

REPORT ON THE BRIDGE COURSE, DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

The department of English of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Khalsa College introduced a bridge course on English literature and its practices for the first-year students of English (Honours) and BA (Prog) discipline courses in the academic year 2020-2021. The course was designed with the purpose of introducing the newly admitted students of these two courses to the principles of literature and literary studies, as well as to their writerly practices, keeping in mind the vastly different pedagogical systems followed by the schools and the tertiary educational systems in India. Thus, this bridge course intended to achieve the following:

1. Provide a rationale for literature and literary studies as a discipline of study,
2. Introduce the students to the many forms and genres of literature,
3. Sensitize them to the tools of reading literary texts with a particular focus on their historical, cultural, discursive and aesthetic matrix,
4. Establish a sense of literary tradition(s) that help locate (and transcend) literary texts in relation to each other,
5. Initiate the students to the fluidity of disciplinary boundaries in literary studies—in its philosophy as well as method, and
6. Provide introductory training in writing long answers through critical and subjective engagements with literary texts.

The course was spread over a period of three months with five lectures of two hours each, where different resource persons from the faculty interacted with the students over several of the aspects outlined above. At the end of the course, it was heartening for the department to have achieved the following outcomes with a majority of the students:

1. A large percentage exhibited greater understanding of the disciplinary requirements of the course,
2. Could identify forms and genres of literary texts without assistance from the teachers,
3. Greater sensitization towards the role of historical, cultural and socio-political forces in the production of a literary text,
4. Increased ability to identify literary traditions and movements,
5. Appreciation of the methodological and philosophical influences on literature exercised by systems of thought in allied disciplines,
6. Greater skills in establishing conversations between literary texts and contemporary social and cultural issues,
7. Noticeable improvement in the ability to write long answers with perspective gained from locating oneself as a self-reflexive reader of a literary text.