

**University of Puerto Rico
Rio Piedras Campus
College of Humanities
English Department**

English 3291: Writing About Literature I
Professor: Nemesio Gil, Ph.D.
Credit Hours: 45 hours/3 credits

Time: Mon/Wed 3:00 p.m.- 4:40 p.m.
Email: nemesio.gil@upr.edu
Office Hrs.: By appointment

Course Description: Introduction to literary analysis, critical theory and critical writing. Students will write a series of critical essays [or perform a series of writing exercises]. This course will also prepare you to do research using Internet sources and the library in order to write an effective literary paper [or prepare for a final writing exercise or exam].

Textbooks: *MLA Handbook Eighth Edition: Official MLA Style* (MLA, 2016): KINDLE or PAPERBACK.
The Norton of Anthology of Theory and Criticism (W.W. Norton and Co., Inc., 2010)
Film Theory and Criticism (Oxford UP, 2004)

Methods of Evaluation Table:

DAILY READINGS AND DISCUSSION	40 pts.
WRITING CLASSWORK	30 pts.
FINAL EXAM	20 pts.
ATTENDANCE	10 pts.
TOTAL	100 pts.

Grading System: A, B, C, D, F.

Methods of Evaluation Summary

DAILY CLASS PARTICIPATION (READINGS AND DISCUSSION) (40 pts.)

Please be ready to discuss your homework readings, individual research, and participate in active discussion **every day**. This is not a lecture hall course. It is imperative students verbalize their analysis of texts and share their findings with their classmates.

WRITING CLASSWORK (30 pts.)

All writing exercises will be performed in the classroom to ensure the development of your critical and organization skills. You will have the opportunity to re-write your classwork following the professor's corrections. Hand it in when assigned.

FINAL ORAL PRESENTATION (20 pts.)

A final research outline and oral presentation on PowerPoint completes total points' requirements. Details on subject and procedure in class.

ATTENDANCE (10 pts.)

Continuous attendance is required and crucial for the successful completion of the semester. Students have a 2-limit absence per semester without penalties (with or without doctor's note, etc.). After the second absence, there will be a **deduction of 5 pts.** off your **TOTAL FINAL GRADE POINTS** (with or without doctor's note, etc.).

*The alternative teaching modality of 11.25 hours will be used on at least two occasions during the semester and according to the needs of the semester in course. This may include online forums, special library assignments and research. It is recommended to use the assigned regular hours of the course to this purpose, as you can take advantage of the scheduled time without interrupting the rest of your academic responsibilities.

Rules of the Game

The syllabus is a contract between professor and students. The following rules are firm and emphatic in order to safeguard daily responsible and hardworking attitude.

1. **ABSOLUTELY NO** electronic devices (cellular, laptop, tablet, etc.) will be allowed during class. They must be **TURNED OFF** and at eyesight your desk **AT ALL TIMES**. A **deduction of 5 pts.** off your **TOTAL FINAL GRADE POINTS** will apply each time you are caught sending messages. Do not take it to the restroom to answer calls, send texts or do business, please.

2. **BE ON TIME**. Every three “tardies” have a **deduction of 5 pts.** off your **TOTAL FINAL GRADE POINTS**. Putting your backpack in the classroom early, leaving for the restroom, and coming back 15 minutes later will be marked as LATE. Waiting for the professor to call the roll, leaving for the restroom, and coming back 15 minutes later will **ALSO** be marked as LATE.

3. **NO MAKE-UP CLASSWORK (“NO REPOSICIONES”).**

4. **PLAGIARISM** (taking others’ information or work or ideas and presenting them as your own) is a dishonest practice. Always give credit to sources’ authors. **INTEGRITY** is the ingredient of a fruitful life.

****Los estudiantes que reciban servicios de Rehabilitación Vocacional deben comunicarse con el/la profesor/a al inicio del semestre para planificar el acomodo razonable y equipo asistido necesario conforme a las recomendaciones de la Oficina de Asuntos para las Personas con Impedimento (OAPI) del Decanato de Estudiantes. También aquellos estudiantes con necesidades especiales que requieren algún tipo de asistencia deben comunicarse con el/la profesor/a al inicio del curso.**

Course Outline

INTRODUCTION: TEXT and THEORY

Week 1

Mon. MARCH 12

INTRODUCTION

LECTURE: “What is a text?”

Wed. MARCH 14

LECTURE: “Written texts, visuals texts, and literature”

Week 2

Mon. MARCH 19

LECTURE: “The moving text and the moving image”

Wed. MARCH 21

HOMEWORK DISCUSSION: “Introduction” to Literary Theory-Norton Anthology” (Part 1)

POSTCOLONIALISM

Week 3

Mon. MARCH 26

HOMEWORK DISCUSSION: “Introduction” to Literary Theory-Norton Anthology (Part 2)

LECTURE: “The Death of the Author” by Roland Barthes (pp. 1322-1331)

Wed. MARCH 28

**HOMEWORK DISCUSSION: “The African and Creole Slave Contrasted” by Anonymous
Writing classwork #1 on literary theory**

POSTCOLONIALISM

Week 4

Mon. APRIL 2

HOMEWORK DISCUSSION (PART 1): “Introduction” to *Orientalism* by Edward W. Said

Wed. APRIL 4

HOMEWORK DISCUSSION (PART 2): “Introduction” to *Orientalism* by Edward W. Said (pp. 1-6), Screening: Videos, visuals, etc.

MARXISM

Week 5

Mon. APRIL 9

LECTURE: Writing the theoretical/critical block (MLA style)

Wed. APRIL 11

LECTURE: “Elements of the short story: An Overview”

Writing classwork #3 on Postcolonialism

Week 6

Mon. APRIL 16

HOMEWORK DISCUSSION: “The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson

Wed. APRIL 18

HOMEWORK DISCUSSION: “Marxism and the ubiquitous commodity”

***Reminder for next week: Research on Dramatic Theory and Drama Theory**

DRAMATIC THEORY and DRAMA THEORY

Week 7

Mon. APRIL 23

AT HOME: Individual research on “Dramatic Theory and Drama Theory” (i.e., Stanislavsky, Brecht, Meisner, Hagen, Brooks, etc.) to hand in on next class

Wed. APRIL 25

HOMEWORK DISCUSSION: “Dramatic Theory and Drama Theory” individual research

Writing classwork #4 on Marxism

Week 8

Mon. APRIL 30

HOMEWORK DISCUSSION: “The Epistolary Novel” supplement + “From *Dangerous Liaisons* (The letters, 1789)” by Choderlos De Laclos

Wed. MAY 2

HOMEWORK DISCUSSION: “The Epistolary Novel” supplement + “From *Dangerous Liaisons* (The letters, 1789)” by Choderlos De Laclos

Week 9

Mon. MAY 7

HOMEWORK DISCUSSION: “From *Dangerous Liaisons* (The play)” by Christopher Hampton

LECTURE: Parts of a play

Writing classwork #5 on Dramatic Theory

Wed. MAY 9

Theater video clips analysis and discussion

Week 10

Mon. MAY 14

“From *Dangerous Liaisons* (The screenplay)” by Christopher Hampton

Film clip: “From *Dangerous Liaisons* (1988)” dir. Stephen Frears

NEW HISTORICISM: THEOLOGICAL TEXT as HISTORICAL LITERATURE

Wed. MAY 16

LECTURE: “New Historicism”

Writing exercise #6 on *Dangerous Liaisons*

Week 11

Mon. MAY 21

HOMEWORK DISCUSSION: The historical text as theological literature (Part 1)

“From *The Old Testament: Kings and Chronicles*”

Wed. MAY 23

HOMEWORK DISCUSSION: The historical text as theological literature (Part 2)

“From *The Old Testament: Kings and Chronicles*”

Week 12

Mon. MAY 28

LECTURE and FILM CLIPS: “From *Game of Thrones*”

Writing exercise # 7 on New Historicism

Wed. MAY 30

FINAL WRITING EXAM

END OF SEMESTER