viewing materials (the latter on DVD) and weekly seminars to discuss this material and related issues.

Indicative Content

- Background: the end of the Studio System
- New Hollywood
- 1970s Politics and Cinema
- Blockbusters
- International Relations
- Film and Television
- Independent Cinema
- Digital Hollywood
- Hollywood in the Age of Terror
- The Future of Cinema

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We aim to provide lots of support for this element of the degree, but here’s what you need to know now.

- The dissertation constitutes 33% of your final mark.
- The dissertation should number c.15,000 words. This excludes the bibliography, but includes footnotes or endnotes.

For PT2 and FT students, it must be submitted by 12:00 midday Friday 15 September 2017. This deadline is not negotiable. If you miss the deadline you will have to wait another twelve months before being awarded your degree, because the exam board meets only once a year.

Supervision Process
The dissertation proposal form is in the Appendices section of this booklet. You’ll be asked to hand this in to the Office at the end of the spring term. There is nothing official about the outline you provide us, and we don’t expect a perfectly conceived project. However, it is on the basis of this outline that you will be assigned a supervisor, so it is important that you have a fairly clear sense of a topic by this point, so that you can begin meeting your supervisor from the beginning of the summer term. We will try to align your work with the most suitable person on the staff, where this is possible. You may wish to approach members of staff (including personal tutors and course tutors) for advice or discussion about the potential of possible projects well before this date; you need to be thinking about the dissertation relatively early.

The MA director will inform students of their supervisors by the beginning of the summer term. It’s up to the student to contact tutors to arrange a first meeting. Students and supervisors should then arrange a further two supervisions (three in all), which must be completed by the end of term (7 July 2017).

A dissertation is a work of independent research. The Department of English & Humanities runs a standardised arrangement for supervising MA students: students may have up to three hour-long meetings with their dissertation supervisor. In the course of these meetings supervisors may be asked to comment on plans or on drafts of part of the dissertation.

Your supervisor should help you to clarify your main thesis and aid you in shaping your thoughts into an appropriate scale. Your supervisor will also suggest further reading or lines of library research, advise you on methods of research, and comment on your dissertation plan. The three supervisory meetings must take place before the end of the summer term (7 July). It is advisable to at least pencil in the future meeting dates at your first meeting. You need to use these meetings wisely, and should be thinking about the last meeting as a point at which you are discussing a draft chapter or some form of written work.

Supervisory sessions are for discussion of intellectual ideas and suggestions for further research. In the course of these meetings supervisors may be asked to comment on
your plans for either your research or your writing. Since the supervisor will also be one of the examiners for the dissertation he or she should not be asked to read the final draft of the dissertation.

**Dissertation supervisors will read up to 3,000 words of the dissertation submitted by 30 June 2017.**

**Typing and Binding**
The dissertation should be typed or word-processed, double-spaced on A4 paper, leaving generous margins all round.

**Format**

**Pagination**
All pages, except the title page, should be numbered.

**Title Page**
You should give the title for your dissertation on a separate page. The following is recommended as a format: Title in the middle of the page; then, at the bottom of the page ‘Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the MA in Contemporary Literature and Culture, Birkbeck College, University of London’, followed by the month and year of submission.

**Abstract**
You should preface your dissertation with a 300-word abstract, which describes succinctly the scope and argument of the dissertation.

**Bibliography**
All dissertations should include a full bibliography listing all the primary and secondary sources you have cited.

**Word Limit**
The word limit is 15,000 words, excluding titles, diagrams and tables and bibliography. **Footnotes are included in the word limit.**

**Referencing**
In your essays and your dissertation you must use a proper system of referencing. The Department of English & Humanities has adopted the MHRA style in all its programmes. Full details are given in the *MHRA Style Guide: A Handbook for Authors, Editors, and Writers of Theses* (London: Modern Humanities Research Association), which can be consulted in libraries, or bought in reference sections of good bookshops. It can also be downloaded from [http://mhra.org.uk/publications/books/styleguide/styleguideV1.pdf](http://mhra.org.uk/publications/books/styleguide/styleguideV1.pdf).

**Assessment Criteria for the Dissertation**
- The dissertation should meet the required length: 15000 words maximum.
- It should be written in good English, and it should be logically structured and divided into sections or chapters.
- It should be presented in a scholarly manner, with full references.
- It should critically address a problem that is clearly explained and draw a conclusion about it.
- Every part of the dissertation should be directed towards exploring that problem and should move the discussion forward.
• It should make a contribution to knowledge or understanding, in the sense that it discusses texts that have not been addressed from the perspective before, or that it presents new data, or offers a new analysis of existing data, or a new critique or synthesis of existing literature or debates.

Bibliography
There are many books and online resources that advise on managing dissertations and longer essays. Here is a list of a few that may be helpful to students:

Bosworth, David P., *Citing Your References: A Guide for Authors of Journal Articles and Students Writing Theses or Dissertations* (Thirsk: Underhill for the Learning Resources Development Group, 1992)
Brown, Haines, *Guide to the Internet for Historians*, online at URL: http://library.ccsu.ctstateu.edu/~history/guides/guide3.html
Gilbert, N., *Researching Social Life* (Sage, 1992)
Dissertation Workshops and Project Presentations (Summer Term)

In the Summer term full time and second year part time students are invited to a series of dissertation preparation workshops. These are followed by ‘project presentations’, which is a ‘mini conference’ where first and second year part-time students and full-time students are invited to give a 20 minute presentation on a topic of their choice (second years and full-timers are strongly recommended to present on their dissertation topic. The presentations are attended by a mixture of students and staff.

Dissertation workshops:
Workshop 1: Dissertation Research Methods, Thursday 4 May 2017, 6.00-7.20pm.
Workshop 2: Debating Your Topics, Thursday 11 May 2017, 6.00-7.20pm.
Workshop 3: Student Introductions and Opportunity to look at and assess part dissertations, Thursday 18 May 2017, 6.00-7.20pm.

Project Presentations:
Presentation evening 1: Thursday 8 June 2017, 6.00-9.00pm.
Presentation evening 2: Monday 12 June 2017, 6.00-9.00pm.
Presentation evening 3: Thursday 15 June 2017, 6.00-9.00pm.

Please also look out for notices advertising the Graduate Lecture Series. These lectures are held on Thursdays 7.30-9pm. Speakers of international renown are invited to the college to give a lecture or to participate in panel discussions. The various MA programmes book two or three speakers pertinent to their area concerns, but speakers are asked to address a wider audience drawn from all the MA programmes in the school. It is stressed that you are heartily invited to all sessions, where sometimes you may also enjoy a glass or two of wine. It should also be noted that countless activities occur every day in the School, the College and in the surrounding institutions and Colleges, with direct relevance to your course and studies. You will be alerted to some of these but should also sign yourself up to mailing lists and keep an eye out for posters. It would be helpful if students sign up to an email list and circulate details of relevant and interesting events in London throughout the year. Please filter for School of Arts events on the calendar here: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/events-calendar/.
Assessment Information

Programme Assessment

The dissertation counts for: 33%
The Average Mark of the student’s four essays counts for: 67%

[All students submit four essays: two core course essays and two option essays].

For a Distinction to be awarded, the dissertation must usually be at Distinction level (70 or above) and the numerical average of the four essays must be at Distinction level.

For a Merit to be awarded, the numerical average of the dissertation and the four essays must usually be at Merit level (60-69).

For a Pass to be awarded, the numerical average of the dissertation and the four essays must usually be at Pass level (50-59).

Students are required to gain a Pass mark on all Core course assessment.

Students are entitled to make one attempt, per piece of coursework, to make good failed essays. Resubmission must take place by the next coursework deadline following the return of the failed piece of coursework to the student (e.g. Autumn term essays submitted in January must be resubmitted by the April deadline; Spring term essays must be submitted by last working day of September). Standard coursework deadline dates, each year, are:

First Monday of Spring-term
First Monday of Summer-term
Friday 15 September

Progression on the Programme is dependent upon making good all Fail marks. Full-time students should note that, where they obtain Fail marks, the MA cannot be completed in one year.

Resubmitted work will normally consist of a second attempt at the same topic.

Students are entitled to resubmit a failed MA dissertation on one occasion only. An extension of up to one year may be granted for resubmission.

Please note that all marks remain provisional until ratified by the External Examiner at the Exam Board in November of the year of finalising.
Grade-Related Criteria

These are the criteria assessors and the exam board apply when marking your essays and dissertations.

To be awarded a PASS at MA level the essay or dissertation should normally:
- Present a reasonably clear argument with some level of detail;
- Show a fair ability to marshal evidence, even if this is not quite sustained throughout the essay;
- Display a reasonably thorough knowledge of the relevant primary sources and texts;
- Demonstrate a fair grasp of a reasonable range of secondary literature relevant to the essay topic;
- To some extent situate the topic in hand within a broader historical and/or intellectual context;
- Use appropriate scholarly conventions relating to presentation;
- Be adequately documented, with footnotes or endnotes, and a Bibliography that reveals engagement with relevant primary and secondary texts.

To be awarded a MERIT at MA level the essay or dissertation should normally:
- Present a clear and detailed argument;
- Marshal a large body of evidence confidently and clearly throughout the essay;
- Display a thorough knowledge of the relevant primary sources and texts;
- Demonstrate a good grasp of a range of secondary literature relevant to the essay topic, including recent work in the field, and be able to engage with as well as rehearse current or recent debates on the topic in hand;
- Effectively situate the essay topic within a broader historical and/or intellectual context;
- Be very well written throughout;
- Be presented in a proper scholarly fashion throughout;
- Be well documented, with footnotes or endnotes, and a full Bibliography that reveals engagement with relevant and recent primary and secondary texts.

To be awarded a DISTINCTION at MA level the essay or dissertation should normally:
- Fulfil all the criteria of a MERIT essay and, additionally:
- Show a level of intellectual ambition beyond what is required for a MERIT mark;
- Display some evidence of originality in the selection of and/or interpretation of primary sources;
- Have a wide range of reference, beyond what is required for a MERIT mark.
Assessment
All essays are double marked, that is, they are marked by two members of staff. Essays are returned to students with a set of comments and a mark. This mark has been agreed by two internal markers. Marks remain unconfirmed until the exam board, which takes place in November. A selection of students' work is seen by our external examiners, who are the final adjudicators of assessed work. Once marks have been agreed by the exam board they cannot be altered. The exam board will take into account any mitigating circumstances that have been accepted, confidentially, by the Sub-Board, and makes decisions about penalties for late or missing work.

Marking Scale
70-100 Pass with distinction
60-69 Pass with merit
50-59 Pass

Marks below 50 constitute a ‘fail’.
Essay Guidelines and Advice

Essays
Essays should be 5,000 words long. Please note that excessively over- or under-length essays will be penalised. Also, please be aware of the university regulations against plagiarism and duplication of your own work (i.e., there should be no overlap between this essay and material presented for assessment elsewhere in this course or in another module). Please ensure that your essay follows the style of referencing outlined in the MHRA stylebook. This is available on the web at:


Dissertations
It is particularly important to submit dissertations on the deadline date. This deadline is not negotiable. If missed, the candidate will not be examined in the same year and will have to wait another twelve months before being awarded the degree as MA examination boards meet only once a year, in November. Any difficulty in meeting the dissertation deadline should be brought to the attention of the Course Director at the earliest opportunity. Students should submit their dissertation electronically via Turnitin and keep a copy for their own reference.

General
Students sometimes ask if they may write on an author who does not write in English. The bibliographies of a number of our modules include works in translation, especially contextual and theoretical works, and it is fine to discuss these in essays and the dissertation. However, the primary source material of assessed work should normally have been written in English. If you have a strong reason for wanting to write on an author who does not write in English, you should discuss this with the course convenor. Factors relevant to the choice of primary material for essays and the dissertation include whether you will be able to obtain the relevant secondary materials in the libraries open to you, and whether the module convenor is able to evaluate the work properly. Material by foreign language authors must be available in translation.

It may be that your course tutor issues a list of questions, one of which you must answer in your essay. In other cases, your tutor may encourage you to devise your own question. **In any case, your essay must be relevant to the course you have taken, in terms of both subject-matter and approach.** If you are in doubt as to whether what you want to write is relevant, you should discuss it with your course tutor. It is a good idea to take notes on this discussion, write a brief note recording it and share it with your tutor, so that you both have a clear, written idea of what your intentions are regarding your essay.

The criteria we normally use for making judgements about the range of assessed work, and their relation to the categories of Pass, Merit and Distinction, are set out formally in the Grade Criteria. It acts as a summation of our expectations, and should not be regarded as a check list but as useful guidance.
Coursework Submission, Return of Coursework, Late Submissions

Submission of coursework
Please note: If you are taking options from other Departments/Schools different procedures may apply. Please check with the relevant Department/School before submitting your essay.

All work should be submitted electronically via Turnitin Assignment on Moodle.
All work should normally be computer-generated (using a format compatible with Microsoft Word unless you are told explicitly that an assignment may be hand-written. All work should be submitted double-spaced. Please note that the word count should include footnotes but excludes the bibliography.

Put your name and/or student ID number and the title of the module at the top of the essay, and include the title of the essay or the question as set out on the list of essay topics. Word count should be indicated at the end of the essay.

You may exceptionally, in addition to electronic submission via Moodle, be asked to submit a paper copy. You should also always retain a copy yourself.

Paper copies of coursework, if requested by the tutor, should be stapled in the top left-hand corner, with a completed School of Arts coversheet forming the top page. The Coursework Cover Sheet is available to download from the Birkbeck College website here.

The paper copy with attached coversheet should be deposited in the coursework submission letterbox in the reception of 43 Gordon Square. Please follow the instructions for each assignment carefully as procedures may differ for modules run by other Departments in the School of Arts. Always check with your convenor if you are not sure. For example, if you are asked to submit a hard copy and do not do so, your work may not be marked.

Please note that electronic submission is normally required by midday (12 noon) on the day of the deadline with hard copies (if requested) due by 6pm on the same day.

Please also note that we require electronic submission of your work for the following reasons:
- Some work will be marked online via Turnitin;
- Electronic submission is essential for purposes of moderation (second marking and External Examiner scrutiny);
- All work submitted online is automatically screened for plagiarism;
- We are required to retain a copy of all student work for up to five years after graduation.
For further information and instructions on how to submit essays using Moodle, please see Appendix A or visit the ITS Help Desk in Malet Street building.

**Return of Coursework**
Coursework will usually be marked and returned electronically within 6 weeks from the stated submission date or the date of handing in. Larger modules and modules with numerous seminar groups, such as core modules, could take longer due to the number of students involved. There may also be a delay if the college is closed or if there are extended holidays during that 6 week period.

Essays are never sent back to students by post. If online submission/return has not been used, your lecturer will advise the method by which your work will be returned – normally via the student pigeonholes at outside room G13, 43 Gordon Square. Your administrator will email you to let you know when coursework has been marked. Please do not phone or email to ask whether your essay has been marked unless the marking period has elapsed.

**Late Submission of Coursework**
All Schools and Departments across the College have moved to a system whereby students are not permitted to ask for extensions to coursework deadlines. If for some reason you are unable to submit a piece of work by the stipulated deadline, you should complete a Mitigating Circumstances form, which you can download here.

This form gives you space to describe the circumstances that have prevented you from meeting the deadline, and requires you to provide supporting evidence (such as a medical certificate). It is advisable to discuss the situation with your personal tutor before submitting the form.

Mitigating Circumstances forms should be emailed to the course administrator or handed in to the Department office at least 7 days before the deadline that is going to be missed. If this is impossible (e.g. if adverse circumstances arise closer to the deadline), then the form should be submitted at the earliest opportunity.

When you receive a late submitted piece of assessed work back from the markers, you will find that you have been awarded two grades: a penalty mark of 50% LP (late pass) for postgraduate students, assuming it is of a pass standard, and the ’real’ mark that would have been awarded if the work had not been late. When the Mitigating Circumstances Sub-Board has met and considered your form, you will be told which of these marks will stand. If your claim has been accepted, the essay will receive the grade it has been deemed worth. If your claim is rejected, you will receive the LP mark.

Please note that Mitigating Circumstances Sub-Board will normally meet two weeks before the final exam board and claims will not be processed until then. Please see the Birkbeck College website for further details on Mitigating Circumstances.
Note: If you are taking an option within another School please note that you will need to adhere to the deadline/ extension policy of the School in which the option course is based.

College Assessment Policy

It may also be useful to familiarise yourself with the College online assessment pages and awarding regulations. Please see the following links for further information:

Assessment Requirements
Registry Policies
Plagiarism

Plagiarism, the act of taking somebody else's work and presenting it as your own, is an act of academic dishonesty, and Birkbeck takes it very seriously.

Examples of plagiarism include (but are not restricted to):

- copying the whole or substantial parts of a paper from a source text (e.g. a website, journal article, book or encyclopaedia), without proper acknowledgement
- paraphrasing another's piece of work closely, with minor changes but with the essential meaning, form and/or progression of ideas maintained
- piecing together sections of the work of others into a new whole
- procuring a paper from a company or essay bank (including Internet sites)
- submitting another student's work, with or without that student's knowledge
- submitting a paper written by someone else (e.g. a peer or relative) and passing it off as one's own
- representing a piece of joint or group work as one's own.

If you knowingly assist another student to plagiarise (for example, by willingly giving them your own work to copy from), you are committing an examination offence.

What happens if plagiarism is suspected?
The College operates a three stage policy for dealing with assessment offences. The first stage allows for a very rapid and local determination for first or minor and uncontested offences. Stage two allows for a formal Department investigation, where a student wishes to contest the allegation or penalty, where there is an allegation of a repeat offence or for more serious cases. Stage three involves a centrally convened panel for third and serious offences, dealt with under the code of Student Discipline.

What if I am worried that I'm not referencing correctly?
Please see your module tutor or contact a member of the learning support team as soon as possible. The following links from Birkbeck's Registry provide some helpful information, but are not intended to replace any guidelines or tuition provided by the academic staff.

Guidelines: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/support/plagiarism

Plagiarism: http://pps05.cryst.bbk.ac.uk/notice/bkplag.htm

Plagiarism FAQ: http://turnitin.com/research_site/e_faqs.html
Collusion

Like plagiarism, ‘collusion’ is an assessment offence. Any piece of writing you submit must be your own work. In the humanities, the way you structure your argument and express yourself is an inherent part of producing work of the required standard, and you will be judged on that, so it is not acceptable to get an inappropriate level of help in this area.

You may ask friends, family or fellow students to proof-read your work and offer advice on punctuation, grammar, and presentational issues, but it is not acceptable for someone else to come up with your arguments for you, or to re-write a draft you have produced.

If your first language is not English, you may find your written work a challenge initially, and it is acceptable to ask someone to look over your work and give you advice on punctuation, grammar and phrasing. However, that advice must be minimal and the argument and structure of any assessment must be your own work, and written in your own words.

It is unacceptable to pay someone to write (or re-write) your essays for you and if you are discovered to have done so, you risk expulsion from the programme. The College and the School Of Arts have a range of services in place to help you improve your academic writing, so if you are concerned at all and would like some additional support, you should contact your personal tutor, or contact Dr Fleur Rothschild, the Learning Development Tutor for the School of Arts, or follow the link to Student Services (http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services).
Resources

Birkbeck Computer Services
There are two or three large rooms in the main building and one in the basement of Senate House that make computer terminals available to Birkbeck students. This gives you free access to word-processing should you require it, as well as an e-mail account and entry to the internet. There are many, constantly growing resources available on the Internet, and it is becoming an increasingly vital element of academic research.

The College constantly runs a rotating series of courses introducing students to word processing packages, negotiating the Internet, and other skills: check the notice board outside E101 (meaning the first floor of the Extension block of the main building), and sign up early: these courses are very popular.

Books: To Buy or Borrow?
Throughout your degree you will be given reading lists, which will include both essential texts forming the basis of lectures and seminars, and suggestions for wider reading. The distinction between these two categories is clearly marked in this booklet. The first you will normally be expected to buy (particular versions or editions are specified in some cases) or photocopy from the short loan collection in Birkbeck Library or locate by another method – see below. If you have trouble obtaining the recommended edition, or already own an alternative, a substitute will often be acceptable; consult the lecturer concerned if you are in any doubt. If you intend to rely on libraries, bear in mind that many other students will inevitably need the books at exactly the same time as you do. It is your responsibility to obtain these books in time for the classes. If you do find that a book has become unobtainable for any reason, please let the lecturer know as soon as possible.

There are many ways of accessing reading material pertinent to the course. Google Books provides sometimes very lengthy extracts that are sufficient for you to do preliminary reading. It is always worth googling for many texts are at least partially online in various contexts.

College Hardship/Book Buying Funds
It may be possible, if you are having financial difficulties, to apply to the College for assistance with fees and to receive small awards to help with the purchase of essential texts. For information and advice, contact the College Student Awards Office on 020 7631 6362.
Libraries

Birkbeck College Library

Birkbeck Library is on the first floor of the main building in Malet Street. Please refer to the Birkbeck website for current User Information, Library Opening Hours, Frequently Asked Questions, and to search the online catalogue.

Birkbeck Electronic Library

The Library subscribes to many electronic journals and databases. You can access these from anywhere within College using your Central Computing Services (CCS) username and password, and the majority of these resources can also be accessed from home or work.

The Library website is at http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib. As well as finding comprehensive information about the Library, its services and collections, you can also:

- Search the Library catalogue, renew your books and place reservations on items out on loan.
- Read articles in over 12,000 electronic journal titles and newspapers.
- Search databases to help you find out what has been written about the subject you are researching, including Literature Online (LION), which includes the MLA International Bibliography (MLA) and the Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature (ABELL), the Arts & Humanities Citation Index, JSTOR, PCI and Project Muse.
- Work through LIFE – an online tutorial to help you make the most of the Library.

Other libraries

Birkbeck students can also use a range of other libraries. Students have reference access to most University of London college libraries. In addition, the UK Libraries Plus Scheme allows students reference access to over 135 other higher education libraries and part-time students may also borrow from up to three member libraries. See the Library web site for more information.

Further information and help

Your Subject Librarians for MA Cultural and Critical studies programme are Charlotte Hobson and Lindsay Tudor (elplibrarian@bbk.ac.uk). Please feel free to contact them with any Library enquiries.

Senate House Library

Situated next door to Birkbeck College, on the fourth floor of Senate House, this is a world-class research library, with extensive collections in twentieth-century British and American fiction and criticism. Staff are very helpful in negotiating this initially confusing library, and you should be able to find most of the materials you require. They have recently purchased a large number of videos which can be viewed in the building. Membership of this library is absolutely vital for your MA.
British Library
A copyright library, which receives all books published in Britain and has a very broad and deep collection of books published elsewhere too. It is only 15 minutes walk from Birkbeck and is an excellent resource for MA study. Books usually take between 50 minutes and 2 hours to arrive at your desk. The library has changed its policy regarding student admission several times in the past year. At the time of going to press, you should be able to join on showing your MA card, but it is worth checking the website for details before you visit for the first time. Queues to the admissions office tend to build up in the middle of the day – try first thing in the morning (from 9:30 am, or 10:00 am on Mondays). The library is open until 8:00 Monday-Thursday, and until 5 on Fridays and Saturdays.

University College Library
This is situated 5 minutes away from Birkbeck, on Gower Street. Students from Birkbeck are admitted to the library, and since it has extensive holdings in English literature, it is worth holding in reserve if texts are proving difficult to obtain. Make sure you have your Birkbeck college card and a photograph when you first visit.

M25 Consortium Libraries and SCONUL Research Extra
Birkbeck participates in an arrangement that allows academics and research students to use other research libraries in the country. It may be convenient for you to have access to the libraries of another university, especially if you do not live or work close to Birkbeck. Some university libraries also have extended hours, which can be useful if you need a quiet place to work later at night. (Imperial, for example, is open for 24 hours during its exam period, including to registered external users.) Opening hours change with some regularity, and libraries have different kinds of restrictions, so check websites for details. Begin with the M25 Consortium Libraries page at www.m25lib.ac.uk/, and www.sconul.ac.uk/use_lib/srx/.

Library Resources: Contact Details

University of London Library
Senate House
Malet Street
London WC1E 7HU
Telephone: 020 7862 8500
Fax: 020 7862 8480
Website: http://www.ull.ac.uk/
Nearest Tube: Goodge Street or Russell Square

Birkbeck College Library
Malet Street
London WC1E 7HU
Telephone: 020 7631 6239
Website: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/
Little Magazines Library
Little Magazines Department
The Library
University College London
Gower Street
London WC1E 6BT
Telephone: 020 7380 7796 (direct line) or: 020 7387 7050 ext 7796
Fax: 020 7380 7727
Website: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/Library/special-coll/litmags.shtml
Nearest Tube: Goodge Street

Courtauld Institute of Art Library
Somerset House
Strand
London WC2R 0RN
Telephone: 020 7873 2649
Fax: 020 7873 2410
Website: http://www.courtauld.ac.uk/new/research/index_lib.html
Nearest Tube: Charing Cross

School of Oriental and African Studies Library
Thornhaugh Street
Russell Square
London WC1H 0XG
Telephone: 020 7323 6109
Fax: 020 7636 2834
Website: http://www.soas.ac.uk/Library/
Nearest Tube: Goodge Street or Russell Square

School of Slavonic and East European Studies Library
Senate House
Malet Street
London WC1E 7HU
Telephone: 020 7862 8523
Fax: 020 7862 8644
Website: http://www.ssees.ac.uk/library.htm
Nearest Tube: Goodge Street or Russell Square

University of London Institute of Education Library
20 Bedford Way
London WC1H 0AI
Telephone: 0207 612 6000
Website: http://www.ioe.ac.uk/infoserv/ishome.htm
Email: lib.enquiries@ioe.ac.uk
Nearest Tube: Russell Square

**University of London Institute of Historical Research Library**
Senate House  
Malet Street  
London WC1E 7HU  
Telephone: 020 7862 8740  
Website: [http://ihr.sas.ac.uk/cwis/library.html](http://ihr.sas.ac.uk/cwis/library.html)  
Email: ihr@sas.ac.uk  
Nearest Tube: Goodge Street or Russell Square

**Warburg Institute Library**
Woburn Square  
London WC1H OAB  
Telephone: 020 7862 8949  
Fax: 020 7862 8939  
Website: [http://www2.sas.ac.uk/warburg/mnemosyne/entrance.htm](http://www2.sas.ac.uk/warburg/mnemosyne/entrance.htm)  
Nearest Tube: Russell Square

**British Library: Humanities and Social Sciences**
96 Euston Road  
St Pancras  
London WC1E 7HU  
Telephone: 020 7412 7676 (reading room); 020 7412 7677 (membership enquiries)  
Website: [http://www.bl.uk/](http://www.bl.uk/)  
Nearest Tube: Euston or Kings Cross

**British Library Newspaper Library**
Colindale Avenue  
London NW9 5HE  
Telephone: 020 7412 7353  
Fax: 020 7412 7379  
Website: [http://www.bl.uk/collections/newspapers.html](http://www.bl.uk/collections/newspapers.html)  
Nearest Tube: Colindale

Daily and weekly newspapers and periodicals, including London newspapers and journals from 1801, English provincial, Welsh, Scottish and Irish newspapers from about 1700, and collections of Commonwealth and foreign newspapers.

**British Library National Sound Archive**
96 Euston Road  
London NW1 2DB  
Telephone: 020 7412 7440  
Fax: 020 7412 7441  
Website: [http://www.bl.uk/collections/sound-archive/nsa.html](http://www.bl.uk/collections/sound-archive/nsa.html)  
Nearest Tube: Euston or King’s Cross
Music recordings of most periods, styles and countries; oral history, spoken literature and drama; wildlife sounds and sound effects. Duplicate recordings of BBC material. Free public listening service by appointment.

**British Library Asia, Pacific and Africa Collections**
96 Euston Road
London NW1 2DB
Telephone: 020 7412 7873
Fax: 020 7412 7641
Website: [http://www.bl.uk/collections/asiapacificafrica.html](http://www.bl.uk/collections/asiapacificafrica.html)
Nearest Tube: Euston or King’s Cross

**Public Record Office**
Ruskin Avenue
Kew
Richmond
Surrey TW9 4DU
Telephone: 020 8392 5200
Fax: 020 8392 5286
Website: [http://www.pro.gov.uk/](http://www.pro.gov.uk/)
Nearest Tube: Kew

**Guildhall Library**
Aldermanbury
London, EC2P 2EJ
Telephone: 020 7332 1868 or 1870
Website:
Nearest Tube: St Paul’s, Bank or Moorgate

History and topography of London. Publications of national and local historical societies, newspapers, complete files of House of Commons and Lords debates and journals, large collections of public and local acts and statutory instruments, House of Commons papers complete from 1830.

**Barbican Library**
Barbican Centre
London, EC2Y 8D5
Telephone: 020 7638 0569
Nearest Tube: Barbican, Moorgate, St Paul’s.
St Bride Printing Library
Bride Lane
Fleet Street
London, EC4Y 5EE
Telephone: 020 7353 4660
Website: http://www.stbride.org/
Nearest Tube: Blackfriars or St Paul's

Printing, publishing, graphic design and related subjects. Early technical manuals, manufacturers’ prospectuses and type specimens. Trade serials and directories.

Battersea Reference Library
Altenburg Gardens
Lavender Hill
London SW11 1JQ
Telephone: 020 8871 7466
Fax: 020 7978 4376
Website: http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/Home/LeisureandTourism/Libraries/Details.htm#battersea
Nearest Railway Station: Clapham Junction

Occult, architecture, William Blake, G A Henty, Edward Thomas. Closed some days - it's advisable to ring to check opening hours before visiting.

West Hill Reference Library
West Hill, (corner of Santos Road)
London SW18 1RZ
Telephone: 0208 871 6386
Fax: 020 7978 4376
Website: http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/Home/LeisureandTourism/Libraries/Details.htm#westhill
Nearest Tube: East Putney

Humanities, fine arts, special loan collections on history and travel. Closed some days – it’s advisable to ring to check opening hours before visiting.

Marylebone Library
109-117 Marylebone Road
London NW1 5PS
Telephone: 020 7641 1037
Fax: 020 7641 1044
Website: http://www.westminster.gov.uk/libraries/findalibrary/marylebone.cfm
Nearest Tube: Baker Street or Marylebone
Medical collection, including dentistry and nursing. Also the Sherlock Holmes Collection which contains material relating to Conan Doyle and the history of detective fiction, and can be seen by appointment only.

Specialist Libraries Open to the Public:

**Catholic Central Library**
Lancing Street (off Eversholt Street)
London NW1 1ND
Telephone: 020 7388 4333
Fax: 020 7388 6675
Website: [www.catholic-library.org.uk/](http://www.catholic-library.org.uk/)
Nearest Tube: Euston

**Commonwealth Resource Centre**
Commonwealth Institute
Kensington High Street
London W8 6NQ
Telephone: 020 7603 4535 ext. 210
Fax: 020 7603 2807
Website: [http://www.commonwealth.org.uk/](http://www.commonwealth.org.uk/)
Nearest Tube: High Street Kensington
The Commonwealth Literature Library has a unique collection of 11,000 books, written and translated into English on all aspects of Commonwealth and postcolonial literature. The Commonwealth Resource Centre provides multi-media resources for loan and information on all 54 member countries, peoples and organisations making up the contemporary Commonwealth community.

**The Women’s Library**
London Guildhall University
Calcutta House
Old Castle Street
London E1 7NT
Telephone: 020 7320 1189
Website: [http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/thewomenslibrary/](http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/thewomenslibrary/)
Nearest Tube: Aldgate East, Toynbee Hall exit

Women’s history, fiction, poetry, magazines; feminism and feminist criticism. The UK’s best resource for women’s history and literature.

**The Great Britain - China Centre Library**
15 Belgrave Square
London SW1X BPS
Telephone: 020 7235-6696
Fax: 020 7245-6885
Website: [http://www.gbcc.org.uk/library.htm](http://www.gbcc.org.uk/library.htm)
Nearest Tube: Hyde Park, Knightsbridge or Victoria

**Imperial War Museum (School of Printed Books)**
Imperial War Museum
Lambeth Road
London SE1 6HZ
Telephone: 020 7416 5342
Fax: 020 7416 5374
Website: [http://london.iwm.org.uk/](http://london.iwm.org.uk/)
Nearest Tube: Lambeth North

History of the two world wars, and other wars and military undertakings involving Britain and the Commonwealth since 1914.

**Poetry Library**
Level 5
Royal Festival Hall
South Bank Centre
London SE1 8XX
Website: [http://www.poetrylibrary.org.uk/](http://www.poetrylibrary.org.uk/)
Nearest Tube: Waterloo or Embankment

**The Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine Library**
The Wellcome Building
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE
Telephone: 020 7611 8582
Fax: 020 7611 8369
Website: [http://library.wellcome.ac.uk/](http://library.wellcome.ac.uk/)
Nearest Tube: Euston or Euston Square

**Websites giving UK libraries information**
COPAC
[http://www.copac.ac.uk/copac/](http://www.copac.ac.uk/copac/)
Access to the catalogues of all major UK university libraries. If you can’t get the book you need in London, see if you can find it here and ask Birkbeck Library to arrange an inter-library loan.

M25 Consortium
Links to over 100 libraries in the London area

UK Public Libraries
[http://dspace.dial.pipex.com/town/square/ac940/weblibs.html](http://dspace.dial.pipex.com/town/square/ac940/weblibs.html)
Libraries Information (via Birkbeck)
[http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/other.html](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/other.html)
Links to academic and other libraries.
Support for Students

Support for students with Disabilities, Dyslexia and Mental Health Needs

At Birkbeck there are students with a wide range of disabilities, specific learning difficulties, medical conditions and mental health conditions (hereinafter referred to as disabled students). Many of them have benefited from the advice and support provided by the College’s Wellbeing Centre. The Wellbeing Centre is located in G26 on the Ground floor of the Malet Street building.

All enquiries should come to the Wellbeing Centre (tel. 0207 631 6316), who will determine the appropriate referral to specialists in the Disability and Dyslexia Service and Mental Health Service. They can provide advice and support on travel and parking, physical access, the Disabled Students’ Allowance, specialist equipment, personal support, examination arrangements, etc.

On enrolment you need to complete a Study Support Plan (SSP), which will set out the reasonable adjustments that we will make with physical access, lectures, seminars, assessments and exams. After you complete this and provide disability evidence, we confirm the adjustments you require and then your department, examinations office, etc. will be informed that your SSP is available and adjustments can be made. You should contact the Wellbeing Service if any of your adjustments are not in place.

Access at Birkbeck
Birkbeck's main buildings have wheelchair access, accessible lifts and toilets, our reception desks and teaching venues have induction loops for people with hearing impairments, and we have large print and tactile signage. Accessible parking, lockers, specialist seating in lectures and seminars and portable induction loops can all be arranged by the Disability & Dyslexia Service.

The Disabled Students’ Allowance
UK and EU (with migrant worker status) disabled students on undergraduate and postgraduate courses are eligible to apply for the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). The DSA provides specialist equipment including computers with assistive technology and training, personal help (e.g., study skills tutors, mentors and BSL interpreters) and additional travel costs for students who have to use taxis. It provides thousands of pounds worth of support and all the evidence shows that students who receive it are more likely to complete their courses successfully. The Wellbeing Centre can provide further information on the DSA and can assist you in applying to Student Finance England for this support. From September 2016, new students will receive their note-taking support from the University rather than the DSA.

Support in your Department
Your Department is responsible for making reasonable adjustments in learning and teaching and assessment, including permission to record lectures, specialist seating,
extensions on coursework, etc. Whilst we anticipate that this support will be provided by the Programme Director, tutors and Programme Administrator in the Department, they will also have a Disability Lead. If you experience any difficulties or require additional support from the Department then they may also be able to assist you. They may be contacted through the Programme Administrator.

Support in IT Services and Library Services
There is a comprehensive range of specialist equipment for students with disabilities in IT Services. This includes an Assistive Technology Room, which may be booked by disabled students. We have software packages for dyslexic students (e.g. Claroread and Mind view), screen reading and character enhancing software for students with visual impairments available in our computer laboratories, specialist scanning software, large monitors, ergonomic mice and keyboards, specialist orthopaedic chairs, etc. We have an Assistive Technology Officer, who can be contacted via IT Services.

The Library has an Assistive Technology Centre, where there is also a range of specialist equipment, including an electronic magnifier for visually impaired students, as well as specialist orthopaedic chairs and writing slopes. The Disability and Dyslexia Service Office refers all students with disabilities to the Library Access Support service, who provide a comprehensive range of services for students with disabilities and dyslexia.

Examinations and Assessments
Many disabled students can receive support in examinations, including additional time, use of a computer, etc. In exceptional circumstances, students may be offered an alternative form of assessment.

Specific Learning Difficulties (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia)
Mature students who experienced problems at school are often unaware that these problems may result from their being dyslexic. Whilst dyslexia cannot be cured, you can learn strategies to make studying significantly easier. If you think you may be dyslexic you can take an online screening test in the computer laboratories – the instructions for the screening test are available on the Disability Office website. If appropriate, you will be referred to an Educational Psychologist for a dyslexia assessment. Some students can receive assistance in meeting the cost of this assessment, either from their employer or from Birkbeck.

Further information
For further information, please call the Wellbeing Centre on 020 7631 6316 or email disability@bbk.ac.uk.
Academic and Language Support Facilities for Postgraduate Students

Centre for Transformative Practice in Learning and Teaching (CTPLT)
The Centre for Transformative Practice in Learning and Teaching (located in the Main Building, Torrington Square) provides workshops and some individual tutorial assistance to PG students. Please click on this [link](#) and look under the ‘Postgraduate Student Support’ tab on the website for further information.

One-To-One Tutorials
The CTPLT offers a number of one-to-one tutorials available each week, including during term 3. These are meant to help students with a specific aspect of their writing. Tutorials can be booked by emailing: learningskills@bbk.ac.uk. Students are asked to bring a sample of their work with them to the appointment.

Workshops Covering a Range of Skills
There are CTPLT workshops specifically for PG students. These are offered periodically throughout the year, but more frequently in Autumn and Spring terms. There is an ‘Academic Writing Day for PGs’ in May, and a day in February on referencing.

Workshops can be viewed and booked on the [Academic Development Workshop Calendar](#). The Academic Development Workshop Calendar includes information on all workshops offered throughout Birkbeck.

Facilitated Writing Workshops
In July and August CTPLT will be hosting a series of facilitated writing workshops designed to help students engage with their dissertation writing process. These workshops are also booked through the [Academic Development Workshop Calendar](#).

Language and Grammar
The CTPLT offers workshops through the year on aspects of formal, academic expression. There are also weekly ‘Drop In’ Language and Grammar sessions. Information about topics, dates and venues can be found on the [Academic Development Workshop Calendar](#).

School of Arts Workshops
In the Autumn and Spring terms, Dr Fleur Rothschild, Learning Development Tutor for the School of Arts, offers a series of workshops on:
- Study Skills  (Thursday 7.40-9pm, Friday 6-7.20pm)
- Research Skills (Thursday 7.40-9pm, Friday 6-7.20pm)
- Essay Writing  (Thursday 7.40-9pm, Friday 6-7.20pm)
- Language and Grammar (Friday 7.40-9pm)

These workshops are open to all students in the School of Arts, including Postgraduate students, and there is always a contingent of PGs who attend each term. The schedules
are usually published in September and can then be accessed via the Birkbeck website [here](#) or in the [Academic Development Workshop Calendar](#).

Regrettably, Dr Rothschild is unable to offer one-to-one help to Postgraduate students who should, in the first instance, contact their Personal Tutor, or Dissertation Supervisor.

**Online resources**

Online resources can be found in students' Moodle list:

- Birkbeck Learning Skills, for example [What materials are available to help develop my academic English?](#)
- **School of Arts Study Skills**
  - Study Tools; Language and Grammar. This resource is a WIP which will be progressively developed through the summer and the coming academic year. It currently contains resources and slides from some of the Study Skills, and Language and Grammar workshops.

**Get Ahead: Stay Ahead - Helping you get the best possible start to your course**

At Birkbeck we want to make sure you get all the help you need to get your studies off to a great start and to provide you with support during your course. On the Get Ahead: Stay Ahead website you can access a range of online resources to help you:

- consider how you can achieve your goals
- find out what studying at Birkbeck is like
- improve your study skills and succeed on your course
- The online materials are interactive tutorials that are free to use and you can work through them at your own pace.

These interactive tutorials will help you consider how you can achieve your goals, find out what studying at Birkbeck is like and improve your academic skills: [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/get-ahead-stay-ahead](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/get-ahead-stay-ahead).

For further information on Learning Development and Academic Skills support available within Birkbeck College, please see the website for details: [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/support](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/support).
General Student Support

As a Birkbeck student, you can get access to a range of support and study facilities. Please follow the links below to access current information on the following facilities:

- Academic support
- Accommodation services
- Career services
- Computing and IT services
- Counselling service
- Disability and dyslexia support
- Financial support
- Graduate Research School
- Health services
- Learning development and academic skills
  - Online tutorials
  - Free workshops
- Library services
- Lockers
- Moodle
- Nursery
- Orientation for new students
- Student Advice Centre
- Wellbeing Service

If you want to talk to someone about any aspect of this provision, please contact the My Birkbeck helpdesk.

International Students

Birkbeck offers a range of support services for international students. Please access the website for details here.

- Guide for international students
- Submit your Visa and immigration enquiry
- Visa and registration information
Appendix A: Getting Started with Moodle

Birkbeck uses ‘Moodle’ as its Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) platform. Moodle is used to house course documentation (handbooks, module outlines, coursework, coversheets etc.) materials (readings, PowerPoint presentations, slide lists etc.) and for electronic submission and marking of coursework.

You can access Moodle here. To log in you need your ITS username and password, a computer with a connection to the internet and a web browser such as Internet Explorer or Firefox.

If you are having login problems, but your password is working for other services, please change your password via the online form (allow one hour after completing this form, and then log in to the VLE again). If this hasn’t resolved the problem please contact the ITS Helpdesk via email (its@bbk.ac.uk), telephone (020 7631 6543) or in person (Malet St building, next to the entrance to the Library).

Please see below some general information on getting started with Moodle:

Browsing your modules

Once logged in, your screen will be similar to that shown below. There are three columns.

- The right column contains the navigation and settings menu. You can expand or collapse items within this panel.
- The middle column contains announcements and updates about Moodle.
- The right column contains Blocks such as a calendar, online users, etc…
Once you click on “My home” in the navigation panel, you should see the courses to which you are enrolled in “Course Overview” in the middle column.

After clicking on a course title you will see your course in the middle column. As you browse the contents of a module, a breadcrumb trail will appear above the contents of each page, as shown

Use the links therein or the Back button on your web browser to go back to previously-visited pages.

Submitting Assignments

Turnitin is a web-based service that checks for ‘originality’. It is used to check your assignment against other assignments, internet sources and journal articles.

All coursework must be submitted via Moodle.

- Click on the Assignments link within the course module
- You will then see the Summary page with the “Start date, Due date and Post date”.
- Then click on the My Submissions tab and enter a title and browse for the file you want to submit on your computer. Also, please confirm that this submission is your own work by ticking the box.
- Click on Add Submission.
A window will open with a synchronizing data message. This will close after a few seconds. In the **My Submissions** tab you will be able to see the new status, showing that your submission successfully uploaded to Turnitin.

**Status:** Submission successfully uploaded to Turnitin.

**Viewing your mark and feedback**
If your tutor has marked the assignments online using GradeMark, students will be able to access their grades and feedback through the GradeMark icon. This is found on the **My Summary** page.

Click on the apple icon and a new page will open which contains your tutor’s feedback and General Comments. You can download your original file by clicking on the arrow on the right.

If you have any difficulties using Moodle please contact ITS Helpdesk via email **its@bbk.ac.uk**.
Appendix B: Common Awards Scheme
Regulations and Policies

Common Awards Scheme
Please access the Common Awards Scheme regulations for taught and research programmes for the current academic year.

If you have any queries regarding the regulations please contact asq@bbk.ac.uk.

Policies
See the Birkbeck College website for access to current policies including: Assessment Offences, Mitigating Circumstances and Break-in-Studies Policy.
Appendix C: MA Cultural and Critical Studies
Staff Contact List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Contacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Dr Mark Blacklock**  
Programme Director | Room 407, 43 Gordon Sq | m.blacklock@bbk.ac.uk  
020 7631 6195 |
| **Sarah Walker**  
Programme Administrator | Room G19, 43 Gordon Sq | sc.walker@bbk.ac.uk  
0203 073 8381 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Staff on the MA Contemporary Literature and Culture Programme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Dr Stephen Clucas**  
Room 306, 43 Gordon Sq | s.clucas@bbk.ac.uk  
020 3073 8421 |
| **Professor Esther Leslie**  
Room 206, 43 Gordon Sq | e.leslie@bbk.ac.uk  
0203 073 8210 |
| **Dr Grace Halden**  
43 Gordon Square | g.halden@bbk.ac.uk |

Above are the core teachers on the MA Cultural and Critical Studies programme. Teaching and dissertation supervisions are also provided by additional specialists in the Department of English & Humanities. Please access a complete list of academic staff in the Department [here](#).

- Remember to check office hours with individual staff members. We ask you visit offices only when you have made an appointment. Please ring or email in advance. Staff members are available for tutorials at other times by appointment.

- Staffing is subject to change and listing in this handbook is not a guarantee that a specific staff member will be with the Department in the 2016-17 academic year.

- There is a research leave policy in the College, which means that all members of academic staff are entitled to one term’s research leave every three years. In addition, members of staff are regularly awarded externally funded research leave, by organisations such as the Leverhulme Trust and the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Therefore, not all academic staff will be present at all times. On such occasions the Department will arrange replacement cover and advise the affected students.
Appendix D: MA Dissertation Proposal Form

This form must be submitted via Turnitin Assignment by 12 noon, Friday 17 March 2017.

Name:

Student Number:

Email:

Please tick here if you would like your dissertation topic and email address to be added to a general list to be circulated to other students on the programme, so that if you wish you are able to contact people working in related areas.

Proposed Topic

Brief Outline/Abstract