

Department of English
Visva-Bharati
Santiniketan

M.A. Course in English
Semester Syllabus

The M.A. syllabus in English will comprise 10 Core papers and 6 Optional papers, as detailed below:

Semester	Core papers	Optional papers (to be selected every semester out of a pool of 66 papers)	Total no of papers
I	2 (M 1.1; M 1.2)	2	4
II	3 (M 2.1; M 2.2; M 2.3)	1	4
III	2 (M 3.1; M 3.2)	2	4
IV	3 (M 4.1; m 4.2; M 4.3)	1	4

Please note: All Core papers will have 5 modules each. Module 1, consisting of study of Background/Context, will be compulsory. The remaining 4 modules will comprise texts across genres.

Paper M 1.1 (Core): The Renaissance

This course engages with the development of the Renaissance primarily in England, though keeping in view the larger context of the Renaissance and Reformation movements both in the South and North of Europe, from the 15th to the early 17th century. The historical, socio-political, cultural, ideological implications involved will be explored: in the first module, through broad discussions of the “history of ideas” of the period (with references also to non-English/non-literary discourses wherever necessary, e.g. Machiavelli’s political treatise on the ideal ‘prince’, or Pico della Mirandola’s discourse on the ‘dignity of man’, or Montaigne’s upholding of the notion of the ‘noble savage’); in the remaining three modules, the similar explorations will be continued with reference chiefly to English texts, selected across different genres (poetry, drama, prose). Since the most significant achievements during the English Renaissance were made in the field of drama, this genre will be given a certain degree of priority in the selection of texts; this may entail a curtailing of the prose component in certain semesters. Also, the detailed selection of actual texts has been left flexible to enable the teacher concerned to exercise his/her choice. The selections will be made at the beginning of the semester and communicated to the students as well as others concerned.

This paper will have two sections: Contexts (1 module) and Texts, across genres (4 modules)

Module 1. Context (compulsory)

This will be primarily based on a series of lectures about the Renaissance, both as an age and an idea. A set of three issues may be discussed (preferably with reference to the texts selected for study in the other modules). These issues/themes may include some of the following:

1. The Idea of the Renaissance in its own time and later, beginning with the formulations of Petrarch, Pico, Ficino, Lorenzo Valla, Erasmus, More, Cornelius Agrippa, Montaigne, Machiavelli, Luther, Calvin, Vasari to later historians like Burckhardt, Panofsky, Cassirer, Kristellar and moving to Contemporary Schools like New Historicism, Cultural Materialism and Feminism
2. Humanist Learning: its scope and aim.
3. Renaissance political thought with special focus on the ideas of monarchy
4. The Renaissance Court and ideas of the Courtier
5. Renaissance notions of love and friendship
6. Religion during the Renaissance
7. Renaissance travel writing and conceptualizing the 'Other.'
8. Renaissance Art including architecture
9. Renaissance Magic, including Witchcraft
10. Renaissance and the Race issue
11. Renaissance and Gender

Modules 2-5: Texts across genres

Module 2. Poetry

(Any 1 component): Sonnets (12 sonnets: to be selected by teacher)

Metaphysical Poetry (10 poems: to be selected by teacher)

Epic: Spenser, *Fairie Queene* (any 1 book)

Or

Milton, *Paradise Lost* (any 1 book)

Module 3. Drama (Other than Shakespeare)

(Author/text to be selected by teacher):

Marlowe, Kyd, Greene, Jonson, Webster, Chapman, Middleton, Massinger, Marston, Tourneur.

Module 4: Drama (Shakespeare):

Text(s) to be selected by concerned teacher(s).

Module 5. Prose (any one)

(This genre may not be offered every year, to allow greater emphasis on the other genres which are considered to be of greater importance). Any one text by any one of the following authors may be offered:

Sidney, Nashe, Greene, More.

Paper M 1.2 (Core): Literature of the Enlightenment

This course attempts to trace the major ideas articulated by the European Enlightenment and trace its representation in the literature of the Long Eighteenth century.

The course will comprise of the following modules:

Module 1: Context (compulsory).

The module will engage with the History of Ideas drawing upon the works of John Milton, Thomas Hobbes, Rene Descartes, John Locke, David Hume, Adam Smith and Immanuel Kant. Issues that might be covered include: Enlightenment and the discourse of Reason, Enlightenment and Political Society, Enlightenment and the question of Freedom, Enlightenment and the discourse of Sensibility, Enlightenment and questions of Slavery, Women and the Enlightenment, among others.

Modules 2-5 (Texts across genres)

Module 2 (Poetry of the Enlightenment):

Poems to be chosen from a pool of texts by John Dryden, Alexander Pope, Samuel Johnson, Oliver Goldsmith, Thomas Gray.

Module 3 (Drama):

Drama during the Enlightenment to be chosen from a pool of texts by Richard Steele, John Dryden, John Gay, Nahum Tate.

Module 4 (Fiction):

Fictional works to be chosen from a pool of texts by Daniel Defoe, Jonathan Swift, Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding, Frances Burney, Laurence Sterne.

Module 5 (Non-fiction):

Non-Fictional Prose to be chosen from a pool of texts by John Milton, John Bunyan, Addison, Steele, Samuel Johnson.

Paper M 2.1 (Core): The Long Nineteenth-century Literature

In this course students will be introduced to the political, sociological, and cultural phenomena like the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution that shaped life and literature in the nineteenth-century. We shall look into the immediate socio-cultural and literary consequences of these revolutions including the advent of Romanticism and the restructuring of the society in the industrial era. We shall also try to understand the long-term effects that had made it possible for radical Romantic ideas, mid-nineteenth century complacency about imperial and industrial achievements, as well as a reaction to this inertia later in the century, all to exist in the same age. The course is divided into different parts: history of ideas and texts representing different genres and phases.

TEXTS (Note: the following list is merely indicative and tentative in nature)

Module I: Background/Context (Compulsory)

A study of the History of Ideas of the period, with selections from one or more authors/texts from the following (to be made by the teacher concerned):

Wordsworth, Coleridge, Arnold, Engels, J.S Mill, Walter Pater, Freud, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche.

Modules 2-5: Texts across genres

Module 2: Poetry (Selections will be made by the faculty):

Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Keats, Shelley, Tennyson, Browning, Arnold, Hopkins, any one poet from the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Women poets.

Module 3: Fiction (1 novel each by any 2 of the following authors will be taught):

Walter Scott, Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, W. M. Thackeray, Wilkie Collins, Charlotte Bronte, Emily Bronte, George Eliot, Elizabeth Gaskell, Benjamin Disraeli, Thomas Hardy, Robert Louis Stevenson, H. Rider Haggard, Arthur Conan Doyle, Charles Kingsley, Gissing, George Moore, Rudyard Kipling, Bram Stoker, H.G. Wells.

Module 4: Drama (1 play by any one of these dramatists)

Galsworthy, Wilde, Shaw, Peter Barry, Gilbert and Sullivan.

Module 5: Non-fiction (to be selected from the following):

Wollstonecraft, Godwin, Paine, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Arnold, J.S Mill, Carlyle, Ruskin, Pater, Wilde.

Paper M 2.2 (Core): Twentieth Century Literature

Module 1: Background/Context (compulsory)

Analysis and discussion of Issues and Themes related to Modernism and Postmodernism, with reference to the History of Ideas relevant for this period (selections from one or more texts – from one or more categories – will be made by the teacher concerned) from

- a) Socio-economic/ political/philosophical/psychological/linguistic thinkers : Marx, Freud, Nietzsche, Camus, Saussure, Derrida, Foucault (the list is not exhaustive)
- b) Writers & artists on principles of creativity : Virginia Woolf, T.S. Eliot, F.R. Leavis, Kandinsky, W.H. Auden, Cecil Day Lewis, Louis MacNeice
- c) Manifestoes by the founders of different movements : Symbolism, Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Imagism, Vorticism, Futurism, Expressionism, Dadaism, Surrealism
- d) Philosophers & thinkers of Postmodernism : Jürgen Habermas, Jean-François Lyotard, Jean Baudrillard, Georg Lukács, Walter Benjamin, Fredric Jameson, Umberto Eco, Simone de Beauvoir, Julia Kristeva, Linda Hutcheon (the list is not exhaustive).

Modules 2-5: (Texts covering 4 broad genres)

Module 2: POETRY (Selections from poems by 1 Modernist poet and 1 poet from the rest of the century from the following list will be made by the teacher concerned):

T.S.Eliot, W.B.Yeats, W.H.Auden, Stephen Spender, Dylan Thomas, Philip Larkin, Ted Hughes, Sylvia Plath, British poets up to the phase of “concrete”, “sound” & “found “ poetry along with Modernism and any European or American poet writing in the century who can be considered under the rubrics Modernism & Postmodernism.

Module 3: FICTION (1novel each by any 2 of the following authors will be taught):

Henry James, Marcel Proust, Joseph Conrad, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, D.H.Lawrence, Samuel Butler, Orwell, Graham Greene, Golding, P.G. Wodehouse, Zadie Smith, Archer, Rowling/ Galbraith Christopher Isherwood, Stephen Spender, British fiction writers of “the experimental tradition” continuing to write till late in the century (viz. Graphic novel, Campus novel, Cosmopolitan novel, etc.), Franz Kafka, Thomas Mann, John Fowles, Gabriel García Márquez, C.S.Lewis, Tolkien and any other novelist of the century who is not of an Asian background and can be considered as involved in important “happenings” and is available in English translation.

Module 4: DRAMA (1 play by any one of these dramatists):

T.S. Eliot, W.H. Auden & Christopher Isherwood, W.B. Yeats, John Synge, Sean O’ Casey, Maurice Maeterlinck, August Strindberg, Antonin Artaud, Eugène Ionesco, Samuel Beckett, Harold Pinter, Bertolt Brecht, John Osborne, Alan Bennett, Edward Bond, Luigi Pirandello, Eugene O’ Neill, and any one dramatist from the century who can be considered as evincing symptoms of Modernism or Postmodernism.

Module 5: SHORT STORY (every alternative session 2 stories along with 1 novel should be taught; stories to be selected by the concerned teacher from the following):

Henry James, D.H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, Somerset Maugham, Angus Wilson, Nabokov, and any British/American writer as also any European writer of the century available in English translation.

Paper M 2.3 (Core): Rabindranath Tagore

Module 1: General Background & Biographical Details: (compulsory)

Focus will be on important nodal points in the life and times of Tagore (Tagore & the Bengal Renaissance, Tagore & Politics, Tagore & Bangla Literature, Tagore & the West, Tagore & Visva-Bharati etc.). Emphasis will also be given to different phases in Tagore's life – like the Jorasanko phase, the Shelaidaha or the Santiniketan phase. Discussions will range from his involvement with the cooperative movements to his 'modernist' experiments in painting with the aim to showcase Tagore as a polymath, a polemicist, an activist and a multi-faceted artist.

Modules 2-5: Texts across genres

Module 2: Poetry

All major collections of poems. Each year selections will be made from 1 or 2 collections.

Module 3: Novel and Short Story

One (1) novel, from among the major novels, will be taught in a semester.

Two short stories will be selected from the major short stories.

Module 4: Drama

One (1) play, from among the major plays, will be taught in a semester.

Module 5: Non-fictional Prose

This category includes essays, travelogues, lectures and other polemical writings and letters. A new selection will be made from 1 or 2 texts each time the course is taught.

Please note: Available English translations of Tagore's texts will be the mainstay of classroom discussions. If available, auto-translations will also be consulted. However, students will be asked to consult the original Bangla texts whenever possible as such texts will feature regularly during the teaching of the course.

Paper M 3.1 (Core): Literary Criticism

This course offers Literary Criticism that pre-dates the advent of "Theory", comprising nevertheless, "theories" or "schools" of criticism such as the "mimetic", "didactic" or "expressive". Writers and their work appear here as part of a historical scheme since thematically some of the writings tend necessarily to overlap. Thus Plato, Aristotle, Horace or Longinus are seen as Classical theorists and Sidney as a Renaissance critic although most of them, in emphasizing the relations between the literary work and the universe advocate the theory of mimesis. Enlightenment theory in England was enriched by the neo- classical criticism of Dryden and Johnson who, however, opened up ideas of propriety and decorum and helped prepare the ground for the Romantic revolution. Wordsworth and Coleridge, expressive critics both, made "the poet's own subjectivity" the subject of poetry. Coleridge's debts to Kant and Schiller notwithstanding, his efforts to integrate literary analysis with the insights of other disciplines uphold the synthesizing power of poetic imagination. Among the Victorians Arnold continues to represent an ideal of literary and cultural humanism. Pater's conception of art and exploration of aesthetic experience inspired twentieth century theorists of literary and critical consciousness. Eliot's modernism defined the critical standards of an era, upturned literary

tradition and established key notions of analysis and evolution. F.R. Leavis's New Criticism defined itself in opposition to subjectivist theories of criticism such as Romanticism and was the dominant mode of criticism against which much later theory typically demarcated its own parameters. It is appropriate, therefore, to round off this survey with New Criticism and its construct of the "meaning" of a literary text.

Selections from authors/texts from each of the following modules:

Module 1- Plato, Aristotle, Horace, Longinus.

Module 2: Sidney, Dryden, Pope, Johnson

Module 3: Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Arnold, Wilde, Pater.

Module 4: T.S. Eliot, F.R. Leavis, I. A. Richards, Empson, Woolf, Lawrence, Forster, Henry James.

Module 5: Bharata, Abhinavagupta, Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, A.K. Ramanujan.

Paper M 3.2 (Core) American Literature

Module 1: Background of American Literature (compulsory)

Module 2: Drama: (any one)

August Wilson, Eugene O'Neill, Tennessee Williams. Edward Albee, Amiri Baraka, Arthur Miller

Module 3: Novel: (any one)

Hawthorne, Mark Twain, Melville, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Ernest Hemingway F. Scott Fitzgerald, William Faulkner, Steinbeck, Sinclair, Scott Momaday, Stephen Crane, Louisa May Alcott, Toni Morrison, Alice Walker

Module 4: Short Stories and Non-Fiction (1 short story and 1 non-fictional work)

Short Stories: Hawthorne, Edgar Allan Poe, Faulkner, Sandra Cisneros, Scott Fitzgerald

Non-fiction: Frederick Douglass, Harriet Jacobs, Emerson, Thoreau, Lincoln
Toni Morrison, Martin Luther King Jr, Scott Fitzgerald

Module 5: Poetry (any four poets)

Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, the Brahmin Poets, Langston Hughes, Allen Ginsberg, Adrienne Rich, Theodore Roethke, Wallace Stevens, Sylvia Plath, Rita Dove

Paper M 4.1 (Core) Literary Theory I

The course will be based upon texts, themes and major schools and positions which may or may not be reflected in the texts prescribed for detail studies. As many basic theoretical premises may be scattered through authors, proponents and texts, it is impossible to capture all nuances and

approaches within the framework of the semester system. Students are encouraged to read beyond the texts. Selections and various compositions from the following will be offered:

Marxism

Karl Marx, Karl, Antonio, Gramsci, Walter Benjamin, Raymond Williams
Louis Althusser, Étienne Balibar, Terry Eagleton, Bakhtin

Psychoanalysis: Freud, Jung, Lacan, Erikson, Fromm, Irigaray, Ernest Jones, Susie Orbach, Sudhir Kakkar

Structuralism: Saussure, Propp, Pierce, _

Poststructuralism

Barthes, Foucault, Habermas, Jürgen, Chakravorty-Spivak, Gayatri,
Jameson, Frederick, Derrida

Paper M 4.2 (Core) Literary Theory II

Reader Response

Stanley Fish, Iser, Jauss, Umberto Eco, Gadamer, Gerald Prince, Riffaterre, Culler, Holland, Bleich

Postmodernism:

Jürgen Habermas, Roland Barthes, Frederic Jameson, Raymond Williams, Jean –François Lyotard, Jean Baudrillard, Laura Mulvey, Stuart Hall, Donna Haraway, John Barth, John Berger,

Gender Studies

Virginia Woolf, Simone de Beauvoir, Germaine Greer, Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, Kate Millet Adrienne Rich, Alice Walker, Barbara Smith, Helene Cixous, Gayle Rubin, Judith Butler, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Chandra Talpade Mohanty,' LGBTQ Theory

Eco criticism

Garrard, Carolyn Merchant, Jonathan Bate, Helen Tiffin, Maria Mies, Vandana Shiva, Upamanyu Pablo Mukherjee, Greta Gaard, Rob Nixon.

Paper M 4.3 (Core) : Postcolonial Literature

Background: An introduction to Postcolonialism as a Theory with reference to:

Edward Said, Chinua Achebe, Frantz Fanon, Ngugi wa Thiongo, Anthony Appiah, 'Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, M K Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, K. C. Bhattacharya, 'Dipesh Chakrabarty, Aijaz Ahmed, 'Ella Shohat.

Novels (Any two):

Rabindra Nath Thakur: Qurut Ul Haider, Kamila Shamsie , Buchi Emecheta , Chinua Achebe, Ngugi wa Thiong’O, Rosario Castellanos: Tayeb Salih Sembene Ousmane , Lee Maracle, Patrik White V.S Naipaul, Bapsi Sidhwa , Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, Ben Okri, Atwood

Plays (Any one)

Wole Soyinka , Ngugi wa Thiong’o: Ama Ata Aidoo: Anowa

Rabindra Nath Thakur, Utpal Dutta, Girish Karnad, Badal Sarcar, Ratan Thiam, Habib Tanveer, Fugard, Derek Walcott,

Short Stories (Any three):

Bessie Head, Chinua Achebe, Juan Rulfo, Garcia Marquez, Alejo Carpentier, Sadaat Hassan Manto, Prem Chand, Rabindranath Thakur, Basil Johnston, Lee Maracle, Drew Hayden Taylor

Poetry (Selections from any three poets):

Senghor, David Diop, Aime Cesaire, A.D. Hope, Tagore, Arun Kolatkar, Margaret Laurence, Dilip Chitre, A.K. Ramanujan, Barry Hill, Sri Aurobindo, Derek Walcott

List of Optional Papers

- M. Op. 1: Special Author
- M. Op. 2: Indian Fiction in English
- M. Op. 3: Classical Literatures in Translation
- M. Op. 4: Detective Fiction
- M. Op. 5: Crime Fiction
- M. Op. 6: Spy Thrillers
- M. Op. 7: Indian Women’s Fiction in English
- M. Op. 8: Bhasa Literatures in Translation
- M. Op. 9: Literature and War
- M. Op. 10: The Early Modern Epic and Romance
- M. Op. 11: Theatre Studies
- M. Op. 12: Literature and the Raj
- M. Op. 13: Gender and Sexuality in any author/ literature
- M. Op. 14: Diaspora Literature
- M. Op. 15: Literature and the Visual Arts
- M. Op. 16: Translation Studies
- M. Op. 17: Orality and Literature
- M. Op. 18: Canadian Literature: An Overview
- M. Op. 19: Australian Literature
- M. Op. 20: African Literatures in English
- M. Op. 21: Caribbean Literature
- M. Op. 22: African- American Literature
- M. Op. 23: Multicultural American Literature
- M. Op. 24: Travel Writing
- M. Op. 25: Literature and Film
- M. Op. 26: Children’s Literature
- M. Op. 27: Fairy Tales and Folklore
- M. Op. 28: Literature and Performing Arts
- M. Op. 29: Literature and Environment / Ecology

M. Op. 30: Approaches to Comparative Literature
M. Op. 31: Comparative Literature: Reception of Asian Literatures in Europe.
M. Op. 32: Comparative Literature: Reception of European Literatures in India
M. Op. 33: Early Modern Theatre / Drama
M. Op.34: The Graphic Novel
M. Op. 35: Literature and Films of the Holocaust
M. Op. 36: Literature and Sports
M. Op. 37: Politics and Literature
M. Op. 38: Satirical Literature
M. Op. 39: Nonsense Literature
M. Op. 40: Race Ethnicity and Nation
M. Op. 41: Canonical English Literature (any one period)
M. Op. 42: Russian / French/ German/ Italian literature in Translation
M. Op. 43: Indian Nationalist writings
M. Op. 44: Modern European Drama (in translation)
M. Op. 45: Modern European Novel (in translation)
M. Op. 46: Modern European Poetry (in translation)
M. Op. 47: Metaphysical Poetry
M. Op. 48: The Romantic Movement
M. Op. 49: The Pastoral Tradition
M. Op. 50: Non-fictional prose writing
M. Op. 51: Indian English poetry
M. Op. 52: Literature of the Absurd
M. Op. 53: Women and Literature / Literature by Women
M. Op. 54. Subaltern literature
M. Op. 55: South Asian Literatures
M. Op. 56: Science and Speculative Fiction
M. Op. 57: Literature and the City
M. Op. 58: Literature of the Uncanny
M. Op. 59: Food and Literature
M. Op. 60: Literature and Sartorial Practices
M. Op. 61: Literature and Architecture
M. Op. 62: Literature and the Social Network
M. Op. 63: Digital Humanities
M. Op. 64: Literature and the Body
M. Op. 65: Literature and Santiniketan-Sriniketan
M. Op. 66: Literature and Colonial Modernity
M.Op. 67: Text and Performance
M. Op.68: Introduction to Northeast Indian Literature
M. Op. 70: Indian Knowledge System: Literary Culture in Colonial Bengal
M. Op. 71: Indian Knowledge System: Religious and Folk Poetry of India