ENGLISH 204 (three sections): Foundations of Literary Studies  Fall 2006
T-Th 9:35-11:00
Section 1: Aquinas 301
Section 2: Aquinas 305
Section 3: Aquinas 309

Professors:
ENG 204-1: Dr. Toni Saldivar (Office: 120-D Aquinas, 569-3230) saldivar@msmc.edu.
ENG 204-2: Dr. Daniel Shea  (Office: 230-A Aquinas, 569-3147) shea@msmc.edu.
ENG 204-3: Dr. Nancy Von Rosk (Office: 122 Aquinas, 569-3363) vonrosk@msmc.edu.

(See below for office hours for each.)

Description: This gateway course is designed to foster the critical reading and writing skills you will need to participate in the discipline of literary studies, and to develop your understanding of contemporary literary criticism in order to expand your ability to respond to, analyze, interpret and write about literature for an audience within the discipline of English. This writing intensive course will also introduce you to research tools and strategies in the field. Students must have successfully completed ENG 102: Forms of Literature to enroll in Eng 204: Foundations of Literary Studies.

Student Outcomes: At the completion of this course, you should
--be familiar with various critical approaches to literature
--know the terminology associated with literary studies
--demonstrate skill in the close reading of literary texts
--have the rhetorical skills to write researched, documented essays on literary texts
--be able to use appropriate research tools, such as the MLA International Bibliography

Course format: To help you achieve these goals, your professors have segmented the course as follows:
--a two-week introduction with the professor of your section (1, 2 or 3)
-- three four-week sessions, each focused on a specific period and on specific critical reading strategies and each taught by a different English professor:
  Session A, British literature        Dr. Shea
  Session B, American literature     Dr. Saldivar
  Session C, World literature        Dr. Von Rosk
--a concluding week of review with the professor of your section. By the end of this course, you will have studied a range of critical approaches and a variety of literary texts with three professors.
-- Some assignments and supplementary readings will be posted on the course’s WebCT link.
Rotation of the Sessions:
ENG 204-1: Dr. Toni Saldivar
Students in 204-1 will, after the two-week introduction with Dr. Saldivar, follow this sequence: Session B, Session A, Session C.

ENG 204-2: Dr. Daniel Shea
Students in 204-2 will, after the two-week introduction with Dr. Shea, follow this sequence: Session A, Session C, Session B.

ENG 204-3: Dr. Nancy Von Rosk
Students in 204-3 will, after the two-week introduction with Dr. Von Rosk, follow this sequence: Session C, Session B, Session A.

Description of the Sessions:
Session A: British literature, the Romantic period: William Blake, *Poetry*
Critical approaches: Marxist criticism; Structuralism and Deconstruction

Session B: American literature, the Modern period: Edith Wharton, *Ethan Frome*
Critical approaches: Psychoanalytical criticism; Feminist criticism, Gender criticism

Session C: World literature: the Post-modern period: Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*
Critical approaches: The New Historicism, Cultural criticism and Post-Colonial criticism

Required Texts:

MLA format, the discipline standard, is available through the Curtain Memorial Library’s homepage and through your College Writing handbook.

Course assessment:
At the end of the two-week introduction, you will write an in-class essay (2-3 pages) demonstrating skill in close reading (10% of final grade). In each four-week session, you will write one brief (3-4 pages) analytical paper tracing a line of potential research from a class-compiled annotated bibliography (10% of final grade) and take an examination on content (10% of final grade). At the end of the course, you will submit a researched and documented analytical essay (5-7 pages) focusing on a single author (20%). The
remaining 10% of your final grade will be based on your professional commitment to the course: punctuality, presence, preparedness, and participation. Assessment of the documented essay and recommendation of satisfactorily completing ENG 204 will be done collaboratively by the instructors. **Students must earn a C or better in this course in order to continue as an English major.** The course may be repeated only once.

**Academic Honesty:** All students are expected to adhere to the College position on academic honesty as defined on p. 36 of the Student Handbook: “either intentionally or accidentally copying or imitating ideas or thoughts of another person and passing them off as the same as one’s original work.” The Division of Arts and Letters has a strict policy: any student found in violation will receive a failing grade for the course.

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**Division Grading Policy**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade Equivalent</th>
<th>Quality Points</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100-95</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Superior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94-90</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89-87</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86-83</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82-80</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79-77</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>Above Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-73</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>72-70</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
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<tr>
<td>69-65</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>Poor</td>
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<tr>
<td>64-60</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>59-0</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>Failing</td>
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**Session A:**

**ENG 204: Foundations of Literary Studies**

**Office Hours:** MWF 9-11; TTH: 11-12

**Dr. Daniel Shea**

**Weeks 1 and 2**

*August 29:* Introduction: What is literary criticism? How does a text mean? What is “close reading”?

*August 31:* Formalist Criticism; New Criticism, Lynn *Texts and Contexts*: 37-58

*September 5:* Reader Response Criticism: Lynn *Texts and Contexts*: 61-95

*September 7:* In class response paper demonstrating skill in close reading of a passage from “The Tyger.”

**Session A:**

**Week One:** Tues.: *Blake*: “The Marriage of Heaven and Hell”: 81+  
Thurs.: Nurmi: 553+

**Week Two:** Tues.: **Marxist Criticism**. in Abrams: 155+; Lynn: 145-148.

**Week Three:**  Tues.: **Structuralism/Deconstruction:** in Abrams: 309+; Frye (in Blake) 510+; Lynn 97-131
Thurs: “The Book of Urizen”: 140+; Price (in Blake): 565

**Week Four:**  Tues: Introduce essay. Lynn: 245-279
Thurs: Exam on concepts. Workshop essay examining two critical essays from the class-compiled annotated bibliography Final draft with writing process attached due the following Tuesday.

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**Session B:**
**ENG 204-1: Foundations of Literary Studies**
**Dr. Toni Saldivar**

**Course schedule.**
**Office Hours:** T-Th: 2:30-4:00

**Weeks 1 and 2**
August 29: Introduction: What is literary criticism? How does a text mean? What is “close reading”? (Lynn *Texts and Contexts* 2-11)
August 31: “Critical Worlds: A Selective Tour” (13-35)
September 5: “Unifying the Work: New Criticism” (37-58)
September 7: In class response paper demonstrating skill in close reading of an assigned passage from *Ethan Frome*.

**Session B:**
**Week One**
Tue. Lecture: Psychological/Psychoanalytical criticism.
Readings: Lynn *Texts and Contexts* 183-209;
Abrams *Glossary* 256-262
Thur: Discussion: *Ethan Frome* (Lauer 3-74)
Unifying and creating the text in the context of post-Freudian culture.

**Week Two**
Tue. Discussion: Cynthia Griffin Wolf, “The Narrator’s Vision” (Lauer 130-145)
Other possible psychoanalytical approaches as found in class-compiled working bibliography using MLA International Bibliography.
Thur. Written and oral contributions to class compiled annotated working bibliography.

**Week Three:**
Tue. Lecture: Feminist criticism, Gender criticism.
Readings: Lynn 211-243; Abrams 93-99
Thurs. Other possible feminist approaches.
Written and oral contributions to class-compiled annotated working bibliography using MLA International Bibliography.

**Week Four:**
- **Tue.** Examination on concepts.
  Essay assignment: Writing the documented critical essay on the topic “Reading Ethan Frome from Psychoanalytical and Feminist Perspectives and Raising Research Questions”
- **Thur.** Conference on draft of documented critical essay
  Revised final draft (3-4 pages) with writing process attached due the following Tuesday.

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**Session C:**

**ENG 204: Foundations of Literary Studies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Schedule</th>
<th>Office Hours MW: 11:15-12:15</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weeks 1 and 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>2:30-3:30</strong></td>
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</table>
| **Aug. 29**     | Introductions: What is “close reading”? What is “literary criticism”?
| **Aug. 31**     | Formalist Criticism; New Criticism, Lynn *Texts and Contexts*: 37-58 |
| **Sept. 5**     | Reader Response Criticism: Lynn *Texts and Contexts*: 61-95, and Fish, “How to Recognize a Poem When You See One” (handout) |
| **Sept 7**      | In-class response paper demonstrating skill in close reading of a passage from *Things Fall Apart* |

**Session C**

**Week 1:**
- **Tues:** *Things Fall Apart* (Chapters 1-8)

**Week 2:**
- **Tues:** Discussion of *TFA*, Part 2 (Chapters 14-19) and lecture on the “Scramble” for Africa
- **Thurs:** *TFA*, Part 3, (Chapters 20-25) and discussion of annotated bibliography assignment

**Week 3:**
- **Tues:** Lynn, *Texts and Contexts* (133-181), Geertz, “Thick Description: Towards an Interpretive Theory of Culture,” Greenblatt, “Culture,” and Said, “In the Shadow of the West” (handouts)
History and Tragedy in *Things Fall Apart*” and Cobham, “Problems of Gender and History in the Teaching of *Things Fall Apart*” (handouts)

**Week 4:**

Tues. Presentation of annotated bibliographies, Abrams, New Historicism (190-197), Cultural Studies (53-55) and Postcolonial Studies (245-246)

Thurs. Exam (one hour) and conferences/workshop on essay examining two critical essays from the class-compiled annotated bibliography

*Due Next Tuesday**: An analysis and comparison of two critical essays on *Thing Fall Apart*. What questions do these articles raise for you? Important points? Insights into the text? Most convincing/least convincing points and why? Problems/issues to investigate in a research paper?

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**Week Fourteen:** Workshop Final Essay
**Week Fifteen:** Essay due in class

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**Guidelines for Writing Papers**

*Focus.* Try to focus your attention on one problem, one question, one image, one character or one quote from a text. This will help you write papers that are more detailed, more substantive, and more analytical as opposed to responses that are merely plot summaries or vague generalizations.

*Avoid plot summaries.* Remember that you are writing for readers who have already read the text and are eager to hear your ideas about its significance. You need to do more than show that you’ve read the material; you need to show that you’ve thought carefully about it. We will be looking for evidence that you have read the work critically, that you are engaged with it, that you are wrestling with the issues the writers have raised.

**Grading**

When grading your work we generally take into account *The Four Cs*:

1. **Content** (Substance and focus. Has the writer used specific examples, concrete details, and relevant quotations or is the writing vague and general?)

2. **Clarity** (Is the writing clear, concise, organized, persuasive or graceful? Or are there grammatical and organizational problems that get in the way of effectively communicating ideas?)
3. **Critical Thought** (Does the writer show a strong intellectual engagement with the material? Is the writer analyzing (rather than summarizing or retelling the story)?

4. **Correctedness** (Has the writer followed the proper format for the literary research paper? Are quotations incorporated gracefully and correctly? Are sources correctly cited and acknowledged using MLA documentation? Are there spelling, punctuation and/or grammatical mistakes?)