

## 2350 (003&004): INTRO TO TEXTUAL ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

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**Instructor:** Dr. P. Ingram

**Semester:** Spring 2018

**Office:** 410 Carlisle

**Class Time & Room:** 9:30am (003) TH 118

**Office Hours:** T/R—11:30-12:30pm  
and by appointment

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### DESCRIPTION:

What do we do when we read? How do we arrive at an interpretation of a text's "meaning"? Can a text have more than one "meaning"? Why does interpretation matter? How do you translate an interpretive *reading* into a piece of analytic *writing*? In this course we will examine these questions and issues related to them through an introduction to some of the key concepts in English studies.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Like other disciplines, English Studies has its own vocabulary and methodology, which have to be learned in order to undertake literary analysis at the college level (and beyond). It is the purpose of this course to teach you these methods by introducing you to various schools of interpretation, including Psychoanalytic Poststructuralist, Feminist, Marxist, Postcolonial, and Eco Critical and to show you how to use these methods to interpret different forms of literature from poetry to film.

Specifically, the course will teach you to

- (1) identify characteristics of genres
- (2) recognize and understand critical and literary terms
- (3) develop methods and strategies for analyzing and interpreting texts and
- (4) demonstrate a command of these methods and strategies in written work.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Students should be able to demonstrate an informed understanding of the many different approaches to analyzing and interpreting texts. Students should be able to explain the similarities and differences of those approaches as well as their benefits and limitations.
2. Students should be able to demonstrate an informed understanding of the different modes of inquiry and research within English studies.
3. Students should be able to analyze and interpret texts, employing close reading skills as well as a variety of other theories and methods introduced.
4. Students should be able to perform independent research, using the MLA bibliography and other methods.
5. Students should be able to express their ideas in clear, logical, organized, concise, and persuasive ways, in both written and oral forms.
6. Students should be able to define many terms within English studies and explain the significance of those terms.

7. Students should be able to respond critically to all course material, using synthesis, analysis, comparison, contrast, critique and evaluation.
8. Students should be able to use web-based scholarly sources in an effective manner.

**Assignments and grade percentages:**

- **Quizzes and Homework:** 15%
- **Midterm Exam:** 25%
- **Annotated Bibliography and Abstract:** 15%
- **Paper Outlines:** 20%
- **Research Paper:** 25%

**Grading Scale:**

Grading: The grades I assign indicate how well you meet the expectations of an assignment.

90-100=A, for work that exceeds expectations.

80-89= B, for work that meets expectations well.

70-79=C, for average work, work that meets the expectations of an assignment competently.

60-69=D, for work that fails to meet the minimum requirements of an assignment.

59 and below=F, for work that is either not completed or has flouted the requirements.

A grade of C at the end of the semester indicates that a student has demonstrated a thorough command of the reading and writing skills the course is designed to impart. A C, in other words, is a grade that indicates that you have succeeded. An A indicates that your performance is well above average, exceeding that of the majority of your peers. Since C is the average grade, by definition, only a very few students will receive As.

**TEXTS:**

Please purchase the texts listed below. They are available at the University bookstore. If the bookstore has sold out, you should try another store or purchase the books online. **Everybody MUST have their books by week 2 of class.**

**You are required to bring the required textbook to every class period. Failure to do so may result in your being assigned an absence.**

- Ann B. Dobie, *Theory into Practice: An Introduction to Literary Criticism*. Third or Fourth Edition, 2012.
- Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale*, 1986 (any edition will do)

**Blackboard (BB)**

Other course materials for this class can be found on Blackboard. These include:

- Carson McCullers, "The Haunted Boy"
- Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses"
- Judith Butler, excerpt from *Gender Trouble*
- Ngugi, "The Language of African Literature"

You should check BB regularly for updates to the syllabus, assignments, and other announcements.

The following websites are also recommended reading:

- [The Owl at Purdue](#) website provides important information about analyzing texts and writing papers.
- The library links below will take you to the major research tools in English studies. You will need them for your final research paper:  
<http://libguides.uta.edu/english>

**There will be a set scheduled time to meet with the English resources librarian, Ms. Shepelwich, but you should familiarize yourself with these tools as early as possible.**

## **MY POLICIES:**

### **Assignments policy:**

#### **Participation**

ENGL 2350 is a discussion course. Your attendance and participation are essential to your success in it. Participation is not simply talking; it involves contributing to the discussion in **relevant** and meaningful ways. Effective participation stems from thoughtful reading and preparation outside of class.

#### **Quizzes**

There will be several quizzes throughout the semester, only some of which are noted on your syllabus. There will also be **occasional pop-quizzes** to test your reading preparedness. **Quizzes cannot be made up**; if you are absent from class you will receive a grade of 0 on the quiz.

#### **Midterm Exam**

The exam will require you to define critical terms, theorists, and movements and answer two or more short essay questions related to a specific theoretical methodology. **Midterm exams cannot be made up** except in extreme circumstances.

#### **Papers**

All of the papers for the class (Paper Outline, Abstract and Bibliography, and the Final Paper) comprise the Final Research Project.

All papers will be **submitted via Blackboard**. It is your responsibility to ensure your paper is correctly submitted. I will make no allowances for papers that are not

properly uploaded. **Blackboard will not accept submissions after the class begins on the due date.** If your paper is late, you will need to make arrangements with me to submit it. I will not accept late papers via email unless by arrangement.

**Late papers will be penalized by 10 points each day they are late. A doctor's note will not excuse a late paper.** If you know you cannot submit the paper by the due date, you should contact me about an extension. An extension is not automatic, however; as you have considerable advance notice as to paper due dates, under no circumstances will an extension be granted the day before the paper is due.

All papers must be double-spaced and typed in 12pt Times New Roman font. Your name and the course number must appear in the top left hand corner of the first page.

## Description of Final Research Project Assignments

### Paper Outlines (3-5 pages each)

You have three outlines to complete as preparation for writing your final paper on *The Handmaid's Tale*. Each requires you to do the **Prewriting** and **Drafting and Revising** exercises for three different critical methods: Marxist Criticism (pp.95-97), Feminist Criticism (120-123), and another method of your choice as presented in the textbook. You should follow the prompts given in these sections to aid you in writing your outline. **One of these will form the basis for your final paper.** The outlines will require you to synthesize the critical material while analyzing various narrative techniques and plot developments in the novel. You should refer to the relevant chapters in the textbook for more information on the critical methods if you get stuck. In some cases, it will be helpful to compare and contrast methods as you critique and evaluate the novel. We will workshop these in class so that everyone is clear on the methodology before proceeding to the final drafting stage.

### Abstract and Annotated Bibliography

After you receive my feedback on your chosen outline, you will submit an abstract of your paper with a clear thesis statement and a summary of the argument to be made. You will also include **5-8 secondary critical sources**. (You should utilize our session in the library with the humanities librarian to find these sources.) From each source, you will identify one or more relevant quotes and explain how these quotes support your argument.

### Final Research Paper (8-10pp)

The Paper Outlines and the Abstract and Bibliography assignments provide the foundation for the final paper. In the previous assignments, you will have established which critical methodology or methodologies you will use in your argument (Feminist, Marxist, Deconstruction, etc.) and will have performed preliminary research. The final paper brings this work together as you utilize your scholarly sources to make an argument about Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*.

through one of the critical lenses we've studied in the course. I am happy to look at rough drafts, but they should be complete drafts, not fragments or random ideas jotted down.

**Attendance:**

I will take attendance every day. During the semester you are permitted **two** absences. Doctor's visits, surgeries, meetings with advisors, friends' weddings, etc. will be taken from your absence total.

I will only excuse university related absences (sports trips if you are on the team and military duty) that are fully documented. Other absences do not require documentation. **Each absence after the second one will result in a 2 point penalty per absence off your final grade.** If you miss more than five class periods, you will have effectively missed two and a half weeks of class. This is unacceptable and will adversely affect your grade.

If you are absent from class you are responsible for getting notes from a classmate, completing the work you have missed, and for being on schedule when you return. I will not provide my lecture notes to you if you miss class. **Quizzes cannot be made up.**

**Tardiness:**

You must arrive to class on time. Not only do you disrupt the class, but you can miss important information which will not be repeated. Repeated tardiness may be counted as an absence.

**Classroom/email etiquette:**

I expect each member of the class to behave respectfully towards each other and towards me. Some of you may find the material we will discuss in class to be controversial, but not everyone will share your opinion. Please be mindful of this fact during discussions and in email correspondence. Please be conscious of the following policies.

1. **Turn off your cell phones when you come into class and put them away.** This means **no texting in class.** If a student persists in sending text messages during class, he or she will be dismissed from class for the day. Attention to discussion and showing respect for your instructor and classmates is part of being present.
2. Unless you have discussed doing so ahead of time with me, please **do not use your laptop in class.**

**Academic Integrity:** Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*

*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents' Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University.

## **PLAGIARISM**

In both oral and written communication, the following guidelines for avoiding plagiarism must be followed:

1. Any words quoted directly from a source must be in quotation marks (for a written assignment) and cited.
2. Any paraphrasing or rephrasing of the words and/or ideas of a source must be cited.
3. Any ideas or examples derived from a source that are not in the public domain or of a general knowledge must be cited.

### **4. All papers and presentations must be the student's own work.**

Students who are confused about what constitutes plagiarism should meet with me. Academic Honesty is expected of all students. Cheating and plagiarism are violations of academic honesty. Any student caught violating the academic honesty code will be failed for the entire semester and the matter will be reported, with documentation, to the Office of Student Conduct for further disciplinary action.

**Writing Center.** : The Writing Center, 411 Central Library, offers individual 40 minute sessions to review assignments, *Quick Hits* (5-10 minute quick answers to questions), and workshops on grammar and specific writing projects. Visit <https://uta.mywconline.com/> to register and make appointments. For hours, information about the writing workshops we offer, scheduling a classroom visit, and descriptions of the services we offer undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty members, please visit our website at [www.uta.edu/owl/](http://www.uta.edu/owl/).

**Electronic Communication:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” shall be directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**Final Review Week:** A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

**Emergency Exit Procedures:** Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit, which is directly to your left after exiting. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.

**Drop Policy:** Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is



the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://www.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

**Americans with Disabilities Act:** The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

**Title IX:** The University of Texas at Arlington is committed to upholding U.S. Federal Law "Title IX" such that no member of the UT Arlington community shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. For more information, visit [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX).

**Student Support Services:** UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to [resources@uta.edu](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at [www.uta.edu/resources](http://www.uta.edu/resources).

## SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

DATE	ASSIGNMENT DUE/CLASS ACTIVITIES <b>Subject to change when necessary</b>
Week 1 T 1/16	Introduction to the Syllabus
R 1/18	Dobie, chs. 1 & 2. Be sure to read the Faulkner story, "Barn Burning" on 267 and Model Student Analysis (MSA)



Week 2 T 1/23	<b>New Criticism and Formalism</b> Dobie, ch.3. Be sure to read “Araby” on 326 and the MSA.
R 1/25	<b>Psychological Criticism</b> Dobie, ch. 4. Read “Young Goodman Brown” and the 2 MSAs

Week 3 T 1/30	Read “The Haunted Boy” on BB and do the prewriting exercise on 72-73. <b>Hand in for a quiz grade.</b>
R 2/1	<b>Marxist Criticism</b> Dobie, ch. 5, including “The Diamond Necklace” on 331 and MSA
Week 4 T 2/6	Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses” on BB. <b>There will be a quiz on this reading.</b>
R 2/8	<b>Feminist Criticism &amp; Gender Studies</b> Dobie, ch.6, including Letters of Abigail Adams and MSA
Week 5 T 2/13	Butler, excerpt from <i>Gender Trouble</i> on BB. <b>There will be a quiz on this reading.</b>
R 2/15	<i>Gender Trouble</i> discussion continued
Week 6 T 2/20	<i>Killing Us Softly</i> video. Watch in class.
R 2/22	<b>Reader-Response Criticism</b> Dobie, ch. 7, including “The Masque of the Red Death” and MSA
Week 7 T 2/27	<b>Deconstruction</b> Dobie, ch. 8, including Frost poem on 280 and MSA
R 2/29	<b>Cultural Studies</b> Dobie, ch.9, including “The Sky is Gray” and MSA
Week 8 T 3/6	In-class review for Midterm Exam (bring questions)
R 3/8	<b>Midterm Exam 20%</b>

Week 9 3/13 & 3/15	<b>Spring Break</b>
Week 10 T 3/20	<b>Postcolonialism and Multiculturalism/Race</b> Dobie, ch. 10 pp. 204- 216, including excerpt from <i>The Road from Coorain</i> and Ngugi, "Language of African Literature" on BB. <b>There will be a quiz.</b>
R 3/22	Dobie, ch. 10, pp.216-end, including Hurston, <i>Eatonville Anthology</i> and MSA.
Week 11 T 3/27	<b>Ecocriticism</b> Dobie, ch.11, including Frost poem on 280 and MSA
R 3/29	Atwood, <i>Handmaid's Tale</i> , Parts i-vii (Night - Night)
Week 12 T 4/3	<i>Handmaid's Tale</i> , Parts vii-xii (Night - Jezebel's)
R 4/5	<i>Handmaid's Tale</i> , Parts xii-end (Jezebel's - Historical Notes)
Week 13 T 4/10	Library/ Research Methods— <b>Meet in Central Library Rm. B-20</b>
R 4/12	<b>Paper Outline 1 (Hand in for a grade)</b> Re-read Dobie 94-95 (do not do the prewriting exercise which deals with the author). Complete the Drafting and Revising section 96-97 and map out an Introduction, Body, and Conclusion for a paper on the HMT from a <b>Marxist perspective</b> .
Week 14 T 4/17	<b>Paper Outline 2 (Hand in for a grade)</b> Re-read Prewriting & Drafting and Revising Section for Feminist Criticism in Dobie 120-121 and map out an Introduction, Body, and Conclusion for a paper on HMT from a <b>Feminist Perspective</b> .
R 4/19	<b>Paper Outline 3 (Hand in for a grade)</b> Choose an approach (except Formalism) from Dobie to prepare an outline, as above, for HMT. Be sure to follow the prewriting and drafting steps for introduction, body, and conclusion as outlined by Dobie. <b>Choose a Perspective</b>
Week 15 T 4/24	<b>Abstract and Bibliography due</b> Individual Student Conferences with me
R 4/26	Individual Student Conferences with me
Week 16 T 5/1	<b>Writing Day—No Class</b>

R 5/3	FINAL PAPER DUE via BB

**Emergency Phone Numbers:** In case of an on-campus emergency, call the UT Arlington Police Department at **817-272-3003** (non-campus phone), **2-3003** (campus phone). You may also dial 911.