ENGL 2000.202: CRITICAL METHODS OF LITERARY INQUIRY
Instructor: Professor S. J. Kim
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Spring 2017
Office: O’Leary Library 476
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Course Description: This course introduces you to the diversity of critical approaches available today in the study of literature and culture. We will read a variety of primary texts (poems, fiction, and nonfiction) as well as secondary works representing a range of critical and theoretical approaches. The goal of the course is to make you more conversant with these various critical approaches, but the emphasis will be on the practical application of these approaches and on how they can enrich our understanding of the literary texts. Special attention will also be paid to the writing and research process — in other words, you will be doing a LOT of writing in this class (in class, out of class, informal and formal). We will also work on how to locate secondary sources and use them effectively and correctly, following MLA guidelines for documentation.

This is a 3-credit course, as defined by federal regulation. You should expect to complete 6 hours of out of class work each week for approximately 15 weeks, for a total of 90 hours of outside-of-class work.

Course Objectives: At the end of this course, students must be able to:
• Close read (explicate) poetry and prose (e.g. define & discuss rhyme scheme & meter, point of view, characterization, etc.).
• Identify, analyze, and discuss elements of the form, content, and context of literary texts.
• Identify the principles and apply the basic methods of the major schools of literary criticism, including formalism/New Criticism; reader-response; historicism and cultural studies; deconstruction; psychoanalysis; feminism, gender studies & queer theory; Marxism; and ethnic & postcolonial studies.
• Locate reliable, scholarly secondary sources on literature and culture.
• Write a lucid, organized essay with a clear thesis (argument), support (analysis of primary and/or secondary texts), and proper MLA documentation (in-text citations & Works Cited page).
• Properly integrate primary & secondary sources into academic writing (using paraphrase, summary, and/or direct quotation).

Required Texts:
• Electronic Readings available on Blackboard -- marked [ER] on syllabus
• Any recent writing/composition/grammar handbook and/or Purdue Online Writing Lab (http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/)

Grading: Your course grade will be determined by the following:
Essay 1: Explication (Close Reading) 15%
Essay 2: Using Literary Critical Approaches 20%
Essay 3: Research Essay:
  Research Prospectus 1%
  Rough Draft 1%
  Annotated Bibliography 6%
  Final Essay 17%
Short Writing Assignments & Quizzes 15%
Final Exam 25%
Final Grades (no exceptions):
94-100=A: Superior work, highest quality
90-93=A-: High Honors Quality
87-89 = B+: High Quality
83-86 = B: Basic Honors Quality
80-82 = B-: Below Honors Quality
77-79 = C+: Above Satisfactory Quality
73-76 = C: Satisfactory
70-72 = C-: Below Satisfactory
67-69 = D+: Above Minimum Passing
60-66 = D: Minimum Passing
below 60 = F: Failed

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Classroom environment and preparedness: Our class time will be divided between brief lectures and open class discussion of the reading assignments. In order to have open class discussions, we must create a classroom environment that allows for the open exchange of ideas, opinions, and questions. In this class, and in all classes at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell, students are expected to exhibit professional and respectful behavior that is conducive to a mutually beneficial learning environment in the classroom. Examples of inappropriate behavior include: text messaging, listening to music, cell phone use (other than the campus alert system), late arrivals & early departures, use of laptops for other than class purposes, disrespectful comments or behavior, intentional disruptions, and failure to follow faculty directives. Students in violation of these standards may be asked to leave class and/or be referred to the administration for disciplinary action.

You should always be respectful to your classmates and their viewpoints, even when you are disagreeing with them. In order to have substantive discussions, it is essential that you come to class prepared, having read the day’s assignment carefully and critically. If you find a particular text difficult and have a hard time forming an opinion or interpretation, at least be ready to ask questions about it.

→ BRING TO CLASS THE READINGS ASSIGNED FOR THAT DAY (i.e. listed on the course syllabus).

Attendance: You are allowed up to FOUR absences with no penalty. Each additional absence will lower your grade by one letter, so save your absences for when you really need them, such as illness or other unavoidable conflicts. Absences will ONLY be excused in the case of jury or military duty or UML activities (documentation required). Also, if you anticipate missing consecutive classes due to a serious illness or crisis, please let me know promptly via e-mail. Otherwise, I may assume you’ve simply dropped the course.

• BE ON TIME – Class begins at the time noted at the top of the syllabus. Arriving late to class constitutes a serious distraction, whether I am lecturing or whether we are involved in a class discussion. If you arrive after I have taken attendance, you are responsible for making sure I have noted your attendance (after class); otherwise you may be counted absent for the day. Unless you obtain permission from me beforehand, 2 late arrivals (i.e. after I’ve taken attendance) = 1 absence.

• If you miss class, YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY MATERIAL MISSED. Get class notes from classmates, and all handouts will be posted on Blackboard.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Essays: Your writing assignments in this class are designed to develop your ability to write about literature, with and without secondary sources. Your first essay will be a close reading/explication of a poem. Your second essay will be a critical paper that employs one or more literary critical approaches. For your final research paper, you will produce a research prospectus, an annotated bibliography, a rough draft, and the research essay itself. A significant part of your grade on the final essay will be based on how well you incorporate these sources into your writing. More detailed assignment guidelines will be distributed later.
Papers are due at the start of class on the assigned due date. Unless pre-approved by me, after the time they are due counts as “late.” ONE LETTER GRADE WILL BE DROPPED FOR EACH DAY YOUR ESSAY IS LATE, AND THAT BEGINS IMMEDIATELY (i.e. if the paper is due at 2pm and you turn it in at 2:15pm, it will be lowered by one letter grade). I will occasionally grant extensions if you make arrangements with me at least 48 hours before the due date.

Papers should be:
- double-spaced, size 12 Times Roman, stapled, and titled, with 1-inch margins and page numbers
- follow MLA format & use gender neutral language

I expect you to know the basics of writing essays; so, for example, if your essay is rife with grammatical, typographical, and/or stylistic errors, you can expect no better than a C at the very most. If you have concerns about your writing, please see me well before the due date of essays.

Exam: Your final exam will test your understanding of the principles and methods of the different critical approaches we will be studying over the course of the semester. The final exam will be cumulative (i.e. the entire semester).

Quizzes: To make sure you are keeping up with the reading, making notes, and looking up vocabulary words, we will have unannounced quizzes and/or in-class writings on a regular basis. These will be promptly administered at the beginning of class. Missed quizzes (due to absence or lateness) may not be made up. Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

Short Writing Exercises (Marked “EXERCISE” on the syllabus): Short writing exercises in response to the readings will be assigned for nearly every class meeting. They will be assessed in terms of effort and completion (i.e. Did you really engage the reading and the writing task? Did you turn it in on time?). Your lowest short writing exercise grade will be dropped.

UML Academic Integrity Policy: All students are responsible for their own academic integrity. Plagiarism, whether intentional or not, is an offense of the highest order and will not be tolerated. Please make sure you have read the academic policies of the University of Massachusetts Lowell. These are found at [https://www.uml.edu/Catalog/Undergraduate/Policies/Academic-Policies/Academic-Integrity.aspx](https://www.uml.edu/Catalog/Undergraduate/Policies/Academic-Policies/Academic-Integrity.aspx).

Communications:
- Email: I regularly use email to communicate with individual students and with the entire class. YOU MUST CHECK YOUR UML EMAIL ACCOUNT REGULARLY to make sure you aren’t missing any announcements or important information. If class is cancelled for any reason, I will contact you by email to let you know how to proceed.
- Blackboard: I will put all course handouts and readings on our course Blackboard site. To access our Blackboard course, go to [https://lowell.umassonline.net](https://lowell.umassonline.net) and sign in with your UMass Lowell email and password. (Please note that this is a separate site from UMass Lowell Blackboard courses you may have had in the past.)
- UML MyAlert: If you haven’t already, it’s a good idea to sign up for text and/or email messages from UML’s alert system, which lets you know about urgent, timely notices such as weather delays or closures and health, environmental or other threats on campus. Visit [https://www.uml.edu/alert/](https://www.uml.edu/alert/) to verify existing contact information, manage your account and choose how you receive messages. Simply log on with your UMass Lowell email account and password.
STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Instructional Support: At the UML Writing Center (3rd floor O’Leary Library), tutors are available (for free) to help you at any stage in the writing process. They will help you generate ideas, organize and revise, understand grammar, avoid plagiarism, or with any other difficulties you may have with your writing. (The one thing they won’t do, however, is simply proofread/edit your paper for you.) To make an appointment visit http://www.uml.edu/Writing-Center/default.aspx. The Centers for Learning and Academic Support Services also provide many resources, including tutoring in a variety of subjects, academic advising, computing resources, and study skills sessions. CLASS resources are available across UML campuses. Visit http://www.uml.edu/CLASS/default.aspx for more information.

Library Computing and Printing services: “Printing is available from library computers at a rate of $.10 per page. All enrolled students receive $15 in print allotment per semester. Students will be able to add cash to their UCards in the libraries or use UCash.” For more information about UPrint, including printing locations around campus, please visit the UPrint information page: https://www.uml.edu/UCAPS/UPrint/UPrint.aspx.

Disability & Other Accommodations: In accordance with University policy and the ADA, I will provide accommodation for students with documented disabilities. If you have a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services as soon as possible (the Wellness Center, 3rd Floor, University Crossing; phone: 978-934-6800; e-mail: Disability@uml.edu). This documentation is confidential. Find more info at http://www.uml.edu/student-services/disability/. If you will miss class due to religious observances or other protected activities, please see me in advance so that we can plan for any change to due dates, etc.

Counseling Services, the Wellness Center, 3rd Floor, University Crossing: “The Counseling Center at UMass Lowell provides counseling services, consultation and referrals to help students achieve personal and academic success, as well as assisting students in better understanding and coping with their feelings, relationships, choices and academic studies.” Counseling is free for UML students. You can contact the Counseling Center at (987) 934-6800 or counseling@uml.edu. You can get more information at http://www.uml.edu/student-services/counseling/.

University Cancellation Line: (978) 934-2121. The UML homepage will also mention if the university is closed.

CLASS SCHEDULE
Readings & Exercises must be completed by date listed. If there are any changes, you will be notified in advance.

Week 1
W 1/18 Course Introduction
In-Class: Close Reading Assessment (Sonnet 116)

Week 2
M 1/23 [ER] Short Guide, ch. 6: Literature, Form, & Meaning (80-88)
EXERCISE: Do “a brief exercise” at bottom of p. 82 in Short Guide
[ER] Two online readings on Sonnet 116:
1. Purdue Online Writing Lab on Poetry: Close Reading: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/751/01/
EXERCISE (1 brief paragraph): After reading the two discussions of Sonnet 116, discuss something that you learned about this specific poem and/or about the process of close reading poetry. You might compare your own close reading to the ones offered by these two articles, talk about something that you didn’t notice about the poem before, or discuss any particular aspect of the two analyses that taught you something new. Also consider the question: what is the purpose of close reading (explicating) poems?

W 1/25  
[ER] *Short Guide*, ch. 4 – focus on **explication** (vs. analysis), p. 43-55  
EXERCISE: 1) write a short **explication** (2-3 paragraphs) of “We Real Cool” (p. 60). Look up the word “jazz” in the Oxford English Dictionary and discuss how its various meanings may nuance the meaning of the poem. To access the OED:
1. go to the UML Library webpage (http://libweb.uml.edu/)
2. in the left-hand menu, click on “Databases”
3. Click on “Literature” (by subject) or “O-P” (alphabetically by title)
4. Scroll down to **Oxford English Dictionary (OED)** and click on it
5. If you are off-campus, sign in with your UML email & password
6. In the search box, type “jazz” and hit “Go”
7. By result #2, “jazz, v.” click on “View full entry”
8. Scroll through the definitions, making note of the time periods in which that definition was used.

Week 3  
M 1/30  
[ER] *Short Guide*, ch. 13 – focus on **Speaker, Diction, Figurative Language, & Structure** (221-48)  
EXERCISE: 1) read Frost poem on p. 227 and write brief responses to questions on p. 228 before reading student examples on p. 228-30; 2) look up what a telephone looked like in the 1920s (you can just google “1920s telephone”) – does this affect your reading of the poem in any way?

W 2/1  
[ER] *Short Guide*, ch. 13, on **Prosody** (rhyme, meter, rhythm) (248-63)

Week 4  
M 2/6  
EXERCISE: On the Blackboard Discussion Board marked “PROSODY PREWRITING,” post the following by the start of class:  
1) indicate the **poem** that you plan to write about for Essay 1,
2) discuss the **prosody** of the poem (1 paragraph minimum), &
3) post one form of **pre-writing** (e.g. listing, freewriting, questions, rough outline) on the poem as you work towards your first essay.

W 2/8  
**Essay 1 Draft Due** – bring 1 paper copy to class & email ONE electronic copy to sue_kim@uml.edu by the start of class  
Review example of an explication in *Short Guide*, ch. 4, p. 48-9

Week 5  
UNIT II: Literary Critical Approaches & (mostly) Fiction  
M 2/13  
**ESSAY 1 DUE @ BEGINNING OF CLASS**  
[ER] *Short Guide*, ch. 10, **Writing About Fiction** (130-78) – Unlike poetics, much of this chapter may be familiar to you. Focus on the discussions of elements of fiction (plot, character, setting, symbolism, point of view, theme) and make sure you can
define/identify each of these (especially theme, which is not the story or plot). You can skim over the examples of student writing (unless, of course, you would like to see an example).

Theory Into Practice, Nathaniel Hawthorne’s “Young Goodman Brown” (p. 311-20)

EXERCISE: For each of the following, identify a specific example from “Young Goodman Brown” – be sure to include location in the text (page number, paragraph number, etc.). You don’t have to write out a paragraph – just a list is fine:

1. plot (a place in the text where something happens)
2. character (a place that tells about a character)
3. setting
4. symbolism
5. theme
6. narrator (what kind? omniscient/selective/limited third-person? effaced, character, and/or unreliable narrator?)

Week 6

M 2/20

NO CLASS MEETING [UML HOLIDAY - PRESIDENT’S DAY]

T 2/21

Theory Into Practice, Marxist Criticism (86-100)

Theory Into Practice, Guy de Maupassant’s “The Diamond Necklace” (338-43)

EXERCISE: Write 1 paragraph that summarizes (briefly, in your own words) what Marxist literary criticism does, and discuss an example from “The Diamond Necklace” or any other text of your choosing (include page numbers). You can focus on a Freudian, Jungian, or Lacanian approach in your discussion. For all the writing exercises in this unit, keep direct quotations to a minimum; I want you to digest and synthesize the information and put it into your own words.

W 2/22

Theory Into Practice, Feminist Criticism (104-131)

EXERCISE: Write 1 paragraph that summarizes (briefly, in your own words) what feminist literary criticism does, and discuss one example from any text (feel free to use any of the texts we’ve discussed earlier this semester).

Week 7

M 2/27

Theory Into Practice, Deconstruction (152-177)

[ER] Toni Morrison’s “Recitatif”

EXERCISE #1: Write 1 paragraph that summarizes (in your own words) what structuralism and semiotics do. Then discuss one example: discuss one “signifier” of race or class in “Recitatif,” OR discuss system of symbols/signifiers from another text.

W 3/1

Theory Into Practice, Deconstruction (152-177) [continued]

EXERCISE #2: Write 1 paragraph that summarizes (in your own words) what deconstruction does, and discuss one place in ‘Recitatif’ that renders signifiers of racial identity unstable/uncertain OR discuss an example of deconstruction in any other text (film, book, TV show) or work of literary criticism.
Week 8
M 3/6  Theory Into Practice, Cultural Studies: Postcolonialism and Ethnic Studies (207-240)
EXERCISE: Write 1 paragraph that summarizes (briefly, in your own words) what postcolonial and/or African Americanist literary criticism do, and discuss an example from “Recitatif” or any other text of your choosing (include page numbers).

W 3/8  Theory Into Practice, Cultural Studies: New Historicism (178-206)
EXERCISE: Write 1 paragraph that summarizes how New Historicism (and new literary historicism) conceives of history differently from traditional historicism. For the poem that you wrote about for Essay 1, how might a New Historicist approach to it differ from a New Critical/Formalist approach?

Week 9
SPRING BREAK

Week 10
M 3/20 Theory Into Practice, Information at a Glance (350-53) (& don’t forget the glossary)
EXERCISE: POST ON BLACKBOARD DISCUSSION BOARD 1 paragraph about the primary text you will be discussing and the critical approach you will be using. What does the critical approach you’re using generally do? How does it help illuminate the particular primary text you’re discussing? What is your (hypo)thesis?

W 3/22 VIRTUAL CLASS [NO IN-CLASS MEETING]
EXERCISE: POST ON BLACKBOARD DISCUSSION BOARD a draft of the first two paragraphs of your Essay 2.
1) Paragraph 1 should include:
   • the primary text(s) you will be analyzing
   • the critical approach you will be using to analyze the text
   • your thesis statement (see Essay 2 instructions)
2) Paragraph 2 should include a discussion the critical approach you are using. This discussion should include basic assumptions, approaches to the text, key terms and concepts, etc.

Week 11
M 3/27 Essay 2 Draft Due – bring ONE hard copy to class (rough drafts are required in order to be counted as present) & email an electronic copy to sue_kim@uml.edu

W 3/29 NO CLASS MEETING – individual conferences

Week 12
UNIT III: Research & Documentation
M 4/3 ESSAY 2 DUE @ beginning of class
Research in Literary & Cultural Studies

W 4/5 MEET IN O’LEARY LIBRARY: Information Literacy Session (Library)
Research Prospectus Due
Electronic Sources: Academic Databases
→ Wednesday, April 5, Last day withdraw with a “W”

Week 13
M 4/10  Research & Documentation Workshop
W 4/12  VIRTUAL CLASS [NO IN-CLASS MEETING]
         Annotated Bibliography Due

Week 14
M 4/17  NO CLASS MEETING [UML HOLIDAY-PATRIOT’S DAY]
W 4/19  Incorporating Research (Primary and Secondary Sources) Into Your Writing
F 4/21  MONDAY CLASS SCHEDULE
         Essay 3 Rough Draft Due – bring ONE hard copy to class (rough drafts are required in order to be counted as present) & email an electronic copy to sue_kim@uml.edu

Week 15
M 4/24  In-Class Presentations of Final Projects
W 4/26  ESSAY 3 DUE & Final Exam Review

→ FINAL EXAM during Finals Period (May 1-8, 2017)