English 5301.001: Theory and Practice I: Literary Studies

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Class Times: TTH 5:30-6:45
Classroom: ECDC 219
Fall 2017

Required Texts:
Adams, Rachel. Continental Divides: Remapping the Cultures of North America
Balibar, Étienne. Citizenship
Bozniak, Linda. The Citizen and the Alien
Gotham, Kevin Fox and Miriam Greenberg. Crisis Cities: Disaster and Redevelopment in New York and New Orleans.
Warner, Michael. Publics and Counterpublics

Other texts listed on the schedule are available on Blackboard or will be handed out in class.

Course Description:
This is the first of a two-semester course that will introduce students to literary and composition theories. Both parts of the course will also introduce students to the research skills necessary for success in graduate school. Over the course of a year, students will explore how to conduct research on different theoretical issues in order to develop the professional practice of analytical writing and interpretation.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):
Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:
1. understand and evaluate current issues and research methods in English Studies
2. apply theory to literary and cultural texts
3. master documentation conventions appropriate to English Studies

Evaluation and Grading:
Class Discussion 10 points
Discussion facilitation 15 points
Short paper #1 15 points
Short paper #2 15 points
Research project:
   Research Question 5 points
   “Footnote trail” Exercise 5 points
   Abstract 5 points
   Final paper 30 points

100 points
90-100 = A, 80-89=B, 70-79=C, 60-69=D, below 60=F

Course Requirements:

Discussion and Attendance: The course format will consist of both teacher- and student-facilitated discussion. In addition, students will work in small groups throughout the semester to discuss the readings. Not only is attendance required, but consistent and informed participation in class discussion is essential for full credit. You can miss one class without penalty; for every subsequent class you miss, two points will be subtracted from your final course grade.

Discussion Facilitation: To prepare you for writing your final essay and to make sure that your concerns and questions are voiced, you will lead a 30-minute discussion facilitation related to your research and reading of the theory assigned for one of our class periods. Your task is not to present the material that we read but instead to illustrate and examine theoretical concepts raised in the assigned reading. Please do not read to the class or lecture extensively or rely too heavily on a PowerPoint presentation. Instead, teach the class by bringing in outside materials to illustrate the text and/or suggest interesting comparisons with it or reactions to it. Feel free to use small group activities and/or full-class discussion to create an effective learning experience. On the class session immediately following, you will also provide a one- to two-page self-assessment that describes and critiques the facilitation and related preparation. I will use this reflection, as well as my own observation of your work, to assess your ability to engage the class in a meaningful learning activity, as well as your originality, effort, and preparation (including research, other resources, handouts, visual aids, etc.). Note: You will need to meet with me or contact me by e-mail one week before your facilitation to let me know what you plan to do.

Short Papers: There will be two short essay assignments of 2-3 pages. In the first essay, you will examine one of the US Supreme Court Cases—not already covered in class—which deal with questions of citizenship. Your goal in this assignment is to link your discussion of the case to the readings we have done so far in class. In the second essay, you want to examine a suggested or already established government policy which supports how neoliberalism has been defined in our readings. Your essay should adhere to MLA documentation/style requirements conventions. At any point in the planning and writing process, please feel free to discuss your paper with me during office hours or at a mutually agreed upon time.

Independent Research Project: This assignment provides the opportunity to demonstrate your ability to apply a critical theory (or a combination of theories) to a text in such a way that reflects your understanding of the keywords discussed in class. It will be important to select a text that is manageable in length/complexity and to focus clearly on one issue in a longer/more complex text. To prepare yourself for developing the paper, you will research both the method(s)/approach(es) you have selected and the existing scholarship on the text itself. The final essay should be 12-15 pages (typed and double-spaced) plus appropriate endnotes and a list of works cited. To help you succeed in developing this project, you will:

- Articulate a research question of interest to you and write a 1-2 page essay explaining your research process. You should include at least 10 sources.
• Choose one of your sources and find a footnote or reference you feel is worth pursuing. For instance, one might look at how Giorgio Agamben, in “State Of Exception,” draws on Carl Schmitt’s book *Dictatorship* to develop this theory of the “exception.” Looking at Schmitt’s book, you could examine how he discusses this notion of the “exception” and whether he cites anyone in support of his understanding. Write an essay exploring what is gained by making these connections: how do the authors you examine build on and alter each other’s argument?

• Prepare a one- to two-page (typed and double-spaced) abstract of what you plan to argue in your paper. Such an abstract, which should include your thesis, can often be revised slightly to form the introduction of the paper.

You should have a *complete* draft of your paper ready for review by your peers in class on December 6. The final paper should adhere to MLA documentation requirements. In evaluating this project, I will consider the complexity, sophistication, and originality of your thesis; your demonstrated understanding and application of the theory that underlies your approach; the selection and strength of the evidence that you use to support your claims; your choice and integration of secondary research with your own ideas; the clarity and coherence of your interpretive argument; your personal engagement with the text; and your command of literary terms, documentation style, writing conventions, and surface features.

**Student Communications:**
You are responsible for the material covered and assignments and announcements made in every class whether or not you are present. In addition, from time to time, it may be necessary for me to contact you individually or to contact everyone in the class to communicate important course-related information. To do so, I will use the email function in Blackboard unless I am responding to an email you have sent to me. I will expect you to act responsibly to ensure that you receive and, if appropriate, respond to all such communications in a timely manner.

**Late Assignments:**
Please contact me by e-mail if an emergency arises and you cannot attend class. I will not accept late assignments unless you have made previous arrangements, and neither journals nor the final paper will be accepted late for any reason. An “Incomplete” will be given at my discretion only and must involve exceptional circumstances. To qualify for consideration, you must have satisfactorily completed two-thirds of the course requirements and met graduate standards for attendance and participation.

**Graduate Student Academic Integrity Statement:**
English graduate students are expected to “conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty” (Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Graduate Catalog). The Student Code of Conduct defines Academic Misconduct as cheating, plagiarism, multiple submissions, complicity, fabrication, falsification, and misrepresentation; in addition to “any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion” (*Student Code of Conduct*, Article III, 1. Academic Misconduct). Academic misconduct is a serious offense that will result in the professor assigning a serious penalty, possibly including failure for an assignment, failure in a course, or recommendation for dismissal from a program (TAMUCC Graduate Catalog, Academic Honesty). For each Academic Misconduct case, the
A faculty member must file a record, including a description of the disciplinary action taken, along with any materials involved, with his or her college dean, who will forward a copy to the Office of Student Affairs. Further information regarding the judicial process is available on the website of the Office for Student Affairs.

**Dropping a Class:**
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. **Wednesday, November 15** is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

**Classroom/Professional Behavior:**
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips etc.

**Grade Appeal Process:**
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures (available at [http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C2.01_student_grade_appeal_procedure.pdf](http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C2.01_student_grade_appeal_procedure.pdf)). For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, [http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html](http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.

**Students with Disabilities and Veterans:**
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in CCH116. You can also visit their website at [http://disabilityservices.tamucc.edu/](http://disabilityservices.tamucc.edu/) and contact them by email at disability.services@tamucc.edu. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom, or on campus, please contact the Disability Services Office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.
Statement of Academic Continuity:
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane, where classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

Blackboard:
To log into Blackboard, go to: http://bb9.tamucc.edu. You must have a NET ID (also known as an Active Directory account or “Islander ID”) to log in. For instructions on how to get this account and more information about using Blackboard, go to: http://distance-education.tamucc.edu/student_resources.html. If you need additional help at any time to access, download, or print course materials on Blackboard, please contact the Island Online (IOL) Help Desk by telephone at (361) 825-2825 or by email at iolsupport@tamucc.edu.

Tentative Class Schedule (subject to change):

Key Theoretical Texts

8/29-8/31 Course Overview and Ferdinand de Saussure “Nature of the Linguistic Sign,” Roland Barthes “The Death of the Author,” Michel Foucault “What is an Author?,” Sigmund Freud “The Interpretation of Dreams” and “The Uncanny.”


Citizenship

9/12-9/14 The Citizen and the Alien, Ch. 1-3

9/19-9/21 The Citizen and the Alien, Ch. 4-6

9/26-9/28 US Supreme Court Cases: Dred Scott v Sandford; Hernandez v. Texas; US v Wong Kim Ark


10/10-10/12 Saskia Sassen TBA and Rose Cuisin Villazor “‘Sanctuary Cities’ and Local Citizenship”

Neoliberalism

10/17-10/19 Wendy Brown TBA and Crisis Cities Preface, Ch. 1-4.

10/24-10/26 Crisis Cities Ch 6-7. Short Assignment #2 due 10/24.
Public Spaces

10/31-11/2  *Publics and Counterpublics* Ch. 1-2
11/7-11/9  *Publics and Counterpublics* Ch. 6-7

Mapping Space

11/14-11/16 *Continental Divides* Introduction, Ch 1-2
11/21-23  *Continental Divides* con’t
11/28-11/30  *Continental Divides* Ch. 6 and Epilogue
12/5  Draft of Final Essay due, Final version due Monday, December 11
Questions to Consider when Reading Theory:

These questions are provided to give you a framework for approaching our readings this semester. Please use them as a point of departure in preparing your journal entries.

1. What is the essence of this school of thought? What would an inventory of its characteristics look like?
2. How is it different from other theories? Is it fundamentally different or different in degree?
3. What is this theory’s relation to history (literary or political)? How does it position itself along the “binary” of politics and aesthetics?
4. Is this theory particularly applicable to a certain kind of literature (of a certain period, region, what have you) or genre? How can you tell? Does it exclude others (kinds/genres) from consideration?
5. What are the philosophical roots of this theory?
6. What use is this particular theory in the classroom? What skills that this theory emphasizes would you want your students to learn? How could you best teach these skills?
7. Is this theory difficult to apply? What theoretical groundwork does a student need to use it?
8. How is this particular theory useful for your own work or interests? Or is it?
9. Can aspects of this theory be combined with aspects of other theories? Which ones? Can you use it eclectically?

Supplemental Resources at Bell Library:

Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities*
Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*
Ashcraft, Bill, ed. *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*
Belsey, Catherine. *Critical Practice*
Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*
Butler, Judith. *Undoing Gender*
Cixous, Helene. *White Ink: Interviews on Sex, Text, and Politics*
Culler, Jonathan. *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism*
---. *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics, and the Study of Literature*
Derrida, Jacques. *Of Grammatology*
Dimock, Wai Chee, *Rethinking Class: Literary Studies and Social Formations*
Eagleton, Terry. *Literary Theory: An Introduction*
Gates, Henry Louis, Jr. *The Signifying Monkey*
Genette, Gerard. *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*
Gilbert, Sandra, and Susan Gubar. *The Madwoman in the Attic*
Halberstam, Judith. *Female Masculinity*
Hoffman, Michael J., and Patrick D. Murphy. *Essentials of the Theory of Fiction*
Jussaalla, Feroza, and Reed Dasenbroke, eds. *Interviews with Writers of the Postcolonial World*
Keese, Donald. *Contexts for Criticism*
Landry, Lorraine. *Marx and the Postmodern Debates: An Agenda for Critical Theory*
Leitch, Vincent. *Deconstructive Criticism: An Advanced Introduction*
Marx, Karl. *The Communist Manifesto* (Textbook Reserve Collection #55)
McClintock, Anne, Aamir Mufti, and Ella Shohat, eds. *Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nation, and Postcolonial Perspectives*

McQuillan, Martin, ed. *Deconstruction: A Reader*

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. *Feminism without Borders*


Richards, I. A. *Practical Criticism*

---. *Principles of Literary Criticism*

Saldivar, Jose David. *Border Matters: Remapping American Cultural Studies*

Scholes, Robert. *Structuralism in Literature*

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present*

---. *In Other Worlds*

Sturrock, John. *Structuralism and Since: From Levi-Strauss to Derrida*

Wall, Cheryl, ed. *Changing Our Own Words: Essays on Criticism, Theory, and Writing by Black Women*

Warhol, Robin, and Diane Price Herndl, eds. *Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*

Wellek, Rene. *Concepts of Criticism*

Young, Thomas Daniel. *The New Criticism and After*

For background information, see also in the reference area:

Groeden, Michael, ed. *The Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism*

Makaryk, Irena R., ed. *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory: Approaches, Scholars, Terms*