

**Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Razi University**

**A Course Syllabus for Literary Terms and Critical Keywords**

**Fall Semester, September 2019- January 2020.**

**Class Time: Sundays 13:30-15:00.**

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**Part 1: Course Overview**

Field of literature and literary studies have grown in depth and vastness in the past century more than any other centuries; or even more than all the history of literature combined (with a little exaggeration). Subjects, genres, technical terms, variety in texts, adaptations, authors, and so forth are growing rapidly in number as well as connections. This is forming a giant net of meaning and significance; literarily and philosophically. Naturally, the need for knowing the specialized vocabulary of the field is to be met. So, the students and scholars of literary studies can navigate their way among the critical terms that, like stars, form conceptual constellations. This course is to start students of literature on finding their way in such a vast conceptual ocean. This will bring both pleasure and insight into their academic lives. Further, with literary terms being always on the move, it is imperative that students familiarize themselves with sources and textbooks so as to keep their knowledge updated.

**Part 2: Course Objectives/Outcomes**

The quality of performance in this course is highly dependent on two pivotal factors. First, instructor’s competence, strategy and choice of reading materials (entries and textual examples). Second, student’s comprehensive close reading of the given materials. If these two are achieved, the course will be able to approximate the following outcomes:

* Student will be able to understand literary devices and terms when they come across them in the texts
* Students will be able to apprehend the depths of critical terms related to literature and philosophy (in a limited fashion critical terms will be introduced throughout this course).
* When close reading literary text, student will be able to define and discuss the terms in relation to critical theories and viewpoints.
* The terms and concepts that are used to classify, analyze, interpret, and narrate the history of works of literature will be briefly discussed.
* In the essays we read, more advanced and complete works are going to be introduced. This will enable undergraduate students to navigate their personal literary, philosophical and critical studies.
* As readers on the path of becoming aficionados, we will be able to appreciate the diverse terms, devices and concepts that are employed by authors and critics.
* Last but not least, we will be able to make connections and links between literary theories and works and other field of humanities and philosophy.

**Part 3: Required Texts**

**Primary source:** Abrams, M. H., and Geoffrey Galt Harpham. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. Cengage Learning, 2015. 11th edition.

**Secondary sources (we refer to them whenever need be):**

Baldick, Chris. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. Oxford University Press, 2004.

Cuddon, J. A., et al. *A Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*. John Wiley & Sons, 2013. 5th edition.

**Suggestions for Further Readings:**

Baym, Nina. *The Norton anthology of American literature*. New York, W.W. Norton & Company, 2002.⃰

Drabble, Margaret. *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*. Oxford University Press, 1993.

Greenblatt, Stephen, and Meyer Howard. Abrams. *The Norton anthology of English literature*. Vol. 1 & 2. New York, Norton & Company, 2013.

Lauter, Peter. *A Companion to American Literature and Culture*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

⃰indeed more books, papers, and other materials will be mentioned during the course. Yet, these two are primary for every literature student. There will be some parts of these two’s content delivered during the course, and only a small portion of these parts are going to be on your final exam.

**Part 3: Method and Strategy**

For the sake of clarity and illumination, the course will start with an introductory lectures that will focus on course’s description and its sources. During each session the designated entries from the primary source will be read, discussed and elaborated on with the help of examples from Anglo-American literary and critical tradition. The quality of the course and the final grades of the students are heavily measured by their mastery over the reading materials specially entries chosen for the class. It is highly recommended that the students read chosen texts for each session meticulously employing their faculty of critical thinking. In this regard, it is exceptionally helpful and illuminating if the students pay attention to the terms, stylistics and devices employed by the authors of the chosen literary examples.

The use of extra materials (critical papers, books, videos, etc.) will also be a great complementary element. However, due to course extensive reading materials, any extra item will be briefly introduced and elaborated upon on the part of the instructor. If the need arises, the instructor will provide the students with any texts or files necessary. Further, using any additional sources on the part of the students will be indeed a very fruitful event. These sources can vary from websites to books and papers. Great range of variety and infinite length of these online/offline materials can be a source of digression and distraction though. Student are advised to seek instructor’s counsel before choosing any extra source for their readings. Your suggestions regarding reading materials are welcome. I will surely take them into account. Approach the primary source and other excerpts with the assumption that every words and phrases are of prime value. **And remember, take notes during the sessions.**

**Part 4: Students’ Responsibilities and Required Assignments:**

* **Attendance:** Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and to have completed the assigned reading before arriving in class. Two absences will be permitted. Each additional absence will result in a reduction of the final course grade.
* **Participation:** Students are expected to take part in class discussions and raise questions, if they have any, regarding the subject matter and content of each session. Moreover, they will be asked to give their opinion on certain matters during the class time.
* **Policies**

Attendance and participation are mandatory. Students must have the primary source and other required texts under discussion on them during the sessions (electronic editions and hardcopies are both acceptable). For the use of electronic editions look at classroom rules section.

The class is open to any reasonable criticism or suggestion. First and foremost, this course and our energy and time are to be employed to make sure that learning will occur, and you will finish this course with relative satisfaction having achieved a minimum though sufficient amount of literary and critical understating in accordance to your needs and interests. Hence, please share your concerns with the class or the instructor anytime the necessity arises.

**Part 5: Makeup Sessions Rules:**

If necessity dictates, and based on past experiences it sure will, extra sessions will be added to our course. At this point we need at least one extra session. Time and date for extra sessions will be discussed with the students to ensure maximum rate of attendance and minimum amount of inconvenience. Decisions taken regarding this matter will be announced two weeks prior to the extra sessions.

**Part 6: Classroom Rules and Standards of Online Behavior**

* All electronic gadgets must be off or set to silent mode. If you use them for reading PDFs and other class related files, make sure they will not distract you or others so as to prevent the class from digressions.
* Punctuality is a non-negotiable must.
* 3 sessions of absence mean reducing your chance of passing the course greatly not to mention increasing the possibility of being dropped out of the course. Don’t try it, ever!
* Class activities are expected of the students.
* Last but not least, respect the class. Do not leave the class in groups during the breaks. You absolutely must not extend breaks’ duration on your own authority. For each session, a 10 minute break is already scheduled.
* Should the students have any questions, concerns, or requests for meeting and materials, they will contact me **only and solely** via my email address. Other forms of communications are absolutely not recommended.

You all have my thanks and appreciation since you have always observed these rules and regulations. Bringing them here again is only a matter of formality and academic regulations.

**Part 7: Grading Policy and Final Exam Structure**

| **Points** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| 40 | 10 per cent of your final grade will be decided based on your attendance and the other 30 per cent is assigned to your participation. |
| 60 | Final exam will determine 70 per cent of your final grade⃰. |
| 100 | Total Points Possible |

**⃰** the final exam will be an essay exam. On your exam, you will answer essay questions that are structured around the issues discussed in the class. You must respond to them properly and to the point in a reasonable length with maximum awareness of the texts themselves and critical subject matters that have been presented in the class. It goes needless to say that those who show genuine analytical insights in their answers will receive extra points. And there will be at least two bonus questions on your exam which are much more difficult than the regular questions and need a great deal of critical insight and mastery over the sources. Don’t forget: **everything I say will be on the exam!**

**Part 8: Schedule**

**Week 1**: Course Orientation

* Preliminary talk on objectives and method
* act and scene
* allegory
* alliteration and assonance
* allusion

**Week 2**: From *A Glossary of Literary Terms:*

* ambiguity
* antihero
* antithesis
* archaism
* baroque

**Week 3**: From *A Glossary of Literary Terms*:

* bathos and anticlimax
* bombast
* burlesque
* carpe diem
* chorus

**Week 4**: From *A Glossary of Literary Terms*:

* cliché
* conceit
* connotation and denotation
* cyberpunk
* decorum

**Week 5**: From *A Glossary of Literary Terms*:

* doggerel
* deus ex machine
* dramatic monologue
* epigram
* epiphany

**Week 6**: From *A Glossary of Literary Terms:*

* epithet
* euphemism
* euphony and cacophony
* euphuism
* fabliau

**Week 7**: From *A Glossary of Literary Terms:*

* figures of thought
* free verse
* hyperbole and understatement
* hypertext
* invective

**Week 8**: From *A Glossary of Literary Terms*:

* irony
* ivory tower
* light verse
* malapropism
* masque

**Week 9**: From *A Glossary of Literary Terms*:

* melodrama
* meter
* negative capability
* onomatopoeia

**Week 10**: From *A Glossary of Literary Terms*:

* over-reading
* paradox
* parallelism
* pathos
* performance poetry

**Week 11**: From *A Glossary of Literary Terms*:

* persona, tone, and voice
* plot
* point of view
* pun

**Week 12**: From *A Glossary of Literary Terms*:

* purple patch
* refrain
* rhetorical figures (selective)
* roman *à* clef

**Week 13**: From *A Glossary of Literary Terms*

* satire
* soliloquy
* stream of consciousness
* style

**Week 14**: From *A Glossary of Literary Terms*

* sublime
* symbol
* synesthesia

**Week 15**:

* Review