

**English 101 – Introduction to Literary Criticism**  
**Spring 2011, San José State University**  
**Section 01: T/R 12-1:15pm, Sweeney Hall 229**

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Do you see hidden meanings in literary texts? Billboards? Movies? Advertisements? Can you come up with 3 variant meanings for Ezra Pound's poem, "In a Station of the Metro"? There are many possible readings of all literary and visual texts. Even your own identity governs your interpretation of the material. What kind of critic are you? For this course, we will discover and apply critical models to various literary, visual, and digital texts. Critical models will include foundational twentieth-century theory as well as contemporary approaches to literature (feminism, Queer theory, Marxism, post-colonialism, and more). Though we will apply these critical models to texts across several historical periods and literary genres, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* will be our ur-text.

*Pre-requisite: Engl. 100W*

### **STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

1. Read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of close reading in the study of literature
2. Show familiarity with major critical approaches to British, American and World Literature;
3. Write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and the nature of the subject;
4. Develop and carry out research projects, and locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively; and
5. Articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts.

### **REQUIRED BOOKS & MATERIALS** (on Course Reserve in King Library or at Amazon Listmania)

*Texts and Contexts*. Ed. Steven Lynn. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Pearson, 2010. (ISBN 0205716741)  
*Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. Ed. Vincent B. Leitch. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Norton, 2010. (ISBN 0393932923)  
Conrad, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Bedford, 1996 (ISBN 9780312114916) or 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Bedford, 2011 (ISBN 0312457537)

*Suggested* (all on course reserve in King Library):

*A Research Guide for Undergraduates in English & American Literature*. MLA, 2006 (ISBN 9780873529242)  
*A Dictionary of Cultural and Critical Theory*. Ed. Michael Payne. Blackwells, 1996. (ISBN 9780631207535)  
*MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 7<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: MLA, 2009. (ISBN 9781603290241)  
Hacker, Diana. *A Writer's Reference* (or other writing handbook)  
Dictionary, Collegiate-level

### **GRADE DISTRIBUTION**

- 10% Class Discussion & Participation
- 20% In-Class & Emailed Response Essays (ICE/OCE) (SLO 1, 2, 3, 5)
- 25% Annotated Bibliography & Reflective Essay (SLO 4)
- 25% Critical Model Presentation & Essay (SLO 1, 2, 3, 5)
- 20% Critical Analysis Essay (Final Exam Essay) (SLO 1, 2, 3, 5)

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### **Class Discussion & Participation**

The reading load for this course is dense with theoretical articles along with the more light-hearted materials. All will require much discussion during our meetings. For these reasons, your participation during class is imperative. Since this class is largely discussion-based, arrive to class prepared with the proper readings. *Bring the appropriate texts to our class meetings; always bring Heart of Darkness.*

A student's participation is assessed by his/her contribution throughout the semester. Use the following as guidelines for this portion of your final grade:

- To earn a "C," do the minimum: read and prepare assigned readings so you are never at a loss if you are asked a question, but speak only when called upon, do "ordinary," plain-vanilla presentations and responses. This is the "bottom line" for getting a "C" in this part of the course.
- To earn a "B," prepare assigned readings thoroughly, initiate discussions about them by asking good questions or suggesting ways to interpret readings, do presentations that reveal that you have done good additional work that you can make both interesting and meaningful to our discussions, and participate actively in those discussions.
- For an "A," take it up another level entirely: prepare readings thoroughly, find and talk about connections among them and among other aspects of culture (then and now), take a real leadership role in class discussions, including working actively to get others involved in the talk, make your presentations and responses "sparkle" by bringing to them something really special in terms of your own contributions, interests, skills, and abilities to think in broad even interdisciplinary terms. Most of all, remember that an "A" indicates the very best grade a person can get; that should tell you what sort of work you need to do to earn the grade of "A."

If you miss class, contact a classmate for notes, reading assignments and handouts – or check our Course Website. (Please do not email me to ask “Did I miss anything important?”)

### **In-Class Essays (ICE) & Out-of-Class Emailed Essays (OCE)**

Because literary criticism is as much about writing as it is reading, each week we will write essay responses to an assigned question about the current reading assignment. As the semester progresses, this essay will turn into an out-of-class emailed essay of approximately 300-500 words. Your understanding of that week's critical models and class discussion are imperative to produce a sufficient piece of writing. Each OCE/ICE will receive a grade based on the *quality* of your response. This weekly writing will also allow you to explore methodologies based on focused questions, clarify your thoughts on a theoretical model or comment on your peer's presentation. This weekly writing will also allow you to practice your in-class writing skills. We will discuss what makes an effective response. The OCE is formal writing that should conform to MLA style with proper citation format and should be edited for grammar and typographical mistakes. Sloppy writing will be penalized by a letter grade. (See handout: Tips for Writing Effective In-Class Essays.)

*There are no make-ups for an ICE/OCE; you simply receive a zero for that essay.* An OCE needs to be emailed by the date and time specified in order to receive credit; a late OCE will receive a zero. Please be aware that missing even a few of these essays will cause your final grade to drop significantly. The lowest grade in this entire group of essays will be dropped.

### **Annotated Bibliography & Reflective Essay**

In order to understand how other scholars use theoretical models to analyze literature, this assignment asks you to find and annotate contemporary literary critical articles that focus on *Heart of Darkness* (not in the *Heart of Darkness* critical edition that we are using for class). Our library session will provide a tutorial on searching the MLA Bibliography, JSTOR and Project Muse as well as retrieving them through King Library's "Get Text," Interlibrary Loan and Link+. A 600-word reflective essay on your research experience will also be required. In the past, submission of this assignment has involved reams of paper (because the articles are lengthy). This year, I would like to explore alternative forms of submission, perhaps Dropbox? Zotero is a new research tool that's

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also extremely helpful in this kind of project. Perhaps we can hold a voluntary computer lab day on these two topics. We'll discuss this further at a later time.

MLA style for documentation, in-text citation methods and Bibliography are required. If you need help on MLA style, please see me before submitting anything. (Essay grades will be reduced for inaccurate citation and Works Cited submissions.) See also our Course Website for MLA style online resources and visit the Writing Center. In addition to handing in a paper copy, your Annotated Bibliography and Reflective Essay will be submitted to Turnitin.com for verification. Further instructions will be provided later.

### **Critical Model Presentation & Essay**

To gain a better understanding of at least one critical theory, each student will give a presentation on a particular model, using a text to exemplify it. The presentation will include a *brief* summary of one literary critical model, summary and discussion of an article (from *Norton*) pertaining to that model and an analysis of a selection from *Heart of Darkness*. The main goal of this presentation is to provide an example of using a critical model. The presentation will be followed by a brief question and answer session from your peers. The following week, a **1500-word** written essay is due. The essay will contain all of the elements that you presented, but in greater detail and in a formal style (MLA style, including a Works Cited). The essay gives you an opportunity to address any questions or dilemmas that were broached during the Q&A session. (Essay grades will be reduced for inaccurate citation and Works Cited submissions.) In addition to handing in a paper copy, your essay will be submitted to Turnitin.com for verification. Further instructions will be provided later.

### **Final Exam Essay**

The 1500-1750-word final exam/essay (written outside of class) will be based on a literary text to which you will apply two critical models. This text and critical models must be different from those included in your presentation. We will discuss the Final Exam Essay towards the conclusion of the semester. In addition to handing in a paper copy, your essay will be submitted to Turnitin.com for verification.

### **GRADING POLICY**

The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the official SJSU *Catalog* ("The Grading System"). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A = excellent; B = above average; C = average; D = below average; F = failure. Courses graded according to the A,B,C,NoCredit system shall follow the same pattern, except that NC, for NoCredit, shall replace D or F. In A,B,C,NoCredit courses NC shall also substitute for W (for Withdrawl) because neither NC nor W affects students' grade point averages.

In English Department courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of the ideas being conveyed. All student writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs.

For your final grades, 100-90 is an A, 89-80 is a B, 79-70 is a C, 69-60 is a D, and below 60 is an F. Pluses and minuses are the middle of each range. In calculating the final grade, a set number will represent each letter grade; for example, B+ is 87.5, B is 85, and B- is 82.5.

### **COURSE POLICIES**

#### **Late Assignments/Essays**

Any late ICE/OCE will not be accepted. For all other assignments: If you cannot meet a deadline, you must contact me *at least 72 hours prior* to our class meeting to discuss the situation. If this is not done, for *every day* that an essay is late, you will be penalized one grade step: A becomes A-, A- becomes a B+, etc. The weekend will count as one day. Unless you have prior permission or the assignment specifically requests it, *absolutely no assignment will be accepted via email.*

### **SJSU Academic Integrity Policy**

Your commitment as a student to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The University's Academic Integrity policy, located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S07-2.htm>, requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The Student Conduct and Ethical Development website is available at [http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial\\_affairs/index.html](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html).

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

Plagiarism checks will be performed by asking students to submit various written exercises or essays to Turnitin.com, a service that scans documents for all references to online sources and essays. **To sign up for Turnitin use the Class ID 3787118 and Password 101spring.** The instructor reserves the right to revise the requirements and to notify students of such revision in a timely manner.

### **Classroom Environment**

Respect your fellow students and I: Arrive on time (excessive tardiness will effect your participation grade) and do not partake in disruptive behavior. We will all be respectful of each other in both our face-to-face and online communications. If you are late, wait for an appropriate moment to enter so you do not disturb the class. Turn off cell phones or put them on silent mode during the class period. You are welcome to use your laptop with the caveat that it is used to enhance our discussions.

### **Email Protocols, Office Hours & Online Contact**

Email is the best possible way to contact me (9am-5pm) and has the added bonus of recording our conversations. When emailing me, please consider it a formal communication: include the appropriate salutation, your name, your question/comment, and be aware of tone. Know that long conversations over email are not fruitful merely because of the limitations of technology. If you have an extended question or dilemma, please visit me during office hours, schedule a phone conference or arrange for an online chat/video chat. If I'm in my office, I will usually turn on Google Chat. You might also be able to get my attention on Twitter. I will amass a class email list and will occasionally send out information regarding our meetings or the readings. *Please provide an email address that you check daily.*

Google Chat ID: drkatherineharris

Skype ID: katherinedharris

Twitter ID: triproftri

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Course Website – <http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/harris/>**

As we move along in the semester, course materials and updated reading schedules will be posted on the course website on a daily basis. Click on our class title to review the updated schedule, print handouts, visit outside web projects, print copies of lost documents, find the SJSU Writing Center, or check my office hours.

### **SJSU Writing Center**

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. The Writing Center website is located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/>.

### **Library Liaison**

For library research questions, contact Toby Matoush, the English Department's Library Liaison: (408) 808-2096 or [toby.matoush@sjsu.edu](mailto:toby.matoush@sjsu.edu). King Library has created an extensive and very useful list of the library's resources specifically for English majors: <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/english>.

### **Student Technology Resources**

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers and laptops are also available in the Martin Luther King Library (<http://www.sjlibrary.org/services/computers/laptop.htm>). A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

### **Dropping and Adding Courses**

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester's Catalog Policies section at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic calendar web page located at [http://www.sjsu.edu/academic\\_programs/calendars/academic\\_calendar/](http://www.sjsu.edu/academic_programs/calendars/academic_calendar/). The Late Drop Policy is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes. Information about the latest changes and news is available at the Advising Hub at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.

### **Campus Policy on Compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities register with DRC to establish a record of their disability. The DRC website is <http://www.drc.sjsu.edu>.

Dr. Katherine D. Harris  
Intro. to Literary Criticism (Engl 101, Section 01)  
Spring 2011

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE**  
*Please respond using complete sentences*

1. Indicate if you are an English major, minor or other. Are you a sophomore, junior or senior?
2. Have you taken Engl. 100W, Engl. 56A (British Survey to 1800), 56B (British Survey 1800 to present), 68A (Native American Myths to Walt Whitman), 68B (Emily Dickinson to present) or Engl. 144 (Shakespeare)?
3. Do you have access to a computer at home? Yes      No  
(If not, become familiar with SJSU's computer labs.)
4. **Briefly** summarize the important policies presented on this syllabus.
5. Write one or two sentences defining "plagiarism."
6. Why are you an English major? (Or any other major?)
7. Write a **brief** paragraph explaining what "criticism" means to you. Are you a literary critic?
8. Do you have a favorite author? Who? Why?

By signing below, the individual acknowledges receiving a copy of the class greensheet and understands the schedule of work, participation requirements, grading criteria and other important information. The individual also acknowledges understanding plagiarism and its consequences.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_