

## ENG 501, Theoretical Perspectives of Contemporary Literary Criticism

Three Semester Hours

### Course Description

An investigation of recent and current criticism to discover its basic assumptions, main tenets, and major implications. The course surveys twentieth-century criticism and includes samples of formalism, structuralism, reader-response criticism, psychoanalytic criticism, historical critique, and cultural studies. The course also includes an emphasis in the theories and influence of Bakhtin.

### Texts

Bakhtin, M. M. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Austin: U of T P, 1981.

Con Davis, Robert, and Ronald Schleifer. *Contemporary Literary Criticism: Literary and Cultural Studies*. 3rd ed. White Plains: Longman, 1994. ON RESERVE IN MONTGOMERY LIBRARY.

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### Objectives

1. To discover the basic assumptions, main tenets, and major implications of contemporary literary criticism.
2. To understand the theories of Bakhtin as they impact current critical theory and practice.
3. To practice applications of contemporary literary and critical theory in interpreting texts.

### Requirements and Point Values

1. Attend class and participate in discussions and other class activities (10 points).
2. Read the assigned works on time and take quizzes on them (10 points).
3. Apply Bakhtinian theory in interpreting a work of literature, and write a ten-page paper to present the Bakhtinian interpretation to the class (40 points).
4. Take a final comprehensive examination on the works included in the survey (40 points).

### Evaluation

Your final grade will be determined by the points you will have earned by the end of the course according to the following scale: 90-100=A; 80-89=B; 70-79=C; 60-69=D; 0-59=F.

### Outline

Week I: Criticism, Literary Theory, and Bakhtin

Week II: Formalism, Structuralism, Reader Response, and Deconstruction

Week III: Psychoanalysis, Historical Critique, and Cultural Studies

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