

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES  
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**  
<https://uofa.ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies>

**2019-2020 MLCS 651: A2 Critical Theory I**  
(Fall Term)

Instructor: Irene Sywenky  
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Time: T 13:00 – 15:50  
Place: T 1-83  
Office Hours: M 14:00-15:00, W 13:00-14:00,  
or by appointment  
Course Website: eClass

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**Course Prerequisite:** consent of department

It is your responsibility as a student to ensure that you have the appropriate prerequisites for the course.

**Course-based Ethics Approval** in place regarding all research projects that involve human testing, questionnaires, etc.?

Yes       No, not needed

**Community Service Learning** component

Required     Optional     None

**Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material Available**

- Exam registry – Students' Union  
<http://www.su.ualberta.ca/services/infolink/exam/>
- See explanations below
- Document distributed in class
- Other (please specify)
- NA

**Course Description, Objectives and Expected Learning Outcomes:**

This course is an in-depth study of the key literary and cultural theories from classical times to the early twentieth century from an international, cross-cultural perspective. Some of the topics examined will include rhetoric, representation, authorship, canon, nationhood, language, hermeneutics, aesthetics, subjectivity, and modernity. Critical readings will be discussed in connection with contemporary issues. Students will read primary texts. At the end of the course successful students will be able to: demonstrate a general knowledge of the history of critical theory and engage with the studied texts in an informed and meaningful way; demonstrate advanced critical oral and writing skills;

engage in research using both primary and secondary sources and assess the relevance of various theoretical concepts and approaches for individual research projects.

**Course Format:** The objectives of this course will be achieved through a combination of formal lectures, assigned readings, class discussions and presentations.

**Required Texts:**

Required texts (critical and literary) will be available on eClass.

**Recommended Texts:**

Leitch, Vincent B., et al., editors. *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. 3rd ed., Norton, 2018.

Grodin, Michael, and Martin Kreiswirth, editors. *The Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism*. (Database) 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Johns Hopkins UP, 2005. (Electronic resource, UoA Libraries)

**Additional Course Fees**

Yes       No

**Important Dates:** [See Academic Schedule in current Calendar](#)

First Day of Class: September 3, 2019

Add/Delete Date: September 16, 2019

50% Withdrawal Date: October 3, 2019

Withdrawal Date: November 29, 2019

Last Day of Class: December 3, 2019

**Grade Distribution (see “Explanatory Notes”):**

One (1) presentation	20% (date TBD)
Two (2) critical reaction papers (1300-1500 words, 2 x 15%)	30% (flexible submission)
Participation	15%
Final research paper (4500 words)	35% (due December 10)

**Explanatory Notes on Assignments:**

*Critical Reaction Papers:* This assignment is expected to be approximately 1300-1500 words long and show your critical and theoretically informed engagement with the text in question. Because this is a short assignment, each reaction paper is expected to offer a narrowly focused critical discussion/analysis of a specific aspect of the text of your choice from the class reading list.

*Presentation* is expected to be about 20-25 min. long. It is a focused discussion of a specific topic related to one of the texts from the class reading list. Presentation will be

followed by a discussion period and questions from peer audience. Students will be encouraged to decide on the topic of their presentation early in the term. The topic should be different from that of the final research paper and must be approved by the instructor at least one week prior to the presentation.

*Final research paper* is an extended essay (about 4500 words not including Works Cited) where you are expected to present a critical, contextualized analysis of the primary source(s) of your choice. A research essay will allow you to explore your understanding of a particular theoretical approach or school of thought, apply theoretical concepts to practical analysis, develop a more complex argument (compared to a critical reaction paper), and engage with the current scholarship on the subject.

*Participation* mark includes attendance, preparedness with class readings and informed participation in class discussions. This class is a seminar and it is expected that all students will actively contribute to class discussions and engage with assigned readings in a thoughtful and meaningful way. For each class reading students are expected to prepare three questions or comments that reflect their critical thinking and understanding of the text and its broader historical, cultural and intellectual contexts.

More detailed assignment notes will be available on eClass and discussed in class.

### **Required Notes:**

Policy about course outlines can be found in the [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#) of the University Calendar.

### **Student Responsibilities:**

#### ***Academic Integrity:***

The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the [Code of Student Behaviour](#) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

All students should consult [the Academic Integrity website](#). If you have any questions, ask your instructor.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the [Academic Discipline Process](#).

#### ***Learning and Working Environment:***

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring all students; faculty and staff are able to study and work in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The Department urges anyone who feels that this policy is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or
- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that direct discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.

For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the [Office of the Student Ombuds](#). Information about the [University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures](#) is described in [UAPPOL](#).

It is the policy of the University of Alberta that sexual violence committed by any member of the University community is prohibited and constitutes misconduct. Resources and more information can be found at <https://www.ualberta.ca/campus-life/sexual-violence>

***Territorial Statement:***

“The University of Alberta acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, and respects the histories, languages, and cultures of the First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and all First Peoples of Canada, whose presence continues to enrich our vibrant community.” (from the beginning of the Calendar).

***Recording of Lectures:***

Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

***Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:***

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections [Attendance](#) and [Examinations](#) of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

Deferral of term work is a privilege and not a right; there is no guarantee that a deferral will be granted. Misrepresentation of facts to gain a deferral is a serious breach of the Code of Student Behaviour.

**In this course**, attendance is mandatory, and participation is strongly encouraged. Course notes and PowerPoint presentations will not be posted on eClass. Participation mark includes attendance, preparedness with readings, and informed contribution to class discussions.

***Policy for Late Assignments:***

Students who consult in advance with the instructor regarding contingencies preventing the timely completion of an assignment may, at the discretion of the instructor, be granted an extension. Otherwise, assignments may be handed in with a 5%-per-day penalty assessed for each day of lateness.

***Disclaimer:***

Any typographical errors in this syllabus are subject to change and will be announced in class and posted on eClass. The date of the final examination is set by the Registrar and takes precedence over the final examination date reported in this syllabus.

**Student Resources:**

The best all-purpose website for student services is: <https://www.ualberta.ca/current-students>.

**Accessibility Resources:** (1 – 80 SUB)

The University of Alberta is committed to creating work and learning communities that inspire and enable all people to reach their full potential. Accessibility Resources promotes an accessible, inclusive, and universally designed environment. For general information to register for services visit the [Accessibility Resources](#) webpage.

**The Academic Success Centre:** (1-80 SUB)

[The Academic Success Centre](#) offers a variety of workshops on effective study and exam strategies. There are in-person and online sessions available for a modest fee.

**The Centre for Writers:** (1-42 Assiniboia Hall)

The [Centre for Writers](#) offers free one-on-one writing support to students, faculty, and staff. Students can request consultation for a writing project at any stage of development. Instructors can request class visits and presentations.

**Health and Wellness Support:** There are many health and community services available to current students. For more information visit the [Health and Wellness Support](#) webpage.

**Office of the Student Ombuds:**

The [Office of the Student Ombuds](#) offers confidential interviews, advice and support to students facing academic, discipline, interpersonal and financial difficulties.

**Grading:**

Assessment of the individual course components may be in the form of numerical marks or letter grades. The final letter grade will be based on "a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in a class" (University Calendar, [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#)). The University Grading Procedure mandates that "a student's level of achievement of the goals/outcomes of a course, their grade, and the descriptor of that grade must be aligned" (<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/>). The following guidelines have been adopted by the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:

**“MLCS Graduate Grading Scale”**

A+	97-100	Excellent
A	93-96	Excellent
A-	90-92	Excellent
B+	87-89	Good
B	79-86	Good
B-	74-78	Satisfactory
C+	68-73	Satisfactory
C	63-67	Failure
C-	58-62	Failure
D+	54-57	Failure
D-	50-53	Failure
F	00-49	Failure

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