**ENGL 5360-001: Contemporary Critical Theory**

**Spring 2019**

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**Office Hours:** T 4:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m., and by appointment

**Place and Time of Class Meetings:** 140 COBA / T 6:00 p.m.-8:50 p.m.

**Description of Course Content**

In *The Meaning of Meaning*, first published nearly a century ago, C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards confidently asserted that the “*there is no longer any excuse for vague talk about Meaning*, and ignorance of the ways in which words deceive us” (p. 8, emphasis added). Excusable or not, vague talk about the very idea of *meaning* continues to this day, even by those scholars—myself included!—who explicitly try to construct a theory of meaning. What makes the concept—or meaning?—of *meaning* resistant to understanding, or at least to the linguistic expression of such understanding, in ways that particular meanings do not seem to be? Or is *meaning* a pure will-o-the-wisp, leading scholars into theoretical quagmires from which they never emerge? Perhaps *meaning* contributes nothing whatsoever to our understanding and should be discarded? We will explore these and related questions as we closely read Bertrand Russell’s *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth* and Ruth Millikan’s *Varieties of Meaning*, supplemented by shorter readings by Donald Davidson, Gottlob Frege, Kevin Porter, Brooke Rollins, John Searle, Alfred Tarski, and Ludwig Wittgenstein.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

* Students should be able to respond critically to course materials, using synthesis and analysis.
* Students should be able to assimilate existing information to formulate new ideas.
* Students should be able to express, clearly and succinctly, ideas or arguments in oral and written form.
* Students should be able to develop active listening skills, including paraphrasing and synthesizing ideas discussed in class.
* Students should be able to develop methods and strategies for analyzing and interpreting texts.
* Students should be apply key concepts from the work of Bertrand Russell, Ruth Millikian, and other theorists discussed during the semester to contemporary contexts.

**Required Textbooks and Other Course Materials**

Millikan, Ruth Garrett. *Varieties of Meaning: The 2002 Jean Nicod Lectures*. 2004. MIT Press, 2006. [ISBN: 978-0-262-63342-0]

Russell, Bertrand. *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth*. 1940. Spokesman Books, 2007. [ISBN: 978-0-85124-737-3]

**Major Assignments**

The major assignments for the course are as follows: two discussion facilitations, two position papers, an oral presentation, and a final course project.

**Grading Policy**

Your course grade will be calculated as follows:

Discussion Facilitation #1 5%

Discussion Facilitation #2 10%

Position Paper #1 15%

Position Paper #2 20%

Oral Presentation 10%

Course Project 40%

*A grade of “Incomplete” will be assigned only under documented cases of extreme medical, family, or personal emergency; in all cases, the incomplete must be resolved by the start of the next 15-week semester or else the grade will be changed automatically to an “F.”*

**Attendance Policy**

At UT Arlington, taking attendance is not required, but attendance is a critical indicator of student success. Each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students’ academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. As the instructor of this section, I require attendance and active participation.

**Schedule of Assignments**

TBA

**Miscellaneous Policies**

**Classroom Decorum:** I treat students with utmost respect and courtesy; when teaching, conferencing, and grading, you and your work will have my full attention. In return, I ask the same from all of you: Please turn off and put away all smartphones, books from other classes, etc. You may use a laptop or tablet **for the purposes of our course** **only** so long as you are mindful enough not to disturb the students around you.

**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 in their courses by 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. Additional information is available at <https://www.uta.edu/conduct/>.

**Writing Center:** The Writing Center, Room 411 in the Central Library, will assist you with any writing assignment while you are a student at UT Arlington. You may schedule appointments by calling 817-272-2601, by following directions listed at www.uta.edu/owl/appointments, or by visiting the Writing Center. If you come to the Writing Center without an appointment, you will be helped on a first-come, first-served basis as tutors become available. Writing Center tutors are carefully chosen and trained, and they can assist you with any aspect of your writing, from understanding an assignment to revising an early draft to polishing a final draft. However, the Writing Center is not an editing service; tutors will not correct your grammar or rewrite your assignment for you, but they will help you learn to solve your grammatical and organizational problems.

**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](http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/current/academic-support/learning-center/tutoring/index.php), [major-based learning centers](http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/college-based-clinics-labs.php), developmental education, [advising and mentoring](http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/advising.php), personal counseling, and [federally funded programs](http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/current/academic-support/mcnair/index.php). 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 <http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/index.php>.

**Disability Accommodations:** UTArlington 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), The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA),* and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.* 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 disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of **a letter certified** by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD).Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) online ([www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability)) or via phone 817-272-3364. 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). Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) ([www.uta.edu/caps](http://www.uta.edu/caps) / 817-272-3671 is also available to all students to help increase their understanding of personal issues, address mental and behavioral health problems and make positive changes in their lives.

**Non-Discrimination Policy:** UT Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit [www.uta.edu/eos](http://www.uta.edu/eos).

**Title IX Policy:** UT Arlington is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated.For information regarding Title IX, visit [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX) or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or [jmhood@uta.edu](file:///D:\002-Professional\01-Teaching\Courses\AY%202016-17\Spring%202017\ENGL%204399\jmhood@uta.edu).

**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://wweb.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

**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 after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**Campus Carry:** Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/>.

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in face-to-face and online classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” are 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 via the SFS database is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. Students’ anonymity will be protected to the extent that the law allows. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law and aggregate results are posted online. Data from SFS is also used for faculty and program evaluations. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**Final Review Week:** For semester-long courses**,** 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. 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 handicapped individuals.

**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. The non-emergency number is 817-272-3381.