My office hours are T Th 11:30-12:30 - and by appointment or chance - in Hagey Hall 263. My phone extension is 2419.

This course will introduce you to some theories of literature and theories of criticism. Two interrelated questions will be primary: What is art (or literature as art)? and, What is language? More generally we will be concerned with the nature of representation: how does something called "life" get into and out of texts? This will lead to questions about what writers and readers do with literature, and about the social and political contexts in which they do what they do.

The course is not a historical survey, but our readings from The Theory of Criticism will trace roughly the shift from 19th to 20th-century thinking about literature.

TEXTS:
Raman Selden, ed. The Theory of Criticism, Longman
Gerald Graff, "Disliking Books at an Early Age" (on 1-hour reserve)
Dick Hebdige, "Culture" (on reserve)
Andrew Ross, "The Day Lady Died" (on reserve)

NOTE: We will read literary texts incidentally, on overhead and handouts.

SCHEDULE:

The schedule has 3 parts:

I some inherited senses of literature and criticism (Arnold, romanticism, realism, symbolism, modernism vs tradition)

II thinking about structure, how it generates meaning (shift from content to device)

III putting structure into culture, history, and politics

*recommended reading: Selden's introductions to sections of the anthology

PART I

Jan 4, 6 introduction; Graff (on reserve)
Arnold 494-501

Jan 11, 13 Arnold continued; James 501, 503; Lawrence 505-09
Wordsworth 86, 175; Mill 178-82; Keats 306
Plato 12-18; Yeats 31
Jan 18, 20 Zola 51, 54; Auerbach 56; Brecht 66, 70

Jan 25, 27 Pater 249; Huysman 251; Wilde 252; Pound 307, 309

Feb 1, 3 Eliot 310, 313; Shklovsky 275; Jameson 265

PART II
Feb 8, 10 De Saussure 113, 351; Austin 120; Barthes 76, 318
Feb 15, 17 Jakobson 367; Lodge 371; Genette 364

**reading week**

Feb 29, Mar 2 Freud 225; Lacan 236; Kristeva 238

Mar 7, 9 Nietzsche 383; Derrida 385, 386

TEST #2 MARCH 9

PART III
Mar 14, 16 De Beauvoir 533, Showalter 537, Cixous 541
Blake 457 Althusser 459, 460

Mar 21, 23 Althusser continued; Foucault 437; Benjamin 449

Mar 28, 30 Hebdige "Culture"; Ross "The Day Lady Died" (both on reserve)

Apr 4 Ross cont.

ESSAY DUE APRIL 4

ASSIGNMENTS and VALUES:
test 1 (one hour): 15%
test 2 (one hour): 20%
essay (1,000 words): 20%
presentation (20 minutes): 15%
final exam: 30%

test 1:
A few classes ahead of the test date I'll give you an assignment sheet with a set of texts. You will choose one of these texts, and prepare an essay to be written out during the test period (no texts may be used during the test). There are many ways to construct your essay, but may be simplest to provide a brief reading of the primary text (pointing out its formal features, how it works basically, etc.), then explain and apply two readings from The Theory of Criticism (up to Feb. 15) to the primary text. Bear in mind that this test requires you to present an essay - with a thesis and an organized and developing discussion.

test 2:
You will choose one of several questions on a pertinent topic in theory provided ahead of the test date, and answer it by writing, in class on March 9, an essay relating the topic to three readings from The Theory of Criticism covered to date.
essay (1,000 words):
The task here will be the same as in test one, with some restrictions about choices of theorists (these will be noted on the test handout). This assignment, however, is a formal essay to be handed in to me.

Final exam:
Two essay questions, same in format as test 2. Questions will be distributed at the end of classes.

Presentation:
About once a week a group of students will present a reading of a primary text drawing on the ideas of one, or perhaps two, theorists from The Theory Of Criticism. The group may choose any text it likes, with the exception of works on the syllabus of other English courses. You should aim for about 20 minutes, at most 30 minutes. Please sign up by the end of the second week of classes.

The group must see me ahead of time for guidance and/or confirmation of what it plans to do. The presentation should include a basic reading of the primary text, a brief review of the theory's salient points, as well as the application of theory to text.

The presentation will be graded for clarity and organization, the interest, surprise, and accuracy of analysis, as well your address to the class, including eliciting and handling of questions.

Notes:

My office hours are for you. Please do not hesitate to see me about any aspect of the course, especially as you prepare your essays.

Tests must not be missed, and cannot be made up without documentation indicating positive and compelling reasons for absence. The essay, due on the last day of classes, will not be accepted late.