Beyond the Human - From Postmodernism to Posthumanism

7.1   Module Overview

Module Number		Module Title	Beyond the Human – From Postmodernism to Posthumanism						
Stage of Principal Programme			3	Semester	2	Duration. *(Weeks F/T)*	12	ECTS	5
Mandatory / Elective (M/E)	E	Hours of Learner Effort / Week	2						

Analysis of required hours of learning effort		
Teaching and Learning Modalities	✓if relevant to this module	Approx. proportion of total (hours)
Contact Hours		
In person face-to-face	✓	24
Synchronous		
Indirect/Non-Contact Hours		
Asynchronous		
Work Based		
Other:		
• Independent self- direct reading	✓	46
• Research, preparation and completion of assessment	✓	25
• Essay Preparation	✓	30
Total		125

Pre-Requisite Module, if any. Module # and Title	N/A
Co-Requisite Module, if any. Module # and Title	N/A
Maximum number of learners per instance of the module	120

Specification of the qualifications (academic, pedagogical and professional/occupational) and experience required of staff working in this module.		
Role e.g., Tutor, Mentor, Lecturer, Research Supervisor, etc.	**Qualifications & experience required**	**Staff - Learner Ratio X:Y**
Lecturer	A minimum level 9 qualification in English Literature or closely cognate area	1:120

Assessment Techniques – percentage contribution					
Continuous Assessment	100%	**Proctored Exam – in person**		**Practical Skills Based**	
Project		**Proctored Exam – online**		**Work Based**	
Capstone (Y/N)?	N	**If Yes, describe**			

7.2   Minimum Intended Module Learning Outcomes (MIMLOs)

MIMLO On completion of this module a learner will be able to:	Related MIPLO #
1. Demonstrate an understanding of the origins, central concerns, and formal properties of postmodern and posthuman fiction.	3, 4, 5

2.	Critically evaluate how postmodern and posthuman texts relate to key module themes and contexts.	**2, 4, 5**
3.	Develop existing skills and knowledge used in the critical evaluation and theorisation of literary texts and literary genre.	**1, 3, 4, 7**
4.	Deeply engage with core themes of the course through classroom discussion, debate and group collaboration, and cogently communicate information through digital interface.	**3, 6, 7, 8**

7.3   Indicative Module Content, Organisation and Structure

This module will focus on how literary fiction has engaged with changing notions of both the human and the self from the postmodernist era to the present. It will examine how postmodern and posthumanist literary modes respond to the increasing destabilisation of the category of the human in recent decades, and will also consider the further unsettling of liberal humanist notions of the individual as a unified, knowing, 'unconstrained author of meaning and action'(Catherine Belsey). It will focus especially on how postmodern and posthuman genre and forms have engaged these themes.

The following topics (and sub-topics) are typical of issues that will be addressed:
- The conditions of postmodernity: Late capitalism, simulacra, Hyperreality, technoculture, decentred subjects/identities

- Postmodernist theories of language, truth and self; Derridean linguistics, scepticism towards metanarrative; truth and relativism; the heterogeneous, multiple, de-centred postmodern self.

- The posthuman as a figure and posthumanisation as a social, ecological and technological process involving, among other phenomena: climate change and a sustainable future, artificial intelligence, androids and robots, the Anthropocene/Capitalocene, enhancement, postanthropocentrism, cyborgisation.

- Varieties of postmodern fiction: postmodern feminist fiction, postmodern (metaphysical) detective fiction, and postmodern metahistorical fiction.

- Varieties of posthuman fiction: posthuman gothic, posthuman science fiction, young adult posthuman fiction.

Each theme/text will be discussed in the form of seminars; the lecturer will begin by providing relevant historical, cultural, and critical context, before learners engage in detailed critical analysis of primary texts and group debate. This will encourage the exploration of a range of interpretative positions of the literature under discussion.

7.4   Work-based learning and practice-placement *(if applicable)*

N/A

7.5   Specific module resources required *(if applicable)*

N/A

7.6   Application of programme teaching, learning and assessment strategies to this module

Lectures will present information to learners in a variety of ways: from lecturer-led presentation of relevant historical, cultural, and critical context, to more discursive teaching formats offering greater opportunity to engage in detailed critical analysis of primary texts. In lectures, learners will be strongly encouraged to discuss and interrogate a range of interpretative positions related to the literature under discussion, while tutorials will also provide further opportunity for close-text analysis and debate, learner-led discussion, as well as

assistance with assessment. Lecture content will primarily be displayed using Microsoft PowerPoint, but other presentation software will be deployed as needed: such as Mentimeter or Prezi.

Learners will access class notes, PowerPoints, and relevant articles and documents on Moodle, which will act as the digital interface for the course. A range of weblinks will also be accessible through Moodle, including documentaries, archival recording, and links to other primary sources of relevance to the course. This will facilitate asynchronous learning and encourage learners to develop their sense of cultural context for the texts being considered.

The assessment for the module consists of 100 % continuous assessment composed of two components:
1. An essay plan and essay (70%)
2. A class database upload (30%)

Essay plan (formative) and 1750 – 2,000 word Essay (Summative) 70%
Learners write an essay that considers module themes in relation to at least two texts. Learners submit an essay plan that details how they will answer one of these questions and what resources they will use. The lecturer gives the learner feedback and commentary prior to the submission of the essay. The purpose of this exercise is offer learners a clear and guided structure in which they can then independently develop an essay topic.

Database Assignment (30%)
Learners compose and upload a class database entry that engages with a non-course text in relation to either postmodern or posthuman themes.

7.7	Summative Assessment Strategy for this module	
MIMLOs	**Technique(s)**	**Weighting**
1, 2, 3	**Essay (1,750 – 2000 words)** learners must complete an essay that responds to a question theme in relation to one or more module texts.	**70%**
3, 4	**Database Assignment: (500-700 words)** Learners must create a 500-700 words database assignment relating to core module themes	**30%**

7.8	Sample Assessment Materials

Database Assignment: (30%)

Select **one** of the two options below and compose a 500-700-word database upload

1.) Select a (non-course) text that you consider to be postmodern and outline and analyse its postmodern themes and properties. If possible, and appropriate, provide images, links and other resources with your upload. Your answer should consider the formal and thematic properties of the text and/or the way it responds to postmodernity as a socio-economic and cultural context.

   OR

2.) Select a (non-course) text that you consider posthumanist and outline and analyse its posthuman themes and properties. If possible, and appropriate, provide images, links and other resources with your upload. Your answer should consider the formal and thematic properties of the text and/or the way it responds to a posthumanist world view.

Marking Rubric
- Appropriateness of material and accuracy of understanding (40%)
- Depth of research and sophistication of analysis (40%)
- Efficacy and dynamism of presentation in database entry and clarity of expression (20%)

Essay (1750-2000 words)

Write an essay on **one** of following themes with reference to **one or more** texts studied on this module:

- The effect of climate change and/or Artificial intelligence on conceptions of the human and humanity
- Late Capitalism and the postmodern condition
- The digital realm and the decentred, fragmentary self
- The posthuman figure and the Nature/Culture binary

OR

Develop your own question/theme in collaboration with the lecturer. It is vital that the lecturer agrees to the wording of your question.

Before beginning you must complete an **essay plan** using the following template:

Essay Plan Template

Learner Name:	
Title of essay:	
Primary Sources/Texts	
Outline the content and structure of your proposed essay. Remember to list the following: • Thesis/thematic focus. • Basic plan for essay structure • Specific moments/scenes that your will analyse as part of your analysis.	
Secondary sources: list the criticism you intend to use in answering your question – please use MHRA format when listing texts.	
Include any additional detail you think is relevant i.e., queries/questions for the lecturer, clarification of terms/ideas/concepts relevant to the questions, uncertainties about argument structure	

This is an ungraded piece but it is an important formative learning opportunity.

Marking Rubric:

Essay graded according to the Carlow College Essay Assessment Marking Criteria as outlined in Section 3.3 of the College's Regulations in Relation to Assessment and Standards.

Brooker, Peter, *Modernism/ postmodernism* (London, New York: Longman,1992)

Butler, Christopher, *Postmodernism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002)

Clarke, Bruce & Manuella Rossini (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Literature and the Posthuman* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017)

Eagleton, Terry, *The Illusions of Postmodernism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997)

Hutcheon, Linda, *A Poetics of Postmodernism* (London; New York: Routledge, 1988)

Hutcheon, Linda, *The Politics of Postmodernism* (London; New York: Routledge, 2002)

McHale, Brian, *Postmodernist Fiction* (London; New York: Routledge, 1987)

McHale, Brian, *Constructing Postmodernism* (London; New York: Routledge, 1992)

Nicol, Bran (ed), *Postmodernism and the Contemporary Novel: A Reader* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002)

O'Connor, Steven, *The Cambridge Companion to Postmodernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006)

Tarr, Anita & Donna R. White, *Posthumanism in Young Adult Fiction: Finding Humanity in a Posthuman World* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2018)

Vint, Sherryl, *After the Human: Culture, Theory and Criticism in the 21st Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020)

Waugh, Patricia, *Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction* (London: Methuen, 1984)