



English 520-01W || Contemporary Critical Practices in English Studies Summer II 2024

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Preferred Form of Communication: email

Communication Response Time: within 24 hours

Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:00 am – 12:00 pm, or by appointment

Course Description

This course is an overview of key critical approaches that inform and guide contemporary scholarship within the field of English Studies (composition and rhetoric, literature, and film). Among the possible theories or methodologies are: New Criticism, Marxism, psychoanalysis, (post)structuralism, deconstruction, reader response, audience studies, cultural studies, new historicism/cultural materialism, feminist theory, narrative theory, postcolonial studies, critical race studies, queer studies, and ecocriticism. The course will explore how these critical frameworks have evolved, building upon and responding to one another, and how they continue to influence and reshape the study of literature, language, and culture. May be repeated for credit when the emphasis changes.

Course Texts

- *How to Interpret Literature: Critical Theory for Literary and Cultural Studies*, Robert Dale Parker
- Selected chapters and articles on critical theory
- Selected films
- Selected short stories, plays

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will:

- Gain a substantial understanding of the major critical theories
- Engage in informed and scholarly discussion about formalist, psychological, Marxist, structuralist, post-structuralist, feminist, queer, and new historicism critical approaches

- Communicate complex arguments in clear and effective written arguments and summaries
- Produce written work that engages meaningfully with the primary texts and existing scholarly research
- Communicate orally complex conversations on approaches to critical theory
- Demonstrate a mastery of postcolonial theory and ecocriticism

Grading

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale, and you can look up your grades anytime on the virtual course space:

- A = 90%-100%
- B = 80%-89%
- C = 70%-79%
- D = 60%-69%
- F = 59% or Below

Weights of the assessments in the calculation of the final letter grade:

• Weekly Responses	30%
• Project Proposal	10%
• Selected theoretical essay explication	30%
• Major Project	30%
• TOTAL	100%

Assignments and Exams

- *Weekly Reading Responses* – These will be brief responses to the week’s reading prompts on the online portal’s discussion boards. You will need to post your individual responses every Wednesday evening, and you will need to respond to one classmate by every Sunday evening. I will read through each of your posts and responses to each other; occasionally, I may also respond, but the purpose of these weekly responses is to ensure that you are completing the reading and that you are engaging with it in a meaningful way. I will read through your responses prior to our zoom meetings (not mandatory) to tailor our discussion to the questions and comments in the discussion forums.
- *Project Proposal*: This proposal will be a two-page summary of the critical theory that you have decided to study with more depth. In it, you will explain the reasons for your selection, the possible uses during your graduate studies that you foresee for the selected critical theory, and the historical contexts that have shaped that critical approach. See assignment prompt for more detail.
- *Selected Theoretical Essay Explication*: this assignment is connected to the Project Proposal and to the Major Project in that it engages with the same critical theory that those two assignments engage with. The difference is that for this assignment, you will select one essay from one of the major figures of the selected critical theory, and you will write an explication about the selected essay. See assignment prompt for more detail.
- *Major Project*: For this project you will expand on the Project Proposal and will research the historical contexts and theoretical connections and trajectories of the selected critical theory that you have selected to study in more depth. See assignment prompt for more detail.

Crucial Course Objective

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, culture, perspective, and other background characteristics. I encourage your suggestions about how to improve the value of diversity, equity, and inclusion in this course. This course meets the following standards for diversity content and instruction in the following way(s):

1. Course content that includes readings and other materials that address various categories of social difference (gender, nationality, religion, ethnicity, race, age, sexuality, political affiliation, socioeconomic status, ability, linguistic background, etc.) on the course topic.
2. Tying current events and local histories centered on the production of social difference into classroom activities.

Interaction with Instructor

I am available via email and via zoom appointments. For zoom meetings, email to set up a time. If you send an email I will answer it within 24 hours. Please follow proper email etiquette. I do not check D2L email, so only send emails to the university address
LameborshiEralda@tamuc.edu

Things to Keep in Mind

1. All Writing Projects must be turned in on D2L (see next section for access) on the due date and time. No make-up work is allowed on major assignments. Late work will be penalized 10% of the grade per day that it is late.
2. All work needs to adhere to MLA format with appropriate documentation.
3. Plagiarism, or turning in work that is not one's own, runs counter to the most basic purposes and presumptions of higher education. The minimum penalty for plagiarism will be failure of the assignment. In repeated cases, the penalty is failure of the course and filing paperwork with the department head (see section below on academic integrity).
4. All students will be graded on their ability to: 1. Achieve the goal of the specific assignment 2. Efficiently and effectively communicate through writing 3. Properly format the work and 4. Avoid stigmatized grammatical and syntactical errors. Each assignment will vary, but these four factors will always determine part, or all, of your grade.

Technology Requirements

We will often use D2L, and in the case of web-based courses, D2L will be our virtual classroom. It is your responsibility to make sure that you have all technology requirements met for a successful interaction with online learning spaces. For more on technology requirements see here: <https://inside.tamuc.edu/facultystaffservices/academictechnology/readiness-for-online-courses.aspx>

Access and Navigation

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the

availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

Communication

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact me via email: LameborshiEralda@tamuc.edu

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here: <https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for me to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance and an updated copy will be posted online.

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail here:

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/campuservices/studentRights/Code%20of%20Conduct.aspx>

Student Grievance Procedure

Students who have concerns regarding their courses should first address those concerns with the assigned instructor in order to reach a resolution. Students who are unsatisfied with the outcome of that conversation or have not been able to meet individually with their instructor, whether in-person, by email, by telephone, or by another communication medium, should then schedule an appointment with the Department Head or Assistant Department Head by completing a Student Grievance Form (available in the main office, HL 141). In the event that the instructor is the Department Head, the student should schedule a meeting with the Dean of the College of Arts, Sciences, and Humanities after following the steps outlined above; if the instructor is the Assistant Department Head, students should schedule a meeting with the Department Head. Where applicable, students should also consult [University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.05 \(“Student Appeal of Instructor Evaluation”\)](#).

Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the attendance webpage: <https://inside.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalinformation/attendance.aspx>

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following: <https://www.tamuc.edu/college-of-business/integrity-policy/>

Use of AI

ENG 520 Policy: No AI may be used for any of the written assignments.

Texas A&M University-Commerce acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty

13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu, <https://www.tamuc.edu/student-disability-services/>

Mental Health Services

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained. For more on this see here:

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/aboutus/administrativeoffices/academicAffairs/handbook2016/section-iii.aspx>

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

For more on campus carry policy see here:

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/aboutus/CampusCarry/FAQs.aspx#:~:text=to%20carry%20guns%3F-,Any%20individual%20who%20holds%20a%20current%20and%20valid%20license%20to,where%20permitted%20on%20university%20property.>

Collection of Data for Measuring Institutional Effectiveness

In order to measure the level of compliance with the accreditation, throughout the semester I may collect some of the ungraded texts you produce solely for an assessment of program effectiveness that in no way affects students' course grades or GPAs.