English 2913: Introduction to Literary Theory Fall 2019

Course Location: OA 2015
Class Times: Monday and Wednesday 11:30-1:00

Prerequisites: One FCE in English at the first-year level, including English 1115, or permission of the Chair of the Department

Note: Students who have received previous credit in English 2903 may not take English 2913 for credit.

To Our Students: This course outline is available online through the English Department homepage and the Desire2Learn site for the course. Should you require information or documents in another format, please let us know. We are happy to help you. Contact your instructor or our Department of English Administrative Assistant.

Table of Contents
Instructor Information: .............................................................................................. 1
Course Description and Overview ............................................................................ 2
Course Objectives and/or Learner Outcomes ......................................................... 2
Course Resources ..................................................................................................... 3
 Required Course Texts .......................................................................................................................... 3
 Course Website ..................................................................................................................................... 4
Course Schedule ........................................................................................................ 4
Assignments and Evaluation .................................................................................... 6
 Assignment Policies .................................................................................................................. 6
 Preparation and Oral Participation ........................................................................................ 8
 Short Essays ....................................................................................................................... 8
 Test on Language ............................................................................................................... 8
 Quizzes ........................................................................................................................................... 9
 Final Exam ..................................................................................................................................... 9
 Marking Standards .......................................................................................................... 9
 Collaboration/Plagiarism Rules ..................................................................................... 10
Course Policies ........................................................................................................ 10
University Policies ..................................................................................................... 10

Instructor Information:
Instructor: Dr. Alice den Otter
Office: OA 3011
Telephone: 705-330-4008 ext. 2622
Email: adenotte@lakeheadu.ca
Office Hours: MW 2:30-3:30, TTH 10-12 or by appointment.
Calendar Description
An introduction to key concepts informing critical thought and practice in literary and cultural studies with a focus on theories of language, ideology, and identity.

Course Overview
The word “theory” comes from the root “theo,” meaning “I see.” What we see in literature and culture depends on our ways of seeing, which are shaped by our theoretical lenses, whether we are aware of them or not. This course provides various lenses, permitting us to see literary and cultural texts in many ways, thus enriching our knowledge and experience, not only of the texts but also of human nature, culture, politics, and the environment. In this course, critical thought and practice particularly emphasize language, identity and ideology, although other aspects will be touched on as well.

Part of our exploration will be reflective, questioning and pondering ways in which the theories resonate or clash with our own experiences of literature and the world. We will be communicating our thoughts in group and class discussions but also in reflective and exploratory essays that require active engagement with the theories. The other part of our exploration will be practical, discerning the methods associated with each of these theories, clarifying the concepts and terminology used, and applying them to literature and culture. By the end of the course, we will be able to identify and explain basic theoretical concepts, understand their relationship to relevant schools of theory, and use them to interpret literary and social texts.

Course Objectives and/or Learner Outcomes
The goal of this course is to enable you to become familiar with various literary theories and critical practices (methods) and know how and when to use them. Your experience in subsequent English courses will be greatly enhanced by the skills learned in this class for thinking critically about literature and culture using literary theory.

By the end of this course you will be able to:

1. Know & Understand Literary Theory
   - Explain a theorist’s key concept or cluster of concepts;
   - Demonstrate that you can read difficult theoretical texts by including relevant quotations and paraphrases in your assignments;
   - Discuss key concepts and define terms employed by a range of theorists and theoretical approaches;
   - Express critical reflections about language, identity, and ideology using literary theory;

2. Apply theoretical concepts in the analysis of literature and other cultural texts
   - Demonstrate how a theoretical concept illuminates or critiques a particular literary or cultural text;
   - Explain how a particular literary or cultural text validates or destabilizes a particular theory;
• Formulate and support a logical argument in a written paper, providing evidence for your claims;
• Organize and structure an academic paper, beyond the three-paragraph essay format;
• Use MLA format effectively in written papers.

3. Synthesize & Transform using literary and cultural theories
• Articulate critical perspectives using literary and cultural theories;
• Compare two or more theoretical approaches;
• Evaluate language, identity, and ideology in everyday culture in terms of responsibility and accountability to friends, family, community, and society in general;
• Discuss issues of social justice and transformation in relation to literature and culture;
• Engage complex theoretical concepts and ideas with respect to literature, current issues and events, the environment, and the global community.

Course Resources:

Required Course Texts

Required Online Articles (consider downloading at beginning of course for easy access later)

Course Website
- Desire2Learn

Course Schedule (subject to change if necessary – check “News” in Desire2Learn for occasional updates). Note that “RR2” refers to second edition of Rivkin and Ryan textbook. “RR3” refers to third edition.

Sept. 4 1. What Is Literature, Theory, and Practice?
Introduction to the course.

9 2. Why is Literary Theory Important?
Before class read “A Short History of Theory” RR3: xi-xxxii.

11 3. Language: What Do Formalists think is “Literary” about a Text?

16 4. Language: How does Formalist Theory Help Us Read?
Before class read Maracle, Ravensong Chapter 1.

18 5. Language: How Does the Structure of Language Work?

Before class read Bakhtin, “Discourse in the Novel” RR3 205-210, RR2 674-79; Ravensong Chapter 2.

25 7. Language: What is Double-voiced Narration?
Before class read Bakhtin, “Discourse in the Novel” RR3 210-216, RR2 679-85; Ravensong Chapter 3.

30 8. Language: How Does Dialogism Work in Ravensong?
Test on Language. Introduction to Freud.

7  10. Identity: Why Are We Frightened by the Uncanny?

9  11. Identity: What Are We Educated to Repress?
Before class read Ravensong Chapter 4. Hand in Second Essay.

14-16 No Classes. Reading Week
Read Ravensong Chapters 5-end.

21  12. Identity: How Does Mirroring Construct the Self?

23  13. Identity: How Does One Write the Body?
Before class read Cixous, “The Laugh of the Medusa” RR3: 940-948; Fee and Gunew, “From Discomfort to Enlightenment: An Interview with Lee Maracle” (online).

Before class read Butler, “Imitation and Gender Insubordination” RR3: 955-959; Ravensong Chapter 6; Casey, “A review of Lee Maracle’s Ravensong: Queering Decolonization, Decolonizing Queerness” 1-3 (online).

30  15. Identity: How Does Colonization Affect Subject Positions?

Nov.  4  16. Identity: How Can We Critique and Rewrite Racial Fabrication?
Before class read Morrison, “Playing in the Dark” RR3: 1161-1169, RR2: 1005-1011; Hoy, “‘Because You Aren’t Indian’: The Politics of Location in Lee Maracle” (online). Note: November 3 is last date to withdraw from course without academic penalty. Talk to your instructor if you are struggling.

6  17. Identity & Ideology: How Are Opportunities Shaped by Culture?
Identity Quiz. Before class read Ravensong Chapter 8.

11  18. Ideology: How Does Labour Inspire Social Consciousness?
Before class read Marx, “The German Ideology” RR3: 730-735, RR2: 656-58; Ravensong Chapters 9-10.
13 19. Ideology: How Does Gender Fit into the Economic System?

18 20. Ideology: What is the Process of Ideological Production?

20 21. Ideology: How Does Ideological Interpellation Create Subjects?

25 22. Ideology: How Do Subjects Respond to the Environment?

27 23. Ideology: How Does Literature Reconceive Ecological Balance?
Before class read Ravensong Chapter 15; Leggatt, “Raven's Plague: Pollution and Disease in Lee Maracle's Ravensong.”

Before class read Ravensong “Epilogue.” Prep for Exam.

Assignments and Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment/Test</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparation &amp; Class participation</td>
<td>Throughout year</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Regular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Exploratory Essays</td>
<td>Sept. 18, Oct. 9, Oct. 30, Nov. 20</td>
<td>4x10%</td>
<td>2-4 pages each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test on Language</td>
<td>Oct. 2</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>90 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes on Identity &amp; Ideology</td>
<td>Nov. 6, Nov. 25</td>
<td>2x 5%</td>
<td>30 minutes each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>TBA by Registrar (Dec. 5-16)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
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Assignment Policies

- Submission for grades must always represent independent work prepared for this course. Highly similar (or identical) assignments will receive a grade of zero. An assignment or substantial portions of your own writing may not be submitted for credit in more than one course without the written permission of all instructors involved. Collaboration on assignments is only allowed with prior permission of the instructor.
Assignments are due by class time on the dates indicated. If you do not hand in your paper in class, send it as an email attachment to adenotte@lakeheadu.ca and then hand in a paper copy as soon as possible to the instructor’s office (OA 3011). Marking will not begin until the paper copy has been submitted. Keep a copy of all papers you submit in case of accidental loss before they are marked. No plastic covers please.

If you require an extension, you must ask for one by email BEFORE the due date. Without an extension, late assignments will be marked down half a letter grade each day they are late without permission; that is, an "A" quality paper due on Tuesday will receive an "A-" on Wednesday, a "B+" on Thursday, etc. Plan ahead, and let your instructor know if time conflicts arise so that we can negotiate a more workable deadline.

All assignments must be in MLA format, double spaced, with 1” margins, and in 12 point font, printed on single sided or double sided white paper.

If you use internet sources, they should be from academic journals (listed in academic databases, such as MLA Bibliography or JSTOR). (If you want to use a non-academic source, please discuss this with your instructor.) Articles must be accompanied by the author’s name(s) and a bibliography. Such sources must be cited and must include the date of publication as well as the date accessed by you. For background information about a particular theory, use M.H. Abrams’ Glossary of Literary Terms or other materials available on reserve at the library for this course.

To avoid plagiarism, make sure that you give credit to ALL sources (including lecture notes, notes from other classes, or internet sources) that you use for an assignment (including notebook entries and exams), even if you paraphrase them. All direct material quoted from a text, even a single sentence or phrase, MUST be placed in quotation marks, followed by the source reference in parentheses. This is especially important for literary theory. You must cite the use of specific words or phraseologies from theorists the first time you use them, especially when they have coined a term or phrase and/or imbued it with new meaning(s) specific to literary theory. Paraphrases should be followed with parenthetical references. See the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, which is well summarized in grammar handbooks or online at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/. Failure to properly document sources constitutes plagiarism and is an extremely serious academic offense (see Collaboration/Plagiarism Rules below). Please see your instructor for help if you are uncertain as to whether or not you are giving credit to sources properly.

The final exam must be written on the date scheduled, so do not make travel plans for the exam periods until the exam schedule is posted.

Exceptions to these policies are allowed only with a doctor’s note or other appropriate documentation.
Assignments

Preparation and Oral Participation 10%
Although this is a lecture course, your full involvement is required, including active listening, questioning, and engaged discussion in small or large groups. Simply attending all classes is not sufficient, although it is necessary. If you’re not there, you can’t participate. Moreover, it is impossible to be involved without having read the required readings before class. If for some reason you are unable to complete the reading for a particular day, please let your instructor know and ATTEND CLASS anyway. Naturally, simply talking a lot in class or dominating the discussion does not necessarily constitute quality participation. Discussion needs to be on topic, thoughtful, and responsive to others in the class. Moreover, stimulating questions can be as valuable as knowledgeable answers.

Short Exploratory Essays 40% (4 x 10% each)
Every few weeks you will be responsible to write a brief exploratory essay (2-4 pages each) that ponders one (or two) of the theory readings studied since the last essay was due. An ideal essay will offer an initial position or question in relation to an aspect of the reading, differentiate your ideas from those of other writers and speakers (perhaps in the class), apply your claim(s) to a specific literary or cultural text that has not (yet?) been discussed in our class (although it could have been discussed in another class, in which case you need to acknowledge that), and end with either a reaffirmation of your theoretical position or a slight shift that has ensued due to the exploration. Feel free to begin with a quotation and agree or disagree (or both) with it. Your discussion must include quotations from the theory reading (using parenthetical citation) and should be supported by examples from your own experience of literature (include quotes) and/or culture (include references to websites, or lines of song lyrics, or seasons and episodes of tv shows or whatever). In any case, the idea is to show YOUR active ponderings, questionings, and confrontations with the theories, using first person singular (“I” as subject, “me” as object of action) as well as your practical application of the theory. Do not simply paraphrase or summarize what you read or what you heard in class. And please do not try to write what you think I want you to think. Each essay should be an exploration not a regurgitation. Feel free to disagree with the readings.

NOTE: These are not intended to be research essays, but if you consult secondary sources, include a “Works Consulted” and credit any quotations and paraphrases as per MLA format. Due Sept. 18, Oct. 9, Oct. 30, Nov. 20. Length 2-4 pages each, double spaced, typed, 12 point font. Each essay is worth 10%.

Test on Language 10%
This test will involve both short and long answers based on the language theories studied to date. The short answer section will involve defining five (5) key terms (2 marks each). For the long answer section, you will be choosing two (2) quotations from a list of five (5) and explaining them (4 marks each). You will then apply one of the quotations to Maracle’s Ravensong (2 marks). The test will be marked out of 20, but is worth 10% of your final grade in the course.
Quizzes on Identity and Ideology 10% (2 x 5%)
Like the test on language, the quizzes on identity and ideology will focus on defining key concepts. Each quiz will consist of 5 terms, of which you will define three (3) and provide an example for two (2) of them. Each definition and example will be worth one mark. Each test will be marked out of 5 and will be worth 5% of your final grade.

Final Exam 25%
Although the final exam requires you to prove your mastery of the course material, you will be given potential examination questions in advance, from which three or four will appear on the exam, and from which you will be required to answer one or two (to be specified prior to the exam). You will be allowed to take one 8 ½ x 11 inch paper into the examination room, filled (handwritten or typed) both sides with a brief outline and quotations from assigned texts. Margins and font have no restrictions. On this paper, you may not write your answers in advance. Include the author of a quotation (not the editor but the person who wrote the words), title, and page numbers for each one. Up to 5 quotations from secondary sources may be included, but are not required. If you choose to include them, include full bibliographical information. The exam is worth 25%. Be as specific as possible.

Marking Standards
Preparation and oral participation (10%) will be marked not only for quantity but also for quality (relevant, thoughtful, and responsive to others in the class). Obviously when you are absent you will lose marks, even if your participation when present is excellent. Conversely, simply attending all classes will not give you a high mark unless you regularly participate in group as well as large class discussions. If you have issues with participation, please talk with your instructor.

Short essays (40%) will be worth 10% each (x4) and will be evaluated according to the English Department’s [Marking Standards for Literature and Theory Courses at Lakehead University](http://flash.lakeheadu.ca/~jrichard/Markingstandards.pdf) (online). Please consult your instructor if you are confused about a concept or are in doubt about a potential application.

Language Test (10%) will be marked for accuracy, specificity, and relevance. Five (5) definitions will be marked out of 2 each. Two (2) discussions of quotations will be marked out of 4 each. One application will be marked out of 2. Total test will be marked out of 20 and will be worth 10% of final grade.

Quizzes (10%) will be worth 5% each (x2) and will be marked for accuracy and relevance. Each definition (x3) and each example (x2) will be worth 1 mark. Each quiz will be marked out of 5 and will be worth 5% of final grade.

Final Exam (25%) will be marked for insight, accuracy, and relevant specific detail.

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1 [http://flash.lakeheadu.ca/~jrichard/Markingstandards.pdf](http://flash.lakeheadu.ca/~jrichard/Markingstandards.pdf)
Collaboration/Plagiarism Rules

As stated in the English Department Marking Standards, “Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of someone else's words and/or ideas. Not acknowledging your debt to the ideas of a secondary source, failing to use quotation marks when you are quoting directly, buying essays from essay banks, copying another student's work, or working together on an individual assignment, all constitute plagiarism. Resubmitting material you've submitted to another course is also academic dishonesty. All plagiarized work (in whole or in part) and other forms of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean, who is responsible for judging academic misconduct and imposing penalties. The minimum penalty for academic misconduct is a 0 on the assignment in question. It might also be subject to more severe academic penalties. See the Code of Student Behaviour for more details.”

Course Policies

1. Undue absence will seriously affect both your achievement and your enjoyment in this course. If you have transportation difficulties, please talk to your instructor about the potential to join class via skype. If you find yourself struggling in the course, please see your instructor before November 3 which is the last day to drop the course without academic penalty.

2. It is imperative that you read the assigned readings before the class in which it is being discussed. If for some reason you are unable to prepare for a particular class, please let your instructor know and COME TO CLASS ANYWAY.

3. The university expects you to treat your fellow students and instructors with mutual respect and fairness. Differences of opinion are what fuel interesting debate in a classroom, which is strongly encouraged in this course. However, oppressive statements or behaviour based on race, class, gender, sexual orientation, nation of origin, (dis)ability, religion, or any other identity marker are clearly not appropriate and will be dealt with accordingly.

4. Please refrain from using cell phones, MP3 players, or other electronic devices during class. Laptops may be used for taking notes, but refrain from using social media during class unless required for an assignment.

University Policies

- Students in this course are expected to conform to the Code of Student Behaviour: https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/policies/student-related/code-of-student-behaviour-and-disciplinary-procedures

- Lakehead University provides academic accommodations for students with disabilities in accordance with the terms of the Ontario Human Rights Code. This occurs through a collaborative process that acknowledges a collective obligation to develop an accessible learning environment that both meets the needs of students and preserves the essential academic requirements of the course.