1. **Title of the module**

The “Real” America: Class and Culture in the American Gilded Age

1. **School or partner institution which will be responsible for management of the module**

School of English

1. **The level of the module (Level 4, Level 5, Level 6 or Level 7)**

Level 6

1. **The number of credits and the ECTS value which the module represents**

30 credits (15 ECTS)

1. **Which term(s) the module is to be taught in (or other teaching pattern)**

Autumn or Spring

1. **Prerequisite and co-requisite modules**

None

1. **The programmes of study to which the module contributes**

**Optional for:** BA (Hons) English and American Literature; BA (Hons) English, American and Postcolonial Literatures; BA (Hons) English and American Literature and Creative Writing; BA (Hons) English Literature; BA (Hons) English and Postcolonial Literatures; BA (Hons) English and Creative Writing; BA (Hons) Contemporary Literature

**Also optional for** JH English Literature programmes owned by English, SECL, History, Arts, Law

1. **The intended subject specific learning outcomes.  
   On successfully completing the module students will be able to:**
2. demonstrate a rich and nuanced understanding of key issues in discussions of “the real” during the American Gilded Age.
3. demonstrate interdisciplinary and contextual knowledge of Gilded Age and Progressive Era society that will enhance their critical readings of late-nineteenth-century literature and literary culture.
4. demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the social and political forces shaping nineteenth- and early-twentieth century American literature beyond that already covered in other areas of the degree.
5. critique “realist” writers’ claim to objectivity and verisimilitude and question the applicability of notions such as “the real” and “the realistic” to literary texts.
6. demonstrate a greater depth of knowledge on the transatlantic networks of influence shaping literature and culture in the Gilded Age.
7. **The intended generic learning outcomes.  
   On successfully completing the module students will be able to:**
8. demonstrate the ability to synthesise complex information with precision and subtlety;
9. demonstrate enhanced skills at comprehending, analysing, and interrogating a variety of texts and assessing the value of diverse critical approaches and ideas;
10. demonstrate ability to communicate effectively to a variety of audiences and/or using a variety of methods;
11. demonstrate their capacity to carry out independent research.
12. **A synopsis of the curriculum**

What is at stake when artists and writers decide to take the “real world” as the subject of their art? In the later nineteenth century, to depict “reality” in fiction and art became a radical act of social protest and critique. In an endeavour to locate the “truth” behind American society, realists moved well beyond pre-existing societal norms to investigate the squalid living conditions of immigrants in the New York slums, participate in Native American religious ceremonies, and probe the psychosexual neuroses of the middle classes. This module explores the American “ideology of realism” (Michael Elliot) in the late nineteenth- and early- twentieth centuries as expressed in a variety of forms and genres, including: the novel, painting, anthropology and photography. We will discuss the reasons behind the emergence of realism in the later nineteenth century, how it interacted with the new “mass culture”, whether it critiqued or reinforced dominant racial, sexual, ethnic and class-based prejudices, and, finally, why it declined in the twentieth century as the favoured aesthetic of the American avant-garde. On this module we will move far beyond seeing realism as merely a tame, neutral artistic style to investigate how it pointed to a radical “way of seeing” the nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century world.

1. **Reading list (Indicative list, current at time of publication. Reading lists will be published annually)**

*Life in the Iron Mills* (1861) – Rebecca Harding Davis (Boston and New York: Bedford Cultural Editions, 1998).

Electronic version available at http://www.gutenberg.org/files/876/876-h/876-h.htm

*The Bostonians* (1886) – Henry James (London: Penguin Classics, 2000)

*A Hazard of New Fortunes* (1890) – William Dean Howells (Toronto: Modern Library Paperback, 2002)

*Maggie* (1893)– Stephen Crane (London:Norton Critical Editions 1979)

Realist American Paintings and Photography (Thomas Eakins, Mary Cassatt, Ashcan School, Lewis Hine) Access via http://www.philamuseum.org/micro\_sites/exhibitions/eakins/index.html; http://www.artchive.com/artchive/S/sloan.html#images; http://www.shorpy.com/lewis-hine-photos

*Letters from New York* (1880-1891) – José Martí in Jose Marti Selected Writings trans. Esther Allen (London: Penguin Books, 2002)

1. **Learning and teaching methods**

Total contact hours: 32

Private study hours: 268

Total study hours: 300

1. **Assessment methods**
   1. Main assessment methods

Two pieces of written work 6,000 words 90%

Seminar Performance 10%

13.2 Reassessment methods

Like for like

1. ***Map of module learning outcomes (sections 8 & 9) to learning and teaching methods (section12) and methods of assessment (section 13)***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Module learning outcome** | 8.1 | 8.2 | 8.3 | 8.4 | 8.5 | 9.1 | 9.2 | 9.3 | 9.4 |
| **Learning/ teaching method** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Private Study | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |
| Seminars | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |
| Lectures | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |
| **Assessment method** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Coursework Essays | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |  | **x** |
| Seminar Performance | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |

1. **Inclusive module design**

The Schoolrecognises and has embedded the expectations of current equality legislation, by ensuring that the module is as accessible as possible by design. Additional alternative arrangements for students with Inclusive Learning Plans (ILPs)/declared disabilities will be made on an individual basis, in consultation with the relevant policies and support services.

The inclusive practices in the guidance (see Annex B Appendix A) have been considered in order to support all students in the following areas:

a) Accessible resources and curriculum

b) Learning, teaching and assessment methods

1. **Campus(es) or centre(s) where module will be delivered**

Canterbury

1. **Internationalisation**

**This module is international by virtue of its topic. Students from a range of nationalities and backgrounds are being asked to consider the particular context of the United States’ engagement with realism in relation to a broader transnational exchange of people and ideas in the period.**

**FACULTIES SUPPORT OFFICE USE ONLY**

**Revision record – all revisions must be recorded in the grid and full details of the change retained in the appropriate committee records.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date approved | Major/minor revision | Start date of delivery of revised version | Section revised | Impacts PLOs (Q6&7 cover sheet) |
| 10/12/19 | Major | September 2020 | 3-5, 9-14, 17 | No |
|  |  |  |  |  |