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ENLT 495.01: Introduction to Graduate Studies

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Harrison
ENLT 495.01

ENGLISH 495: INTRODUCTION TO GRADUATE STUDIES

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(Please consult)

REQUIRED TEXTS

Conrad, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness: Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism*, 2nd Ed. (Bedford)
Jameson, Fredric. *The Political Unconscious*. (Cornell)
Rivkin, Julie, and Michael Ryan, Eds. *Literary Theory: An Anthology* (Blackwell)
Selden, Raman, et al. *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*. (Prentice Hall)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course asks a basic question: what do you need to excel in an English graduate program? Part of the answer: expertise in research, proficiency in a variety of academic genres, and a prodigious understanding of critical theory. English 495 aims to deepen your abilities in these areas.

To this end, English 495 consists of three components: a library unit, a series of mini-units on graduate studies in English, and a sustained unit on literary theory. Sue Samson, the Humanities Librarian, will conduct the library sessions wherein we'll be introduced to library services for graduate students, databases, and internet and archival resources. As part of the library sessions—and throughout the semester--we'll do a number of the mini-units on matters relating to your success in a graduate program: how to stage dazzling in-class presentations, how to write triumphant seminar papers and theses, how to write a hip conference paper proposal (and then how to give a fine presentation), and so on. Finally, much of the course will be devoted to some of the most influential bodies of theory: Marxism, poststructuralism, feminism, and postcolonial/ international studies.

GRADING

Bibliography: 30%
Essay #1 (8+ pages): 30%
Essay #2 (8+ pages): 30%
Participation: 10%

THE ESSAYS

For the two essays, you have a couple of primary options:

1. *The Meta-Critical Essay*: Write an essay in which you defend, elaborate upon, or critique an aspect or argument of one of the theories.
2. *The Application Essay*: Write an essay in which you apply one of the theories (or some aspect of one of the theories) to a primary text (a poem, a story, a novel, a film, etc).

You may write two meta-critical essays, two applications, or one of each.

SYLLABUS (Subject to Revision!)

- Th Sept 7: Introduction
- Th Sept 14: Selden 1-120
Rivkin & Ryan 231-42
Mini-Unit: The Graduate Career
- Th Sept 21: Library Session 1
Mini-Unit: The Successful In-Class Presentation
- Th Sept 28: Library Session 2
- Th Oct 5: Library Session 3
- Th Oct 12: Selden 121-266
Rivkin & Ryan 333-357
- Th Oct 19: Library Session 4
Mini-Unit: The Successful Seminar Paper
- Th Oct 26: Library Session 5
- Th Nov 2: Conrad 17-95, 148-298
- Th Nov 9: Rivkin & Ryan 243-304
Gramsci, Excerpts (In the Wall)
Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History" (In the Wall)
Essay 1 Due

- Th Nov 16: Jameson 9-102
Mini-Unit: The Successful Thesis
- Th Nov 23: No Class: Thanksgiving
- Th Nov 30: Rivkin & Ryan 358-428
Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences"
Mini-Unit: Conferences? Conference Proposals?
- Th Dec 7: Rivkin & Ryan 527-611
Mini-Unit: Statement of Purpose/Writing Sample (for a Ph.D. Program Application)
- Th Dec 14: Rivkin & Ryan 851-855, 873-922
Essay 2 Due