

English 2200F (001): History of Theory and Criticism

Department of English

Western University

Fall 2014

Lectures: TC 341 ~ Tuesday 7:00-10:00

<https://owl.uwo.ca/>

Instructor

Dr. Christopher Keep

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Office Hours: Tuesday 10:30-11:30 and Thursday 1:30-2:30 (or by app't)

Teaching Assistant

Marc Mazur

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Office Hours: Tuesday 5:00-7:00

Course Description

This course is an introduction to important issues in the history of literary theory and criticism from Plato to the early-Twentieth Century. Students will read a selection of representative texts from different historical periods (Classical and Medieval, Renaissance, Neoclassical and Eighteenth Century, Nineteenth Century, early-Twentieth Century). Our goal will be to trace the continuities and discontinuities that distinguish this intellectual history, and to develop methods and practices that will allow us to treat criticism itself in a critical manner. That is to say, we will strive to see criticism not only as a set of terms and concepts that one may apply to the study of literary texts, but as a creative act in own right. As Oscar Wilde writes, "Criticism itself is an art. And just as artistic creation implies the working of the critical faculty, and, indeed, without it cannot be said to exist at all, so Criticism is really creative in the highest sense of the word." If criticism is "really creative in the highest sense of the word," so too is it an occasion to study the aesthetic, cultural and political practices that have shaped it, and forge connections between the strategies it offers and our own historical moment.

Learning Outcomes

Successful students who complete the course will be able to:

- identify the major historical periods of criticism: Classical, Medieval, Renaissance, Neo-classical, Romantic, and Post-romantic
- define and explicate the major terms that derive from the history of literary criticism, including (but not limited to): mimesis, representation, genre, anagnorisis, peripeteia,

catharsis, imagination, fancy, sublime, picturesque, *zeitgeist*, means of production, ideology, etc.

- Write an essay about a work of literary criticism, including an effective thesis supported by adequate evidence from the original text;
- Research critical commentary on literary criticism;
- Evaluate the relevance, reliability, and usefulness of research sources, especially those obtained through the Internet;
- Integrate outside research materials and references to the original text into an essay through use of quotations and paraphrases;
- Organize and present ideas clearly and effectively;
- Document essays using MLA format.

Required Text

(Available in the English section at the Campus Bookstore in the University Community Centre)

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

Assignments and Grade Distribution

Attendance and Participation: 5%

Short Essay (1200 words): 15%

Essay (2500 words): 25%

Mid-Term Test: 20%

Final Exam: 35%

Note: Students must pass both term work and the final examination in order to pass the course. Students who fail the final examination (regardless of their term mark) automatically fail the course.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance is mandatory and will be taken in each class. Chronic absences may result in a formal request to be debarred from taking the final exam, as set out in the [Western Academic Calendar](#): “Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class . . . will be reported to the Dean (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the Department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination.” Students, of course, who are debarred from taking the exam, automatically fail the course. If circumstances prevent you from attending class regularly for a period, please do let me know so that we can work out some alternative arrangement.

Participation means arriving for class on time, having read the assigned materials, and regularly volunteering informed, thoughtful, and helpful replies to questions.

Essay Assignments

Essay assignments will be posted to the course website at least two weeks before they are due.

Essays will be written according to standard essay style: typed, double-spaced, 12 point font, and margins will be 1." A title-page is not necessary, but the first page must include the title of the essay, your name, the course number, the professor's name, teaching assistant's name, and the date.

Originality of argument, the ability to support the argument with reference to the primary text, rhetorical persuasiveness, syntax, grammar, spelling, and accurate bibliographic citation will *all* be factors in the grading of the essay.

All bibliographic notation will employ the MLA method of parenthetical notation and a works cited page. Please consult a standard style guide such as that found in the Little Brown Compact Handbook or the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, which is available in the reference shelves of the D.B. Weldon Library. A good online guide to the MLA method can be found here: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>.

Assignments will be submitted electronically through the owl site, and are due by 4:30 on the due date. Papers submitted late will be returned with a grade but no comments. Papers handed in late without prior permission will be deducted 2 per cent per day late, including weekends. Papers handed in after the assignment is returned will not normally be accepted.

Please keep at least one copy of each of your papers. Save each file on a usb key, external drive, or other form of back up media. Retain all returned, marked assignments until you receive your final grade for the course.

Academic Accommodation Policy

Students seeking academic accommodation for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments must apply to the Academic Counseling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. Further information on how to apply for academic accommodation can be found here: http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/index.html?academic_acc

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Plagiarism

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation

marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see [Scholastic Discipline for Undergraduate Students](#) in the Western Academic Calendar).

Plagiarism Checking: All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between Western University and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

Email

Questions and concerns about the course should, in the first instance, be directed to your Teaching Assistant. If you have a question that you feel is best addressed to the instructor, please do feel free to get in touch. I will try to respond within one business day; email over the weekend will be returned the following Monday. Please note, however, that email is not the most ideal medium for the discussion of difficult conceptual material, such as is often the focus of queries regarding an English course. If you miss a class and would like to catch up, or are having difficulties with an assignment, please do consider seeing me during my office hours, or, if those times are not convenient, making an appointment to meet at some alternative time.

Electronic Devices

Please switch off cell phones and remove headphones during class. Laptop computers and tablets may be used for taking notes but not for web surfing, email, social networking or any other non-course related activity. Students who are found to be using their laptops or tablets for any purpose other than note taking will be asked to leave the class.

Lecture and Reading Schedule

N.B. Unless otherwise noted, all page number refer to Leitch, Vincent B. et al, eds. *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. Second edition.

September	9	Introduction Nussbaum, “The Value of the Humanities” (owl)
	16	Plato, from <i>The Republic</i> (45-77)
September	23	Aristotle, from <i>Poetics</i> (88-119)

	30	Augustine, from <i>On Christian Teaching</i> (156-62) Aquinas, from <i>Summa Theologica</i> (181-84) Sidney, from “The Defence of Poesy” (254-83)
October	7	Pope, from “An Essay on Criticism” (349-62) Johnson, “The Rambler, No. 4” (367-71) de Staël, from “Essay on Fictions” (507-15)
	14	Wordsworth, from “Preface to <i>Lyrical Ballads</i> ” (559-79) Wordsworth, “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud” (owl)
	21	Coleridge, from <i>Biographia Literaria</i> (584-91) Coleridge, “Kubla Khan” (owl) Short Essay Due
	28	Shelley, from <i>A Defense of Poetry</i> (595-613) Kant, from <i>Critique of the Power of Judgment</i> (bottom 430-top 442)
November	4	Baudelaire, “The Painter of Modern Life” (680-690) Mid Term Test
	11	Hegel, from <i>The Phenomenology of Spirit</i> (541-47) Marx, from “The Communist Manifesto” (657-661) Marx, from <i>Capital</i> , Volume 1 (663-674)
	18	Arnold, from <i>The Function of Criticism at the Present Time</i> (695-714) Arnold, from <i>Culture and Anarchy</i> (714-720) Arnold, “The Scholar-Gipsy” (owl)
	25	Pater, from <i>Studies in the History of the Renaissance</i> (724-30) Wilde, “Preface to <i>The Picture of Dorian Gray</i> ” (790) Wilde, from “The Decay of Lying” and “The Critic as Artist” (790-807) Essay due

December 2	Woolf, from <i>A Room of One's Own</i> (896-905) Course Review
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