

Eng 101 – Introduction to Literary Criticism
Fall 2005, San José State University
Section 1: T/Th 10:30-11:45, SH 435

Dr. Katherine D. Harris

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Office Hours: T/Th 12:30-2:30

Friday 12-1

Course Description & Student Objectives:

Study and application of various historical and contemporary approaches to literature, such as formalism, structuralism, new criticism, cultural studies, new historicism, post-structuralism, Marxism, post-colonialism, feminism, etc. Application of these approaches to works of literature.

Required Texts & Materials:

- *Texts and Contexts* by Steven Lynn, 4th ed.
- *Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. Ed. Vincent B. Leitch
- *A Dictionary of Cultural and Critical Theory*. Ed. Michael Payne.
- *A Writer's Reference* by Diana Hacker, 5th ed. – Suggested
- Dictionary, Collegiate-level – Suggested
- Email Account

Grading Policy & Requirements

- 10% Class Discussion & Participation
- 10% In-Class Response Essays (10)
- 20% Critical Review Essay (2 pp)
- 20% Presentation & Essay (4-5pp)
- 20% Mid-Term Exam (4-5pp)
- 20% Final Exam/Essay (6-7pp)

Class Discussion & Participation:

Because we meet only once a week, the reading load for each class is dense with theoretical articles along with the more light-hearted materials. All will require much discussion during our meetings. For these reasons, your participation during class is imperative. Since this class is largely discussion-based, arrive to class prepared with the proper readings. Bring the appropriate texts to our class meetings. Without them in front of you, you will get lost. If you miss class, contact a classmate for notes, reading assignments and handouts – or check our Course Website.

In-Class Response Essays:

Because literary criticism is as much about reading as it is writing, we will spend the first 10-20 minutes (in only 10 sessions) writing an essay response to an assigned question about the current reading assignment. To prepare for this essay, pick one or two quotes from the days' readings – quotes that you would like to write explore further or about which you have questions. Each in-class essay will receive a grade based on the *quality* of your response. This weekly writing will also allow you to explore methodologies based on focused questions, clarify your thoughts on a theoretical model or comment on your peer's presentation. There will be no make-up for an in-class response essay.

Critical Review Essay:

Scholars use a variety of theoretical models to analyze literature. To gain an understanding of just how various models are used, you will write a 2-page review of a published example of literary scholarship (article assigned by me) to see how other scholars perform their work. MLA style for documentation, in-text citation methods and Works Cited are required. If you need help on MLA style, please see me before submitting anything. (Essay grades will be reduced for inaccurate citation and Works Cited submissions.) See also our Course Website for MLA style online resources. In addition to handing in a paper copy, your essay will be submitted to Turnitin.com for verification.

Presentation & Essay:

To gain a better understanding of at least one critical theory, each student will give a presentation on a particular model, using a text to exemplify it. The presentation will include a *brief* summary of one literary critical model, summary and discussion of an article (from *Norton*) pertaining to that model and an analysis of a sample text (taken from the corresponding *Texts & Contexts* chapter). The following week, a 4-5 page written essay is due. The essay will contain all of the elements that you presented, but in greater detail and in a more formal style (MLA style, including a Works Cited). (Essay grades will be reduced for inaccurate citation and Works Cited submissions.) In addition to handing in a paper copy, your essay will be submitted to Turnitin.com for verification.

Mid-Term Essay:

After viewing *The Matrix* (in-class), students will be given the mid-term essay question. Your resulting 4-5 page essay is due the following week. The exam will require you to apply particular critical models to an analysis of the movie, including an explanation of key terms and use of at least one theorist (and his/her articles). MLA style, including a Works Cited is expected. In addition to handing in a paper copy, your essay will be submitted to Turnitin.com for verification.

Final Exam/Essay:

The 6-7 page final exam/essay will be based on a literary text to which you will apply a critical model. This text must be a different genre from the literary text included in your presentation. We will discuss the Final Exam towards the conclusion of the semester. In addition to handing in a paper copy, your essay will be submitted to Turnitin.com for verification.

Late Assignments/Essays

If you cannot meet a deadline, you must contact me prior to our class meeting to discuss the situation. If this is not done, for everyday that an essay is late, you will be penalized one grade step (A becomes A-, A- becomes a B+, etc.). Unless you have prior permission (or the assignment specifically requests it), absolutely no assignment will be accepted via email.

Departmental Grading Policy

The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the official SJSU Catalog (“The Grading System”). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A = excellent; B = above average; C = average; D = below average; F = failure. Courses graded according to the A, B, C, No Credit system shall follow the same pattern, except that NC, for No Credit, shall replace D or F.

In English Department courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing

as well as the quality of ideas being conveyed. All student writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs. Essays in this class will be graded according to the following SJSU academic standards for assessment:

- The “**A**” essay will be well-organized and well-developed, demonstrating a clear understanding and fulfillment of the assignment. It will show the student’s ability to use language effectively and to construct sentences distinguished by syntactic complexity and variety. Such essays will be essentially free from grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors.
- The “**B**” essay will demonstrate competence in the same categories as the “A” essay. The chief difference is that the “B” essay will show some weaknesses in one of those categories. It may neglect one of the assigned tasks, show less facility of expression, or contain some minor grammatical, mechanical, or usage flaws.
- The “**C**” essay will complete all tasks set by the assignment, but show weaknesses in fundamentals, usually development, with barely enough specific information to illustrate the experience or support generalizations. The sentence construction may be less mature, and the use of language less effective and correct than the “B” essay.
- The “**D**” essay will neglect one of the assigned tasks and be noticeably superficial in its treatment of the assignment—that is, too simplistic or too short. The essay may reveal some problems in development, with insufficient specific information to illustrate the experience or support generalizations. It will contain grammatical, mechanical, and/or usage errors that are serious and/or frequent enough to interfere substantially with the writer’s ability to communicate.
- The “**F**” essay will demonstrate a striking underdevelopment of ideas and insufficient or unfocused organization. It will contain serious grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors that render some sentences incomprehensible.

Classroom Environment

Prompt arrival is essential. Entering class late is disruptive to the discussion and disrespectful to other students as well as to me. Do not interrupt class if you are late. Wait until an appropriate moment in which to enter. If I see a pattern of absences or late attendance, we will meet to discuss the problem and the impact on your grade. While in class, please turn off or leave outside any pagers, cell phones or other electronic devices.

Email

I will amass a class email list and will occasionally send out information regarding our meetings or the readings. (Please provide an email address that you check regularly.) When emailing me, please consider it a formal communication: include the appropriate salutation, your name and your question/comment. Know that long conversations over email are not fruitful (merely because of the limitations of the technology). If you have an extended question or dilemma, please visit me during office hours.

Course Website – <http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/harris/>

As we move along in the semester, course materials will be posted on the course website. After you have entered, simply click on English 101 to print copies of lost documents, see course reserves, check my office hours, find Theory websites or double-check the meaning of “plagiarism.”

Plagiarism

Plagiarism means representing any idea, expression of an idea, or work of another as if it were your own, on essays, exams, or other assignments. Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic standards and the rules of every university, including SJSU. Plagiarism is dishonest, since you steal the language and ideas of the person who honestly worked hard to produce this text. Sometimes students resort to plagiarism because of feelings of desperation caused by leaving the assignment to the last minute. Whenever in doubt, speak to me. Turning in plagiarized work may result in immediate failure in the course and could result in dismissal from SJSU, since I am required to report all cases of plagiarism to the appropriate university authorities. See King Library's definition, University policy and tutorial: http://www.sjlibrary.org/services/literacy/info_comp/plagiarism.htm

LARC (Learning Assistance Resource Center)

The Learning Assistance Resource Center is an on-campus facility that provides peer tutoring for SJSU students. LARC offers assistance with writing, and if you feel as if you need intensive help beyond what I can offer during office hours, please request a writing tutor. The Center is located in The Student Services Center in the 10th Street Parking Garage, Room 600. The phone number is (408) 924-2587.

Disabled Student Services

Students who require assistance due to a disability should contact the Disability Resource Center as soon as possible. The Center is located at Admin. 110, and its phone number is (408) 924-5990. Submit a copy of their report to me by our next class meeting.

Dr. Katherine D. Harris
Intro. to Literary Criticism (Eng 101, Sect 3)
Fall 2005

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Indicate if you are an English major, minor or other. Are you a sophomore, junior or senior?
2. Do you have access to a computer at home? Yes No
(If not, become familiar with SJSU's computer labs.)
3. *Briefly* summarize the important policies presented on this syllabus.
4. Write one or two sentences defining "plagiarism."
5. Have you taken any literature courses on critical theory? If so, what course(s)?
6. Write a *brief* paragraph explaining what "theory" means to you.
7. Do you have a favorite author? Who? Why?

By signing below, the individual acknowledges receiving (and reading) a copy of the class syllabus that details the schedule of work, participation requirements, grading criteria and other important information. The individual also acknowledges understanding of plagiarism and its consequences.

Name: _____

Signature: _____