

# English 382: Literary Theory



**Spring, 2014**

Instructor: Dennis Allen

Office: 205 Colson

Office Hours: TH: 4:00-5:30 and by appointment

Office: 304-293-9702

Home Phone: 304-292-0081

E-mail: [dallen@wvu.edu](mailto:dallen@wvu.edu)

**Course Purpose:** This course is intended to provide you with an overview of the schools of literary theory that are currently used to analyze literary and cultural texts, ranging from post-structuralism to Gender Theory and Cultural Studies.

**Course Requirements:** Course grades will be based on a midterm (35%), a final exam (35%), and three two page response papers (30%).

**The Response Papers:** Should consist of a two page typed analysis of an essay from the course reading assignments. These should not summarize the reading but should engage it intellectually. In other words, a response to a particular essay should do one or more of the following: critique the essay, apply it to a literary or cultural text, or relate it to previous reading in the course. Also, if an essay proves exceptionally difficult, your response paper on that essay could present some focused, specific questions on points that you did not understand.

**Attendance:** You are allowed three absences. If you miss class a fourth time, you will fail the course.

**Text:** Rivkin, Julie and Michael Ryan, eds. *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, Second Edition (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004)

## Assignments:

Thursday, Jan. 9: Course Introduction

### Poststructuralism and Deconstruction:

Tues., January 14: Introductory Lecture

Thurs., Jan. 16: Ferdinand de Saussure, "Course in General Linguistics," pp. 59-71

Tues., Jan. 21: Jacques Derrida, "Semiology and Grammatology," pp. 332-339

Thurs., Jan. 23: Barbara Johnson, "Writing," pp. 340-347

Tues., Jan. 28: Jean Baudrillard, "Simulacra and Simulations," pp. 365-377

**Response 1 Due**

Thurs., Jan 30: Application Day

### Psychoanalysis:

Tues., Feb. 4: Jacques Lacan, "The Instance of the Letter..." pp. 447-454

Thurs., Feb. 6: Lacan, "The Instance of the Letter..." pp. 454-461

Tues., Feb. 11: Luce Irigaray, "Women on the Market," pp. 799-811

Thurs., Feb. 13: Application Day

### Marxism/Materialist Criticism:

Tues., Feb. 18: Karl Marx, "Wage Labor and Capital," and "Capital," pp. 659-672

**Response 2 Due**

Thurs., Feb. 20: Day Off

Tues., Feb. 25: Alan Sinfield, "Cultural Materialism," pp. 743-750

Thurs., Feb. 27: Alan Sinfield, "Cultural Materialism," pp. 750-762

Tues., March 4: Review Day

Thurs., March 6: **Midterm**

### Spring Break

### New Historicism:

Tues., March 18: Stephen Greenblatt, "Shakespeare and the Exorcists," pp. 592-620

Thurs., March 20: Day Off

### Feminism, Gender Studies, and Queer Theory:

Tues., March 25: Judith Butler, "Performative Acts," pp. 900-911

Thurs., March 27: Michel Foucault, "The History of Sexuality," pp. 892-899

### Ethnic Studies/Postcolonial Theory:

Tues., April 1: Toni Morrison, "Playing in the Dark," pp. 1005-1016

Thurs. April 3: Ania Loomba, "Situating Colonial and Postcolonial Studies," pp. 1100-1111 **Response 3 Due**

Tues., April 8: Alan Lawson, "The Anxious Proximities..." pp. 1210-1223

Thurs. April 10: Application Day

### Cultural Studies:

Tues., April 15: Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art...", pp. 1235-1241

Thurs., April 17: Michel de Certeau, "The Practice of Everyday Life," pp. 1247-1257

Tues., April 22: Review Day

Thurs., April 24: **Final**