



Course Syllabus

Southern New Hampshire University Online
LIT 300 x5537: Contemporary Literary Theory
Center: Online
2008 Term 5
April 28 – June 22, 2008

Instructor Information:

- Dr. Lorianne DiSabato
- l.disabato@snhu.edu
- <http://www.pedestrianthoughts.com>

Textbooks (required by the college):

Literary Theory: An Introduction
Terry Eagleton
University of Minnesota Press
Second edition
ISBN 0-8166-1251-X

Modern Feminisms: Political, Literary, Cultural
Ed. Maggie Humm
Columbia University Press
ISBN 0-231-08073-5

Supplementary Reading Material

Lecture notes & handouts located in Course Documents folder.
Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*, available in various editions at libraries, bookstores, or online at
<http://docsouth.unc.edu/southlit/chopinawake/chopin.html>

SNHU Catalogue Description

This course is an introduction to the major schools of contemporary critical theory, and an examination of principal exponents of these theories. The student will become familiar with the most important features of psychoanalytic criticism, Marxism and feminism and examine the meaning of structuralism and post-structuralism. In addition, the course affords an opportunity to practice applying the theories to specific literary texts.

Class Prerequisites

ENG 121

Course Objectives

After successfully completing this course, students will be able to

- recognize various schools of literary theory,
- interpret a given literary text according to various theoretical perspectives, and
- discuss the social and political implications of literary criticism.

Grading Policies

All required tasks and assignments are assessed on a point scale. Point values and percentages are as follows:

Task	Points Possible	% of Final Grade
8 POPs @ 5 points each	40 points	20%
Discussion facilitation	20 points	10%
Literary analysis essay	40 points	20%
8 wks Discussion Board participation @ 5 points per week	40 points	20%
Quiz average	20 points	10%
Final essay-style exam	40 points	20%
TOTAL	200 points	100%

Term Grades

Out of a total 200 possible points, your term grade will be calculated according to the following scale:

Term Point Totals	Percentage	Letter Grade
190 – 200 points	95-100%	A
180 – 189 points	90-94%	A-
172 – 179 points	86-89%	B+
166 – 171 points	83-85%	B
160 – 165 points	80-82%	B-
152 – 159 points	76-79%	C+
146 – 151 points	73-75%	C
140 – 145 points	70-72%	C-
130 – 139 points	65-69%	D+
120 – 129 points	60-65%	D
0 – 119 points	0 – 59 %	F

Essay Criteria

Your Literary Analysis essay and the final exam will be evaluated for the following: spelling and mechanics; grammar and sentence structure; organization, coherence, and transition; and ideas and content. The following basic rubric will be employed:

An “**A**” paper will have no more than one spelling, capitalization, or usage error and no more than one grammar or punctuation errors. It will have an enticing audience hook, great introduction and thesis, well-supported and developed body paragraphs, solid conclusion, and good flow from one thought to the next. It will contain fresh original ideas, solid content backed up with examples and illustrations, creative wording, a strong voice, and a variety of support for its ideas.

A “**B**” paper will have no more than three spelling, capitalization, or usage errors and no more than three grammar or punctuation errors. It will have a hook or thesis that is too generalized, an introduction or conclusion which lacks complete development, abrupt transitions, and interrupted flow due to unnecessary ideas. It will have good ideas and content backed up with generalized examples, accurate wording, and a developing voice and style. The support for its ideas will be mostly of the same type.

A “**C**” paper will have four to six spelling, capitalization, or usage errors and between four to six grammar or punctuation errors. Its hook or thesis will be unclear and its introduction or conclusion will be absent. Its paragraphs will lack coherence and ramble from thought to thought without transitions. It will have stale and worn-out ideas, content that is not well-supported, clichéd wording, and no real voice.

A “**D**” paper will have seven or more errors in spelling, capitalization, or usage and seven or more errors in grammar and punctuation. It will lack an introduction and conclusion, its paragraphing will be uncertain and disorganized, and it will lack transitions between thoughts. It will have no discernable essay format. It will lack real ideas, its content will be murky and unsupported, and its wording will feel elementary.

Paper Format

Unless otherwise noted in the weekly Assignment Overview, all assignments must be submitted via the relevant Assignment Link no later than midnight (11:59pm) Eastern time on the day they are due. Late assignments will be penalized UNLESS you have received from me prior permission to submit a late paper. Papers must be double-spaced in standard (11 or 12 point) font size with one-inch margins. Please submit your work in either MSWord (.doc) or HTML (.html) format.

POP/Page on a Page

“POP” stands for “page on a page.” A POP is a 1 – 2 page (typed, double-spaced) paper that discusses a single page from an assigned reading. Instead of making global generalizations about what a particular selection is about, your POPs will point to what you think is interesting or intriguing about a *specific passage* (i.e. a single page) in that reading. Since your POPs will focus on what *you* think is interesting, intriguing, or problematic in a given text, you are permitted to use the first person (“I”).

In addition to reading sections from the required textbooks (Terry Eagleton’s *Literary Theory: An Introduction* and *Modern Feminisms*, edited by Maggie Humm), we will be reading and discussing Kate Chopin’s turn-of-the century novel, *The Awakening*. The purpose of reading Chopin’s book is to give us a common text upon which to “practice” the various kinds of literary theory we’ll discuss. For this reason, you are free in your POPs to discuss a particular page or passage from *The Awakening* as long as you employ a specific theoretical perspective to discuss that page or passage: for instance, you might use a psychoanalytic perspective to discuss the protagonist’s relationship with her father, you might employ queer theory to examine her relationships with same-sex friends, etc. If you prefer to discuss a page out of *Literary Theory* or *Modern Feminisms*, you need not address Chopin’s novel in your POP: what I’m interested in reading is whatever YOU found interesting, intriguing, or problematic in each week’s readings.

Discussion Facilitation

Each week one or more students will be assigned to facilitate that week’s discussion. As a discussion facilitator, you are expected to post to the appropriate Discussion Board forum a message that outlines the key themes or issues raised by the reading and that poses at least 3

questions for further discussion. This message should be posted at the BEGINNING of the week you are facilitating. At the end of the week, you should post a follow-up message that offers a brief summary of the week's discussion.

Literary Analysis Essay

For your Literary Analysis essay, you should select a specific school of contemporary literary theory (e.g. psychoanalytic criticism, Marxist criticism, feminist criticism, etc.) and offer an interpretation of Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* based upon that literary theory. Your analysis should offer a coherent interpretive thesis (i.e. "your interpretation" of what the novel says or means when viewed through a particular theoretical lens), and you should support that thesis with specific details from the text. (These details do not have to be exact quotations; if you do choose to quote the novel directly, you should cite these quotations according to MLA documentation guidelines.)

Your Literary Analysis essay is due at the end of Week 7 and should be between 5 and 7 double-spaced pages long; you are permitted and encouraged to revise relevant passages from your weekly POPs. You shouldn't need to refer to any outside research to write your Literary Analysis; if you choose to include research, sources should be cited according to MLA guidelines.

Attendance Policy

Failure to participate during the first week of the course (12:00 AM Monday through 11:59 PM Sunday) will result in automatic withdrawal. Participation is defined as posting activity within a discussion board, wiki, or blog, and/or an assignment submission. Students who do not participate during the first week forfeit their rights to be reinstated into the course.

While Online Education classes are asynchronous, they are **not** correspondence or self paced. Although only a portion of students grades are tied to discussion, participation is MANDATORY. Students are expected to login and participate at least three times per week, on separate days throughout the term.

Extended absences, defined as failure to post into the Blackboard classroom for more than five days, must be coordinated with the instructor. Students who fail to coordinate any such absence with the instructor, or who fail to withdraw from the course in accordance with Online's official drop and withdrawal policy will be graded appropriately.

For more specific information, please access Online's official withdrawal policy, found at <https://www.snhu.edu/648.asp> and the [Student Handbook](#)

Administrative Withdrawal Policy

Once a student has missed enough classes that the instructor believes that the student cannot meet the goals of the course within the remaining time frame, the student may be given a failing grade, withdrawn from the course, or be considered for an incomplete *at the instructor's discretion*. Faculty members may give a student a grade of incomplete (I) only if the student and instructor have agreed, in advance, to plan or schedule for completion. Withdrawal is allowed due to lack of attendance or unusual circumstances, not as a method to prevent failing grades. *No withdrawals are permitted during the last week of the term.*

Participation Policy

As ongoing collaboration and dialogue are essential for effective online course delivery, it is imperative that students participate regularly. Those who do not participate regularly according to the guidelines outlined above may receive no credit for participation, and are **subject to course failure** at the discretion of the instructor.

Discussion Rubric

Since we will not be meeting in person to discuss readings, the Discussion Board is where we will come together as a community of active learners. Participation in each week's Discussion Board forums is an ESSENTIAL part of this course. Participation counts as 20% of your final grade, and your Discussion Board postings will be judged by the following criteria:

1. **Frequency:** To earn full Discussion Board participation, you need to post between 3-6 messages PER FORUM spread out over the course of the week. In other words, posting 3 messages in one sitting will not earn you full participation credit for that week. You need to consider your classmates' comments and contribute as the discussion evolves. Although you are encouraged start a new thread to post your thoughts, AT LEAST TWO of your weekly posts in EACH forum should be in response to a classmate's posting. Again, the purpose of our discussion is to build community as a group of active learners, not simply to post ideas without regard for how those ideas relate or compare to others' ideas. The goal is to engage one another in discussion, not simply talk to ourselves.
2. **Timeliness:** Forums are not open indefinitely. There will be a start and end date for each week's discussion, so please plan accordingly. Do not wait until the last day of the week to post your comments.
3. **Quality:** Since the term "quality" is subjective, here are some specific attributes that I am looking for:
 - Ability to synthesize readings and main concepts
 - Clear demonstration that you are reading and synthesizing peers comments
 - Good grammar & organization
 - Ability to give more than just an opinion. We all HAVE opinions, but as members of a community of learners it is our responsibility to SUPPORT our opinions with logical reasons and evidence.
 - Creative thinking
 - Ability to take the dialogue to a deeper level
 - Ability to provide useful related web sites or resources to support your points and/or encourage further discussion.

Attributes to AVOID in the Discussion Board Forums

- Excessive "I agree" statements. These are nice and sometimes appropriate, but too often they clog up the forums and do not reveal WHY you agree. Please try to support such statements.
- Lack of respect for divergent opinions. Please show the respect you would want bestowed on you.
- Off-topic comments. I've created a separate forum where you can freely talk about current events, your favorite sports teams (Go Celts & Sox!), or the trials & tribulations of your daily life. Although occasional digressions in other forums can enliven discussion, please try to keep your postings on-topic.
- Forum "hogging." Again, the purpose of the Discussion Board is to engage one another in discussion, not simply talk to ourselves. "Engaging in discussion" means expressing oneself while leaving room for the thoughts and opinions of others.
- Overly long threads. We all live busy lives and struggle to keep up with the reading. Out of kindness, please try to write concise postings that do not exceed one to two screen lengths.

Academic Honesty Policy

Southern New Hampshire University requires all students to adhere to high standards of integrity in their academic work. Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated by the university. Students involved in such activities are subject to serious disciplinary action. This includes course failure, academic suspension, and expulsion from the university.

Technological tools may be used to detect plagiarism or cheating at the instructor's discretion.

It is the students' responsibility to understand what constitutes plagiarism (defined below), guidelines for proper citation, and that ignorance of plagiarism does not and will not constitute an excuse for the behavior.

It is the responsibility of the student to:

- Review the following [document](http://www.plagiarism.org/resources/documentation/plagiarism/learning/complete_resources.doc), courtesy of turnitin.com and research resources: http://www.plagiarism.org/resources/documentation/plagiarism/learning/complete_resources.doc
- Use www.plagiarism.org as a resource throughout the term
- Contact his or her instructor with any questions or concerns.

Definitions of Academic Dishonesty

1. Cheating

- a) The unauthorized use of notes, textbooks, oral, visual or electronic communication, or other aids during an exam, quiz, or other related course assignment.
- b) The copying of the work of another student during an exam, quiz, or course assignment.

2. Plagiarism

- a) The use, whether by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another without full and clear acknowledgement through proper citation format.
- b) the submission of an assignment or parts of an assignment written by someone other than the student, including but not limited to, other students, commercial organizations, and electronic sources.

3. Misrepresentations

- a) The substitution of another student/individual for completion of a course, or during the taking of a quiz, examination or other assignment.

4. Unauthorized collaboration

- a) The sharing of quiz/exam questions or answers with another student without the instructors permission.
- b) The copying of another student's papers, homework or any assignment without the instructor's permission.
- c) Group collaboration on individual assignments without the instructor's permission.

5. Alteration or fabrication of data

- a) The submission of data not obtained by the student during the course of research.
- b) The deceitful alteration of data obtained by the student during the course of research.

6. Duplication

- a) The submission of the same or similar paper in more than one course without the express permission of the instructor.

7. Participation in or facilitation of dishonest academic activities

- a) The stealing of quizzes or examinations.
- b) The alteration of academic records, including grades.
- c) The sabotaging of the work of another student.
- d) The distribution of materials for the purpose of cheating.
- e) The alteration, forging, or misuse of university-related documents.
- f) The intentional reporting of a false violation of academic integrity.
- g) The offer of a bribe to any university member in exchange for special consideration or favors.
- h) The misuse of university resources, including library resources (print and electronic) and facilities, computer labs, university equipment and networks, etc.

This list is by no means comprehensive, but is representative of any actions completed in the spirit of academic dishonesty for which the university's policy on Academic Integrity might apply. It is the student's responsibility to seek clarification from an instructor if the student has questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty.

ADA/504 Compliance Statement:

Southern New Hampshire University is committed to and concerned with meeting the needs of students challenged by physical, sensory, psychiatric and/or learning disabilities. At the beginning of each term, or as soon as you become aware of a disability, we encourage you to request those accommodations which you need to meet your academic goals. To ensure that all of your needs are met, the University recommends that you meet with one of the following individuals who will assist you in making contact with appropriate faculty members and support services staff regarding accommodations:

For questions concerning compliance matters, grievance or legal issues:

Ms. Jet Goldberg
 Director of Wellness Center
 603-645-9679
j.goldberg@snhu.edu

For questions concerning support services, documentation guidelines, or general disability issues:

Office of Disability Services
 Exeter Hall, CLASS Office, Suite 101
 Tel. (603)668-2211
 Hyla Jaffe, Director, ext.2386, h.jaffe@snhu.edu
 Lisa Levy, Disability Specialist, ext.2035, l.levy@snhu.edu

Assignments & Schedule

The following chart outlines each week's reading and writing assignments. Please note that there will be additional tasks (e.g. quizzes) listed in each week's Assignment Overview, which will be posted to the Course Documents area at the start of the week. It is your responsibility to read & keep up with the tasks listed in each week's Assignment Overview! The schedule below is subject to change. ("LT" refers to *Literary Theory*, and MF refers to *Modern Feminisms*.)

Dates	Reading	Writing
Week 1 4/28 – 5/4	"Introduction: What is Literature?" <i>LT</i> pp. 1-14 Ch. 1, "The Rise of English," <i>LT</i> pp. 15-46 Section 1, "History of Feminism in Britain & America," <i>MF</i> pp. 1-8 Chopin, <i>The Awakening</i> , Ch. I-VII	POP 1 due 5/4 Discussion Board participation

Week 2 5/5 – 5/11	Ch. 2, “Phenomenology, Hermeneutics, Reception Theory,” <i>LT</i> pp. 47-78 Section 2, “Herstory: From Olive Schreiner to the ‘Second Wave,’” <i>MF</i> pp. 9-50 Chopin, <i>The Awakening</i> , Ch. VIII-XV	POP 2 due 5/11 Discussion Board participation
Week 3 5/12 – 5/18	Ch. 3, “Structuralism and Semiotics,” <i>LT</i> pp. 79-109 Section 3, “Second Wave Feminism,” <i>MF</i> pp. 51-86 Chopin, <i>The Awakening</i> , Ch. XVI-XXIII	POP 3 due 5/18 Discussion Board participation
Week 4 5/19 – 5/25	Ch. 4, “Post-Structuralism,” <i>LT</i> pp. 110-130 Section 8, “Difference,” <i>MF</i> pp 193-226 Chopin, <i>The Awakening</i> , Ch. XXIV-XXXI	POP 4 due 5/25 Discussion Board participation
Week 5 5/26 – 6/1	Ch. 5, “Psychoanalysis,” <i>LT</i> pp. 131-168 Section 9, “Psychoanalytic Feminism,” <i>MF</i> pp. 227-250 Chopin, <i>The Awakening</i> , Ch. XXXII-XXXIX	POP 5 due 6/1 Discussion Board participation
Week 6 6/2 – 6/8	“Conclusion: Political Criticism,” <i>LT</i> pp. 169-189 Section 4, “Socialist/Marxist Feminism,” <i>MF</i> pp. 87-121 Section 5, “Asian, Black, & Women of Colour” <i>MF</i> pp. 122-162	POP 6 due 6/8 Discussion Board participation
Week 7 6/9 – 6/15	“Afterword,” <i>LT</i> pp. 190-208 Section 6, “Lesbian Feminism,” <i>MF</i> pp. 163-180 Section 7, “Liberal Feminism,” <i>MF</i> pp. 181-192	POP 7 due 6/15 Literary analysis essay due 6/15 Discussion Board participation
Week 8 6/16 – 6/22	Section 15, “Culture,” <i>MF</i> pp. 346-365 Section 16, “Language and Writing,” <i>MF</i> pp. 367-388	POP 8 due 6/22 Final Exam due 6/22 Discussion Board participation

Online Course Structure / Blackboard Tools

Your course is organized through Blackboard CourseInfo. Below are the tools in your class, how we will be using them, and expectations associated with each. Take time to acclimate yourself to the tools and contact me if have questions.

Button	
Announcements	The latest course information, including administrative details, reminders about assignments, schedule changes, etc. You should check the Announcements several times each week.
Course Documents	Each week’s lecture notes, supplemental readings, & Assignment Overview. You should check Course Documents at the start of each week and as necessary to complete assignments. The Course Documents area also contains an “Assignment Link” folder which you will use to upload assignments. DO NOT SEND ASSIGNMENTS VIA EMAIL.
Faculty Information	My picture, bio, and contact information.
Communication	<u>Send Email</u> : Email is not the primary mode of communication in this course. Please reserve email for comments and questions of a sensitive or personal nature.
	<u>Discussion Board</u> : The primary area for class discussion & participation. You should contribute to the Discussion Board forums regularly. (See Participation Guidelines above.)
	<u>Group Pages</u> : Use this area to communicate with your peer group and to exchange drafts & reviews with your peer review partner.

Discussion Board	Direct access to the course Discussion Board
External Links	Links to useful web-sites.
Tools	<u>Personal Information</u> : Use this to edit your personal information, privacy settings, Blackboard password, etc.
	<u>My Grade</u> : Use this tool to check your quizzes, assignment submissions, individual grades, and term-long point total.
	<u>Manual</u> : Check here for Blackboard-related questions.

Instructor Schedule

I check email and Discussion Board forums at least every other day. If you send me email or ask me a question in the "Q&A" Discussion Board forum, you can expect a response (if a response is necessary) within 48 hours.

Please send only personal questions to me through email. General questions about assignments, class policies & requirements, etc. should be posted to the Q&A forum so everyone can benefit from my clarification. If you email me a question that should be posted to the Q&A forum, I re-post your question (and my answer) there.

Off Campus Library Services

Off-Campus Library Services (OCLS) has been established to provide holdings, materials, and services for faculty and students at continuing education centers and in distance education programs. A barcode is required to access materials. To obtain your barcode you can access a request form online. For further information or inquiries please contact Off-Campus Services Librarian Ed Daniels at ocls@minerva.snhu.edu or go to <http://www.snhu.edu/library.asp>

Fax: 603-645-9685 attn: OCLS
Phone: 603-645-9605 ext. 2163

Library Resources Statement: In addition to the intellectual resources available on site and online (<http://www.snhu.edu/library.asp>), Shapiro Library makes available group and one-on-one instruction in information literacy, enabling students to define and articulate what knowledge-based resources are relevant to their research interests. Library staff are available to assist students in effectively and efficiently accessing information from credible sources, to compare new knowledge with prior beliefs, and to consider the related ethical, legal, and socio-economic issues that are inherent in scholarly investigation.

Technical Support

Support for technology and Blackboard software issues can be found at <http://supportcenteronline.com/ics/support/default.asp?deptID=1845> or by dialing SNHU 24/7 Live Support at 1-877-708-2909.

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