

## **Course description**

### **Descriptif du cours**

**Department : English**

**Instructor (s): Pr. Lobna Ben Salem**

**Academic year: 2021-2022**

**Level: Masters 1 Literature**

**Course title: Literary Theory and Criticism**

#### **Course outline:**

- Chapter 1: Defining Criticism, Theory, and Literature
- Chapter 2: A Historical Survey of Literary Criticism
- Chapter 3: Russian Formalism and New Criticism
- Chapter 4: Reader-Oriented Criticism
- Chapter 5: Modernity and Postmodernism: Structuralism and Deconstruction
- Chapter 6: Psychoanalytic Criticism
- Chapter 7: Feminism
- Chapter 8: Marxism
- Chapter 9: Cultural Poetics or New Historicism
- Chapter 10: Cultural Studies: Postcolonialism, African-American Criticism, and Queer Theory

**Course objectives:** The course aims at surveying the major schools of 20<sup>th</sup> century literary criticism and theory, ranging from Russian formalism and structuralism to New Criticism and post-structuralism (including neo-Marxism, gender and queer studies, psychoanalysis, deconstruction, New Historicism, reader-response theory, race and ethnicity studies, post-colonial theory, and cultural studies). Emphasis is on the continuity of key ideas in the history

of criticism, as well as the gradual displacement of once-revered concepts such as “greatness,” “meaning,” and “beauty” as goals of aesthetic inquiry.

By the end of the course, students will

1. demonstrate familiarity with the history of literary theory in the West, including prominent theorists and critics, important schools and movements, and the historical and cultural contexts relevant to those theories;
2. demonstrate their ability to articulate theoretical concepts orally by their class participation and formal presentation of their final paper;
3. Explain to others the meaning, significance, and value of specific literary theoretical works.
4. Use literary theoretical concepts to develop your own interpretations of literary texts;
5. Analyze specific literary theories in order to distinguish them from other theories and to identify the structure and logic of their arguments;
6. Think critically about a range of literary theories.

**Method of evaluation:**

- Evaluation takes the form of written Exams at the end of each semester.

**References:**

- Aristotle, *Poetics*. Trans. and ed. by Anthony Kenny. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Barthes, Roland. ‘The Death of the Author’, in *Image-Music-Text*. Trans. Stephen Heath. New York: Noonday Press, 1977.
- Barry, Peter. *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2002.
- Bennett, Andrew, and Nicholas Royle. *An Introduction to Literature, Criticism and Theory*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited. 2009.
- Culler, Jonathan. *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: OUP, 2011.
- Eagleton, Terry. *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2008.
- Preminger, Alex, Leon Golden et al, eds. *Classical Literary Criticism: Translations and Interpretations*. New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1974.
- Rylance, Rick. *Debating Texts: A Reader in Twentieth-Century Literary Theory and Method*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1987.

Waugh, Patricia. *Literary Theory and Criticism: An Oxford Guide*. Oxford: OUP, 2006