Course Objective: Our objective in this class is to study and critique the theory and practice of various critical perspectives and strategies as they inform the analysis of literary texts. Upon completion of this course, you shall be able to

- identify the dominant “schools” of literary/critical theory and the major critics practicing those theories
- explain the philosophical basis of these theories/premises;
- relate the critical perspectives to the history of western ideas;
- critique the theories on the basis of their philosophical premises; and
- apply selected theories to specific literary works

Text:
- Other readings as assigned, e.g., *The Mirror and the Lamp* ((ch. 1), *Anatomy of Criticism* (ch. 1).

Class Format: The instruction format will include lecture and discussion. Your regular attendance and class participation will be recorded and rewarded. Your comprehension of the assigned readings and your ability to discuss complex, inter-disciplinary topics will constitute a significant portion of the course grade.

Requirements: The course requires you to

- read the assigned material from the book
- come to class prepared to discuss the readings for the day
- present two short papers (see format instructions) in class—approx. 1000 words each
- write a research paper—approx. 2000 words (8-10 pages, double-spaced). This paper should be of a quality that merits presentation at a professional conference.

Course Background: The professional study of literature and literary criticism encompasses a broad range of epistemological fields. Centuries ago, as a branch of philosophy, rhetoric, and the arts (the classical trivium and the quadrivium), it had an ontological emphasis (the nature of being); since the European enlightenment, it has emerged as an independent, autonomous area of inquiry with an epistemological focus (the nature of knowing), subsuming philosophy, theology, psychology, sociology, anthropology, fine and performing arts, and even the natural sciences (ecocriticism). As we proceed through the key ideas of major thinkers across cultures, we will discuss and even question fundamental concepts about human society, nature, god, and their complex inter-relationship(s). Some of these discussions may/will challenge our preconceived, deeply rooted individual convictions, but our purpose is to trace the history and evolution of ideas, not to proselytize or convert.

Grade Distribution:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>2 short papers @20% each</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research paper</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance and Class participation</td>
<td>20</td>
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Syllabus

March 31  Week 1  Introduction
- Plato’s Theory of Forms/Ideas: Problem of Discovery
- Aristotle’s Theory of Imitation: Problem of Persuasion
- Renaissance (Sidney); Neoclassical (Dryden, Pope)
- Romantic (Wordsworth, Coleridge); Victorian (Arnold); Modern
- Literary History, Theory, and Criticism.  Periods of literary history: American and British
- Elements of literature: communication model.  M. H. Abrams *The Mirror and the Lamp*

[Readings for week 2:  “Introduction” (1-22), “Ion” (38), “Allegory of the Cave” (web), “Poetics” (55); Hume (231), Kant (247)]

April 5-7  Week 2  Platonism and Neo-Platonism
- Neo-Classicism of Horace and Pope
- Sidney’s defense of poetry against Platonists
- Hume, Kant, and subjectivism

[Readings for week 3:  Wordsworth (304), Coleridge (319), Keats (330), Hegel (369), Marx (400), Arnold (429), Nietzsche (459)]

April 12-14  Week 3: Romantic Revival: Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats
- Victorian classicism; Arnold
- Nietzsche: The Apollonian and the Dionysian

[Readings for week 4:  Freud (500-513), Jung (554), James (464), Eliot (537), Formalisms (747-62), Bakhtin (575-95), Frye (693), Richards (764), Shklovsky (775)]

April 19-21  Week 4: Reading the author  **Short report due this week**
- Psychoanalysis and the individual unconscious
- Myth and the collective unconscious.  Northrop Frye → Structuralism
- Russian Formalism: Bakhtin (dialogism and carnival), Shklovsky (ostranenie or estrangement), Vladimir Propp’s *Morphology of the Folktale* (loose and bound motifs)
- New Criticism-- I. A. Richards, T. S. Eliot, R. S. Crane and the “Chicago School” (Neo-Aristotelianism)

[Readings for week 5:  Brooks (799), Wimsatt and Beardsley (811), Structuralism (819-40), Saussure (841-51), Levi-Strauss (859-67), de Man (882-91), Foucault (904-13), Derrida (914-25; 932-49)]

April 26-28  Week 5: Reading the text
- Formalism—Victor Shklovsky (*ostranenie* estrangement), Mikhail Bakhtin (dialogism, carnival)
- Structuralism: Jonathan Culler, Robert Scholes
- Post-structuralism and Deconstruction: Derrida (“Trace” and “Differance”)

[Readings for week 6: Reader-Response Theory (962-80), Booth, Iser, Holland, Fish]

May 3-5  Week 6: Reading the reader
- Rhetorical criticism
- Reading the Reader (or reading into the text): Reader-Response criticism
- Husserl’s phenomenology; Hermeneutics

[Readings for week 8: Follow up after Hegel and Marx—Georg Lukacs, Walter Benjamin, Horkheimer and Adorno, Jameson, Eagleton]

May 10-12  Week 7: Reading the world (Reality): Cultural criticism  **Short report 2 due this week**
- Marxism: History/Political Economy—Hegel, Marx
- African American criticism: Henry Louis Gates, Cornell West

[Readings for week 8:  Wollstonecraft (275), Woolf (596-610), Beauvoir (673), Gilbert/Gubar (1545), Kolodny, Kristeva, Smith (1600), Foucault (1627), Wittig, Cixous, Spivak]
May 17-19  Week 8: Gender
- Women’s literature, gay/lesbian literature
- Women as subject and object: Feminine, female, feminist Simone de Beauvoir and *The Second Sex*, Kate Millet *Sexual Politics*, Betty Friedan *Feminine Mystique*.
- Three Feminisms: American(social/economic), British (political), French (biological/physiological)
- Third World feminism: Spivak
(Readings or week 9: Geertz, White, Hall, Greenblatt (1443), Said, Anderson, Fannon (*Black Skin, White Mask*), Bhabha, Achebe, Gates, Habermas)

May 24-26  Week 9: New Historicism
- Multiculturalism: Reading the text/author/world as historical productions
- Constructed communities: Benedict Anderson
- Orientalism: Edward Said
- Postcolonial criticism—Franz Fannon, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak.
- African Americanism: Gates, West

May 31- June 2  Week 10 Postmodernism (one class meeting this week) Research paper due this week
- Reading social sciences: Lacan (psychology), Foucault (sociology), Williams (economics), Said (geography)
- Cultural studies: anthropology (multiculturalism), Postcolonialism (Orientalism), the Carnival, Play and subversion of theory.

Dates to remember:
Two 1000-word reports—one in the fourth week and the other in the seventh
Research paper: Wednesday of the last week of class.
No final examination.

Format of short papers: The short paper will have two recognizable parts:
   a. Part 1 will include a synthesis of a selected theoretical perspective, outlining its key features, major practitioners, and assertions (approx. 1.5 pages)
   b. Part 2 will apply this theory to a work of common interest to the class (approx. 2.5 pages). The paper should avoid jargons and reflect clear comprehension of the theoretical model.

Format of the Research Paper: The research paper will have the following sections
   a. An introduction locating the topic in a critical context: importance of the topic and its critical neglect in the recent few years. This section should conclude with the formulation of a thesis.
   b. A summary of the current status of scholarship on this topic, identifying the different camps of scholars holding differing opinions. This section should conclude with a re-statement of how your view either counters or furthers one or the other of these scholarly positions.
   c. Development of 3-4 key points.
   d. Conclusion.
Some books of interest:

- M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp*
- Stanley Edgar Hyman, *The Armed Vision*
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<th>Learner Outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Identify the major advances in literary theory, their authors and philosophical</td>
<td>Students will identify in oral presentations, written papers, or quiz/exam the major advances</td>
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<td>foundations, key texts, and value to analysis of literary works.</td>
<td>in literary theory and their basic assumptions about the world, life, and literature.</td>
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<td>Explain the critical approaches informed by these theories, such as, Formalism,</td>
<td>Students will articulate in oral presentations and written papers their knowledge of the</td>
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<td>Structuralism, Reader-Response, Postcolonialism, Feminism, New Historicism,</td>
<td>critical approaches, and their historical and cultural background.</td>
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<td>Cultural Studies, and others, and analyze their historical and cultural</td>
<td>Students will prepare oral presentations or written reports using practical criticism informed</td>
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<td>background.</td>
<td>by the different theoretical perspectives and critical strategies.</td>
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<td>Apply selected critical approaches to literary works to illustrate the</td>
<td>Students will critique the critical approaches and their underlying premises in oral</td>
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<td>varieties of critical response generated by different theoretical perspectives</td>
<td>presentations or written reports.</td>
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<td>and critical strategies.</td>
<td>Students will write two papers (8-10 pages) constructing a strong argumentative thesis and</td>
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<td>Evaluate the critical approaches and their theoretical assumptions by way of</td>
<td>referencing secondary sources defending their position in an ongoing dialogue on literary</td>
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<td>developing their own critical orientation as literary scholars and critics.</td>
<td>theories.</td>
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<td>Write analytical essays based on an argumentative thesis and employing</td>
<td>Students will write two papers (8-10 pages) constructing a strong argumentative thesis and</td>
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<td>primary and secondary sources in defense of a theoretical position of their</td>
<td>referencing secondary sources defending their position in an ongoing dialogue on literary</td>
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<tr>
<td>choice.</td>
<td>theories.</td>
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