

English 3291-0U1: Writing About Literature 1

Department of English (Humanities)
University of Puerto Rico - Río Piedras
Spring 2023
Tue-Thu 11:30-12:50, LPM 311

Instructor: Eugene H. Speakes Díaz

Email: eugene.speakes@upr.edu

Office Location and Hours: TBD

Course Description:

This course will introduce students to some of the influential ideas, schools of thought, and thinkers that have defined the practice of literary analysis and critical theory. In the process, students will be encouraged to develop and engage in their own literary analysis and criticism, while they simultaneously further develop their writing skills. This course will better prepare students to conduct research using various resources and to write effective and efficient papers.

Requirements: Works required include:

- Lexies. These are 1-2 page reactions centered on a singular salient feature found in a text. Students can react to an idea or apply a concept to another text of their choosing. (15%)
- Four-page midterm paper. Prompts will be handed out. Due March 14 (15%)
- Seven-page final research paper. Due May 25th. (30%)
- Participation and quizzes. (40%)
 - As part of the participation element, each student will be asked to help lead discussion once during the semester. A list will be handed out for discussion selection early in the semester.

Texts: - Philip K. Dick – *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*. Del Rey, 1968.

- Robert Dale Parker - *Critical Theory: A Reader for Literary and Cultural Studies*. Oxford University Press, 2012.

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Week 1	Thu Jan 26	Introduction
Week 2 - Foundational Texts	Tue Jan 31	Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels - The German Ideology Robert Dale Parker - Marxism (Key Concepts and first How to Interpret segment)
	Thu Feb 2	Sigmund Freud - The Premises and Technique of Interpretation, The Manifest Content of Dreams and the Latent Dream-thoughts Robert Dale Parker - Psychoanalysis (Key Concepts and first two How to Interpret segments)
Week 3 - Foundational Texts	Tue Feb 7	Lexie #1 Due Ferdinand de Saussure - Course in General Linguistics Robert Dale Parker - Structuralism (Key Concepts and How to Interpret: Structuralism in Cultural and Literary Studies)
	Thu Feb 9	Simone de Beauvoir - Myth and Reality Robert Dale Parker - Feminism (What is Feminism?, Early Feminist Criticism and Contemporary Criticism, Sex and Gender, Feminisms, and How to Interpret: Feminist Examples)
Week 4	Tue Feb 14	Lexie #2 Due Philip K. Dick – <i>Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?</i>
	Thu Feb 16	Philip K. Dick – <i>Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?</i> (If needed.)
Week 5 - Historicism and Poststructuralism	Tue Feb 21	Michel Foucault - What is an Author?; Panopticism Robert Dale Parker - Foucault

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Week 5 - cont. Deconstruction and Cultural Studies	Thu Feb 23	Lexie #3 Due Roland Barthes - The Death of the Author Robert Dale Parker - Deconstruction (Key Concepts and How to Interpret: Deconstructionist Example)
Week 6	Tue Feb 28	Walter Benjamin - The Work of Art in the Age of Its Mechanical Reproducibility Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno - The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception
Week 7	Tue Mar 7	Lexie #4 Due Marc Forster – <i>Stranger Than Fiction</i>
	Thu Mar 9	Marc Forster – <i>Stranger Than Fiction</i>
Week 8 - Return to Psychoanalysis	Tue Mar 14	Midterm Paper Due Jacques Lacan - The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience Robert Dale Parker - Jacques Lacan, How to Interpret: A Lacanian Example
	Thu Mar 16	Maya Deren <i>Meshes of the Afternoon</i>
Week 9	Tue Mar 21	Frantz Fanon - The Negro and Psychopathology Robert Dale Parker - Postcolonialism
	Thu Mar 23	Nalo Hopkinson short story “Glass Bottle Tricks”

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Week 10 – Return to Marxism	Tue Mar 28	Final Paper Proposal Due. Antonio Gramsci - The Formation of the Intellectuals Robert Dale Parker - Lukács, Gramsci, and Marxist Interpretations of Culture
	Thu Mar 30	Louis Althusser - Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses Robert Dale Parker - Contemporary Marxism, Ideology, and Agency
Week 11 – Queer Theory	Tue Apr 4	Lexie # 5 Due Judith Butler - Gender Trouble Robert Dale Parker - Queer Theory (Key Concepts in Queer Studies; How to Interpret: A Queer Studies Example)
Week 12	Tue Apr 11	Laura Mulvey - Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema bell hooks - The Oppositional Gaze - Black Female Spectators
	Thu Apr 13	Jean Baudrillard - Simulacra and Simulations
Week 13	Tue Apr 18	Lexie #6 Due Ridley Scott <i>Blade Runner</i>
	Thu Apr 20	Ridley Scott <i>Blade Runner</i>
Week 14	Tue Apr 25	Round Table Discussions

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Caribbean Theory	Thu Apr 27	Roberto Fernández Retamar Caliban: Notes Toward a Discussion of Culture in Our America
Week 15	Tue May 2	Robert Dale Parker - From Orientalism to Deconstruction: Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak
	Thu May 4	Robert Dale Parker - From Orientalism to Deconstruction: Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (cont.)
Week 16	Tue May 9	Perry Henzell <i>The Harder They Come</i>
	Tue May 11	Perry Henzell <i>The Harder They Come</i>
Week 17	May 16	Final Paper Discussions

Policies:

-Attendance is MANDATORY. You are allowed 5 absences throughout the semester without any effect on your grade. Each absence beyond that limit is worth HALF A GRADE POINT taken off of your final grade in the course. In the event of sickness, please bring a doctor's note. On occasions when you have a scheduled engagement (sports commitment, music performance, family festivity, etc.), please inform the instructor ahead of time so that an arrangement can be made to serve as a substitute for the missing class.

-Please refrain from using cellphones, laptops, or other electronic devices during class. Silence your cellphones. If you expect an important call or suspect an emergency, feel free to walk out of the classroom to answer. The instructor will remind you of this only twice in the semester (during first class and the class following the end of the Add/Drop period). Failure to comply will reflect on your overall grade.

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-Please respect your peers and their opinions. No personal attacks will be tolerated. Many of the topics we will engage with can be controversial; therefore, in all cases, formal language is to be utilized. You are to address the instructor and your peers with respect. You are more than welcome to disagree with either the instructor or your peers' opinions, but never in such a way that will devolve into offensive language or personal attacks. When in doubt, it is best to approach a text as a formal construct (how is it written?, what is the author trying to say?, how are words functioning?, etc.); that way we avoid making the task of reading and discussing a text personal

-Plagiarism constitutes an automatic failing grade and can lead to suspension or expulsion from the university. Please make sure you cite any references, examples, or text taken from other authors accordingly. Give credit even when you use the resource to argue against it. This includes, and is not limited to, internet resources.

-Finally, in the event that you have any technical issues with the online learning system, do not hesitate in contacting APOYO TÉCNICO at 787-764-0000 Ext. 80400 or at their webpage: <https://dtaa.uprrp.edu/help-desk/>

-Enjoy this experience and never hesitate in contacting me with concerns.

Important Notices:

Reasonable Accommodation

Students receiving Vocational Rehabilitation services must inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester so that reasonable accommodation and any necessary equipment can be provided, in keeping with the recommendations of the Coordinating Office for People with Disabilities (Oficina de Asuntos para las Personas con Impedimentos -- OAPI) under the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs. Students with special needs must also inform the instructor of any accommodation-related needs.

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Academic Integrity

The University of Puerto Rico promotes the highest standards of academic and scientific integrity. Article 6.2 of the UPR General Student Bylaws (Certification No. 13, 2009-2010, of the UPR Board of Trustees) establishes that “academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: fraudulent actions, obtaining grades or academic degrees using false or fraudulent pretexts, entirely or partially copying academic work from another person, entirely or partially plagiarizing the work of another person, entirely or partially copying responses from another person to examination questions, having another person take any test, oral or written examination on the student’s behalf, as well as assisting or facilitating any person to incur in the aforementioned conduct.” Fraudulent conduct refers to “behavior with the intent to defraud, including, but not limited to, malicious alteration or falsification of grades, records, identification cards or other official documents of the University of Puerto Rico or any other institution.” Any of these actions shall be subject to disciplinary sanctions in accordance with the respective disciplinary procedure, as stated in the current UPR Student Bylaws.

Discrimination / Sexual Harassment

The University of Puerto Rico prohibits discrimination in education, employment and in the provision of services based on race, color, sex, age, nationality, ethnicity, origin or social status, ancestry, marital status, religious or political ideas or beliefs, veteran status, other disabledness (disability), sexual orientation, and gender identity in any of its forms. The university also prohibits sexual harassment. According to the Institutional Policy Against Sexual Harassment at the University of Puerto Rico, Certification No. 130, 2014-2015 of the Board of Governors, any student subjected to acts constituting sexual harassment should contact 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 further orientation and/or to file a formal complaint.

Contingency Plan in Case of Emergency

In the event of an emergency or interruption of classes, your professor will communicate with you via institutional email to coordinate the continuity of the course offering. (The full document can be found at: [https://estudiantes.uprrp.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/ Reglamento-General-Estudiantes-de-la-Universidad-de-Puerto-Rico-2016-2017.pdf](https://estudiantes.uprrp.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Reglamento-General-Estudiantes-de-la-Universidad-de-Puerto-Rico-2016-2017.pdf))