English 3381.001: Intro. to Literary Analysis  
Ferguson 183  
Tuesday and Thursday, 11-1215  
Fall, 2023  

Instructor: Dr. Michael Martin  
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Office Hours:  
Monday: 830-10, 130-3  
Tuesday: 2-330  
Wednesday: 830-10, 130-3  
Thursday: 2-330  
Or by scheduled appointment  

Catalog Description: “Reading and writing critical analyses of primary texts, including essays, fiction, and poetry. This course, which reviews the mechanics and techniques of literary analysis, should be taken during the first semester the student is eligible for 3000 level courses. Prerequisites: nine semester hours of English.”  

Course Justification: ENGL 3381 “Introduction to Literary Analysis” (3 credits) typically meets three times each week in 50-minute segments or twice each week in 75-minute segments for 15 weeks, and also meets for a 2-hour final examination. Students are expected to complete a significant amount of reading of theoretical, aesthetic, and literary text. The weekly reading will be accompanied by such assignments as in-class and out-of-class writing and class presentations. The amount of writing will average between 18-26 pages over the semester and will, at times, require substantial research. The required outside of class workload will average 6 hours per week.  

Course Description: This course is designed to introduce students to the foundations of literary study and writing. Our goal here will not directly focus on the direct interpretation of literary texts, but will instead focus on critically engaging those texts that form the foundation for how and why we engage literary texts. As such, a majority of our study will center on the reading, interpretation and questioning of many major essays in the areas of criticism and theory. Our discussions will circle around issues of aesthetics, literary value, questions of craft and talent, and the place and/or purpose of literature in an ever-changing world and culture. We will broadly trace the development of these conversations all the way from the...
ancients to the much more recent. The importance behind such a study is that it provides students with a general understanding of where and why literary interpretation begins. In other words, if you have ever asked yourself why your professors find value in certain texts or how your professors have brought such interpretations of texts or questions for discussion to your other classes, these essays will, potentially, provide answers. Beyond introducing students to the purpose of literary study, this course will also introduce students to the discourse of the field, the mechanical and stylistic requirements of writing within the field of literary study, and how to research within field. Furthermore, we will explore exactly “how” we might begin our engagement with specific literary texts/genres before we come to class for discussion of said texts.

As currently designed, our semester will be broken into mini-units. We will quickly start the semester with the very broad discussion of “Why study English”; in other words, what is the purpose in literary study. Then, we will move into a study of literary criticism—where we read and discuss central essays regarding the purpose and craft of the literary enterprise. Next, we will explore exactly how we talk about and critically explore different literary genres. At this time, we will be looking to expand our disciplinary discourse and discuss how it is that we are to engage with literature (beyond simply recognizing our like or dislike of pieces). We will then turn our focus to specific literary works and explore how literary theory can aid in our reading and interpretation of said works. In the last part of the class, we will be turning our time over to the exploration of very specific aspects of the writing process—knowing how to correctly incorporate quotations and cite works; how to write thesis statements; how to make transitions; etc. We will then end the course with a return to the start and re-look at the purpose behind the study of literature.

As you can see, this is an intensive course, but it is not so overwhelming that we cannot accomplish our goals. In order to accomplish our goals, it is important that you not only attend class, but also be prepared when in attendance (i.e. come to class having read and marked your texts, be ready with questions, be open to being questioned and questioning others, etc.).

**Delivery Format:** This class has been designed to be delivered in a face-to-face manner.

**D2L/Brightspace Page:**
We will make use of our D2L page (Brightspace) in a number of ways. First, in order to save some money, I have made use of OER documents as much as possible. So, for example, during the first four weeks of class, all of our readings will be posted—either as a pdf or as a direct link—to our D2L page. While it is not expected that you print all of these documents, you are still to have practiced active reading and you **MUST have access** to the works during class meetings (and such access needs to be on a device other than your phone). While all essay assignments will be turned in as printed documents, other assignments will be turned in via drop-box. The course calendar will explicitly state submission requirements for each assignment. Finally, we will use D2L to house the syllabus, course calendars, handouts, etc. and I will make use of the “News” function for announcements.
Program Learning Outcomes:

Objective 1: The student will demonstrate the ability to analyze works accurately through close reading.
Objective 2: The student will demonstrate the ability to conduct and apply effective textual research.
Objective 3: The student will demonstrate the ability to write clear, grammatically correct prose for a variety of purposes.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1) Through class discussion and writing, students will demonstrate the ability to engage and adeptly analyze discipline specific essays on literary aesthetics and theory.
2) At the end of the semester, students will have encountered some of the dominant schools of literary theory/thought. This will be done through a study of various literary texts and the use of Literary Criticism: An Introduction to Theory and Practice. Students will read about five different schools—completing a presentation on one school and writing about a second.
3) Throughout the semester, students will be taught to conduct research within the field of literary studies. The student will employ this research knowledge through a “treasure hunt” assignment and final seminar paper.
4) Throughout the semester, students will complete summary/analysis and literary analysis papers. These papers will be evaluated on the clarity, development, and delivery of the argument.

Required Texts:


Grade Determination:
Critical Response to Lit Crit: 100 Points; 15% of Final Grade
Video Presentation: Making a “Reading”: 100 points; 10% of Final Grade
Critical Response to Lit Theory: 100 points; 15% of Final Grade
Group Presentation on Lit Theory: 100 points; 10% of Final Grade
Seminar Project: 100 points; 35% of Final Grade
Final Exam: 100 points; 15% of Final Grade
Collateral Assignments: In order to receive a grade for this class, you must complete and turn in these two assignments.

*Treasure Hunt and MLA Worksheet:* Pass/Fail (these two assignments must be completed in order to complete the class)

**Individual Grades**
A: 100-90  
B: 89-80  
C: 79-70  
D: 69-60  
F: 59-0

**Major Course Assignments:**

*Critical Response: 15% of Final Grade*

As you can see from the calendar, every student will a critical response to one of the lit crit essays that we will read for class. The date when you write these essays will be determined by the group number you are assigned. The purpose of each critical essay is to practice and further develop the standard abilities of summary and analysis. Each critical essay is to be 4 pages in length (no longer; with the exception of a fifth page being a Works Cited page), written in the academic voice, show proper MLA citation (through in text citations and a works cited page), be free of stigmatized errors, and provide a clear, purposeful discussion.

At the start of the semester, we will be reading a number of different essays. When you are assigned to complete a critical response essay, you must write on the piece that you have been assigned (your direct assigned essay is found on the calendar). You cannot choose to write on an essay that we have already discussed.

In terms of structuring this essay, I will be grading each essay based on your ability to offer a quality and succinct summary of the primary source AND then your ability to critically engage said source through analysis of and argument with one or more of the central ideas expressed by the author. When writing the paper, the summary of the primary source should be no longer than 1 to 1 ¼ pages. The goal of this summary is not to highlight every point that an author has made, but to introduce the essay, recognize the author’s thesis, and then highlight the MAJOR points that are used to support said thesis and questions that arise. After the summary, you will need to smoothly transition into the critical analysis of the primary source. This should be the majority of your paper. The analysis is not a continuation of the summary, but the opening of an argumentative discussion. The purpose of said discussion will be to either further develop or problematize (argue against or find fault with) some aspect of the essay. **Now, it is most important that this analysis does not simply become a response to the primary source.** In other words, any discussion that simply states agreement or disagreement with points being made and does not inform readers how and why such points of agreement or disagreement come about and are important to some greater discussion will not receive a high grade. Furthermore, arguments that are supported by generalizations (points without specific examples) will also be graded accordingly. Remember, there is a great difference between response and analysis.
“Reading” Video (Asynchronous Assignment): 10% of Final Grade
We will spend three days this semester covering discussions in the Schilb and Clifford work which will center on “reading” fiction, poetry, and drama. In these readings, we will engage with the broad conversations of how individuals can/should engage the different genres and what one can/should focus on in order to make a “reading” or an argument about a particular work. After we have completed these readings and discussions, you will be assigned a particular poem and you will be required to make an individual video presentation where you “walk” one through your reading/interpretation of the poem. This video will be accompanied by a series of “process” documents that help display how you came to the reading provided in the video. You will then submit this video and the supporting “process” documents to a D2L drop-box. Specific requirements will be provided.

Group Theory Presentation: 10% of Final Grade
In October, we will read and explore five different chapters (theories) in the Bressler text. While all students will be expected to complete the different readings, there will be one group that will be assigned to each specific theory/chapter and they will be expected to present/teach that chapter to the class. The teaching will be done through a group presentation on the chapter. The presentation will include an explanation of the theory/chapter and an example of how that theory can be applied to a literary work—specifically, your group may choose to focus on a poem or a particular aspect of a short story or novel. It is expected that each group member will speak during the presentation. Also, these presentations are to be practiced and polished. Students should not be stumbling through the delivery.

Theory Critical Response: 15% of Final Grade
Whereas there will be one group that will do a formal presentation on each theory, there will be a second group that will turn in individual, critical responses to specific theories. I have broken the class up and so each student will be required to develop a written response to one theory. The written responses will be attached to a theory OTHER THAN the one that will serve as your group presentation. In other words, during this unit of the class, your group will present on one theory AND you (as individuals) will complete a written critical response to a different theory. The purpose of this critical response is the same as the critical response you completed at the start of the semester. You are to first offer a concise summary/explanation of the theory and then provide a critical evaluation of the theory that is based on questions/concerns and points of support.

Seminar Paper: 35% of Final Grade
For your seminar paper, you will be assigned to work with a particular short story. The Seminar Paper will be completed in steps and you will have to employ all the different skills and discourse that you learn throughout the semester. The Seminar Paper will be a larger and longer work than the other writing that you complete for this class and thus will count for a larger chunk of your grade. A full explanation of the Seminar Paper will be given on September 27th and a handout will be provided.
**Final Exam: 15% of Final Grade**

A final exam for this class will be held during the scheduled exam period. The exam will be cumulative in that you will be asked questions that are focused on each of the major units (literary criticism, literary terminology, literary theory, MLA, and library research).

**General Grading Standard:**

The following paragraphs offer a “general” description of how essay grades are determined. Of course with each specific assignment that you complete, there will be specific requirements that will be central to your completion of the essay and your final grade, but this will give you a set of general rules that should always be kept in mind.

**A: 90-100: Students earning the grade of an A on any assignment will have completed work that obviously demonstrates a more than average understanding of the course material and completion of all aspects and requirements of the assignment. The grade of an A is reserved for that work which expertly displays one’s ability to engage the ideas at hand, recognize and dialogue about the complications of such ideas, and translate such dialogue into clear, academic prose that is free of stigmatized errors.**

**B: 80-89: Students earning the grade of a B on any assignment will have completed work that demonstrates a more than average understanding of the course material and completion of all aspects and requirements of the assignment. The grade of a B is reserved for that work which adeptly displays one’s ability to engage the ideas at hand, recognize and dialogue about the complications of such ideas, and translate such dialogue into clear, academic prose that is free of stigmatized errors. However, the level of thought, while still above average, may fluctuate in terms of analytic abilities and expression.**

**C: 70-79: Students earning the grade of a C on any assignment will have completed work that demonstrates an average understanding of the course material and completion of all aspects and requirements of the assignment. The grade of a C is reserved for that work which displays one’s ability to engage the ideas at hand (more so through summary and response rather than analysis), recognize and dialogue about the complications of such ideas (however, the complications recognized will focus more on surface level issues rather than the greater whole), and translate such dialogue into clear, academic prose that is free of stigmatized errors. As can be seen from this description, the level of thought will be acceptable and display that a student has read the assignment, but his/her analytic abilities and level of expression will not be nearly as complicated nor developed. Instead, C work will display a student’s hold to traditional methods of expression (simpler construction of sentence and paragraph development) and a struggle to develop complex, critical thinking skills.**

**D: 60-69: Students earning the grade of a D on any assignment will have completed work that demonstrates a below average understanding of course material and a lack of completion of all aspects and requirements of the assignment. The grade of a D is reserved for that work which displays one’s struggle or refusal to engage the ideas at hand, simply summarizes the work under study with no actual recognition of or dialogue about the complications of such ideas, and the**
translation of ideas into writing is completed in such a convoluted manner that the audience will have difficulty following the conversation.

F: 0-59: Students earning the grade of a F on any assignment will either not have completed the assignment, will have completed the assignment but not followed the guidelines, or will have completed the assignment and demonstrated a complete misunderstanding of the course material. In this case, it will be obvious that the student has either not completed the required reading and/or given him/herself enough time to develop the work. The grade of a F is reserved for that work which does not engage the issues at hand, offers a base (not complete) summary of the work at hand with no critical engagement, and the translation of ideas into writing is either incomplete or the audience will be unable to follow the conversation. It is important to remember that a student can receive 0 out of 100 points. In the case that a student only partially completes an assignment or completes a work (in terms of page length, but not purpose) s/he may receive 0 points.

Course Policies and Procedures:

Attendance and Late Work:
I have found, and studies have shown, that students who attend class and are regular participants in activities will show improvement in the areas of critical thinking and writing and thus are more likely to earn better grades. As such, I do hold to an attendance policy. This being said, you will be allowed four absences without penalty. An absence will be counted on any day that you are not in class.

If you miss more than four class meetings, your final grade may be impacted in the following manner: if you miss 5 class meetings, your final grade may be no higher than a C; if you miss 6 class periods, you may fail the course (this is three weeks of the course). Again, remember that while your final grade will not be directly penalized for any early absence, the fact that you have missed the exploration of certain essays and ideas may ultimately impact your understanding of course material and thus impact your own work. Also, if you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get the notes missed from a peer or to meet with me during office hours. I will not “re-teach” an entire period to anyone through e-mail messages nor will I run through an entire lecture or presentation during office hours. I will gladly help to clarify and explore ideas, but I will not re-teach an entire period.

As for late work, I do my best to return all work in a prompt manner. In order to do so, I must have all assignments turned in on time. This being said, any assignment that is turned in late will be dropped 5 points for each day that it is late. Assignments will be turned in at the start of class. An assignment will be considered late if it is turned in more than 15 minutes after class has begun. As you will know of due dates in advance, I will not accept such excuses as my printer broke, the library printer did not work, something happened to my computer, etc. Plan ahead!

The only absences that will count as excused absences will be DOCUMENTED family emergencies, university sanctioned events (this only includes sport/team events and will only count if I have documentation from the “coach”), and extreme medical issues. An excused absence does not include absences due to doctor appointments, personal illness (a cold, the flu, etc.), work, etc.. In the case of any excused absence, you must remember that any work that is
due that day is still due that day unless you have contacted me in advance and I have agreed to other arrangements.

**Academic Integrity:**

*The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity* outlines the prohibited conduct by any student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to adhere to and uphold this policy.

Articles IV, VI, and VII of the new Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outline the violations and procedures concerning academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and misrepresentation. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) Copying from the test paper (or other assignment) of another student, (2) Possession and/or use during a test of materials that are not authorized by the person giving the test, (3) Using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of a non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program, or using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters without permission of the Faculty member, (4) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one’s self, to take a test, (5) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit, (6) Using any sort of unauthorized resources or technology in completion of educational activities.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source or the use of one’s own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously, without any indication of the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, and other expression or media, and presenting that material as one’s own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program course or degree requirements.

Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on academic dishonesty, including disclosing and/or distributing the contents of an exam.

Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual or to injure another student academically or financially.
Chat GPT/AI Programs:

What is the rule on Chat GPT or other AI program for this course?

I understand that CHAT GPT can be used as a sort of tutor to help break down complex readings and ideas, and thus use of the program for tutorial purposes to help prepare you for class MAY be acceptable, ONLY if you acknowledge said use to myself and peers. However, in terms of your written assignments, all formal writing assignments will be centered on your own interactions with the poems—whether these are confusing or not—and thus use of CHAT GPT or other AI program is not allowed when completing formal written assignments (specifically your two outside papers).

Cell Phones:
Unless instructed otherwise, all cell phones will be put up in your bag at the start of class. They will remain there for the period unless you are instructed otherwise. Please, remember, we are adults and I SHOULD NOT need to keep reminding you to put a phone away.

Class Discussion and Class Conduct:
In order to help improve our critical thinking and writing skills, we will regularly engage in class discussions and writings. The purpose of such work will be to recognize that while many of the students in the class may be similar in terms of age or year, there are different academic abilities in the classroom and different ways to look at an issue or piece of writing. In other words, one can always learn from his/her peers. In order for this to happen, students should come to class ready to engage in discussion and debate. Our goal is not to “win” an argument or roll over our peers, but to critically engage the texts and our own responses to these texts. This is a space where one must feel comfortable to express his/her ideas and be willing to question those same ideas. During any discussion, I will encourage debate, but I will not allow any student to employ sexist, racist, or homophobic speech, to commit a threatening action toward any peer, or to purposely work to silence or roll over peer.

Acceptable Student Behavior
Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy 10.4). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.

In the case of this course, disruptive behavior will include the following: consistent use of cell phones/texting during class, consistent side discussions that are not part of classroom dialogue, referring to your teacher or peers in an inappropriate way, physically threatening your teacher or peers, and/or completing homework assignments for another class. Students participating in such activities can be asked to leave the class and will be counted as absent.

Withheld Grades:
“Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one
calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.”
For the complete policy, [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/semester_grds.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/semester_grds.asp)

**Students with Disabilities:**
“To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building Room 325, 468-3004/468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices).”

**Student Wellness and Well-Being**
SFA values students’ overall well-being, mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, emotional well-being, alcohol and other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help, SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

**On-campus Resources:**
The Dean of Students Office (Rusk Building, 3rd floor lobby) [www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents](http://www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents)
936.468.7249
dos@sfasu.edu

SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic Human Services, Room 202
[www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp)
936.468.1041

The Health and Wellness Hub “The Hub” Location: corner of E. College and Raguet St.

To support the health and well-being of every Lumberjack, the Health and Wellness Hub offers comprehensive services that treat the whole person – mind, body and spirit. Services include:

- Health Services
- Counseling Services
- Student Outreach and Support
- Food Pantry
• Wellness Coaching
• Alcohol and Other Drug Education

www.sfasu.edu/thehub

936.468.4008 thehub@sfasu.edu

Crisis Resources:

• Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343
• National Suicide Crisis Prevention: 9-8-8
• Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255) • johCrisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741