

Module: Critical Theory

Level: Master 1 (Civ. & Lit.)

Semester: 01

Teacher in Charge of the Module: Mr. Adel Boulegroune

MODULE DESCRIPTION

1. Introduction to the Course

The module of Critical Theory introduces students two categories of theoretical approaches employed in the interpretation and critical analysis of literary texts. During the first semester, the course explores a range of context-oriented and author-oriented approaches to literary criticism. The context-oriented approaches include Feminist Criticism, Postcolonial Criticism, Marxist Criticism, New Historicism, and Ecocriticism. The author-oriented approach comprises Freudian Psychoanalytic Theory. The theoretical content is complemented by practical tutorial sessions in which students apply the principles of the approaches studied to the critical analysis of selected literary works. Through textual analysis, debate, and discussion, students are encouraged to question established interpretations, identify basic assumptions, and develop their own informed and theoretically grounded readings of literary texts. The module is organized into one weekly lecture and two tutorial sessions per week. Lectures provide students with the theoretical foundations of the different critical approaches, while tutorials focus on the practical application of these approaches through the examination of literary texts.

2. Objectives of the Module

By the end of the semester, students are expected to:

1. Understand the fundamental concepts and principles of major literary critical approaches.
2. Distinguish between context-oriented and author-oriented criticism.
3. Apply theoretical concepts and critical methods to the analysis and interpretation of literary texts.
4. Examine the relationships between literature and its historical, social, cultural, political, and psychological contexts.
5. Develop critical thinking, analytical skills, and the ability to construct coherent, theoretically informed arguments.
6. Improve their academic writing, discussion, and debate skills.

3. Criteria of Assessment

Assessment is intended to measure students' understanding of the theoretical approaches covered in lectures and their ability to apply the concepts and methods of literary criticism to the analysis of literary texts.

The proposed assessment framework comprises continuous assessment and a final examination.

Continuous Assessment	tutorial participation, assignments, and written tests	40%
Final Examination	theoretical knowledge and practical application of critical approaches	60%

4. Syllabus: Critical Theory (S 1)

Week	Lecture	Tutorial
1	Lecture 01: Introduction to Literary Theory	Tutorial 01: Debate & Discussion Questions
		Tutorial 02: Debate & Discussion Questions
2	Lecture 02: Context-oriented Literary Criticism: Feminist Approach (Part 1)	Tutorial 03: Jane Austen's <i>Pride and prejudice</i>
		Tutorial 04: William Shakespeare's <i>Macbeth</i>
3	Lecture 02: Context-oriented Literary Criticism: Feminist Approach (Part 2)	Tutorial 05: Charlotte Bronte's <i>Jane Eyre</i>
		Tutorial 06: Fairy Tales (Snow White, Cinderella, etc.)
4	Lecture 03: Context-oriented Literary Criticism: Postcolonial Approach (Part 1)	Tutorial 07: Rudyard Kipling's "The White Man's Burden" (part one)
		Tutorial 08: Rudyard Kipling's "The White Man's Burden" (part two)
5	Lecture 03: Context-oriented Literary Criticism: Postcolonial Approach (Part 2)	Tutorial 09: Chinua Achebe's <i>No Longer at Ease</i>
		Tutorial 10: Tayeb Salih's <i>Season of Migration to the North</i>
6	Lecture 04: Context-oriented Literary Criticism: Marxist Approach (Part One)	Tutorial 11: George Orwell's <i>Animal Farm</i>
		Tutorial 12: Charles Dickens's <i>Great Expectations</i>
7	Lecture 04: Context-oriented Literary Criticism: Marxist Approach (Part Two)	Tutorial 13: Charles Dickens's <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i>
		Tutorial 14: Scott Fitzgerald's <i>The Great Gatsby</i>
8	Lecture 05: Context-oriented Literary Criticism: New Historicism (Part One)	Tutorial 15: "On Being Brought from Africa to America"
		Tutorial 16: William Shakespeare's <i>The Tempest</i>
09	Lecture 05: Context-oriented Literary Criticism: New Historicism (Part Two)	Tutorial 17: Salman Rushdie's <i>Midnight 's Children</i>
		Tutorial 18: Javier Cercas's <i>Soldiers of Salamis</i>
10	Lecture 06: Context-oriented Literary Criticism: Ecocriticism (Part One)	Tutorial 19: George Orwell's <i>Animal Farm</i>
		Tutorial 20: Mary Shelley's <i>Frankenstein</i>
11	Lecture 06: Context-oriented Literary Criticism: Ecocriticism (Part Two)	Tutorial 21: Anne Sewal <i>Black Beauty</i>
		Tutorial 22: William Golding's <i>Lord of the Flies</i>
12	Lecture 07: Author-oriented Criticism: Freudian Psychoanalytic Theory (Part 1)	Tutorial 23: William Shakespeare's <i>Hamlet</i>
		Tutorial 24: Edgar Allan Poe's <i>The Black Cat</i>
13	Lecture 07: Author-oriented Criticism: Freudian Psychoanalytic Theory (Part 2)	Tutorial 25: D. H. Lawrence's <i>Sons and Lovers</i>
		Tutorial 26: Robert Louis Stevenson's <i>Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde</i>
14	Revision – Wrapping Up	Revision – Wrapping Up
		Revision – Wrapping Up

5. Suggested References

1. Rivkin, Julie, and Michael Ryan, editors. *Literary Theory: An Anthology*. 3rd ed., Wiley-Blackwell, 2017.
2. Bressler, Charles E. *Literary Criticism: An Introduction to Theory and Practice*. 5th ed., Pearson, 2011.
3. Guerin, Wilfred L., et al. *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature*. 6th ed., Oxford University Press, 2011.
4. Tyson, Lois. *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide*. Routledge, 2015.