

PROGRAM IN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE  
RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

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Fall 2011  
01:195:301:01  
Tuesdays 4 (1:10-2:30) SC-206; CAC  
Thursdays 4 (1:10-2:30) HH-A5; CAC

**Introduction to Literary Theory**

**Objectives:**

Designed especially for students of Comparative Literature, the course has two related aims: 1) to critically examine seminal texts which have helped to shape contemporary views of literature, culture and art; 2) to engage in a sustained, interdisciplinary exploration of the question: what is theory? Topics include: formalism, poetics and narrative theory, psychoanalysis, structuralism, post-structuralism, speech act theory, Marxism, sexuality and gender, race, postcolonial and cultural studies.

*[N.B. This course is a requirement for all majors and minors.]*

**Readings:** Texts for this course may be purchased at the Rutgers Bookstore.

- ◆ Leitch, Vincent B. *et al. The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. New York: W.W.Norton & Co. (2001) ISBN: 978-0-393-93292-8 (Hardcover)
- ◆ Culler, Jonathan. *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford UP. (2000).

**Internet information:**

Visit <<http://complit.rutgers.edu/>> for useful information about Comparative Literature.

***Core Curriculum Learning Goals Met by this Course***

01:195:301 Introduction to Literary Theory 3 o AHo

***Department Learning Goals Met by this Course***

1. Students will demonstrate familiarity with a variety of world literatures as well as methods of studying literature and culture across national and linguistic boundaries and evaluate the nature, function and value of literature from a global perspective.

2. They will demonstrate critical reasoning and research skills; design and conduct research in an individual field of concentration (such as literary theory, women's literature, post colonial studies, literature and film, etc); analyze a specific body of research and write a clear and well developed paper or project about a topic related to more than one literary and cultural tradition.
3. They will demonstrate competency in one foreign language and at least a basic knowledge of the literature written in that language.

**Activities and Grading:**

[1] 3 scheduled examinations: 25% each = 75%

[2] Class presentation: 15%

[3] Class attendance and participation: 10%

- Class attendance is fundamental; furthermore, active participation is required. Students are encouraged to engage in all class and group discussions, if not with commentary on the reading material, certainly by asking questions. This course is designed for intellectual exchange: every student is responsible for reading and preparing the assigned texts *before* class meetings. All discussions or interventions will be made individually, in pairs or small groups. Remember: not staying on top of the reading is unfair to your classmates who depend on your participation.
- ◆ All exams must be taken on the announced date. If you cannot do so, you must contact the professor ahead of time to make other arrangements. Should you be unable to take the exam due to illness, appropriate documentation must be provided.
- ◆ *The professor reserves the right to give impromptu quizzes during the semester.*

**Academic Integrity:**

Except for collaborative assignments officially approved by the instructor in advance, all work that a student submits must be his/her own independent effort. Students must cite properly all outside sources consulted in preparing written assignments.

Students should review the university policy on Academic Integrity:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>

Violations include: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity.

**Disability Support Services:**

Students who may be requesting accommodations due to disabilities are encouraged to familiarize themselves with procedures and policies regarding disability support services at the following website:

<http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>. It is recommended that students seeking accommodations begin filing paperwork as soon as possible since the documentation review process may take up to 30 business days.

Students are encouraged to speak with the professor about these issues at the beginning of the term. All

such conversations will be kept strictly confidential.

***Reporting Absences***

*Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.*

***Important Additional Information:***

Cell phones and all other technological devices (beepers, iPods, MP3players...) *must be turned off during class*. Failure to comply may result in dismissal from class and a drop in class participation grade.

***Office hours:***

Students are strongly advised to consult with the professor about any problems that might arise regarding ideas for presentations, material to be covered on an exam, etc. **Office hours are Tuesdays between 2:45 and 5 p.m. —or by appointment.** Do not bottle up all questions for the session before exams are given.

**Grading Scale:**

92→100=**A**; 87→91=**B+**; 81→86=**B**; 77→80=**C+**; 70→76=**C**; 65→69=**D**; 0→64=**F**

<b>Course of study</b> (schedule subject to change)		
Date	Topic	Reading / Assignment
<b>September</b>		
Th1	<b>Introduction</b>	
T6	<b>What is Theory? / Literature Matters</b>	<b>Culler 1-41</b>
Th8	<b>Formalism</b>	<b>NATC: Eichenbaum "The Theory of the 'Formal Method'" 921-951, Ransom "Criticism Inc." 969-982, Wimsatt &amp; Beardsley "The Intentional Fallacy" "The Affective Fallacy" 1230-1261</b>
T13		<b>NATC: Eagleton "Literary Theory: An Introduction" 2137-2146</b>
T15	<b>Structuralism</b>	<b>NATC: Saussure From <i>Course in General Linguistics</i> 845-867 Jakobson From <i>Linguistics and Poetics</i> 11141-1152</b>
T20	<b>Poetics &amp; Narrative Theory</b>	<b>NATC: Todorov "Structural Analysis of Narrative" 2021-2031, Bakhtin From <i>Discourse in the Novel</i> 1072-1107</b>
Th22	<b>Introduction to Poststructuralism</b>	<b>Culler 55-93 NATC: Barthes 1316-1332 From <i>Mythologies</i>, "The Death of the Author," From "Work to Text" Nietzsche "On Truth and Lie in a Non-Moral Sense" 759-774</b>
T27		<b>**Exam #1**</b>

Th29		<b>NO CLASS MEETING</b>
<i>October</i>		
T4	Poststructuralism	<b>NATC: de Man “Semiology and Rhetoric” 1361-1378; Foucault, “What is an Author?” 1469-1490</b>
Th6	Deconstruction	<b>NATC: Derrida, <i>From Of Grammatology</i> 1680-1697</b>
T11	<b>Performatives</b>	<b>NATC: Austin “Performative Utterances” 1286-1301 Culler, 94-107</b>
Th13		<b>Culler, 108-120 Selections from Felman, <i>The Scandal of the Speaking Body</i> (Sakai)</b>
T18	<b>Psychoanalysis</b>	<b>NATC: Freud, 807-824 From <i>The Interpretation of Dreams</i></b>
Th20		<b>NATC: Lacan, 1156-1190 “The Mirror Stage,” “The Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious,” “The Signification of the Phallus” Weber Selections from <i>Return to Freud</i> (Sakai)</b>
T25	<b>Marxism</b>	<b>NATC: Marx &amp; Engels 647-651 From “The German Ideology” 655-657, “The Communist Manifesto” 657-661, Gramsci 998-1008 “The Formation of the Intellectuals,” Lukacs From <i>The Historical Novel</i> 905-921</b>
Th27	<b>Marxism</b>	<b>NATC: Benjamin “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” 1046-1072</b>

	<b>Marxism</b>	<b>NATC Althusser, 1332-1361, From "Ideology and ISAs" 1483-1509; Jameson 1818-1822; 1846-1861 "Postmodernism and Consumer Society"</b>
<i>November</i>		
T1		<b>**Exam #2**</b>
Th3	<b>Sexualities</b>	<b>NATC: Woolf; 892-896, From <i>A Room of One's Own</i> 896-905, Foucault, From <i>The History of Sexuality</i> 1502-1521; Sedgwick From <i>Between Men and Epistemology of the Closet</i> 2464-2477</b>
T8	<b>Woman and Femininity</b>	<b>NATC: de Beauvoir From <i>The Second Sex</i> 1261-1273 , Cixous "The Laugh of Medusa" 1942-1960, Wittig "One is not Born a Woman" 1904-1913; Haraway 2187-2221 "A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980s"</b>
T15	<b>Queer</b>	<b>NATC: Rich From <i>Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence</i> 1588-1610, Butler From <i>Gender Trouble</i> 2536-2553</b>
Th17	<b>Race</b>	<b>NATC: Hurston, 1008-1023 "Characteristics of Negro Expression"; Dubois, 867-877 "Criteria of Negro Art"; Hughes, 1190-1196 "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain"</b>

T22	<b>Race</b>	<b>NATC: Gates 2427-2438 "Talking Black: Critical Signs of the Times;" Anzaldúa 2095-2110, From <i>Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza</i>; Allen 2106-2126 "Kochinnenako in Academe"</b>
T24		Thanksgiving
T29	Postcolonial Studies	<b>NATC: Fanon 1437-1454 From <i>The Wretched of the Earth</i>, Achebe 1610-1623 "An Image of Africa;" Said 1861-1888 From <i>Orientalism</i>; Anderson, 1913-1923 "Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism"</b>
<b>December</b>		
Th1	Postcolonial Studies	<b>NATC: Gilroy, 2533-2575 From <i>The Black Atlantic</i>" Ngugi <i>et al</i> "On the Abolition of the English Department" 1992-2000; Spivak A Critique of Postcolonial Reason 2110-2126;; Bhabha "The Commitment to Theory" 2351-2373</b>
T6	Cultural Studies	<b>NATC: Horkheimer &amp; Adorno "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception" 1223-1240; Hall 1895-1910 "Cultural Studies and Its Theoretical Legacies," Williams 1565-1575 From "Marxism and Literature";</b>
Th8	<b>Conclusions and Review</b>	
T13		<b>**Exam #3**</b>

