

Literary Analysis

This course introduces students to post-secondary studies in English by developing skills in the close reading of language, genre, narrative, and poetic form. Rather than focusing on historical or cultural contexts (although these may come into play), this course concentrates on literary forms and structures, and on developing a critical vocabulary for literary analysis. Students can expect to encounter a variety of shorter genres in the literary tradition (the short story, poems, and essays) as well as film and other visual media. In Literary Analysis we will focus primarily on the development of the study of literature and literary criticism. This course seeks to establish a firm understanding of the origins and maturation of how and why we read literature.



Learning Goals

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify and understand various formal characteristics of poetry, the short story, short film, and literary criticism;
- Demonstrate understanding of the cultural, historical, and political contexts in which texts are produced and received;
- Apply techniques of critical analysis as appropriate to diverse literary forms, genres, and media;
- Use literary study to develop skills for careful reading and clear writing;
- Read and discuss literature on the levels of both form and content.

Required Texts

Gregory Castle *The Literary Theory Handbook*

Course Reading/Unit Schedule

Week One | January 5-9

Monday | Introduction to the Course

Wednesday | What is Literary Theory?

Friday | Dan Hartley “The Politics of Style” (in-class)

Read: *LTH* “Introduction” 1-10

Week Two | January 12-16

Monday | Not just What, but How?

Wednesday | The Romantics and the Imagination: Blake and Coleridge

Friday | Literary Realism and the Novel: Dickens and Eliot

Read: *LTH* “The Rise of Literary Theory” 11-17, Blake “The Echoing Green,” “The Sick Rose,” and “London,” Coleridge “This Lime Tree Bower My Prison,” Dickens *Hard Times* excerpt, Eliot *Middlemarch* excerpt

Week Three | January 19-23

Monday | Privileging the Form: William Carlos Williams and Gertrude Stein

Wednesday | Plot, Story, Allegory: Flannery O'Connor

Friday | How to Write a Paragraph

Read: *LTH* "The Rise of Literary Theory" 18-26, Williams "The Red Wheelbarrow" and "This is Just to Say," Stein *Tender Buttons* excerpts, and O'Connor "A Good Man is Hard to Find"

Week Four | January 26-30

Monday | Not just How, but Whom?

Wednesday | First Analysis Due | Destabilizing Language

Friday | Unsettling White Affluent Male Writing

Read: *LTH* "The Rise of Literary Theory" 27-50, Reading TBA

Week Five | February 2-6

Monday | Introduction to Reading Form

Wednesday | Elizabeth Bear "Tideline" and Jorge Luis Borges "The Aleph"

Friday | How to Write a Thesis

Read: *LTH* "Form/Structure/Narrative/Genre" 51-83, Bear "Tideline," and Borges "The Aleph"

Week Six | February 9-13

Monday | Ideology: On the Uses of a Concept

Wednesday | Introduction to Reading Ideology

Friday | Ursula K. Le Guin "The Ones who Walk away from Omelas"

Read: *LTH* "Ideology/Philosophy/History/Aesthetics" 84-141 and Le Guin "The Ones who Walk away from Omelas"

Week Seven | February 16-20

READING WEEK

Week Eight | February 23-27

Monday | Introduction to Reading Communities

Wednesday | Second Analysis Due | Octavia Butler "Speech Sounds"

Friday | Marge Piercy "Moonburn"

Read: *LTH* "Language/Systems/Texts/Readers" 142-177, Butler "Speech Sounds," and Piercy "Moonburn"

Week Nine | March 2-6

Monday | Introduction to Reading Gender

Wednesday | Sylvia Plath "Mirror"

Friday | Audre Lorde "Coal"

Read: *LTH* "Mind/Body/Gender/Identity" 178-217, Plath "Mirror," and Lorde "Coal"

Week Ten | March 9-13

Monday | Reading Space, Reading Place
 Wednesday | Vandana Singh “Infinities”
 Friday | Yoon Ha Lee “A Vector Alphabet of Interstellar Travel”

Read: *LTH* “Culture/Ethnicity/Nation/Location” 218-265, Singh “Infinities,” and Lee “A Vector Alphabet of Interstellar Travel”

Week Eleven | March 16-20

Monday | *OMEGA* (short film)
 Wednesday | Paolo Bacigalupi “People of Sand and Slag”
 Friday | How to Write an Essay

Read: *LTH* “People/Places/Bodies/Things” 266-312, Bacigalupi “People of Sand and Slag”

Week Twelve | March 23-27

Monday | On the Uses of Literary Theory
 Wednesday | Essay Writing Workshop
 Friday | Self-Directed Research

Read: *LTH* “Reading with Literary Theory” 361-382

Week Thirteen | March 30-April 3

Monday | Bertolt Brecht *Mother Courage* excerpts, Viktoria Binschtok, “Wand#1”
 Wednesday | Essays Due | Walter Benn Michaels “The Beauty of a Social Problem”
 Friday | Juliana Spahr “Non-Revolution”

Read: Brecht *Mother Courage* excerpts, Michaels “The Beauty of a Social Problem,” and Spahr “Non-Revolution”

Week Fourteen | April 6-10

Monday | Concluding Discussion
 Wednesday | Exam Review
 Friday | Exam Practice