

ENG2302: Early Twentieth-Century Literature in English

Assessment guidelines: Term paper (essay)

Level: the course is aimed at students in their second year of study.

Students answer one essay question from the selection.

Highly successful essays should:

- Respond with direct relevance to the question, paying attention to any special stipulations
- Demonstrate an excellent understanding of, and strong engagement with, texts by authors studied on the course, as well as the literary culture of the period as a whole
- Deploy a high level of analysis and critical thinking
- Communicate effectively and fluently
- Be well presented and thoroughly documented, with a clear and consistent referencing style
- Deploy and engage with a range of well-chosen secondary materials
- Offer some distinctive or original perspectives

Moderately successful essays should:

- Offer a response which is relevance to the question and its terms
- Demonstrate some understanding of, and engagement with, literature and/or literary movements from the period in question
- Make use of some appropriate secondary materials
- Show some evidence of the ability to analyse material
- Be written in a generally readable and fluent form and style
- Provide appropriate references

Very low-scoring and failing essays will not satisfactorily meet some or all of these criteria.

Instructions

Write an essay responding to **one** of the following questions.

Your answer should engage closely with **at least two** authors studied on the course, and should make use of a range of appropriate **secondary reading** (scholarly books, essays and journal articles). Some preliminary suggestions are provided on Canvas.

Essays should be formatted with 1.5 line spacing and a 12 point font size. Referencing and style must be consistent and conform to a major system (by default, Chicago style with footnotes).

Length: 7 standard pages +/- 10%

Essay questions

1. In what ways, and to what ends, does writing of this period offer a **“re-reading” of literary history**?
2. How helpful (or otherwise) is **historical and/or biographical context** in illuminating texts from this period?
3. “Poets in our civilization, as it exists at present, must be difficult” (T. S. Eliot, “The Metaphysical Poets”). In your view, why does **literary modernism’s apparent difficulty** arise — and how **justified** is it?
4. How **radical** were the period’s literary renegotiations of **gender, race or nation** (choose one)?
5. Discuss the treatment of **human desire** in at least three works of literature from the period.
6. Literature of the period is often considered fundamentally **pessimistic** about the state of **modern civilisation**. How fair do you think this characterisation is?
7. How and why did writers of this period engage creatively with **perception** and the **senses**?