1. **Title of the module**

ENGL8180 (EN818) – American Modernism (1890-1940)

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 7

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**

MA English and American Literature; MA American Studies

1. **The intended subject specific learning outcomes.  
   On successfully completing the module students will be able to:**

8.1 Demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the key themes, styles, and theoretical foundations underpinning the competing visions of American modernity represented by key texts of the literary canon;

8.2 Display a critical knowledge of the social and cultural contexts of American modernity and the development of the modern American city, particularly in relation to the tensions between ideas of “high” and “low” culture, the relationship of city spaces to the development of intellectual traditions, and the importance of interdisciplinarity to the study of American literature and culture;

8.3 Demonstrate historical knowledge and the ability to use conceptual tools to reflect critically upon the categories of the “modernist”, the “American” and their implications for the study of literature and culture in the early 20th Century USA – specifically how regional US variants of modernism differed from their European counterparts and from each other;

8.4 Demonstrate knowledge and appreciation of early 20th century American literature, and enhanced skills in analysing a diverse range of texts including architecture, visual culture, film, and critical and philosophical prose;

8.5 Show the importance of historically-grounded and interdisciplinary modes of criticism in the reading of literature and culture in the early 20th century;

8.6 Demonstrate enhanced capacity to construct nuanced, fluent, and well-reasoned arguments focussed on the imaginative, intellectual, and cultural complexities of American modernism.

1. **The intended generic learning outcomes.  
   On successfully completing the module students will be able to:**

9.1 Synthesise complex information with precision and subtlety;

9.2 Comprehend, analyse, and interrogate a variety of different kinds of text and assess the value of diverse critical approaches and ideas;

9.3 Mount complex arguments lucidly and persuasively in both spoken and written contexts;

9.4 Carry out independent research.

1. **A synopsis of the curriculum**

This course investigates the development of American modernism in art and literature in the fifty year period between 1890 and 1940; a time bookended by official closing of the American frontier (which effectively concluded the period of the nineteenth century associated with “manifest destiny”) and the outbreak of World War Two. The course will explore key texts of the period within their artistic and social contexts, including the development of new scientific and social-scientific modes of inquiry, the growth of the city and the increasing importance of the USA on the world stage.

The course is organised into blocks comprised of texts associated with various cities and movements within American modernism. We will begin by looking at the importance of New York and the American expatriate scene, before considering modernism in the mid-West and US South. A reading pack will be provided in the first week as an aid to student research.

Students will be expected to develop their own research interests within the topic and will be assessed by a 5,000 word essay. Essays that investigate topics not directly covered by the set reading are encouraged and can be developed in consultation with the tutor.

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

Amy Helene Kirschke, “A Visual Artist with an Authentic Voice” and “The Evolution of Douglas’s Aesthetic Language” from Aaron Douglas: *Art, Race, and the Harlem Renaissance* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1995)

Christine Stansell, “Art and Life: Modernity and Literary Sensibilities” from *American Moderns: Bohemian New York and the Creation of a New Century* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2000)

John Sloan’s Pedestrian Aesthetics” in Heather Campbell Coyle, Joyce K. Schiller et al, John Sloan’s *New York* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007)

José Martí, “New York Under the Snow” (1888) Henry James, from *The American Scene* (1907)

Leslie Fishbein, “The Culture of Contradiction: The Greenwich Village Rebellion” in Rick Beard and Leslie Cohen Berlowitz, *Greenwich Village: Culture and Counterculture* (Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1993)

Maria Balshaw, “New Negroes, New Spaces” from *Looking for Harlem: Urban Aesthetics in African-American Literature* (London: Pluto Press, 2000)

1. **Learning and teaching methods**

Total Contact Hours: 22

Private Study Hours: 278

Total Study Hours: 300

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

* Assignment (5,000 words) – 100%
  1. 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)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Module learning outcome** | *8.1* | *8.2* | *8.3* | *8.4* | *8.5* | *8.6* | *9.1* | *9.2* | *9.3* | *9.4* |
| **Learning/ teaching method** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Private Study | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |
| Seminar | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |
| **Assessment method** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Assignment | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |

1. **Inclusive module design**

The School recognises 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**

The course considers American modernism through a transnational lens. Weeks covering material from the Harlem Renaissance, Ex-patriate Modernism, Greenwich Village and Immigration all have space for internationalisation. Links with the MA at the Paris campus might be exploited to allow students 1st hand experience of the sites discussed in Hemingway, Barnes and other texts. This might take the form of the seminar being held in Paris, with the convenor organising trips out to the sites of American exile in the interwar years. The Henry James, John Sloan week could also benefit from teaching connections with Paris. The yearly New York trip with Arts could reinforce subject-specific learning outcomes I through VI, and contribute to the interdisciplinary drive of the module (considering architecture, fine art and other disciplines).Cuban material is also discussed and internationalisation opportunities might be explored with Havana and other institutions, building on Kent’s already established connections through the Cuba Scholarship.

**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.**

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| Date approved | Major/minor revision | Start date of the delivery of revised version | Section revised | Impacts PLOs (Q6&7 cover sheet) |
| 15/12/16 | Major | September 2017 | 1, 8-9, 11-12 | No |
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| Revised FSO Jan 2018 |