

ENGL 466: CONTEMPORARY LITERARY THEORY FALL 2007

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Grades will be based on:

Major Research Paper: 30

Other Project: 20

Review of Literature and Proposal: 10

Pecha-Kucha presentations: 2x10= 20

Attendance/Participation: 20

Total: 100

Major Research paper: your research paper will be approximately 3750-4000 words (15-20 pages) long and draw on extensive research. You will use MLA format. The topic is relatively open. You will approach any text(s) you choose from any theoretical perspective that seems appropriate.

For help with the MLA format, consult the Writing Center's style sheet

([http://www.vanguard.edu/uploadedFiles/WritingCenter/MLAstylesheet\(1\).pdf](http://www.vanguard.edu/uploadedFiles/WritingCenter/MLAstylesheet(1).pdf)) or the Purdue Owl materials on the topic (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/>). Papers are to be submitted electronically.

Submit this paper using the document name 466F07RPlastname, according to the guidelines for electronic submission found below.

In order to assist you in our paper writing, you will also submit a **paper proposal and literature review**. Not only will the outline the intended argument of your paper, it will also demonstrate that you have begun your research by surveying the available publications relevant to your subject (s). The body of the proposal and review should be 1000-1250 words; an extensive Works Cited should be attached. Submit this paper using the document name 466F07PPLRlastname, according to the guidelines for electronic submission found below.

You will make two in-class **Pecha-kucha presentations**. "Pecha-kucha" is the Japanese word for "chit-chat," but in this case it refers specifically to a Powerpoint presentation containing 20 slides shown for 20 minutes, for a total of 6 minutes and 40 seconds long. You will present on our theory articles, and your presentation should be designed to stimulate class discussion. You may contextualize the article in the theorist's overall work, but focus on the article at hand. <http://www.pecha-kucha.org/> is the website of the international organization promoting this as an art/social event, and http://www.wired.com/techbiz/media/magazine/15-09/st_pechakucha# has a sample slide show. Submit your slide show by 10:00 pm the night before your presentation, using the title 466F07PKtheoristlastname (theorist would be the name of the theorist you are presenting about, such as Barthes or Cixous), according to the guidelines for electronic submission found below.

The **Other Project** is a flexible option. Students are expected to conceive of, propose, and complete a project which supports and connects to our learning in this class. Those who prefer straightforward academic projects might make an annotated bibliography on one of our texts. One might write a short paper. Others may produce a website or power point presentation relevant to our course materials, discussing background information, criticism, etc. One might plan and execute a large-ish artistic project (painting, quilting, music, dance?). One might request the opportunity to host a film presentation, making a little talk or leading discussion

afterwards. We will meet together and share our Other Projects during the scheduled Final Exam time.

A brief proposal (500-750 words; 1-2 pages) for the Other Project will be expected as well. It should describe the project, suggest an appropriate grading framework, and present a rationale for the project's appropriateness for inclusion in this course. Submit this paper using the document name 466F07OPlastname, according to the guidelines for electronic submission found below.

Guidelines for Electronic Submissions: Documents should be saved in MSWord format and sent to vugrading@gmail.com by 9:00 pm on the due date. The documents should be named as instructed above. The last name that should be used is the student's, not the instructor's. Please do not submit papers with generic titles like "English paper" or "definition paper." All documents should follow MLA format: that is, headers containing the student's name, date of submission, and course should be included, as should page numbers. Do not send any correspondence, other than paper submissions, to this address. If you wish to e-mail me regarding the class, questions about our reading, etc., please use the Vanguard e-mail address.

Your **attendance and participation** in this class are important to your learning experience. Due to the discussion-oriented nature of this course, your thoughtful preparation will directly affect the quality of the class for all of us. After two absences, your grade will begin to drop. This includes the assumption that all students will own and read our textbooks. These are *required* for the course; please do not think that you can succeed in a literature course without using our books. If it becomes apparent that you are in class unprepared, or are browsing the internet or otherwise not participating, you may be asked to leave, and would certainly be marked absent.

Late work is strongly discouraged. All take-home materials (papers, worksheets) will drop a letter grade for each calendar day that they are late. Make-up exams are at the discretion of the instructor.

Plagiarism is a form of theft that I take very seriously. In my classes, the first instance of plagiarism generally results in a failing grade for that assignment; further plagiarism can cause you to fail the class and/or be reported to the dean's office.

According to the *Student Handbook*, "Either cheating or plagiarism (presenting as one's own, the words or opinions or others). is regarded as a serious violation of both the academic and moral standards of VUSC.... The dean of the program and the Vice President for Student Affairs are to be notified in instances of academic dishonesty.

A student commits plagiarism if submitted as his/her work: Part or all of an assignment copied from another person's assignment, notes, or computer file. Part or all of an assignment copied or paraphrased from a book, magazine, pamphlet, or website. A sequence of ideas transferred from another source which the student has not digested, integrated and reorganized and to which he /she fails to give proper acknowledgement.

A student is an accomplice in plagiarism if he/she: Allows his/her paper or other assignment, in outline or finished form, to be copied and submitted as the work of another. Lends his/her computer disk to another student or otherwise allows his/her computer files to be copied for the

purposes of plagiarism. Prepares a written assignment for another student and allows it to be submitted as another's work" (61-62).

The Required books for this class include:

Raman Selden et. Al. *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*. 5th ed.
ISBN 0582894107

David H. Richter *The Critical Tradition: Classic Texts and Contemporary Trends* 3rd ed.
ISBN 0312415206

This syllabus is tentative and may be altered by the instructor at any time.

Course Schedule:

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| R 30 August | ----- |
| T 4 September | ----- |
| <u>R 6 September</u> | <u>Course introduction; New Criticism</u> |
| T 11 September | Selden Ch 1; New Criticism Selden Ch 2: Russian Formalism |
| R 14 September | Bakhtin "Heteroglossia in the Novel" (588-593) Bakhtin "From Problems in Dostoevsky's Poetics" (594) |
| <u>T 18 September</u> | <u>Selden ch 3: Reader-Oriented Theories</u> |
| R 20 September | Iser "The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach" (1002-1013) |
| T 25 September | Holland "The Question: Who Reads What How?" (1015-102) |
| <u>R 27 September</u> | <u>Selden ch 4: Structuralist theories</u> |
| T 2 October | Saussure "Nature of the Linguistic Sign" (842-844) Saussure "Binary Oppositions" (845-851) |
| R 4 October | Levi-Strauss "The Structural Study of Myth" (860-867) |
| <u>T 9 October</u> | <u>Selden ch 5: Marxist Theories</u> |
| R 11 October | Lukacs "The Ideology of Modernism" (1218-1231) |
| T 16 October | Benjamin "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1233-1248) |
| <u>R 18 October</u> | <u>Selden Ch 6: Feminist theories</u> |
| T 23 October | Gilbert & Gubar "Infection in the Sentence" (1532-1544) |
| R 25 October | Kolodny "Dancing Through the Minefield" (1550-1562) |
| T 30 October | Cixous "The Laugh of the Medusa" (1643-1655) |
| <u>R 1 November</u> | <u>Selden ch7: Poststructuralist theories</u> |
| | Barthes "The Death of the Author (874-877) PAPER PROPOSAL DUE |
| T 6 November | Foucault "What is an Author?" (904-913) Foucault "History of Sexuality" (1627-1636) |
| R 8 November | Derrida "Structure Sign and Play..." (915-925) |

T 13 November White “The Historical Text as Literary Artifact” (1384-1397)
 Buell “The Ecocritical Insurgency” (1433-1441)

R 15 November Selden ch 8: Postmodernist theories
 OTHER PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE

T 20 November Baudrillard “The Procession of Simulacra” (1936-1945)

T 27 November Selden ch 9: Postcolonialist Theories

R 29 November Said “Orientalism” (1801-1813)
 RESEARCHED PAPER DUE

T 4 December Christian “The Race for Theory” (1859-1865)
 Gates “Writing, ‘Race,’ and the Difference it Makes” (1891-1902)

R 6 December Selden ch 10: Gay, lesbian and queer theories
 Sedgwick “Epistemology of the Closet” (1687-1690)

T 11 December 10:30 – 12:30 OTHER PROJECTS DUE