ENGLISH 251B -- LITERARY CRITICISM: THEORY
WINTER 1997

Professor D. Denisoff (Office: HH 246; Phone: 885-1211 ext. 2124)

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES
While 251B will involve the reading and discussion of literature, the primary aim of the course is to give students an understanding of various theoretical approaches to interpreting literature in general. Drawing on writing from Plato to the present, classes will involve discussions around literary, theoretical, and sociopolitical issues. Students will be encouraged to recognize and to question their own theoretical and sociopolitical assumptions. They will also be asked to discover, discuss, and write on the benefits and drawbacks of the approaches addressed in class.

TEXTS
Selden, Raman, ed. The Theory of Criticism: From Plato to the Present.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Midterm Exam 20%
Annotated Bibliography 15%
Essay (1500-1750 words) 30%
Final Exam 35%

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND ESSAY
The annotated bibliography is part of your preliminary research for your essay. The essay itself must compare and contrast two particular theoretical approaches taken from two separate class modules; as much focus must be given to the theories as to the literature discussed. Use any text or texts from Wilde's plays, stories, or essays to strengthen your argument. You are free to use other primary texts, but you must consult with me first. Also consult with me regarding your thesis before beginning the annotated bibliography or the essay.

The bibliography and essay must be typed (except under special circumstances), and in MLA style and format throughout, including the first page, citations, end notes, and works cited. Assignments are due at the start of class on the due date. Extensions must be arranged with me in advance of the due date. Documentation, such as a doctors note, is generally required for any extension to be granted. Because assignments will be returned five days after the standard due date, extensions beyond 5 days will only be granted in exceptional instances and when documentation is provided. Penalties of 2% per day for the first five days of lateness and 4% per day thereafter will be deducted from assignment grades, unless you provide documentation for a cause that justifies the paper's lateness and explains why an appropriate extension was not secured in advance. In fairness to other students, Saturday and Sunday are counted in all "per day" calculations.
PLAGIARISM
Students are advised to read the summary of the Student Academic Discipline Policy in the Undergraduate Calendar which states in part:
Together with cheating, theft, and falsification, academic offenses include plagiarism, the act of taking ideas of writings from another person and presenting them as one’s own. While it is completely acceptable to use ideas, and even quote passages from other scholars, their work must be completely and unambiguously acknowledged and referenced. If you are unsure about what is considered acceptable practice in this regard, you should seek guidance from the professor teaching the course.

OFFICE HOURS
My office hours are Tuesday 5:30 to 6:30 and Thursday from 3:00 to 4:00. If these times are inconvenient due to a conflict with your class schedule, we can arrange another time and/or day to meet. If you have to get in touch with me and I am not in my office, leave a message with my voice-mail (ext. 2124).

TENTATIVE LECTURE SCHEDULE

Week 1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION: Requirements, Expectations, Procedures.
Module I.1 "Imaginative Representation" (Read only Plato, Plotinus, Yeats, Stevens)
Week 2 Module I.2 "Mimesis and Realism" (Read only Aristotle, Lukács, Barthes)
Wilde: "Salomé"
Week 3 Module II.4 "Subjective Criticism and the Reader’s Response": (Read only Aristotle, Richards, Empson, Jauss, Ricoeur)
Wilde: "The Decay of Lying."
- Research Orientation Seminar will be held this week.
Week 4 Module III.1 "The Aesthetic Dimension" (Read only Pater, Huysmans, Bell, Mukarovský, Jameson)
Wilde: "The Young King."
Week 5 Module V.3 "Class and Gender"
Wilde: "The Ballad of Reading Gaol."
Week 6 Module III.4 "Impersonality and the 'Death' of the Author" (Read only Eliot, Wimsatt, Barthes)
MID-TERM EXAM DURING THE SECOND CLASS THIS WEEK
Week 7 WINTER STUDY PERIOD
Week 8 Module III.6 "Structure and System" (Read only Saussure, Propp, Jakobson, Lodge, Culler)
Wilde The Picture of Dorian Gray
Week 9 Module III.3 "Ambiguity and Polysemy"
ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE AT THE START OF THE FIRST CLASS THIS WEEK
In-class essay workshop will be held this week.
Week 10 Module IV.4 "Ideology"
Wilde: "The Importance of Being Earnest."
Week 11 Module IV.2 "History"
PAPER DUE AT THE START OF THE FIRST CLASS THIS WEEK
Week 12 Final Exam Review