

**English 2200F (650): History of Theory and Criticism (online)
Western University • Fall/Winter 2014**

Instructor:

Mary Wennekers

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Online office hours: Thursday 12 - 4PM

This online course aims to provide students with a solid introduction to some of the key issues and debates surrounding thinking about the arts, and literature in particular, from Plato up to the early twentieth century. Thus, while the course readings trace something of a historical trajectory, the course also aims to come to an understanding of some of the most crucial and contentious issues throughout and across the tradition: the charge that literature is a “lie,” the question of beauty, the role of the author, gender, and so forth.

Required Texts:

The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism, 2nd ed., Ed. Vincent Leitch et. al. (New York: Norton, 2010). ISBN 978-0-393-93292-8.

Additional Resources

- *Undergraduate Introduction to Critical Theory* (Dino F. Felluga, Purdue University): <http://www.purdue.edu/guidetotheory>
- *The Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism*. Ed. Michael Groden and Martin Kreiswirth: <http://www.press.jhu.edu/books/guide/> (available through the Weldon Library website)
- *Literary Sources—Theory* (Jack Lynch, Rutgers University): <http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Lit/theory.html>
- *Voice of the Shuttle—Literary Theory* (Alan Liu, University of California, Santa Barbara): <http://vos.ucsb.edu/browse.asp?id=2718>
- *Literary Theory and Literature Online* (both available through the Weldon Library website)
- Eagleton, Terry. *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. 2nd ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2008.
- Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 7th ed. New York: Modern Language Association, 2009.

Evaluation:

Discussion (online) Ongoing 10%
Midterm (online) October 18th 20%
Essay November 25th 35%
Final Exam TBA 35

Course Structure:

This is an online distance studies course consisting of twelve (12) units. You should read one unit per week for each full week of the semester. Each Unit will officially begin at 9AM on the Monday of that week and end at 11:59PM on Sunday.

Evaluation Details:

Your contributions to **class discussion** will constitute your participation grade for the course. During each unit, you must make meaningful contributions to that week's discussion board: you should pose questions, try to answer questions asked by others, share observations, and so forth. I expect you will make **at least two contributions per week**; however, more than anything, I am looking for **quality** over **quantity** here. Your responses should be thoughtful, original, and relevant: don't simply repeat arguments others have made unless you are bringing something new to the discussion. I will unlock each topic at the start of the relevant unit; I will also be locking topics once the unit is over, so please make your contributions before this point if you want to receive credit for them.

The following general guidelines for written work apply to your midterm and the essay:

- Late **essays** will be penalized at a rate of 2% per day (including weekends). Late **midterms** will not be accepted without valid reason.
- Assignments must be typed and formatted in accordance with the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (7th edition).
- Assignments will be graded based on the quality and clarity of your writing, the sophistication and persuasiveness of your arguments, and your use of direct textual **evidence** to support your claims. In general, all written work will be evaluated in accordance with Western University's Department of English grading criteria (see the course homepage and/or the undergraduate English website).

The **midterm** will be a take-home assignment that you must submit online. I will distribute the midterm on Monday, October 13th at 9AM. You will have until Friday, October 17th at 11:59PM to complete the midterm. Late midterms cannot be accepted, so be sure to give yourself enough time to submit it online. The test will consist of one (1) short essay question. Please see the Midterm information document in the Assignments folder of the homepage for more information.

The **essay** should be 2500 words in length (approx. 10 pages, double-spaced, using standard margins and 12-point font) and must demonstrate your ability to analyze and synthesize course readings and secondary sources. The paper must focus on one reading from the syllabus, and should provide a critical analysis of that text. It should also demonstrate your ability to situate this work within the larger critical context of literary theory addressed in the course; thus, it should also reference two to three other readings as secondary sources. You can use other texts from the anthology, scholarly journal articles, chapters from books, or books. There is an Essay

information document in the Assignments folder of the homepage that you can consult for more information.

The **final exam** will be cumulative. You will write the exam *in person* at an approved exam centre. The date is set by the registrar, but I will endeavour to give you more information as soon as it's available. The exam will consist of three parts. For more information, see the Final Exam information document in the Assignments folder of the homepage.

Course Policies

Online Office Hours: I will be holding online office hours every Thursday from 12PM until 4P. You can contact me through email, via googlehang, or on our Facebook group. That said, I'm happy to arrange alternate times.

Email: If you contact me via Western email or WebCT mail I'll try to respond to you within 24 hours. This isn't always possible, however, so please be patient – I *will* get back to you! Please avoid last minute requests and inquiries; I can't guarantee I'll be able to accommodate them.

Departmental Regulations

The Department of English has developed clear guidelines around issues that may come up while you are enrolled in this course. You can find the full policies at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergrad/info-for-students.html>.

Regarding academic accommodation:

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth (either alone or in combination) 10% or more of their final grade 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. The necessary form and further information regarding this policy can be found at the [Student Services website](#), and the full policy is available [here](#).

Students who are in emotional or psychological distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western for a complete list of options and a guide on how to access these.

Regarding plagiarism:

Plagiarism (the unacknowledged use of another person's work) is one of the most serious academic offenses, since it involves fraud and misrepresentation. In plagiarizing, one is in effect claiming another person's words or ideas or data as one's own work, and thus misrepresenting material subject to academic evaluation. It is necessary, therefore, that plagiarism carry appropriate penalties. These are within the discretion of the Chair of Undergraduate Studies, but may include failure of a course or a grade of zero on an assignment, without the privilege of resubmitting it.

STUDENTS FOUND GUILTY OF A SECOND SERIOUS OFFENCE WILL BE EXPELLED FROM DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH COURSES. FURTHER ACTION MAY BE TAKEN BY THE DEAN'S OFFICE.

Students must acknowledge each printed or electronic source (including study guides such as Cole's Notes and Internet materials) by author, title, date and place of publication, and page number if: (a) they quote from it directly; (b) they paraphrase its ideas; (c) they are conscious of any influence its ideas may have had on their own work. Every source (including websites) that students have consulted (whether they refer to it directly or not) must be included in a bibliography (Works Cited). Some instructors may require that students provide copies of material downloaded from the Internet.

It is not always possible to identify the sources of inspiration of one's own ideas with total accuracy. A reasonable and conscientious effort is all that is required. However, it is entirely the student's responsibility to be aware of the nature of plagiarism. If students have any questions about plagiarism, they should ask their instructor. If students have any doubts about the documentation of their own essays, they should see the instructor before the essays are due. Information about correct forms of documentation may be found in the *MLA HANDBOOK For Writers of Research Papers* (New York: Modern Language Association, 2009), available in the Reference section at Weldon (LB 2369.M57).

Students found to have submitted the work of another person as their own work will automatically fail the course. Any students who know their own work has been used improperly have a responsibility to inform the Department of that fact; otherwise they will be considered collaborators.

Since honest students (by far the majority) are potentially affected by the actions of the dishonest few, some may choose to bring instances of plagiarism or other forms of cheating confidentially to the attention of the Chair of Undergraduate Studies.

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 for such checking 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 The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Regarding failing grades in either course assignments or exams:

As per The Department of English and Writing Studies' regulations, a student must receive a passing grade for both term work and the final examination in order to receive a passing grade for the course. This applies to all courses in all programs offered by the department. Students whose term and final exam grades average 50% or above, even though one of the two is a failure, shall receive a default grade of 48%.

Class Schedule

(all page numbers are from the Norton Anthology)

Unit One (week of Sept. 8)

Introduction - What is literary theory? (1-33)

Unit Two (week of Sept. 15)

Plato, from Republic Book X (64-77)

Unit Three (week of Sept. 22)

Aristotle, Poetics (88-115); Horace, Ars Poetica (122-33)

Unit Four (week of Sept. 29)

Sidney, from The Defence of Poesy (254-83); Pope, from An Essay on Criticism (349-62)

Unit Five (week of Oct. 6)

Kant, from Critique of Judgement (411-50); Hegel, from Phenomenology of Spirit, from Lectures on Fine Art (541-55)

Unit Six (week of Oct. 13)

Wollstonecraft, from A Vindication of the Rights of Women (496-504); Wordsworth, Preface to Lyrical Ballads (559-79)

Midterm assigned; due October 17th at 11:59PM**Unit Seven (week of Sept. 19)**

Arnold, "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" (695-714)

Unit Eight (week of Sept. 26)

Marx and Engels, from Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 (651-55); from The German Ideology (655-56); from The Communist Manifesto (657-60); from Capital Vol. 1 (663-74)

Unit Nine (week of Nov. 2)

Baudelaire, from The Painter and Modern Life (680-90); Nietzsche, "On Truth and Lying in a Non-Moral Sense" (764-74), from The Birth of Tragedy (774-85)

Unit Ten (week of Nov. 9)

Freud, from The Interpretation of Dreams (814-24), from "The 'Uncanny'" (824-41)

Unit Eleven (week of November 16)

Woolf, from *A Room of One's Own* (896 – 905); de Beauvoir, from *The Second Sex* (1265 – 73)

Unit Twelve (week of November 24)

Eliot "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (9655 – 61); Brooks, from *The Well-Wrought Urn* (1217 – 29); Wimsatt and Beardsley, "The Intentional Fallacy," "The Affective Fallacy" (1232 – 61)

Essay Due: November 28th at 11:59PM