

Course Outline: Introduction to Postcolonial Literatures in English

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH | FALL/WINTER 2026-2027

Note for students: This outline is provide for planning purposes online. Course information is tentative and subject to minor changes; the final course syllabus will be available by the first day of classes.

Course Code

AP/EN 2240 6.0A (Y) – Introduction to Postcolonial Literatures in English: African, Caribbean, South Asian and the South Pacific

Course Description

This course introduces students to the most acclaimed works of 20th and 21st century literature from Africa, South Asia, the Caribbean, and the islands of the Pacific Ocean. We will read widely across genres (short-stories, novels, memoirs, and essays), paying close attention to how authors from around the world bend and stretch the English language to make room for new voices. Throughout, our focus will be on narratives of travel, migration, exile, and self-discovery. We will consider questions such as: What does it mean to be a witness or a narrator? What was the role of race and sexuality in cross-cultural encounters between Europeans, Asians, and Africans? How did the independence movements of the twentieth century transform world literature? Most importantly: can we recover redemptive stories of wonder, enchantment and friendship that transcend the limitations of their time?

AN/EN 2240 6.0 enables students to engage with literary responses to some of the most urgent issues of our times, including colonialism, war, and mass-migration. Students will learn to read, think, and write critically by engaging carefully with major writers from the global South, and investigating how these writers have tackled hybrid identities, multilingual settings, and the bittersweet legacies of imperialism. AP/EN 2240 6.0 will provide a solid foundation for further literary study, including more advanced courses in African, South Asian, Caribbean, or immigrant literatures.

Course Delivery

Delivery mode: SEMR

When: Thursdays, 11:30 AM to 2:20 PM

Where: ACW 302

How: This course will be taught as an in-person seminar that calls for active and enthusiastic participation in classroom discussion.

Course Materials

Alongside the books listed below, assigned readings for this course also include a few short texts that will be uploaded to the course website (eClass).

Fall term:

Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (\$12.00)

Abdulrazak Gurnah, *Paradise* (\$32.35)

Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* (\$17.00)

V.S. Naipaul, *Miguel Street* (\$19.95)

Winter term:

Mariama Ba, *So Long a Letter* (\$21.10)

J. M. Coetzee, *Waiting for the Barbarians* (\$22.00)

Rohinton Mistry, *Swimming Lessons* (alternative title: *Tales from Firozsha Baag*) (\$21.00)

Edwidge Danticat, *Brother, I'm Dying* (\$23.00)

Note: The approximate prices for these books are based on estimates from the York University Bookstore. You are welcome to borrow the required texts from the library or from the Toronto Public Library system.

Grade Breakdown

Library Scavenger Hunt (1 page)	Take-home	10%
Fall Term Essay (4-5 pages)	Take-home	15%
Fall Term Test	In-person	15%
Winter Term Essay (7-8 pages)	Take-home	25%
Winter Term Survey (1-2 pages)	Take-home	10%
Winter Term Test (in-person)	In-person	15%
Active, informed participation	In-person	10%

Additional Information

Category:	C
Historical Requirements:	N/A
Open To:	Yr 2, 3 (EN,ENPR, CRWR students only)