

DEREE COLLEGE SYLLABUS FOR:

EN 3660 CRITICISM: THEORY AND PRACTICE

(Updated Fall 2012)

**UK LEVEL 6
UK CREDITS: 15**

PREREQUISITES:

WP 1010 Introduction to Academic Writing
WP 1111 Integrated Academic Writing & Ethics
WP 1212 Academic Writing and Research
EN 2220 English Literature: From Chaucer to Swift
EN 2321 English Literature: From Romanticism to Modernism
EN 2305 Introduction to English Studies

CATALOG

DESCRIPTION:

Focus on the major principles of a wide range of modern and contemporary literary and cultural theories, combined with discussion of the applications of theories to the interpretation of literary texts.

RATIONALE:

This course trains students in understanding the philosophical foundations and practical applications of a variety of theoretical approaches to language, literature, and culture. Readings include both theoretical texts and critical applications of theory.

LEARNING

OUTCOMES:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate a clear understanding of theoretical approaches which focus on text and those which focus on context;
2. Identify the critical approach or approaches evident in scholarly discussions of literary texts;
3. Analyse the terms, techniques, and principles particular to each of the theories discussed in the course;
4. Compare and contrast the theoretical premises of various methodologies of textual analysis;
5. Discuss the appropriateness of various critical methodologies as applied on specific texts.

METHOD OF TEACHING

AND LEARNING:

Teaching and learning strategies include:

- Lectures, class discussions, workshop-style pair work and group work during class meetings;
- Formative exercises and other learning tasks assigned to help students acquire confidence and benefit from independent study;
- Timely instructor feedback on assignments;
- Additional print and audiovisual educational material posted on the Blackboard course template;
- Other relevant educational material placed on reserve in the library;

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- Individualized assistance during office hours for further discussion of lecture material, additional reading, assignments and examinations;
- Close collaboration with Librarian and Writing Center Coordinator to encourage students' effective use of academic support services.

ASSESSMENT:

Formative coursework	0%	Essay drafts and all other in-class and out-of-class assignments in preparation for the examination and the Critical Theory responses
SUMMATIVE Coursework		
Critical Theory portfolio (3,000-word in total)	60%	At least 4 and no more than 6 assignments requiring responses to critical articles and/or theoretical texts which relate to the theories covered
Comprehensive 2-hour Final examination	40%	Explication of extracts and one Essay question OR two Essay questions; choice of extracts and Essay questions

The formative coursework prepares students for successful completion of the summative coursework.

The Critical Theory portfolio tests learning outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

The final examination tests learning outcomes 1, 3 and 4.

READING

MATERIAL: Hall, Donald. *Literary and Cultural Theory: From Basic Principles to Advanced Applications*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, latest edition. [Core Textbook]

Peter Barry. *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. Third ed. Manchester UP, 2009.

Andrew Bennett. *An Introduction to Literature, Criticism and Theory*. Fourth ed. Longman, 2009.

Jonathan Culler. *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford, 2000.

Terry Eagleton. *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. U Minnesota P, 1996.

Antony Easthope, ed. *A Critical and Cultural Theory Reader*. Second ed. Open UP, 2004.

Richard J. Lane. *Fifty Key Literary Theorists*. Routledge, 2006.

Vincent B. Leitch, et al, ed. *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. Second ed. Norton, 2010.

David Lodge and Nigel Wood, ed. *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader*. Third ed. Longman, 2009.

Robert Dale Parker. *How to Interpret Literature: Critical Theory for Literary and Cultural Studies*. Oxford, 2008.

Julian Wolfreys. *Critical Keywords in Literary and Cultural Theory*. Palgrave, 2004.

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COMMUNICATION

REQUIREMENTS:

With the exception of the in-class examination, all written work must be word-processed on Word and adhere to MLA guidelines for manuscript format and documentation.

SOFTWARE

REQUIREMENTS:

Word, Blackboard

WWW RESOURCES:

<http://www.classics.ox.ac.uk/resources/theo.html>

<http://www.nagasaki-gaigo.ac.jp/ishikawa/amlit/general/theo.html>

<http://www.geocities.com/kristisiegel/theorx.htm>

INDICATIVE CONTENT: Instructors cover at least six major theories from the ones listed below. The list of key principles of each theory presented below is not comprehensive but representative of main points to be covered.

Major Critical Approaches and Debates

A. Intrinsic Critical Approaches: Focus on Text

- New Criticism
 - Emphasis on the text's formal aspects
 - Meaning as a function of the text's structure
 - Rejection of the "affective fallacy"
 - Rejection of the "intentional fallacy"
 - Universality of canonical texts
 - Literature as a means to restore culture
- Structuralism and Semiotic Analysis
 - Language as a system of signs
 - The arbitrary nature of the sign
 - The differential relations of signs
 - Literary representation as a sign system
 - The elusive nature of the sign
- Post-Structuralism and Deconstruction
 - The fluidity of signs
 - Language as discourse
 - Critique of logocentrism
 - The "transcendental signified"
 - The concept of "difference"
 - The self-referential nature of language
 - Cultural and literary criticism as a form of signification

B. Extrinsic Critical Approaches: Focus on Context

- Psychoanalysis
 - The nature of the unconscious mind
 - Text as a reflection of the writer's unconscious
 - Language and the unconscious
- Feminism
 - Gender ideology as social construct
 - Women's resistance to patriarchal ideology in literature and culture
 - Varieties of responses to the question of gender difference
 - Gender in the context of race and ethnicity
 - Gender system in the context of the class system
 - Feminine/feminist discourses
 - Writing the body
- Materialism
 - Ideology as a product of material conditions
 - Literature as an instrument of social change
 - Production and consumption of texts as a reflection of class ideologies
 - Cultural criticism as an ideological construct.
 - Criticism's elucidation of textual and extra-textual ideologies as a means to further class awareness and positive social change
- Post-Colonial Analysis
 - Race and ethnicity in the context of power and oppression
 - Imperialism and colonization
 - Race/ethnicity and literary representation
 - Textual analysis of race, ethnicity, post-coloniality as a means of social change
- New Historicism
 - History as a reflection of ideology
 - Literary and cultural texts as reflections of systems of social power
 - Culture theory as ideological construct'
- Reader-Response Analysis
 - The reader's contribution to the realization of the literary work
 - The dynamics of the reading process

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READING LIST: In addition to chapters from the core textbook, instructors may assign various theoretical texts as well as critical applications of the theories discussed. The highly selective list of theoretical and critical texts from the 19th and 20th centuries which follows is indicative but not restrictive or comprehensive:

- De Saussure, Ferdinand. Extracts from *A Course in General Linguistics*
- Marx, Karl, and Friedrich Engels. "Bourgeois and Proletarians" or other extracts from *The Communist Manifesto*
- Freud, Sigmund. "The Oedipus Complex" from *The Interpretation of Dreams*
- Woolf, Virginia. Extracts from "A Room of One's Own"
- Eliot, T. S. "Tradition and the Individual Talent"
- Brooks, Cleanth. "The Formalist Critics"
- Barthes, Roland. "The Death of the Author"
- Foucault, Michel. "What Is an Author?"
- Bloom, Harold. Extract from *The Anxiety of Influence*
- Derrida, Jacques. Extract from *Of Grammatology*
- Gilbert, Sandra and Susan Gubar. Extract from *The Madwoman in the Attic*
- Eagleton, Terry. "The Rise of English" from *Literary Theory: an Introduction*
- hooks, bell. "Postmodern Blackness"
- Butler, Judith. Extract from *Gender Trouble*
- Achebe, Chinua. "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*"
- Iser, Wolfgang. "Interaction between Text and Reader"
- Abrams, M. H. "The Deconstructive Angel"
- Hills Miller, J. "The Critic as Host"
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. "The Beast in the Closet"

Indicative list of critical articles which may be assigned to students for analysis of applications of theory onto literary texts:

- James Calderwood. "Speech and Self in *Othello*". *Shakespeare Quarterly* (1987): 293-303.
- Coppelia Kahn. "Coming of Age in Verona". *Modern Language Studies* (1978): 5-22.
- Catherine S. Cox. "'An Excellent Thing in Woman': Virgo and Viragos in *King Lear*". *Modern Philology* (1998): 143-157.
- Paul Delany. "*King Lear* and the Decline of Feudalism". *PMLA* 92 (1977): 429-440.
- Marina Favila. "'Mortal Thoughts' and Magical Thinking in *Macbeth*". *Modern Philology* (2001): 1-25.