

Course: ENG-225, Literary Criticism and Theory

Credit Hours: 3

Level: 4th Semester

Course Introduction

This course introduces some of the most vital debates in the tradition of English literary criticism from Plato and Aristotle in the Greek times to T. S. Eliot in early twentieth century. Equipped with the ability of analyzing and appreciating this literary tradition through all these centuries, the students would be able to grasp arguments in classical and romantic schools of literary criticism, represented by critics like Samuel Johnson, Mathew Arnold, T. S. Eliot, and F. R. Leavis on the one hand, and Philip Sidney, Wordsworth, and Coleridge on the other. That would help students be conversant with 'practical criticism' / 'close reading' and ideas-led' criticism respectively. By concentrating on this rich canonical tradition, students will be able to learn how each generation of critics has responded to critical theorizing and creative works of not only their own times but also the ages preceding them. What is likely to excite and engage the students is debates like Plato's theory of imitation and his standpoint on poets, challenged not only by his contemporary and disciple, Aristotle, but also by Philip Sidney and others. Similarly, the import of Mathew Arnold's view--- one needs to study poetry of at least two different cultures, the more different the better---will be transformative for students of literature. Moreover, this course will ground the students in familiar critical concepts and thus prepare them to grasp the complexities of literary and cultural theory in later semesters.

Course Objectives

It is an intensive course in literary criticism focusing on the following aspects

- It would prepare the learners of literature and language to understand the historical background to literary criticism, exploring its developmental changes from Plato till T.S Eliot
- It would focus on the poetic and dramatic forms in order to highlight some significant trends and concepts in world literature in general and English literature in particular.
- It would also provide a brief introduction to the contemporary literary theories.

CLO No	Course Learning Outcomes	Bloom Taxonomy
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CLO-1	to understand basic theories related to literary criticism	C2 (Understand)
CLO-2	To apply these theories to analyze different literary texts	C4 (Analyze)

Course Contents

S. No	Weekly Course Distribution
Week 1	The Greek Critics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plato (427-347 BC): Selections from <i>The Republic</i> (c. 380 BC)
Week 2	• Plato (427-347 BC): Selections from <i>The Republic</i> (c. 380 BC)
Week 3	• Aristotle (394-322 BC): <i>The Poetics</i> (c. 335 BC)
Week 4	Aristotle (394-322 BC): <i>The Poetics</i> (c. 335 BC)
Week 5	Renaissance to Eighteenth Century Critics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586): <i>An Apology for Poetry</i> (1595)
Week 6	• b) John Dryden (1631-1700): <i>Essay on Dramatic Poesy</i> (1668)
Week 7	• c) Samuel Johnson (1709-1784): "From Milton" (1779-81)
Week 8	The Romantic Critics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • William Wordsworth (1770-1850): <i>Preface to Lyrical Ballads</i> (1798-1802)
Week 9	Mid Term
Week 10	• William Wordsworth (1770-1850): <i>Preface to Lyrical Ballads</i> (1798-1802)
Week 11	• S.T. Coleridge (1772-1834): <i>Biographia Literaria</i> (Chapters xiv, xv, xvi, xvii) (1817)
Week 12	• S.T. Coleridge (1772-1834): <i>Biographia Literaria</i> (Chapters xiv, xv, xvi, xvii) (1817)
Week 13	The Victorian Critics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matthew Arnold (1822-1888): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <i>The Study of Poetry</i> (1880)
Week 14	• Matthew Arnold (1822-1888): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <i>Function of Criticism at the Present Time</i> (1865)
Week 15	Modern Critics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T.S. Eliot (1888-1965): "Tradition & the Individual Talent" (1921)
Week 16	A Brief Introduction to Contemporary Literary Theories
Week 17	Students' Presentations
Week 18	End Semester Exam

Recommended Readings

- Barry, P. *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1995
- Booker, Keith M. *A Practical Introduction to Literary Theory and Criticism*. New York: Longman Publishers, 1996.
- Kamran, Robina and Farrukh Zad. Ed. *A Quintessence of Literary Criticism*. National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad.
- Leitch, Vincent B. (General Editor). *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. New York & London: W. W. Norton and Company, 2001 (or later editions)
- Lodge, David. Ed. *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader*. Longman, 1988.
- Newton, K. M. ed. *Twentieth Century literary Theory: A Reader*. Second Edition. New York: St. Martin's, 1998 (or later editions)
- *Selected Terminology from any Contemporary Dictionary of Literary Terms*.
- Selden, R. & Widdowson P. *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory (3rd Edition)*. New York: Harvester, 1993.