

## **Syllabus: ENG 3014 – Theories & Techniques of Literary Study**

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Office Hours: Mondays from 1:30-2:30pm and by appointment  
Classroom Meeting Times and Location: Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:30pm-1:20pm, NSC 0147

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### **How Should A Person Read?**

This is a course for English majors about *how* and *why* literary scholars read the way they do. By “read” I actually mean a whole host of other verbs, such as interpret, examine, investigate, historicize, challenge, deconstruct... To read (for students of English literature) is to treat a text or group of texts as evidence, and literary theories and techniques as methods for interpreting that evidence.

Literary theories and techniques are historically specific. They tell us about the philosophical and intellectual preoccupations, cultural assumptions, biases and belief systems of people from different places, different backgrounds and different time periods. For this reason, this course is a historical survey first, and an experiment in applying literary theories and techniques second. Beginning with Plato and ending with twenty-first century feminists, queer theorists, critical race theorists and cognitive linguists, we’ve got a lot of ground to cover. You’ll be reading a lot, and writing about what you are reading in a variety of assignments and exercises. By the end of the course, you will feel confident situating literary theory and criticism in history and culture, applying literary theoretical frameworks to primary sources, as well as name-dropping “Roland Barthes” at dinner parties.

It’s worth noting that this is not an easy course. The theoretical readings tend to be dense and difficult, and my expectations for your work as a “junior scholar” are high. The whole term we will work towards writing theoretically sophisticated scholarly research essays; at the end of term, there is a final exam that will be open-book and online.

Credit Hours: 3.

Semester: Fall 2018

Prerequisite: Junior standing, or C.I., and C (2.0) or better required in ENC 1102.

Course type: “Mixed Mode”

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### **Required Texts:**

1. Anne H. Stevens’s *Literary Theory and Criticism*, Broadview Press, 2015.

2. EITHER:

*The Norton Anthology of Literary Criticism*, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Editions, edited by Vincent B. Leitch, 2010 or 2018. (<http://books.wwnorton.com/books/detail-contents.aspx?ID=11544>)

The approximate cost of this book is \$95-75 for a new copy ordered online, or \$60 for a used copy ordered online. You should consider buying the *Norton* if you prefer reading in hard copy, and don’t want to have to print a bunch of stuff. You will be using literary theory the rest of your English degree, so you can think about this as an investment in your future as a literature scholar!

OR: All the linked readings on the course blog

The cost of this is FREE! I have scanned a bunch of excerpts and will make them available as PDFs under “Course Announcements” on Webcourses. You should consider this option if you want to save money; don’t mind reading online; or would prefer to print the excerpts yourself.

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### **Assignment Overview:**

Assignment #1: Historical Development of a High Stakes Term (1500 words)*	20%
Assignment #2: Research Paper (2500 words)*	40%
Final Exam	20%
Participation (2000 words total; see below for breakdown)	15%
In-class Attendance	5%

\*This course is a “Gordon Rule” course. The required assignments that fulfill the Gordon Rule are indicated with an asterisk. Each has the following characteristics:

1. The writing will have a clearly defined central idea or thesis
2. It will provide adequate support for that idea
3. It will be organized clearly and logically
4. It will show awareness of the conventions of standard written English
5. It will be formatted or presented in an appropriate way.

In addition, this course requires 6000 words of evaluated writing per English Department requirements.

All Gordon Rule assignments will be graded on the plus/minus system (maximum 100%): A = 100–94, A- = 93–90, B+ = 89–87, B = 86–84, B- = 83–80, C+ = 79–77, C = 74-76, C- 70-73, D+ 67-69, D 64-66, D- 60-63, F 59 and below.

No Incompletes will be given in this course.

### **Participation Breakdown:**

In this course, it is possible to earn 15% participation. Every Friday you will have an opportunity to earn participation marks.

Participation is awarded in “whole percentages” (so, you earn 1% per assignment). Full percentages are based on preparedness, completion and professionalism. I retain the right to award partial percentage points for sloppy work; there will be no handing in of late participation assignments. Once you miss the Friday deadline, you will receive a zero.

Participation assignments can take quite a lot of work outside of class to complete well! Please give yourself ample time to complete them. Assignments will appear on Webcourses on Wednesdays at 9am and are due before 11:59pm on Fridays.

### **Attendance:**

I will take attendance every class, in order to determine 5% of your grade (see above). You should strive for perfect attendance. As a rule, there are no “excused absences” in college. Students who need accommodation for a religious holiday occurring at any time during the semester should notify me during the first week of class; otherwise, they will be held fully accountable for the class period missed. Assignments can only be made up if the reason for the absence is (i) documented, (ii) communicated to me in advance and (iii) necessary. If you fail to show up for an examination, you fail the test. If you

anticipate a scheduling conflict with the midterm, you must consult with me at least two weeks prior to the exam. **Also, be advised that we will often cover materials in class that are not included on the syllabus; you are responsible for all material covered during your absence.**

### **What happens if my assignment is late?**

If you need to hand in a late assignment, please do so at the English Office (Trevor Colbourn Hall 250A). Have the admin person put it in my mail box.

**My late penalty is that I begin taking off a late deduction of 3% per day, even the weekends, \*on the day that the assignment was due.\*** That means that if an assignment was due in class on Friday, and you hand it in on Friday after class, you will lose 3%. Saturday (6%) and Sunday (9%) the English Office is closed. If you hand it in on Monday you will lose 12%, Tuesday 15% etc. Late penalties are extremely damaging to your grade. Really, really, really try not to put yourself in that position!

### **But what if I was sick/had to work my part time job/visiting my family overseas?**

The only thing I can help you with is if you were sick (like, really sick). I will need an original doctor's note, addressed to me (not just a random doctor's note that you use for every class). It must say the dates you were sick, AND it must say that it is the doctor's opinion that you were unable to complete your assignment due to illness.

If you are trying to juggle work and school, I get that it's stressful, but I cannot make any special concessions. Same goes for being out of the country. My feeling is this: you are here at UCF to learn, so it's up to you to be at UCF to learn!

### **Plagiarism, Cheating, and Academic Dishonesty**

I am very good at spotting plagiarism. But it does waste a lot of time to track down the original, highlight the overlaps, meet with you about it, fill out forms for the Dean, etc. So, spare us both! Here is what UCF has to say on the subject:

All work that you submit for this class must be your own, and it must be written exclusively for this course. Also, any sources consulted for your writing must be properly documented. "Rewriting," in which a student consults a source, changes a few words, and presents the ideas as his/her own, is plagiarism. Plagiarism and cheating of any kind on an examination, quiz, or assignment will result at least in an "F" for that assignment and may also lead to an "F" for the entire course. Plagiarism and cheating subjects a student to referral to the Office of Student Conduct for further action. See the UCF Golden Rule for further information (<http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/>).

I will assume for this course that you will adhere to the academic creed of this University and will maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. In other words, do not cheat by giving answers to others or by taking them from anyone else. I will also adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity, so do not expect me to change your grade illegitimately or to bend or break rules for one person that will not apply to everyone.

To make sure we are all on the same page, in the second week of class, I will make available a Prezi presentation for you to work through on your own as homework. Once you have done so, I will ask you to sign an agreement that reflects this.

If I do find evidence of plagiarism, my policy is to assign an “F” to egregious instances the first time, and a zero after that. If I notice “patch-writing” (a form of plagiarism) going on, often I will assign a grade of “D-” as a warning.

### **But what if I need help with an assignment?**

The University Writing Center (UWC) is a free resource for UCF undergraduate and graduate students. The UWC's most popular service is the individualized writing consultation: a trained writing consultant will spend thirty minutes with you reviewing your work and making recommendations for revision. The consultant will work with you for an hour if your paper is longer than seven pages or if you are writing a paper with a group. (Under these circumstances, all group members should attend the session.) You can bring your work to the UWC at any point in the process--even if you have not yet started writing. Your consultation will be most helpful if you take the time to:

- prepare: identify specific issues on which you want feedback
- participate: actively discuss your paper with the consultant
- reflect: decide which of the possibilities raised during the consultation are helpful to you • act:

revise your paper

The UWC will help with writing in any subject, including out-of-class writing such as job application letters. The UWC will also help you organize oral presentations. After each consultation, you will receive a Record of Consultation (RoC) form that summarizes what was discussed. It is best to make an appointment; however, the UWC does accept walk-ins. You may use the UWC computers to work on your writing without an appointment; available software includes Microsoft Office 2000, and specialized software (Editor, Writer's Helper, Minklink, Inspiration) for brainstorming, organizing, problem-solving, proofreading, and editing. The UWC does not write, proofread, or grade papers. For more information or to make an appointment, visit the UWC website at <http://www.uwc.ucf.edu>, stop by TCH 109, or call 407-823-2197.

### **MLA Formatting**

All assignments should be formatted according to the most recent MLA guidelines. If you are not sure what MLA is, I recommend visiting the Owl @ Purdue website. You will lose marks (see marking rubrics for specific assignments) if you fail to adhere to MLA standards.

### **Make-Up Work/Extra Credit**

As a rule, I do not give make-up assignments or extra credit. Plan to do the necessary work to succeed on your assignments, rather than relying on special assignments to improve your grade.

### **Accessibility**

UCF is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the professor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has met with the professor to request accommodations. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Accessibility Services, Ferrell Commons Room 185, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

### **Classroom/Online Behaviour**

Proper classroom behavior is expected at all times. Students must follow UCF standards for personal and academic conduct as outlined in The Golden Rule. As a matter of common courtesy, please arrive on time prepared to stay for the entire class, and do not engage in conversation other than the classroom critical discussions we will be having about the texts on hand. Proper classroom conduct also entails creating a positive learning experience for all students, regardless of sex, race, religion, sexual

orientation, social class, or any other feature of personal identification; therefore, sexist, racist, prejudicial, homophobic, or other derogatory remarks will not be tolerated.

**Electronics and cell phones:**

In a class such as ours, where I can see your shining faces quite easily from the front of the classroom, watching you text while I talk gives me an adrenaline reaction that disrupts my ability to speak, let alone teach. It is also distracting to other students. For that reason, **all phones must be stowed away out of sight.** If I see you on your phone or computer doing things that are not relevant to the course (like online shopping! Facebook! Other, cooler things that I don't know about but I'm sure you do!) then THIS is what I will do: I will say nothing. I will quell my beating heart and attempt to stay calm. I will write your name down on an available surface.

Later, you will receive an email letting you know you have lost 1% of your participation grade.

**Eating in class:**

Food and drink are discouraged, but not forbidden, in the classroom. However, if it is necessary for you to eat or drink during class, please remember the "X 30" rule: if everyone in the class does what you are doing, how great of a disruption would it be? That is to say, a doughnut is much quieter to eat than potato chips; a drink with ice and a straw is much louder than a drink in a can. It is inappropriate to eat a meal during class.

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### Schedule:

This schedule is subject to change; be sure check it regularly!

#### **Week 1: Chapter 1: Introduction**

Monday: Theory vs. Criticism: Stevens pp. 13-39

Wednesday: Theory vs. Criticism: Stevens pp. 39-45 (drop/swap deadline is today)

Friday: **Participation Assignment #1 (worth 1%):** What is the difference between theory and criticism? Based on your reading, some light research, and the discussion we had last class, compose an explanation (50-75 words) that uses the terms **(a) theory, (b) criticism, (c) method of study/ methodology** and **(d) primary source/object of study** to clearly explain the relationship between theory and criticism in the following scenario:

Dr. Sara Stein is an expert in Early Modern literature and culture. She recently attended a conference, where a colleague introduced her to a new framework that draws on the work of Michel Foucault but is markedly different. Excited by the possibilities of the new framework, Dr. Stein plans to use it in a future analysis of “The Canonization.”

*P.S. - All instructors/faculty are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, UCF needs you to complete the above academic activity; failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.*

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#### **Week 2: Chapters 2: The Ancient World**

Monday: Selections from Plato's *Republic* and Stevens pp. 46-54

Wednesday: Selections from Aristotle's *Poetics* and Stevens pp. 54-64 (stop before “Longinus's Sublime Aesthetics”) and then Stevens 68-98

Friday: **Participation Assignment #2 (worth 1%): particulars TBA**

Groups Discussion: You have each been randomly assigned to a group on Webcourses. Please work together in your groups to come to a consensus about the following: What would be the formal elements of an ideal Tweet, according to Aristotle? What are some examples (at least one per person) of very persuasive Tweets (or other kinds of Aristotelian ideals—like, maybe a very Cathartic Tweet?) and how do they accomplish whatever it is that they are accomplishing? Please post comments \*at least twice, at two separate times\* so that you are really discussing (and not just yelling into a crowd).

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#### **Week 3: Chapter 3: The Middle Ages and the Renaissance**

Monday: LABOUR DAY \* NO CLASSES

Wednesday: Selections from Longinus's “On the Sublime” (1<sup>st</sup> century CE) and Stevens 65-67.  
Selections from Edmund Burke's *Sublime and the Beautiful* (1757) and Stevens pp. 104-110.

Friday: **Participation Assignment #3 (worth 1%):**

The sublime, according to Burke, is "vast in [its] dimensions...rugged and negligent" (550). For Immanuel Kant, the contemplation of infinity, of space and time, leads to another form of sublime experience.

This week's Participation Assignment asks you to find and share your own 2017 example of the sublime. I encourage you \*not\* to start by doing a Google Image search for the sublime, but to begin by reflecting on what sublime experiences you have had in your life. What has moved you to a feeling at once awe-inspiring and terrifying? Filled with wonder and the sense of your own insignificance? Once you've decided on a sublime experience, choose either an image or words that exemplify it.

Upload the image/words (you'll have to illustrate or take a screen-shot of them) onto our class Instagram here. The username is 'mysublimeexperience' and the password is 'xxxx.' In the comments section, provide a 40-60 word explanation of what the image/words mean to you and how they portray an experience of the sublime.

FYI: Instagram only lets one person be logged in at a time, so be sure to log out again once you've posted!

**Specifics:** The instagram will be open all this week-- from Monday at 9am to Friday night at 11:59pm. Once the clock strikes midnight, the password will change, and you will have missed your chance! You will know that you have earned your 1% participation once I've "liked" your post!

FYI: *Instagram only lets one person be logged in at a time, so be sure to log out again once you've posted!*

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#### **Week 4: Chapters 4 and 5: How the Enlightenment becomes the Nineteenth Century**

Monday: Selections from Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792) and Stevens pp.103

Wednesday: Kant's "What is Enlightenment?" (1794) and Stevens pp. 114-119.

#### **Friday: Participation Assignment #4 (worth 1%):**

On Wednesday, we worked in groups to visually map Kant's argument in "What is Enlightenment" by creating a Levels of Generality tree. You've each taken a photo of your group's tree, so you have a record of your thinking. (If you missed class, you'll need to make a tree on your own. If you need direction on how to do this, please ask for the notes from a classmate). Now, I'd like you to use that tree to help you 1) summarize Kant's overall argument in your own words and 2) respond to the following: would you rather live under the rule of an enlightened despot or an unenlightened, but democratically elected, leader?

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#### **Week 5: Chapters 4 and 5: How the Enlightenment becomes the Nineteenth Century**

Monday: Selections from Hegel's "Master-Slave Dialectic" (1807)

Wednesday: Selections from Nietzsche's "On Truth and Lying in the Non-moral Sense" (1873) and Stevens pp. 120-134.

#### **Friday: Participation Assignment #5 (worth 1%):**

Exam Study Guide I (Quiz): This is the first of three “Exam Study Guide” quizzes. Please log in to Webcourses to find the quiz. It will remain open until Friday at 11:59pm, and it will allow multiple attempts. Please continue to re-take the quiz until you have achieved a score of 100%!

\*\*\*MANDATORY Anti-plagiarism Prezi is also due at 11:59pm on Friday\*\*\*

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**Week 6: Chapter 6: Twentieth- and Twenty-First Century Formalist Approaches**

Monday: Selections from Saussure’s *Course in General Linguistics* (1919), and Stevens pp. 135-151;

Wednesday: Selections from Derrida’s *Of Grammatology* (1967), and Stevens pp. 152-159.

Friday: **ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE in WEBCOURSES by 11:59pm TODAY (20%)**

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**Week 7: Chapter 7: Twentieth- and Twenty-First-Century Historicist Approaches & Chapter 8: Twentieth- and Twenty-First-Century Political Approaches**

Monday: Selections from Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish*, and Stevens pp. 160-179;

Wednesday: Selections from Marx’s *Capital*, Vol 1: “The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof” (1867) and Stevens pp. 180-193

Friday: **Participation Assignment #6 (worth 1%): particulars TBA**

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**Week 8: Chapter 8 cont’d:**

Monday: Selections from Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), and Stevens pp. 184-202

Wednesday: Selections from Said’s *Orientalism* (1978), and Stevens pp. 202-210

Friday: **Participation Assignment #7 (worth 1%): particulars TBA**

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**Week 9: Chapter 8 cont’d**

Monday: Selections from Spivak’s “Can the Subaltern Speak?” (first published 1985; we are reading the 1999 revised and expanded publication)

Wednesday: Selections from Anzaldúa’s *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987)

Friday: **Participation Assignment #8 (worth 1%):**

Exam Study Guide II (Quiz): This is the second of three “Exam Study Guide” quizzes. Please log in to Webcourses to find the quiz. It will remain open until Friday at 11:59pm, and it will allow multiple attempts. Please continue to re-take the quiz until you have achieved a score of 100%!

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**Week 10: Chapter 9: Twentieth- and Twenty-First-Century Psychoanalytic Approaches**

Monday: Selections from bell hooks’s “Postmodern Blackness” (1990)

Wednesday: selections from Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* and Sara Ahmed's "Feminist Killjoy" (2010)

Friday: **Participation Assignment #9 (worth 2%): Mini Research Proposal!**

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**Week 11: Chapter 9 cont'd**

Monday: Intro to Freud: Stevens pp. 211-218

Wednesday: Freud's "The 'Uncanny'" (1919) (quite long!)

Friday: **Participation Assignment #10 (worth 1%): particulars TBA**

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**Week 12: Chapter 9 cont'd**

Monday: Lacan's "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience" (1949)

Wednesday: Blakey Vermeule's "The Cognitive Dimension" from *Why Do We Care about Literary Characters?* (2009)

Friday: **Participation Assignment #11 (worth 1%): particulars TBA**

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**Week 13: Chapter 10: Applying Literary Theory to Texts**

Monday: **VETERANS DAY \* NO CLASSES**

Wednesday: Selection from Lauren Berlant's "Cruel Optimism"

Friday: **Participation Assignment #12 (worth 1%):**

Exam Study Guide III (Quiz): This is the last of three "Exam Study Guide" quizzes. Please log in to Webcourses to find the quiz. It will remain open until Friday at 11:59pm, and it will allow multiple attempts. Please continue to re-take the quiz until you have achieved a score of 100%!

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**Week 14: Chapter 10: Applying Literary Theory to Texts**

Monday: TBA

Wednesday: TBA

Friday: **Participation Assignment #13 (worth 1%): particulars TBA**

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**Week 15: Chapter 10: Applying Literary Theory to Texts**

Monday: **Participation Assignment #5 (worth 2%): In-class peer review of Research Paper** (I will also glance at papers and answer questions. Bring what you have—partial marks will be awarded for partial drafts! 😊)

Wednesday: **Final Exam prep**

Friday: Last day! **RESEARCH PAPER DUE**

**EXAM time TBA (will be open book and online!)**