

Course Title: Literary Theory and Practice I

Semester: 5th

Course Code: ELL 303

Course Description

This course introduces some of the most vital debates in the tradition of English literary criticism from Plato and Aristotle in the Greek times to T. S. Eliot in early twentieth century. Equipped with the ability of analyzing and appreciating this literary tradition through all these centuries, the students would be able to grasp arguments in classical and romantic schools of literary criticism, represented by critics like Samuel Johnson, Mathew Arnold, T. S. Eliot, and F. R. Leavis on the one hand, and Philip Sidney, Wordsworth, and Coleridge on the other. That would help students be conversant with 'practical criticism' / 'close reading' and ideas-led' criticism respectively. By concentrating on this rich canonical tradition, students will be able to learn how each generation of critics has responded to critical theorizing and creative works of not only their own times but also the ages preceding them. What is likely to excite and engage the students is debates like Plato's theory of imitation and his standpoint on poets, challenged not only by his contemporary and disciple, Aristotle, but also by Philip Sidney and others. Similarly, the import of Mathew Arnold's view---one needs to study poetry of at least two different cultures, the more different the better--- will be transformative for students of literature. Moreover, this course will ground the students in familiar critical concepts and thus prepare them to grasp the complexities of literary and cultural theory in later semesters.

Learning Outcomes

It is an intensive course in literary criticism focusing on the following aspects

- It would prepare the learners of literature and language to understand the historical background to literary criticism, exploring its developmental changes from Plato till T.S Eliot
- It would focus on the poetic and dramatic forms in order to highlight some significant trends and concepts in world literature in general and English literature in particular.
- It would also provide a brief introduction to the contemporary literary theories.

Course Contents Unit-I

1.1 Aristotle to Modern Times

1.2 The Greek Critics

- Plato (427-347 BC): Selections from *The Republic* (c. 380 BC)
- Aristotle (394-322 BC): *The Poetics* (c. 335 BC)

1.3 Renaissance to Eighteenth Century Critics

- Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586): *An Apology for Poetry* (1595)

1.4 The Romantic Critics

- William Wordsworth (1770-1850): *Preface to Lyrical Ballads* (1798-1802)
- S.T. Coleridge (1772-1834): *Biographia Literaria* (Chapters xiv, xv, xvi, xvii)

1.5 The Victorian Critics

- Matthew Arnold (1822-1888): *The Study of Poetry* (1880)

1.6 Modern Critics

- T.S. Eliot (1888-1965): "Tradition & the Individual Talent" (1921)

1.7 A Brief Introduction to Contemporary Literary Theories

Teaching and Learning Strategies:

Following teaching strategies to be adopted:

1. Class Discussion
2. Reading and analyzing the text through interactive sessions.
3. Class presentations.
4. Group Discussions
5. Lectures, seminars and tutorials.

Assignments:

Two assignments, one before midterms and one after midterm, to be submitted. The students are advised to get their topics approved by the teacher. And there is a zero tolerance policy for plagiarism. (Please consult HEC policy on Plagiarism).

Recommended Readings

1. Barry, P. *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1995
2. Booker, Keith M. *A Practical Introduction to Literary Theory and Criticism*. New York: Longman Publishers, 1996.
3. Kamran, Robina and Farrukh Zad. Ed. *A Quintessence of Literary Criticism*. National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad.
4. Leitch, Vincent B. (General Editor). *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. New York & London: W. W. Norton and Company, 2001 (or later editions)
5. Lodge, David. Ed. *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader*. Longman, 1988.
6. Newton, K. M. ed. *Twentieth Century literary Theory: A Reader*. Second Edition. New York: St. Martin's, 1998 (or later editions)
7. *Selected Terminology from any Contemporary Dictionary of Literary Terms*.
8. Selden, R. & Widdowson P. *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory* (3rd Edition). New York: Harvester, 1993.