



# Literary Theory

Dr. Gerald R. Lucas : 82363 ENGL 4700 MW 9.30-10.45a PSC-152

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# Introduction

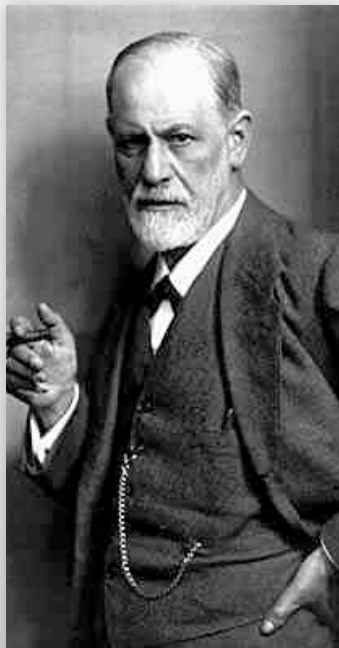
## Literary Theory

This section of ENGL 4700 will examine literary theory from its poetic and rhetorical beginnings, through hermeneutics, philology, and romanticism to contemporary theoretical and critical discourses about literary studies.

This course is about the idea of what we characterize as literary discourse and its place in temporal cultural matters. Our journey will be a linear tracing through history of thinking about literature as art, symbol, rhetoric, psychology, self-referent, and thing-in-itself.

Our survey will spend about half of the semester before the twentieth century and half after. We'll begin with the classic texts, from the poetic and rhetorical theories of the Greeks and Romans, their development into medieval hermeneutics, through Renaissance humanism, Romanticism, and modern New Criticism. Part two of the course will examine late modern and contemporary trends in literary theory and criticism, like Formalism, (Post-)Structuralism, Psychoanalysis, Deconstruction, Feminism, Postcolonialism, Postmodernism, and other slippery liminal ares.

Much of what we read — if not all — will be challenging and often frustrating. Our approach will attempt to engage the texts in the capacity that we are ready for. We will conduct our meetings as seminars in which we attempt to tease out meaning and significance toward a better understanding of both literature and the theoretical discourse that surrounds, supports, and/or deconstructs it.







# Requirements

Three major requirements must be completed for Literary Theory.

## Daily Participation

Regular class attendance, question posing, and active participation in classroom discussions are required. Participation, effort, and attitude will count significantly in this course. Quizzes, other class activities, and homework assignments not explicitly outlined above will be considered daily work.

## Responses

To get you thinking more critically about the major works, you are required to respond to class readings in writing. All writing should be thoughtful, refer to specific portions of the text, use the critical vocabulary, and cite correctly using MLA citation method. Each response should be no longer than two pages and address any weekly reading(s). I will count a total of **eight** of these responses in your final grade, but feel to write every week. These responses should be submitted on dead trees at the beginning of Monday's class before we address the text(s) in our discussion.

## Discussion Leading / Research

For this requirement, you should select an assigned reading from the second half of the semester to research, briefly introduce to the class, and then lead our discussion on the text. You should provide a handout that gives an overview of your research and attempts to cover the major points of the text.

I will pass around a sign-up sheet a couple of weeks into the course, so you should pick several readings that interest you in case your first choice is taken.



# Books & Materials

Richter, David. **The Critical Tradition.**

There is one required text for this class: David Richter's *The Critical Tradition* (Bedford/St. Martin, 2006). This book should always accompany you to class, along with your reading notes so you are ready to participate in the discussion. Please do not come to class without it: we need the book for class activities, in-class writing, and all aspects of our study.

Do not come to class without your books and something to write with and on. Everyday. Seriously.



# Policies

You will be accountable for **knowing and practicing each of these policies.**

## Assignments

Your work represents you. Therefore, I expect everything you turn into me to exemplify the very best of your professional self. Please proofread all writing before submission.

## Attendance

Attendance will be taken at every class meeting. If you come in late, it is your responsibility to inform me of your presence that day. If you fail to do so, you are absent. Two tardies count as one absence. There are no "excused absences" in my class, but you are allowed to miss one class before your grade suffers. Each additional class missed beyond the allotted one will result in your final semester's grade being dropped one letter.

## Deadlines

Late work is not acceptable and will receive a zero. Technical, computer malfunctions are not acceptable excuses for late work. Quizzes and in-class activities cannot be made up for any reason. Pay particular attention to forum deadlines; if you complete the forum after the due date, you will receive no credit.

## Email

The best and quickest way of contacting me is via email. Only use the email address that I provided on this document for class business: <theory@grlucas.net>.

## Grades

Letter grades are based upon a traditional ten-point scale. If you would like to know your official grade, you

should see me during my office hours, make an appointment, or check it yourself online.

## Plagiarism

Any time you use ideas that are not your own — be they paraphrased or copied verbatim — in anything that you write, you must supply a citation in MLA Citation Style. Willful plagiarism will result in automatic failure of this class and will be submitted to the Dean for further potential consequences. Remember two things:

If you use ideas or information that are not common knowledge, you must cite a source, whether you quote it directly or paraphrase.

Unsure as to what to cite, when to cite, and how to cite? Check your handbook for the best information.

The professor reserves the right to use **Turn It In**, a plagiarism prevention service, to evaluate any written work submitted for this course. As directed by the professor, students are expected to submit or have their assignments submitted through the service in order to meet requirements for this course. The papers may be retained by the service for the sole purpose of checking for plagiarized content in future student submissions.

## Special Needs

Any student who has special needs should contact Ann E. Loyd at the Counseling and Career Center (478-471-2714) and fill out the appropriate paperwork. The student should then see me with the documentation so that the necessary accommodations can be made.

## Technology Competency

Computer competency is an integral skill in any discipline. Students should be familiar with the general uses of a computer, particularly using a web browser. Students should be willing to put forth the effort to learn what they need to in order to succeed in the course. Please see me for additional assistance when necessary.

# Course Schedule

This schedule is tentative and subject to change. It reflects only an overview of readings and assignments, but does not always indicate other specific class session assignments or activities.

**Week 1 (8/17 & 8/19)**  
Course Introduction

**Week 2 (8/24 & 8/26)**  
Plato

**Week 3 (8/31 & 9/2)**  
Aristotle

**Week 4 (9/9)**  
Horace, Longinus, Plotinus

**Week 5 (9/14 & 9/16)**  
Sydney, Dryden, Pope, Johnson

**Week 6 (9/21 & 9/23)**  
Hume, Kant

**Week 7 (9/28 & 9/30)**  
Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley

**Week 8 (10/5 & 10/7)**  
Hegel, Marx, Arnold

**Week 9 (10/12 & 10/14)**  
Eliot, Leavis, Frye

**Week 10 (10/19 & 10/21)**  
Formalism

**Week 11 (10/26 & 10/28)**  
Structuralism & Deconstruction

**Week 12 (11/2 & 11/4)**  
Psychoanalysis

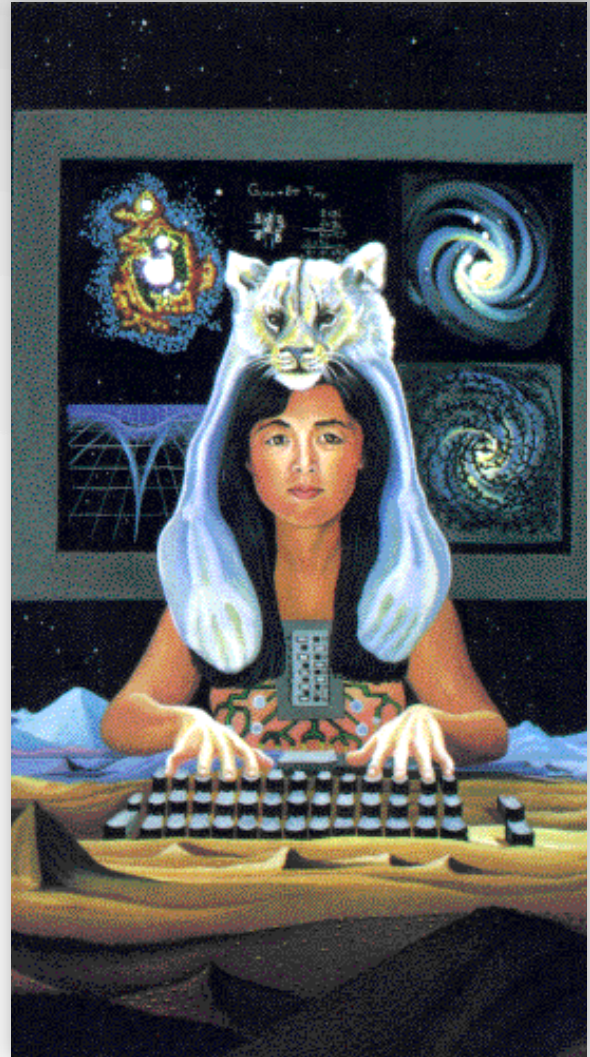
**Week 13 (11/9 & 11/11)**  
Feminism & Gender Criticism

**Week 14 (11/16 & 11/18)**  
New Historicism & Cultural Studies

**Week 15 (11/23)**  
Marxist Criticism & Postcolonialism

**Week 16 (11/30 & 12/2)**  
Postmodernism

**Exam (12/7)**  
1-3pm



Dr. Gerald R. **Lucas**

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<http://litmuse.net/>

Office H/SS-117

Office Hours MW 11-12:30 and by appointment