

San José State University
Department of English and Comparative Literature
English 101, Introduction to Literary Criticism, Fall 2016

Instructor: Dr. Katherine D. Harris
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Office Hours: Tues & Thur 12-1pm
Class Days/Time: T/R 10:30-11:45am
Classroom: Clark 306

Course Web Page

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on our course web page on Canvas. You are responsible for regularly checking the email you provided in MySJSU to learn of any updates or the Canvas messaging system.

Course Description

Do you see hidden meanings in literary texts? Movies? Games? There are many possible readings of all literary and visual texts. Even your own identity governs your interpretation of the material. 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 (Feminist, Queer, Marxist, Post-Colonial, and Digital Humanities theories). 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.

Co-requisite: Engl. 100W

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

Course Learning Outcomes and Course Goals

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

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

Required Texts/Materials

Texts and Contexts. Ed. Steven Lynn. 7th ed. Pearson, 2016.

Conrad, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness*. 3rd ed. Bedford, 2010

Grading Policy

10% Class Discussion & Participation

20% Weekly Blog Posts (CLO 1, 2, 3, 5)

25% Annotated Bibliography & Reflective Essay (CLO 4)

25% Team Critical Model Presentation & Essay (CLO 1, 2, 3, 5)

20% Critical Analysis Essay (Final Exam Essay) (CLO 1, 2, 3, 5)

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.

Within any of the letter grade ranges (e.g. B+/B/B-), the assignment of a + or - grade will reflect stronger (+) or weaker (-) completion of the goals of the assignment.

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.

- The “A” essay will be well organized and well developed, demonstrating a clear understanding and fulfillment of the assignment. It will show the student’s ability to use language effectively and construct sentences distinguished by syntactic complexity and variety. Such essays will be essentially free of grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors.
- The “B” essay will demonstrate competence in the same categories as the “A” essay. The chief difference is that the “B” essay will show some descriptably slight weaknesses in one of those categories. It may slight one of the assigned tasks, show less facility of expression, or contain some minor grammatical, mechanical, or usage flaws.
- The “C” essay will complete all tasks set by the assignment, but show weakness in fundamentals (usually development), with barely enough specific information to illustrate the experience or support generalizations. The sentence construction may be less mature, and the use of language less effective and correct than the “B” essay.

- The “D” essay will neglect one of the assigned tasks and be noticeably superficial in its treatment of the assignment—that is, too simplistic or short. The essay may reveal some problems in development, with insufficient specific information to illustrate the experience or support generalizations. It will contain grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors that render some sentences incomprehensible.
- The “F” essay will demonstrate a striking underdevelopment of ideas and insufficient or unfocused organization. It will contain serious grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors that render some sentences incomprehensible.

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 Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on.

Class Discussion & Participation

This course studies a variety of ways to analyze literature. From the first day of class, your participation in each class meeting is imperative. Since this class is largely discussion-based, arrive to class prepared with the proper readings. Bring *Heart of Darkness* to every class meeting. 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, better yet, check our Course Website.

Weekly Blog Posts (10 total)

Because literary criticism is as much about writing as it is reading, each week we will write blog posts that offer you an opportunity to practice the critical model as it is applied to a piece of literature (approximately 300-500 words). Your understanding of the critical models and class discussion are imperative to produce a sufficient piece of writing. Each blog post is worth 1 to 10 points and is based on the *quality* of your response. This weekly blog post will also allow you to explore methodologies based on focused questions, clarify your thoughts on a theoretical model or comment on your peer’s presentations. This weekly writing will also allow you to practice your writing skills. Blog posts (unless otherwise specified) are 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 at least 3 points. (See [Writing Tips](#).)

There are no make-ups for blog posts; you simply receive a zero for that post. A late blog post will receive a zero. Please be aware that missing even a few of these posts will cause your final grade to drop significantly. On some days, you will write a post for participation points. This will apply not necessarily in terms of finite points, but will instead represent your participation in the class. Most of the prompts for these blog posts will be supplied in class and will not be repeated via email. (In other words, you have to attend class to get the prompt.)

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). A 600-word reflective essay on your research experience will also be required.

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 submitting your Annotated Bibliography to DropBox, your Annotated Bibliography and Reflective Essay will be submitted to Turnitin.com for verification.

Team Critical Model Presentation & Essay

To gain a better understanding of at least one critical theory, on the “praxis” day teams will give a presentation on a critical model and use a literary text to demonstrate its use. 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. A **1200-word** team-written essay is due on the day of the presentation through Google Docs.

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 submitting a digital copy, your essay will be submitted to Turnitin.com for verification.

Late Submission Policy

If you cannot meet an assignment deadline (other than the blog posts), you must contact me *at least 48 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.*

A Word about Plagiarism & [Turnitin](#)

Plagiarism checks will be performed by Canvas by submitting various written exercises or essays to Turnitin.com, a service which scans documents for all references to Web sources and other essays. You may see your Turnitin report when you submit your assignment; if there are any discrepancies, I will request a meeting with you; if plagiarism is indicated, you will receive a zero for the assignment and will be reported to Judicial Affairs. A second offense will result in failing the course and will require disciplinary action by Judicial Affairs.

Classroom Protocol

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 Protocol, Office Hours & Online Contact

Email is the best possible way to contact me (9am-5pm, M-F) 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. See below for a brief example or check out the [Writing Center's handout](#) (pdf):

Dear Professor Harris,

[my question]

Thanks,

[sign your name here with your course]

Know that long conversations over email are not fruitful merely because of the limitations of technology. If you have an extended question or dilemma that cannot be answered by our online materials, please visit me during office hours or schedule an online chat/video chat. See our Google spreadsheet for class contact and blog roll. *Please provide an email address that you check daily.*

Google+ Hangout ID: dr.katherine.harris

Skype ID: katherinedharris

Twitter ID: [@triproftri](#)

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

English 101, Spring 2016, Course Schedule

Note: Syllabus subject to change

Date	Topics	Reading Due	Assignment Due
Thur 8/25	Introductions: Me, You, Lit Crit	Readings/Discussions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus Policies & Schedule: Emailing, Office Hours, Assignments, Plagiarism • Letters from Previous Students (in-class) • Johns Hopkins Database of Literary Theory (Links to an external site.) (in-class) (requires SJSU log-in) • Register to Vote (Links to an external site.)! 	
Tue 8/30		Discussion (in-class): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linguistics, Cloud Tagging & the Value of Literary Criticism (see NYTimes article on Presidential Inauguration Addresses (Links to an external site.)) • “Pulp Fiction as Typography (Links to an external site.)” (video) • “Dude (Links to an external site.)” in Google's Ngram Viewer • Hints for Reading Fiction (pdf)  • “Reading a Poem: 20 Strategies (Links to an external site.)” (<i>The Atlantic</i>) 	Discussion Post by 10am on letters from past students (credit/no credit)
Thur 9/1	Ur-Text	<i>Heart of Darkness</i> (read half)	Post due by 10am Intellectual Autobiography (credit/no credit)
Tue 9/6	Ur-Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Heart of Darkness</i> (finish all) 	Discuss Annotated Bibliography & Reflective Essay

Date	Topics	Reading Due	Assignment Due
		<p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concordance (Links to an external site.) in TaPoR • Heart of Darkness E-Text (Links to an external site.) 	<p>Assignment</p>
Thur 9/8	Formalism: Introduction	<p>TC: Introduction & Critical Worlds (3-43)</p> <p>TC: Appendix 2 “A Note on How Theories Relate” (258-61)</p> <p>JHU: Forward to the JHU (Links to an external site.)</p> <p>JHU: “American Theory & Criticism 2: 1900 to 1970 (Links to an external site.)”</p> <p>JHU: Russian Formalism (Links to an external site.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post by 10am: “What Kind of Critic Am I?” • Discuss Critical Model Team Presentations • Designate team members by Friday, 5pm (see instructions above)
Tue 9/13	Formalism: Praxis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “In a Station of the Metro (Links to an external site.)” (Pound) • HOD: “A Critical History of HoD” (137-162) • <i>Heart of Darkness</i> (always bring this to class) • <i>Texts & Contexts</i> (always bring this to class) <p>Discussion: How to Read Poetry (pdf) </p>	<p>Discuss Writing Tips for discussion posts</p>
Thur 9/15	New Criticism: Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TC: Chp 3 Unifying the Work (45-58 & 68-70) • JHU: New Criticism (Links to an external site.) • JHU: T.S. Eliot (Links to an external site.) • JHU: Poet-Critic (Links to an external site.) 	<p>Post due by 10am on Formalism</p>

Date	Topics	Reading Due	Assignment Due
Tue 9/20	New Criticism: Praxis	<p>“The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock (Links to an external site.),” T.S. Eliot</p> <p><i>Heart of Darkness</i></p> <p><i>Texts & Contexts</i></p>	
Thur 9/22	Structuralism & Semiotics: Introduction	<p>JHU: “American Theory & Criticism: 1970 & After (Links to an external site.)”</p> <p>JHU: Structuralism (Links to an external site.)</p> <p>JHU: Semiotics (Links to an external site.)</p> <p>JHU: Linguistics and Language (Links to an external site.)</p> <p>JHU: Ferdinand de Saussure (Links to an external site.)</p> <p>TC: Structuralism & Semiotics (109-11)</p>	Post due by 10am on New Criticism
Tue 9/27	Structuralism & Semiotics: Praxis		Team Presentation
Thur 9/29	No Class Meeting	Work on Team Video during class session	Post due by Friday, 5pm: Team video on Structuralism
Tue 10/4	Post-Structuralism & Deconstruction: Introduction	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TC: Chp. 5 “Opening Up the Text” (109-124 & 140-42) & Writing help (124-35) • JHU: “Deconstruction: Derrida, de Man, and the Yale School (Links to an external site.)” • JHU: “Deconstruction: The 1980s and After (Links to an external site.)” • JHU: Jacques Derrida (Links to an external site.) 	

Date	Topics	Reading Due	Assignment Due
		<p>external site.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JHU: Michel Foucault (Links to an external site.) • HOD: “What is Deconstruction (205-220) • HOD: Miller, “<i>Heart of Darkness Revisited</i>” (231-244) <p>Discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annotated Bibliography 	
Thur 10/6	No Class Meeting - Research Session	Begin work on Annotated Bibliography	
Tue 10/11	Post-Structuralism & Deconstruction: Praxis		<p>Team Presentation</p> <p>Post due by 10am Annotated Bibliography Progress report</p>
Thur 10/13	Psychoanalytical Criticism: Introduction	<p>TC: Chp 7 “Minding the Work” (195-203 & 217-18)</p> <p>JHU: Psychoanalytic Theory and Criticism (Links to an external site.) (read all 3 entries)</p> <p>JHU: Sigmund Freud (Links to an external site.)</p> <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starbucks logo and 15th-century siren (Links to an external site.) • The CoffeeHouse: A Cultural History (Links to an external site.) • “London Cafes: The Surprising History of London’s Lost Coffeehouses (Links to an external site.)” (from <i>The Telegraph</i>) 	<p>Post due by 10am on Deconstruction</p>

Date	Topics	Reading Due	Assignment Due
Tue 10/18	Psychoanalytical Criticism: Praxis		Team Presentation
Thur 10/20	Marxism: Introduction	<p>TC: Chp 6 “Connecting the Text” (156-60)</p> <p>TC: Cultural Studies (150-53 & 184-190)</p> <p>JHU: Cultural Studies (Links to an external site.)</p> <p>JHU: Marxist Theory & Criticism (Links to an external site.) (read all 3 entries)</p> <p>JHU: Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels (Links to an external site.)</p> <p>Just for Fun:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “How to Talk to Babies About Semiotics (Links to an external site.)” 	Post due by 10am – on Psychoanalytical Criticism
Tue 10/25	Marxism: Praxis	<p>Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hamlet’s Soliloquy (Links to an external site.) • Revolution (Links to an external site.) in <i>Les Miserables</i> 	Team Presentation
Thur 10/27	No Class Meeting	Work on Marxism post	Post due by 5pm – on Marxism
Tue 11/1	Feminist & Gender Theory: Introduction	<p>TC: Chp 8 “Gendering the Text” (221-35 & 251-53)</p> <p>HOD: “What are Feminist and Gender Criticism” (163-176)</p> <p>JHU: Feminist Theory & Criticism (Links to an external site.) (read all 5 entries)</p> <p>JHU: Gender Theory &</p>	

Date	Topics	Reading Due	Assignment Due
		<p>Criticism (Links to an external site.)</p> <p>JHU: Judith Butler (Links to an external site.)</p> <p>Article: "Donald Trump Sounds More Feminine than any Candidate (Links to an external site.)..." (<i>Slate</i> Mar 14, 2016)</p> <p>Article: "Man Enough? Masculinity, Media, and the American Presidency (Links to an external site.)" (<i>Blue Review</i>)</p> <p>Video: "Bic Pens for Women (Links to an external site.)" (video)</p> <p>Video: "Body Form Responds: The Truth (Links to an external site.)" (video)</p> <p>Video: History of Superheroines (Links to an external site.) (PBS) (Video trailer)</p>	
Thur 11/3	Feminist & Gender Theory: Praxis	<p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Potty Mouthed Princesses (Links to an external site.)" • 1980s Enjoli Perfume Commercial (Links to an external site.) • "You Spin Me Round (Links to an external site.)," Dead or Alive • David Bowie, Ziggy Stardust (Links to an external site.) 	Team Presentation
Tue 11/8	Queer Theory: Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JHU: Queer Theory & Criticism (Links to an external site.) (read all 3 entries) • JHU: Eve Kosofsky 	Post due by 10am – on Feminist & Gender Theory

Date	Topics	Reading Due	Assignment Due
		<p data-bbox="724 249 1013 317">Sedgwick (Links to an external site.)</p> <p data-bbox="630 359 756 384">Discussion:</p> <ul data-bbox="678 428 1057 1518" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="678 428 1057 533">• “Tim Cook Speaks Up (Links to an external site.)“ <li data-bbox="678 537 1057 604">• Paris is Burning (Links to an external site.) <li data-bbox="678 609 1057 751">• “The Music and Meaning of Paris is Burning“ (Links to an external site.) <li data-bbox="678 756 1057 861">• “homosexual (Links to an external site.)” OED (requires log-in) <li data-bbox="678 865 1057 970">• “queer (Links to an external site.)” OED (requires log-in) <li data-bbox="678 974 1057 1117">• Psychopathia Sexualis (Links to an external site.), Chaddock, 1894 <li data-bbox="678 1121 1057 1264">• “queer (Links to an external site.)” NGram Viewer (American English corpus) <li data-bbox="678 1268 1057 1373">• “queer (Links to an external site.)” Wikipedia <li data-bbox="678 1377 1057 1518">• Oscar Wilde’s literary legacy and his gender-bending publisher (Links to an external site.) 	
Thur 11/10	Queer Theory: Praxis		Team Presentation
Tue 11/15	Postcolonial Criticism: Introduction	<ul data-bbox="678 1619 1057 1866" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="678 1619 1057 1724">• TC: Postcolonial and Ethnic Studies (160-63 & 184-90) <li data-bbox="678 1728 1057 1866">• JHU: Postcolonial Cultural Studies (Links to an external site.) (read both entries) 	Post due by 10am on Queer Theory

Date	Topics	Reading Due	Assignment Due
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JHU: Globalization (Links to an external site.) 	
Thur 11/17	Postcolonial Criticism: Praxis	Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shirley Cards (Links to an external site.) (race & arts), NPR Podcast 	Team Presentation
Tue 11/22	Race & Ethnicity Studies: Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JHU: Race & Ethnicity (Links to an external site.) • JHU: Edward Said (Links to an external site.) • Article: “Achebe: Racism in Heart of Darkness (Links to an external site.)” • Podcast: Chinua Achebe on NPR (Links to an external site.) • Article: Chinua Achebe in The Guardian (Links to an external site.) • Scholarly Article: “‘A Bloody Racist’: Achebe’s View of Conrad (Links to an external site.),” <i>The Yearbook</i> (requires SJSU log-in) 	Annotated Bibliography & Reflective Essay Due Wed by 5pm
Thur 11/24	Thanksgiving — No Class Session		
Tue 11/29	Race & Ethnicity Studies: Praxis		Team Presentation
Thur 12/1	Postmodernism: Introduction	JHU: Postmodernism (Links to an external site.) JHU: Jean Francois Lyotard (Links to an external site.) JHU: Frederic Jameson (Links to an external site.) JHU: Jean Baudrillard (Links to an external site.)	Post due by 10am – on any one of Postcolonialism, Race, Ethnicity critical model

Date	Topics	Reading Due	Assignment Due
		<p>Online: “Understanding Baudrillard with Pumpkin Spice Lattes (Links to an external site.)”</p>	
Tue 12/6	Postmodernism: Praxis		Team Presentation
Thur 12/8	Post-Humanism: Finale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JHU: Katherine Hayles (Links to an external site.) • JHU: Donna Haraway (Links to an external site.) <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “interpellation (Links to an external site.)” and social institutions 	<p>Post due by 10am on participation - credit/no credit</p> <p>Discuss Final Exam Essay (instructions distributed during class)</p> <p>Letter to future 101ers (in class – bring paper)</p>
FINAL EXAM			
Essay Due on Dec. 15, by 10am			
December 15, 9:45AM-12PM (no class meeting)			