EL225

CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIAN WRITERS

This sample unit outline is provided by CHC for prospective and current students to assist with unit selection.

Elements of this outline which may change with subsequent offerings of the unit include Content, Required Texts, Recommended Readings and details of the Assessment Tasks.

Students who are currently enrolled in this unit should obtain the outline for the relevant semester from the unit lecturer.
Unit Name | Contemporary Australian Writers
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Unit Code | EL225

**Awards**
- Bachelor of Education (Primary) - Stream A: General Primary - English minor
- Bachelor of Education (Middle Years) - English minor
- Bachelor of Education (Secondary) - English teaching area
- Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Education (Secondary) - English major/minor

This unit is able to be undertaken towards other CHC awards according to course rules and the meeting of prerequisite requirements, as applicable.

**Core/Elective**
Elective

**Prerequisite**
20 credit points of 100-level EL units

**Mode**
Internal

**Delivery/Contact hrs**
- Class contact 33 hours
- Engagement with unit materials 44 hours
- Assignment preparation 63 hours
- Total 140 hours

**Unit Rationale**
In the last twenty years, Australian writing has come of age as a presence on the world stage. Authors such as Peter Carey, Thomas Keneally, David Malouf, Tim Winton and Les Murray have attained international acclaim, while others such as Janette Turner Hospital, Thea Astley, Murray Bail, Ruth Park, Colleen McCullogh, and Bruce Dawe have achieved considerable attention in their homeland. There has also been the birth of a new interest in Australian indigenous literature from both within Australia and in the international literary world.

This unit will explore the world of contemporary Australian literature by examining the works of Australian writers who have made their mark in recent years. It will evaluate the major themes that have dominated our cultural conversation, and will compare and contrast the responses of authors to major issues on both the Australian and the international stage, including a review from Christian perspectives. Special attention will be paid to the portrayal of spiritual experience, both in terms of Australian responses to organised religion, and in terms of other forms of spirituality that resonate with the Australian cultural context.

As students of literature, those enrolled in this unit need to be aware of the authors, the types of texts, and the potential readership of contemporary Australian literary texts. They should have knowledge of who the authors are, what their philosophies encompass, and how they have communicated these perspectives through their literature.

**Learning Outcomes:**

On completion of this unit, students will have provided evidence that they have:

1. Discussed the works of leading contemporary Australian prose writers and poets.
2. Evaluated the contribution of contemporary Australian literature to our cultural conversation.
3. Compared and contrasted the works of individual authors in relation to common themes and issues.
4. Assessed the influence of trends in contemporary philosophy and literary theory on the works of Australian writers.
5. Reflected on the portrayal of organised religion and other forms of spirituality in contemporary Australian texts.
6. Appreciated elements of imagery, style, and literary technique in the works of contemporary Australian writers.
7. Written at an appropriate tertiary standard (with special attention to correct grammar, punctuation, spelling, vocabulary, usage, sentence structure, logical relations, style, referencing and presentation.)
Content:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The historical and literary backgrounds to contemporary Australian literature and to contemporary Australian writers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>Contemporary Australian poetry - themes, issues, styles</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Contemporary Australian short stories - settings, themes, issues</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Contemporary Australian novels - <em>Oscar and Lucinda</em></td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Contemporary Australian novels - <em>It's Raining in Mango</em></td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Contemporary Australian novels - <em>Cloudstreet</em></td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Aboriginal literature (including the novel, <em>Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence</em>) - motifs, spirituality</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Contemporary Australian novels - <em>Oyster</em></td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Contemporary Australian literature and postmodern literary theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>General themes in contemporary Australian literature, including the portrayal of spirituality</td>
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Set Text Requirements:

- Pilkington, D & Garimara, N 1996, *Follow the Rabbit Proof Fence*, Univ. of Qld Press, Brisbane.

Recommended Readings:

Assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Item</th>
<th>Topic/s</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes assessed</th>
<th>Week Due</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term Paper (2500 words)</td>
<td>Post-1945 Australian novels and novelists, poems and poets. Subjects, themes, and forms (language and Structure) in which they write. Similarities with and differences from post-1945 texts and writers.</td>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar Presentation and Paper (1500 words)</td>
<td>The Contemporary Australian Novel - Global or Australian? A critique from Christian perspectives.</td>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Unit Overview:

This unit views the works of Australian contemporary writers as part of the emerging of Australian literature into the international scene. It examines the common themes and issues that have engaged Australian writers since the beginning of white settlement (including the portrayal of religion and other forms of spirituality – such as aboriginal spirituality); and it discusses the influence of trends in contemporary philosophy and literary theory in the works of contemporary Australian writers.