

Women's Writing

Programme(s) in which it is offered: B.A.B.Ed. English

Course Category: Elective	Schedule of Offering: Odd
Course Credit Structure: 3	Course Code: LL252
Total Number of Hours: 45	Contact Hours Per Week: 3
Lecture: 3	Tutorial: 0
Practical: 0	Medium of Instruction: English
Date of Revision: 18-3-2021	Skill Focus: Life Skills
Short Name of the Course: WW	Course Stream (<i>Only for Minor Courses</i>): n/a
Grading Method: Regular	Repeatable: Credit/Audit/Repeatable
Course Level: Beginner	

Course Description

This course seeks to give learners a detailed understanding of literature by and about women, the diverse themes and issues expressed therein, and the way in which such literature expresses the ideas and aspirations of women around the world.

Course Introduction

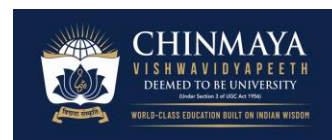
“A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction.”

- Virginia Woolf.

How true is this claim? It goes without saying that women writers have faced unique challenges over the decades. Do such challenges persist? How have different writers overcome them? Why must one study such literature apart from other works? Through a study of various seminal works in literature, primarily in English but also in the form of translations from other languages, this course seeks to arrive at an understanding of these questions and their possible answers. It also covers important texts from feminist literature, and examines the concerns expressed in feminist literary theory. More contemporary and popular women authors, as well as the shifting concerns of the audience for literature that is identified as by or for women, are also examined.

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Course Objective

1. To acquaint students with important texts of women's literature
2. To familiarise learners with major women writers of English literature
3. To introduce learners to women's movements and feminist literary theories
4. To make students aware of the rich and diverse literature in this domain, with focus on the socio-cultural contexts that engendered such works
5. To enable students to critically appreciate the themes and literary style in the texts studied

Course Outcome

At the end of this course, learners will be able to:

1. Appreciate the literary quality of famous works by women writers.
2. Describe the narrative progression and themes of such works.
3. Critically appreciate and analyse the literary style and use of language in the texts studied, and the socio-cultural context within which they were produced.
4. Undertake a comparative study of these texts and others from English literature.
5. Evaluate literary texts from the perspective of feminist literary theories.

PO-CO Mapping

PO-CO Mapping Matrix

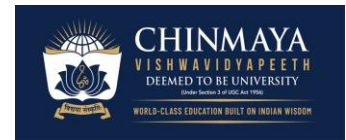
CO/PO Mapping	PO1	PO2	PO3	PO4	PO5	PO6
CO1						
CO2						
CO3						
CO4						
CO5						

Prerequisites and other constraints

Since this course will be taught in English, students taking this course must be comfortable with reading, writing, listening, and speaking in English, that is, they must be able to read and understand papers and critical essays written in English, and be able to discuss and debate the ideas proposed therein. Students must be willing to actively engage in discussing their reading and their own analyses in class. There are no other prerequisites.

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Pedagogy

The teaching in this course will be through a combination of lectures and classroom discussions. The instructor will introduce concepts and reading material, drawing attention to various facets of writing style and language in the selected texts, and highlighting the unique features of the texts that make them so successful and celebrated. Students will be expected to read sections of various texts and make presentations in class, followed by individual or group analysis.

Suggested Reading:

Primary Texts:

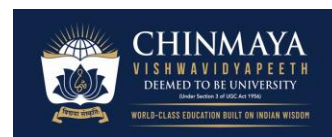
1. Gill, J. (2007). *Women's poetry*. Edinburgh University Press.
2. Mitchell, A., & Taylor, D. K. (Eds.). (2009). *The Cambridge companion to African American women's literature*. Cambridge University Press.
3. Pacheco, A. (Ed.). (2008). *A companion to early modern women's writing*. John Wiley & Sons.
4. Jackson, E. (2010). *Feminism and contemporary Indian women's writing*. Springer.
5. Bauer, D. M., & Gould, P. (Eds.). (2001). *The Cambridge companion to nineteenth-century American women's writing*. Cambridge University Press.

Recommended Reading:

1. Wollstonecraft, M. (1995). *Wollstonecraft: A Vindication of the Rights of Men and a Vindication of the Rights of Woman and Hints*. Cambridge University Press.
2. De Beauvoir, S. (2012). *The Second Sex*. Vintage.
3. Millett, K. (2016). *Sexual politics*. Columbia University Press.
4. Greer, G., & Inglis, A. (1971). *The female eunuch* (p. 301). London: Paladin.
5. Woolf, V. (2015). *A room of one's own and three guineas*. OUP Oxford.
6. Showalter, E. (1977). *A literature of their own: British women novelists from Bronte to Lessing* (p. 14). Princeton: Princeton University Press.
7. Gilbert, S. M., & Gubar, S. (1980). *The madwoman in the attic: The woman writer and the nineteenth-century literary imagination*. Yale University Press.
8. Sangari, K., & Vaid, S. (Eds.). (1990). *Recasting women: Essays in Indian colonial history*. Rutgers University Press.
9. Tharu, S.J., and Lalitha, K., (Eds.). (1991). *Women Writing in India: 600 B.C. to the early twentieth century*. Feminist Press at CUNY.
10. Mills, E., and Cochrane, K., (Eds.). (2005). *Cupcakes and Kalashnikovs: 100 Years of the Best Journalism by Women*. Constable.

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Evaluation Pattern

Analytical and critical ability, as well as the ability to express opinions clearly and concisely, are extremely important for this course, and hence term papers and class presentations constitute a crucial evaluation component here. Individual progress will be further measured through quizzes, assignments, and a mid-term examination.

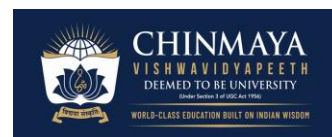
Evaluation Matrix

	Component Type	Weightage Percentage	Total Marks	Tentative Dates	Course Outcome Mapping
Continuous Internal Assessment (CIA) Components*	Quizzes (5x)	10 % of CIA Marks	10	Fortnightly	1, 2, 3, 5
	Mid-Semester Examination	25% of CIA Marks	50	Week 8	1, 4, 5
	Class Presentations (2x)	20% of CIA Marks	20	Week 3; week 11	1, 2
	Assignments (2x)	20% of CIA Marks	20	Week 6; Week 10	3, 4, 5
	Term Paper	25% of CIA Marks	25	Week 13	1, 2, 3
	CIA Marks	100 % (To be converted to 100% of course total)	125	---	---

* The assignments involved in CIA will be subject to plagiarism checks. A submission with unexplained similarities exceeding 30% for Undergraduate courses, 20% for Postgraduate courses and 10% for PhD courses will be reverted for resubmission. The final submission is subject to score penalization as defined by the course instructor at the start of the course, with a clear communication of the same to all the registered candidates.

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Module Sessions

Module 1: Women and Writing

(9 Hours)

- Why should one read women's writing in English?
- A brief historical overview of women's voices in English Literature
- A selection of women's writing on writing
- A glimpse into feminist theories

Reading:

1. Virginia Woolf – A Room of One's Own (Chapter 3)
2. Joanna Russ – What Can a Heroine Do or Why Women Can't Write
3. Alice Walker – In search of our mother's gardens
4. Margaret Atwood – On Being a 'Woman Writer': Paradoxes and Dilemmas
5. George Eliot – Silly Novels by Lady Novelists

Activities:

- a) Discussion 1: Is women's writing only for women?

Module 2: Poetry

(9 Hours)

- Emily Dickinson – 'She Rose to His Requirements'
- Kamala Das – 'An Introduction'
- Sylvia Plath – 'Lady Lazarus'
- Eunice D'Souza – 'Advice to Women'
- Maya Angelou – 'Phenomenal Woman'

Reading:

1. Williams, H. (2017). The women poets taking over the world. BBC Culture. <https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20170713-the-women-poets-taking-over-the-world>
2. Ferguson, D. (2019). 'Keats is dead...': How young women are changing the rules of poetry. The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/jan/26/new-generation-young-women-poets>

Activities:

- a) Discussion 2: The role of gender in women's writing

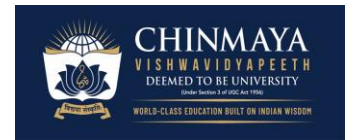
Module 3: Novels and Short stories

(9 Hours)

- Alice Walker – 'The Colour Purple'
- Charlotte Perkins Gilman – 'The Yellow Wallpaper'

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Reading:

1. Howell, S. (2014). The Evolution of Female Writers: An Exploration of Their Issues and Concerns from the 19th Century to Today. University of Hawai'i. <https://hilo.hawaii.edu/campuscenter/hohonu/volumes/documents/TheEvolutionofFemaleWritersAnExplorationofTheirIssuesandConcernsfromthe19thCenturytoTodaySamanthaHowell.pdf>

Activities:

- a) Discussion 3: Must all women's writing have a female protagonist?

Module 4: Drama

(9 Hours)

- Mahasweta Devi – 'Bayen'

Reading:

1. Boyne, J. (2017). 'Women are better writers than men': novelist John Boyne sets the record straight. The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/dec/12/double-x-factor-why-women-are-better-writers-than-men>.

Activities:

- a) Discussion 4: When men write for women

Module 5: Non-Fiction

(9 Hours)

- Mary Wollstonecraft – 'A Vindication of the Rights of Woman'
- Pandita Ramabai – 'A Testimony of our Inexhaustible Treasure'
- Elaine Showalter – 'The Feminist Novelists'

Reading:

1. Deshpande, S. (2021). Things are stacked against women's writing. Scroll.in. <https://scroll.in/article/987471/things-are-stacked-against-womens-writing-can-a-new-prize-for-women-writers-really-change-things>.

Activities:

- a) Discussion 5: The present and future of women's writing