

English 3291: Writing About Literature

Fall 2021

Instructor: Marcos H. Pechio
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Hours: T,TH 1:00-2:20
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Required Texts: Rivkin and Ryan, *Literary Theory: An Anthology, 3rd Edition*

Recommended Text: *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers 7th Edition*

Objectives: This course is designed to help you improve your writing and critical reading skills, while also developing your knowledge of literary studies and criticism.

Attendance: You will be allowed 4 absences without repercussions. Each absence over the 3 costs you 1/3 of a letter grade. I do not differentiate between excused and unexcused absences, so use your 4 wisely. Keep in mind that you are still responsible for the work on days you miss.

*Due to the current pandemic, this course is conducted fully online and will meet synchronically 3h a week through the Google Meet platform. Expect invites to be delivered daily to your institutional email, until further notice.

Requirements:

Participation: First and foremost, you will be expected to **complete ALL of the reading assignments**. Participation will constitute 10% of your overall grade. This course will not be designed around lectures. Rather, we will spend our time discussing the reading as a class and in smaller groups. To make this a worthwhile experience, we all need to come to class prepared to offer our own insights on that day's reading. Some of the texts will be challenging, but difficult reading can still help you generate interesting questions. In other words, I will not expect you to arrive at class with all the answers, but I will expect you to demonstrate that you have attempted to identify the questions that are raised by each of the texts. You will also be asked to give an oral presentation on your research paper at the end of the semester.

Graded Work: (Response Papers) Each student will complete a **3 page Response Paper** for each of the 3 sections of *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, plus K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* This makes a total of **4 response papers**. I expect these to engage with the issues raised in the reading or in the case of *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (as well as selected poems) to engage in a critical/theoretical analysis of the text. To clarify, I am not looking for a book report or summary, or a "how this essay/book relates to my life" type essay. Rather, you will be expected to employ the critical, analytical, and rhetorical skills modeled for you in the essays we will read. Be aware that you can only address so much in 3 pages, so keep the focus concentrated. I will allow you to revise the first response paper. You will have one week

from the time you get the original grade to hand in the revised response.

(Final Paper) Each student will also complete a **10 page Researched Essay which should be a critical/theoretical analysis of a work(s) of literature (worth 40% of your total grade).**

While you will be graded on the final product, you will also be required to complete and hand in earlier stages of this project, to include a **paper proposal or abstract**, as well as **clusters and 1st and final outline** of the project. You will also keep a **SOURCES folder** with an **annotated bibliography** for all cited sources in your final essay. Failure to complete any stage of the project, will result in a deduction of points from the final paper grade.

ALL papers should be double-spaces with 1" margins and should follow MLA guidelines.

Grading:

Response Papers	40%
Annotated Bibliography	10%
Final Paper	40%
Participation	10%

Paper Format

All papers **MUST** be TYPED (12 pt font) and double-spaced on 8 1/2 x 11-inch paper with no more than 1 inch margins, and should follow MLA format. You must also title all papers and include page numbers. You should keep in mind that mechanics (spelling, punctuation, grammar, usage, citation, etc...) counts toward the grades on your papers, so please leave yourself time to proofread and edit. Being able to write an acceptable college level paper means mastering documentation, technique, usage, punctuation, and stylistics.

Warning: Plagiarism of someone else's work (student or professional) equals automatic failure of the course.

Schedule: (Subject to revision and to be supplemented with handouts). **NOTE:** All theory related readings are excerpts, compiled in Rivkin and Ryan's *Literary Theory: An Anthology*.

T Introduction to course
Th Richter, *Falling into Theory*, "Introduction" (PDF) | Rivkin and Ryan "A Short History of Theory", xi

Part I: Structuralism and Linguistics | Psychoanalysis | Critical Theory, Marxism, History

T Intro, p.131 | Saussure, "Course in General Linguistics" | Culler, "The Linguistic Foundation" | Foucault, "What is an Author?"
Th Intro, p.567 | Freud, "Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego" | Lacan, "The Symbolic Order (from "The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis")*Provided by the professor, "The Mirror Stage as Formative of

the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience”

- T Intro, p.711 | Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses” | Gramsci, “Hegemony” (from “The Formations of The Intellectuals)*Provided by the professor. | Walter Benjamin, “Theses on the Philosophy of History”
- Th Pre-writing Workshop | (Poetry): Frost, “Fire and Ice”, “Nothing Gold Can Stay” | Williams, “Queen-Anne’s Lace”

- T Writing
- Th **Due: First Response Paper**

Part II: Post-Structuralism | Cultural Studies* provided by the professor.

- T Intro, p.445 | Deleuze, “What Is Becoming?” | Derrida, “Différance” | Barthes, “The Death of the Author”
- Th Kristeva*, “Revolution in Poetic Language” | Baudrillard*, “The System of Objects”
- T Baudrillard*, “Symbolic Exchange and Death” | Deleuze & Guattari*, “A Thousand Plateaus”
- Th Intro, p.1025* | Horkheimer and Adorno*, “The Culture Industry as Mass Deception” | Bourdieu, “Structures and the Habitus” | Moretti, “Planet Hollywood”
- T Pre-writing workshop | (Poetry) Frost, “Departmental”, “Provide, Provide!” | Lowell, “Skunk Hour”

- Th Writing

- T 10/4 **Due: Second Response Paper** | *Blade Runner* (film)
- Th 10/6 *Blade Runner* (discussion)

- T 10/11 K. Dick, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (criticism)
- Th 10/13 K. Dick, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (criticism)

- T 10/18 **Due: Third Response Paper** | Choosing a topic for Final Papers | Pre- Writing and Clustering Workshop
- Th 10/20 Research Day (UPR database)

- T 10/25 Workshop
- Th 10/27 Workshop
- Due: Initial clusters, sources folder and abstract for final papers**

Part III: Gender Studies and Queer Theory | Post-Colonial Studies

- T 11/1 Intro p.893 | Rubin, “The Traffic in Women” | Cixous, “The Laugh of the Medusa”
- Th 11/3 Butler, “Imitation and Gender Insubordination” | Mohanty, “Women Workers and Capitalist Scripts”
- T 11/8 Puar, “I Would Rather Be a Cyborg Than a Goddess”: Becoming Intersectional in Assemblage Theory” | Esteban Muñoz, “Cruising Utopia: “Introduction” and “Queerness as Horizon: Utopian Hermeneutics in the Face of Gay Pragmatism”
- Th 11/10 Intro, p.1099 | Morrison, “Playing in the Dark” | Appadurai, “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy” | Achebe, “An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad’s Heart of Darkness”
- T 11/15 Pre-writing | (Poetry) Plath, “Daddy” | Clifton, “Wild Blessings” | Baraka, “A Poem for Willie Best”
- Th 11/17 Writing
Due: Fourth Response Paper
- T 11/22 Complete full cluster and definite outline for Final Papers
- Th 11/24 **Thanksgiving Break**
- T 11/29 Writing
- Th 12/1 Presentations
- T 12/6 Presentations (cont.)
Due: Final Paper with Annotated Bibliography

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 asistivo 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 de algún tip de asistencia o acomodo deben comunicarse con el/la profesor/a.

Integridad académica: La Universidad de Puerto Rico promueve los más altos estándares de integridad académica y científica. El Artículo 6.2 del Reglamento General de Estudiantes de la UPR (Certificación Núm. 13, 2009-2010, de la Junta de Síndicos) establece que “la deshonestidad académica incluye, pero no se limita a: acciones fraudulentas, la obtención de notas o grados académicos valiéndose de falsas o fraudulentas simulaciones, copiar total o parcialmente la labor académica de otra persona, plagiar total o parcialmente el trabajo de otra persona, copiar total o parcialmente las respuestas de otra persona a las preguntas de un examen,

haciendo o consiguiendo que otro tome en su nombre cualquier prueba o examen oral o escrito, así como la ayuda o facilitación para que otra persona incurra en la referida conducta”. Cualquiera de estas acciones estará sujeta a sanciones disciplinarias en conformidad con el procedimiento disciplinario establecido en el Reglamento General de Estudiantes de la UPR vigente.

Sexual harassment policy: “The University of Puerto Rico prohibits discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in any of its forms including that of sexual harassment. According to the Institutional Policy Against Harassment at the University of Puerto Rico, Certification Num. 130, 2014-2015 from the Board of Governors, any student subjected to acts constituting sexual harassment, must turn to the Office of the Student Ombudsperson, the Office of the Dean of Students, and/or the Coordinator of the Office of Compliance with Title IX for an orientation and/or a formal complaint.