

Course Number and Section: ENGL 250.001 / CULT 275.001

Course Name or Topic: Interdisciplinary Theory and Method in Literary Research

Credits: 3

Term: Winter T1, 2020 (Sept.-Dec., 2020)

Instructor: Dr. Melissa Jacques

Course Description:

This course will introduce students to major trends in critical theory by introducing them to the work of a range of critics, philosophers, and theorists who are brought together—often uncomfortably or contentiously—under the rubric of critical or literary theory. Because this field of study is vast, we will be hitting only the highlights. Our readings will move chronologically, from Plato, through to New Criticism, Psychoanalysis, Structuralism, Post-Structuralism, Post-Colonial Theory, Feminism and Gender Theory, Affect Theory, and Trauma Theory.

Method of Course Delivery:

This course will run online with both real-time (synchronous) sessions and self-guided (asynchronous) materials. For a fuller description of synchronous and asynchronous, see below. The breakdown for this section of ENGL 250 / CULT 275 is as follows: 1.5 hours of class time per week will be synchronous, and 1.5 hours will be asynchronous.

Tentative Reading List (All readings are either essays or chapters / excerpts):

Plato, “Book X.” *The Republic*.

Cleanth Brooks, “The Formalist Critics”

Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction”

Sigmund Freud, “Mourning and Melancholia”

Roland Barthes, “The Death of the Author”

Michel Foucault, “Panopticism”

Jacques Derrida, “Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences”

Edward Said, “Themes of Resistance Culture”

Laura Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema”

Judith Butler, Introduction to *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex*.

Sarah Ahmed, “Affective Economies”

Judith Herman, Introduction to *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence: From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*.

Tentative Viewing List:

As part of the asynchronous work of the course, students will be asked to watch videos of lectures and / or interviews with specific theorists on the reading list.

Synchronous: Some or all of the scheduled class hours are spent in a real-time, online virtual classroom, with the instructor and registered students in attendance; these class hours may be devoted to lecture, discussion, group work, or other real-time virtual learning activities. Consult your instructor for specifics.

Asynchronous: Refers to course instruction delivered in the form of materials that can be accessed and worked through at the student’s own pace; these materials might include recorded lectures or power point demonstrations, required readings, etc. Consult your instructor for specifics.