ENG 2205-002: Introduction to Literary Studies

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English 2205-002  
Introduction to Literary Studies  
Fall 2007

Dr. Francine McGregor  
2255 Coleman Hall  
581-6305

Office Hours: M/W/F 11-11:50, M/W 1-2, and by appointment.

About the Course

In this course we'll consider some of the questions most fundamental to studying literature: What is literature, and why do we consider it worth reading? What questions do we ask as we read, and in what ways do those questions effect how we read? What, in short, is literary criticism, and where does our practice of it place us in relation to the texts we study? As we pursue these questions, we'll also be compiling a working vocabulary with which to discuss literature and exploring several of the most influential theoretical approaches informing contemporary literary criticism. The goals of the course are to introduce you to some of the practices fundamental to literary study while providing a forum in which you can experiment with, reflect on, and further develop your own critical perspectives.

Required Texts:

Auster, *The New York Trilogy* (*NYT*)  
Richter, *The Critical Tradition* 2nd/ed (*CT*)  
Richter, *Falling Into Theory* 2nd/ed (*FT*)

You should also have access to a grammar book and college level dictionary

Course Requirements/ Evaluation

1) Midterm exam  
2) Final exam  
3) Short paper (4-5 pages)  
4) Final paper (6-8 pages)  
5) Class participation (may include short writings and quizzes)
Policies

1) The reading load for this course is heavy and the material challenging, so make sure you allow yourself plenty of time to complete the assigned reading. Keep in mind that if you come to class unprepared, you’ll lose participation credit. On the less punitive side, class is simply a lot more fun and interesting when you know what everyone else is talking about and have ideas of your own to contribute.

2) Much of what you will learn in this course will come from ideas generated in class discussion and so your presence in, and engagement with, the class are essential. Missing more than three classes will reduce your class participation grade.

3) Assignments must be handed in within the first five minutes of class on the day they are due unless we have worked out a prior arrangement. Work handed in after that time will lose half a letter grade for each calendar day it is late. No work will be accepted a week after the deadline.

4) You must successfully complete all work for the course in order to receive a passing grade.

Plagiarism Policy

The following is the English department’s statement concerning plagiarism:

“Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—‘The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s original work’ (Random House Dictionary of the English Language)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including a grade of ‘F’ for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.”

While I assume I’ll have no need to impose penalties for plagiarism, the ones I consider appropriate are that the student fail the course and be reported to the Judicial Affairs Office. If at any point in your writing for this course (or for another, if you like) you’re uncertain about whether you’re using sources appropriately, please come and talk to me.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please let me know and please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.
Syllabus
(I'll notify you in advance of any changes)

Week 1: (Aug 20-24)
Richter, “Introduction” (FT 1-11)
Richter, “Why We Read” (FT 15-30)

Week 2: (Aug 27-31)
Hooks, “Toward a Revolutionary Feminist Pedagogy” (FT 78-84)
Richter “What We Read” (FT 121-136)

Week 3: (Sept 3-7)
Mon 3rd Labor Day – no classes
Tompkins, “Masterpiece Theater” (FT 137-47)

Week 4: (Sept 10-14)
Richter, “How We Read” (FT 235-52)
Eliot, “Tradition and the Individual Talent” (CT 495-503)

Week 5: (Sept 17-21)
Brooks, “Irony as a Principle of Structure” (CT 757-65)
Foucault, “What is an Author” (CT 889-900)

Week 6: (Sept 24-28)
Fish, “How to Recognize a Poem When You See One” (FT 268-78)
Dasenbrock, “Do We Write the Text We Read” (FT 278-89)

Week 7: (Oct 1-5)
Fetterly, “Introduction to The Resisting Reader” (CT 990-98)
Morrison, “Black Matter(s)” (FT 309-22)

Week 8: (Oct 8-12)
Review
Midterm Exam
Fri 12th Fall Break – no classes

Week 9: (Oct 15-19)
Presentations
Paper 1 is due

Week 10: (Oct 22-26)
Auster, “City of Glass” (NYT)
Derrida, “Structure, Sign, and Play” (CT 877-89)
Week 11: (Oct 29-Nov 2)
  Auster, “Ghosts” (*NYT*)
  Lacan, “Logical Time” (on reserve)

Week 12: (Nov 5-9))
  Auster, “The Locked Room” (*NYT*)

Week 13: (Nov 12-16)
  Conferences
  **Draft of Paper 2 is due**

Week 14: (Nov 19-23)
  Thanksgiving Break – no classes

Week 15: (Nov 26-30)
  Presentations

Week 16: (Dec 3-7)
  Review
  **Final paper is due**

You will have a comprehensive final exam on Monday, December 10th, 12:30-2:30.