My office hours are T 2:30-4, F 12:45-1:30 and by appointment. My office is HH 263. My phone number is 888-4567, x2419.

This course will introduce you to some theories of literature and theories of criticism. Two interrelated questions will be primary: What is literature (or, more generally, what is art)? and, What is language? A good deal of the course 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, beginning with Matthew Arnold’s influential account of culture and ending with the re-definition of culture in “Cultural Studies.”

**TEXTS:**
Raman Selden, ed. The Theory of Criticism from Plato to the Present, Longman
Gerald Graff, “Disliking Books at an Early Age” (on 1-hour reserve)
Jonathan Culler, “Performatively” (on 1-hour reserve)
Dick Hebdige, “From Culture to Hegemony” (on 1-hour reserve)
Andrew Ross, “The Day Lady Died” (on 1-hour reserve)

**NOTE:** We will read literary texts on overheads and handouts that I bring to class.

**SCHEDULE:**
* all readings are in The Theory of Criticism, except where noted
* recommended reading: Selden’s introductions to sections of the anthology
* slight adjustments to the schedule may be made as we go; only regular attendance will allow you to keep in touch with the course as it evolves

Jan 6, 8 introduction; Graff (on reserve); Arnold 494-501
Jan 13, 15 Arnold continued; James 501, 503; Lawrence 505-09; Wordsworth 86, 175; Mill 178-82; Keats 306; Plato 12-18; Yeats 31
Jan 20, 22 Zola 51, 54; Auerbach 56; Brecht 66, 70
Jan 27, 29 Pater 249; Huysman 251; Wilde 252; Pound 307, 309
Feb 3, 5 Eliot 310, 313; Shklovsky 275; Jameson 265
Feb 10, 12 De Saussure 113, 351; Barthes 76, 318

**reading week**

Feb 24, 26 Jakobson 367; Lodge 371; Genette 364; Propp 353
Mar 2, 4 Freud 225; Lacan 236
Mar 9, 11 Nietzsche 383; Derrida 385, 386; De Beauvoir 533, Showalter 537, Cixous 541
Mar 16, 18 Culler “Performatively” (on reserve); Blake 457, Althusser 459, 460, Brecht 66 (again)
Mar 23, 25 Foucault 437; Benjamin 449; Hebdige "From Hegemony to Culture"(on reserve)
Mar 30, Apr 1 Ross "The Day Lady Died" (on reserve)

ESSAY DUE APRIL 2 IN MY OFFICE
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:** February 12

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 that draws on two readings from the syllabus to date (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 your two readings by theorists to the primary text.

Bear in mind that the test requires you to present an essay - with a thesis and an organized and developing discussion.

**test 2:** March 4

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, an essay relating the topic to three readings from The Theory of Criticism covered to date chosen by you.

**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), and with the difference that you will draw on three theorists. In addition, this assignment will require a formal essay to be handed in to me. The essay is due on, April 2, the last day of classes. It should be delivered to me in my office.

**Final exam:**

Two essay questions, same in format as test 2. Questions will be distributed at the last class.

**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 (literary, visual, musical, etc.), with the exception of works on the syllabus of other English courses. Note that you must be able to present the text to us within the limits of the time and space of the presentation. 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, and the application of theory to the text.

The presentation will be graded for clarity and organization, the interest, surprise, and accuracy of analysis, and for the quality of your address to the class, including eliciting and handling of questions. Do not use overheads, except for showing your primary text or necessary illustrations. The substance of your presentation must be delivered orally.

**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. Likewise, the essay, due on the last day of classes, will not be accepted late without documentation indicating positive and compelling reasons for lateness.

Please be sure that you understand the concept of plagiarism. This is your responsibility. You can view the university policy on plagiarism online. It is policy 71.