

ENGL 0024 - INTRODUCTION TO LITERARY CRITICISM AND CRITICAL CONCEPTS

Catalog Description

Prerequisite: Eligibility for ENGL 1A

Hours: 54 lecture

Description: Introduction to the issues, concepts, and contexts central to literary interpretation, with particular concentration on the relationships of aesthetics, culture, history, politics, issues of race, gender, and class, to conceptions of literary meaning and developments in literary form. Includes surveys and history of major approaches to literary criticism and applications of these approaches to literary analysis. (CSU, UC)

Course Student Learning Outcomes

- CSLO #1: In writing and discussion, identify and evaluate the premises, arguments, and interpretive implications of literary criticism and theory and apply selected theories or criticism to the analysis of representative literary texts.
- CSLO #2: In writing and discussion, identify, analyze, and evaluate the historical, literary, philosophical, and general cultural contexts of literary theories and criticism.
- CSLO #3: Conduct independent research analyzing and evaluating the critical discourse on a single major literary text and relationship between literary theory/criticism and the historical development of this discourse.

Effective Term

Fall 2018

Course Type

Credit - Degree-applicable

Contact Hours

54

Outside of Class Hours

108

Total Student Learning Hours

162

Course Objectives

A student completing English 24 will be able to:

1. Identify, interpret and analyze literature and literary issues in cultural, social, political, and critical contexts;
2. Identify, analyze, and evaluate differences and similarities among different literary critical concepts and theories and evaluate the relationships between historical contexts and developments in literary theory and aesthetics;
3. Analyze the relationships between culture, history, literary fashion and the forms and themes of literature;

4. Identify, interpret, and apply knowledge of literary devices and critical theory to the analysis of individual literary texts (poetry, fiction, drama, and essays) and related non-literary works (e.g., magazines, film, television, and performance);
5. Conduct independent research in literature and literary contexts;
6. Interpret, analyze, and evaluate primary and secondary sources in criticism;
7. Synthesize and generalize about themes and forms of literature across time, across thematic periods, and across works by various authors;
8. Communicate analyses, interpretations and critiques of single works or several works by the same author, or several closely related texts in class discussion and in required essays and exams;
9. Analyze and criticize the logic and empirical accuracy of critical concepts in literature; and
10. Develop and argue for (advocate) critical approaches to literature and support these arguments through effective reasoning and evidence.

General Education Information

- Approved College Associate Degree GE Applicability
 - AA/AS - Comm & Analyt Thinking
 - AA/AS - Literature & Language
 - AA/AS - Multicultural Studies
- CSU GE Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU approval)
 - CSUGE - C2 Humanities
- Cal-GETC Applicability (Recommended - Requires External Approval)
- IGETC Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU/UC approval)
 - IGETC - 3B Humanities

Articulation Information

- CSU Transferable
- UC Transferable

Methods of Evaluation

- Classroom Discussions
 - Example: Students will break into groups. Each group will be provided with a critical commentary on "To Room 19" and will be asked a) to evaluate the effectiveness of the critical interpretation as an explanation of the text and b) to interpret the story in terms of the critical theory assigned for the week, "Historical Criticism." What insights does the historical approach provide, if any, that are missing from the original interpretation provided to the group?
- Essay Examinations
 - Example: Read the following passage from "Paradise Lost" (Book IV, the sequence in which Satan first views Eve and Adam). Interpret and evaluate the passage from the point of view of the two critical theories you have chosen in preparation for this question. Which did you choose and why? Of the two critical points of view, which allows for the most complete interpretation of the image? Why? Does either interpretation alter our understanding of the passage and its implications?
- Objective Examinations
 - Example: General question: Select the critical theory most fully represented by the choices following each quotation: Example: The word "nature" serves a deceptive purpose in "Greasy Lake" [a work handed out in class]. The word seems to represent a demarcation between the false and true, paralleling the experience of the narrator as gains experience and knowledge. Instead, however, both descriptions reflect the fact that "nature" refers not to the reality of things nor to the transformation of the

narrator's understanding, but rather to the social conceptions that frame our understanding of the world: the mistaken belief there is a coherent external order which we can understand separate from the framing language of the narrative: a) psychological criticism; b) historical criticism; c) deconstructive theory; d) formalism

- Projects

- Example: Choose one literary work assigned in class or selected from your own reading and determine the critical approach you would like to use in developing a formal interpretation of the text (although you may make this determination based on your research). Research and evaluate representative critical responses to the text, focusing on the last ten years but also including some class or primary (contextual) responses to the text as available, determine the central issues addressed by the critics, and develop an individual essay incorporating this research and presenting your own interpretation and evaluation of the text in terms of on the critical approach you have chosen. You may incorporate any of the journal or assignment entries developed throughout the semester.

- Reports

- Example: Short essay: Determine which critical theory or combination of critical theories from the first half of the course is in your view most insightful, accurate, useful, and/or complete—that has the greatest truth value—and write an essay a) defining the theory and b) demonstrating its value through an analysis of any one assigned work of literature of your choice. If you want to develop your own theory, feel free, but be sure to present it in relationship to the critical theories from which it develops and/or from which it departs. Responses will be evaluated according to a rubric handed out in class.

Repeatable

No

Methods of Instruction

- Lecture/Discussion
- Distance Learning

Lecture:

1. Instructor will ask students to read "The Metamorphosis" and two brief excerpts from primary critical texts representing two related approaches: psychoanalytic and gender theories. The instructor will lead discussion on the use of theory in interpretation, facilitate small group discussions in which students determine how each approach defines the text and its themes, and guide large group discussion of student conclusions. Students will respond to questions related to the discussion, share their responses in groups, analyze the responses, and present the group's ideas to class.

Distance Learning

1. Instructor will present a video of a contemporary television series like "Stranger Things" or "Big Little Lies" and lead discussion of its interpretation, incorporating culture criticism and related approaches (Marxist, gender, and post-colonial criticism). Students will develop responses individually and in groups and the instructor will lead a large group lecture/discussion based on the conclusions developed by the group.

Typical Out of Class Assignments Reading Assignments

1. Read "The Wasteland" and related explanations of formalism with the goal of exploring the assumptions, strengths, and weaknesses of formalist criticism; read or reread the sections of the text dealing with formalism, in particular New Criticism. 2. Read "The Tempest" in terms of the insights of post-colonial, new historicist, and culture criticism; read or reread the sections of the text describing these critical approaches.

Writing, Problem Solving or Performance

1. Read "The Tempest" and write a brief response to Stephen Greenblatt's analysis of the impact of colonialism on interpretations of the action of the text. 2. Read "The Wasteland" and write a brief summary of each section without reference to external sources. Write briefly about the process and analyze the strengths and weaknesses of a formal approach.

Other (Term projects, research papers, portfolios, etc.)

Research paper: Choose one literary work assigned in class or selected from your own reading and determine the critical approach you would like to use in developing a formal interpretation of the text (although you may make this determination based on your research). Research and evaluate representative critical responses to the text, focusing on the last ten years but also including some class or primary (contextual) responses to the text as available, determine the central issues addressed by the critics, and develop an individual essay incorporating this research and presenting your own interpretation and evaluation of the text in terms of on the critical approach you have chosen. You may incorporate any of the journal or assignment entries developed throughout the semester.

Required Materials

- Critical Theory Today
 - Author: Tyson, Lois
 - Publisher: Routledge
 - Publication Date: 2015
 - Text Edition: 3rd
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- An Introduction to Literature, Criticism, and Theory
 - Author: Bennett, Andrew
 - Publisher: Longman
 - Publication Date: 2009
 - Text Edition: 4th
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism
 - Author: Leitch, Vincent, et. al., eds.
 - Publisher: W.W. Norton
 - Publication Date: 2010
 - Text Edition: 2nd
 - Classic Textbook?:

- OER Link:
- OER:
- Literary Theory: An Anthology
 - Author: Rivkin, Julie and Michael Ryan
 - Publisher: Blackwell
 - Publication Date: 2017
 - Text Edition: 3rd
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory
 - Author: Barry, Peter
 - Publisher: Manchester University Press
 - Publication Date: 2009
 - Text Edition: 3rd
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:

Other materials and-or supplies required of students that contribute to the cost of the course.