

**HL4024      Advanced Studies in Contemporary Literature**  
**(AY 2023/2024, Semester 1)**

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<b>Class meets</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>9.30am – 12.20pm</b>	<b>SHHK Seminar Room 8</b> (School of Humanities)
	<b>Office hours</b>	<i>by appointment only; in person or online</i>	
	Monday	5.30pm – 6.30pm	SHHK 03-57
	Wednesday	12.30pm – 1.30pm	SHHK 03-57

### **Course Description and Objectives**

HL4024: Advanced Studies in Contemporary Literature engages with issues of form, narration, artistic echoes, aesthetics, intermediality, and adaptation in contemporary literature—including long-form narratives such as the novel, graphic novel, graphic memoir, and film. We engage with a range of issues in the course, including bioethics in Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go* (2005); “model minority” myths in Lan Samantha Chang’s *Hunger* (1998); temporal, genre, and medium fluidities in Jennifer Egan’s *A Visit from the Goon Squad* (2001); and more.

Given the lively and ever-shifting nature of concerns and texts that dominate contemporary literature, one of the dynamic components in HL4024 includes familiarizing ourselves with the types of writing that currently capture the imaginations and critical attention of readers and literary critics alike, including works that have been translated into English. While the assigned core texts comprise of books written in English from dominantly British and American traditions, the book review presentation will engage with texts that have gained a wide readership in translation.

*Content advisory: Reading material in this course includes texts that address self-harm, rape, and other emotionally challenging material. You may wish to factor this into your enrollment decision during the Add/Drop period.*

<b>Assessment</b>	65%	Continuous Assessment
	35%	Final Exam (closed-book)

### **Academic Integrity Policy**

Good academic work depends on honesty and ethical behaviour. The quality of your work as a student relies on adhering to the principles of academic integrity and to the NTU Honour Code, a set of values shared by the whole university community. Truth, Trust and Justice are at the core of NTU’s shared values.

As a student, it is important that you recognize your responsibilities in understanding and applying the principles of academic integrity in all the work you do at NTU. Not knowing what is involved in maintaining academic integrity does not excuse academic dishonesty. You need to actively equip yourself with strategies to avoid all forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, academic fraud, collusion and cheating. If you are uncertain of the definitions of any of these terms, you should go to NTU’s Academic Integrity policy page on the Student Intranet

(<https://ts.ntu.edu.sg/sites/intranet/student/dept/tlpd/ai/Pages/NTU-Academic-Integrity-Policy.aspx>) for

more information. In line with NTU's Academic Integrity Policy, please attach the "Declaration of Authorship" form when you submit written assignments (available on NTU Learn).

Please be reminded that in line with clause 4.1:

- repeating the work submitted to another course (whether at NTU or another institution, in part or in whole); and
  - reusing material taught or submitted in another course ***without properly crediting source/s***
- all constitute a violation of NTU's academic integrity policy and is subject to the relevant penalties. Consult your instructor(s) if you need any clarification about the requirements of academic integrity in the course. Please also read the Technology Policy carefully before enrollment.

### **Late Work Policy**

All graded assignments are due in hard copy and soft copy (to be submitted electronically on NTU Learn through the Turnitin dropbox) by the start of class on the due dates. Late work will be accepted within 24 hours for a reduced grade, but will receive no instructor comments.

### **Attendance Policy**

Your prepared and active participation is essential to your success in the course. You must adhere to current and evolving university and national public health policies, including but not limited to the wearing of a mask, etc. Should you feel unwell, please *do not* attend class and seek medical advice instead, and follow up with the instructor via email. You may only do a make-up quiz/test/presentation (where applicable) for reasons relating to an excused absence, with proper documentation such as a medical certificate, which needs to be submitted to the School (with a copy via email to the instructor). Please note that it is your responsibility to get in touch with the instructor within three days of the missed session in order to arrange for a make-up. In line with university and national public health policies, this class may transition to online synchronous learning as and when necessary.

### **Technology Policy**

Given that this course emphasizes process-based critical thinking skills and originality of thought, the use of all generative AI technologies (including, but not limited to, large language models, chatbots such as ChatGPT, Bard AI, Bing AI, etc.) is strictly prohibited. While these technologies offer learning opportunities in relation to specific modes of assessment, they are antithetical to the learning outcomes of this course.

Students are otherwise welcome to use e-books etc. to facilitate your learning in the classroom, so long as the devices are being used on task and with one other exception: no audio, video, and/or screen recording is allowed at any point during the lectures, seminars, and/or tutorials. This also applies to online classes, where applicable. Please see the University Copyright Statement for more information. The classroom is meant to be a space where students feel comfortable to respectfully, critically, and constructively exchange ideas about the texts discussed.

All quizzes, tests, and exams—where applicable—are closed-book, unless otherwise stated; please ensure all electronic devices including cellphones, tablets, computers, smart watches, etc. are put away into your bags at that point.

## University Copyright Statement

All course materials (including and not limited to lecture slides, handouts, recordings, assessments and assignments) are for your own educational purposes at NTU only. All course materials are protected by copyright, trademarks or other rights.

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Appropriate action(s) will be taken against you (including and not limited to disciplinary proceedings and/or legal action) if you are found to have committed any of the above or infringed copyright.

## Reading List

1. Auster, Paul, Paul Karasik, and David Mazzucchelli. *City of Glass: A Graphic Mystery*. 1994. Picador, 2004.  
ISBN 9780312423605 (136pp.)
2. Auster, Paul. *The New York Trilogy*. 1985. Penguin Books, 2006.  
ISBN 9780143039839 (308pp.)
3. Butler, Octavia. *Kindred*. 1979. Beacon Press, 2003.  
ISBN 9780807083697 (264pp.)
4. Chang, Lan Samantha. *Hunger: A Novella and Stories*, 1998. W. W. Norton, 2009.  
ISBN 9780393337952 (193pp.)
5. Chast, Roz. *Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant?* Bloomsbury, 2014.  
ISBN 9781608198061 (240pp.)
6. Egan, Jennifer. *A Visit from the Goon Squad*. Corsair, 2017.  
ISBN 9781780330969 (351pp.)
7. Ishiguro, Kazuo. *Never Let Me Go*. Vintage International, 2006.  
ISBN 9780307276476 (288pp.)
8. *One additional text of your choice from the supplementary reading list*

**Supplementary Reading List** (select **one** book of your choice from the following titles; with the exception of Maarouf's book, all ebooks are available through NTU Libraries)

1. Mazen Maarouf, *Jokes for the Gunmen* (translated from Arabic, 2019)
2. Samanta Schweblin, *Mouthful of Birds* (translated from Spanish, 2019; ebook)
3. Emmanuelle Pagano, *Faces on the Tip of My Tongue* (translated from French, 2019; ebook)

**Films** (available in NTU Libraries)

1. *Never Let Me Go* PR6059.S5N513 2010

## Reading and Assignment Schedule

Week – Date	Topic
1 – 16 Aug	Introductory lecture
2 – 23 Aug	Octavia Butler, <i>Kindred</i> (1979) (end of subsection 5, “The Fight”)
3 – 30 Aug	Octavia Butler, <i>Kindred</i> (end of book) <i>Distribution of assignment prompts and sign-up sheets</i>
4 – 6 Sept	Paul Auster, <i>City of Glass</i> (1985) Paul Auster, Paul Karasik, and David Mazzucchelli, <i>City of Glass</i> (1994)
5 – 13 Sept	Paul Auster, <i>Ghosts</i> (1986)
6 – 20 Sept	Lan Samantha Chang, “Hunger” and “San” (1998)
7 – 27 Sept	Kazuo Ishiguro, <i>Never Let Me Go</i> (2005) (end of chapter 14) <b><i>Written book review due</i></b>  <i>RECESS</i>
8 – 11 Oct	Kazuo Ishiguro, <i>Never Let Me Go</i> (end of book) <i>Never Let Me Go</i> [film]
9 – 18 Oct	Jennifer Egan, <i>A Visit from the Goon Squad</i> (2011) (end of chapter 6)
10 – 25 Oct	Jennifer Egan, <i>A Visit from the Goon Squad</i> (end of book)
11 – 1 Oct	Roz Chast, <i>Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant?</i> (2014) (end of chapter 10) <b><i>Research essay due</i></b>
12 – 8 Nov	Roz Chast, <i>Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant?</i> (end of book)
13 – 15 Nov	Exam revision

*Note: This syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.*