



ENGL*2120 Seminar: Critical Practices

Fall 2020

Section(s): 01

School of English and Theatre Studies

Credit Weight: 0.50

Version 3.00 - September 05, 2020

1 Course Details

1.1 Calendar Description

This course guides students through a range of critical approaches and explores their implications for readings of a limited number of literary texts. The seminar's main areas of concentration are: (1) close reading, centering on the way a particular poem, work of fiction, or play works in its details and overall structure; (2) critical approaches and methodologies; (3) critical writing and discussion. (Choices of approaches and texts will be determined by individual instructors.) Writing- and presentation-intensive course.

Pre-Requisites:

ENGL*1080

Restrictions:

Registration in the English major, minor or area of concentration, or minor in Creative Writing.

1.2 Course Description

This course offers an overview of the practice of literary criticism through an introduction to literary theory. Students examine issues that develop from reading, interpretation, and evaluation of primary fictional and theoretical texts. Critical responses engage the assumptions and methodological implications of theoretically informed approaches to literary criticism (for example, New Criticism, Marxist, or Lacanian strategies). The course design includes applications of literary theory to *Hamlet* and *Frankenstein*, and to an adaptation of these texts by Ian McEwan in his AI novel, *Machines Like Me* (2019).

1.3 Timetable

Asynchronous class: Tues. 11:30 a.m.

Synchronous class: Thurs. 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (students are expected to participate in real time)

1.4 Final Exam

There is no final exam.

2 Instructional Support

2.1 Instructional Support Team

Instructor:	Sandra Singer
Email:	ssinger@uoguelph.ca
Telephone:	N/A
Office:	N/A
Office Hours:	I will not be holding regular office hours this semester but will be available to discuss class matters by email and virtual appointments. When emailing me, please use the course code as part of your title. If you are requesting an appointment, also indicate it in the title. I will respond to email within 48 hours (weekends excluded).

3 Learning Resources

3.1 Required Resources

Sandra Singer (Readings)

- Ian McEwan *Machines Like Me*
 - William Shakespeare *Hamlet*
 - Mary Shelley *Frankenstein*
 - Anne H. Stevens *Literary Theory and Criticism*
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4 Learning Outcomes

4.1 Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. analyze principles of literary theory, including those from a wide selection of the major theoretical schools
 2. apply literary theory to a variety of literatures and other texts of your choosing
 3. understand and appreciate how texts and literary criticism are shaped by literary theory
 4. be prepared for upper-level courses in literary studies by having a working understanding of central tenets, terminology, and movements in literary theory
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5 Teaching and Learning Activities

5.1 Outline

The schedule includes Tues. and Thurs. readings, in order to space out coursework. Students are expected to read all of the week's material before Thursday's class, and have a copy of course readings (hard copy or digital) available during the seminar.

Module 1 *Hamlet* and *Frankenstein* in Literary Criticism

Sept 10 Introduction to Literary Theory and Criticism, Reading: *Literary Theory* 13-18

Sept 15 Reading: *Hamlet* (read

<http://www.folgerdigitaltexts.org/?chapter=5&play=Ham&loc=p7> or watch a production: for instance, *Hamlet* at Elsinore https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l3w_cohUO8E

Sept 17 Reading: *Literary Theory* 135-48

Sept 22 Brooks, "The Formalist Critics" (Courselink); "*Hamlet's* Organic Unity" LT 233-36
[Posting 1 available on Courselink](#) (on "The Formalist Critics" and "*Hamlet's* Organic Unity")
[Seminar and Poster Sign-up on Courselink](#)

Sept 24 Reading: *Literary Theory* 211-20; "*Hamlet's* Melancholy" LT 242-44

Sept 29 Reading: Wimsatt and Beardsley "The Intentional Fallacy" (Courselink); *Literary Theory* 18-26

[Posting 1 due](#)

[Posting 2 available on Courselink](#) (on Wimsatt and Beardsley and *Hamlet*)

Oct 1 Reading: *Literary Theory* 114-34; *Frankenstein* vol. 1 (read 1818 edition

[https://library.oopen.org/bitstream/id/24cb1da5-a512-4de1-b24c-](https://library.oopen.org/bitstream/id/24cb1da5-a512-4de1-b24c-639b6452dbec/628778.pdf)

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/84/84-h/84-h.htm> or listen to an audiobook: for instance, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t7XLp_bOFUU

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AmUuXtVWZb4>)

Oct 6 Reading: *Frankenstein* vol. 2-3
Posting 2 due

Oct 8 Reading: *Literary Theory* 149-59; "Frankenstein and Narratology" LT 245-48
Posting 3 available on Courselink (Narratology of Frankenstein)

Oct 13 Fall Study Break

Oct 15 Reading: *Literary Theory* 160-79; "Hamlet in Literary History" LT 238-40
Posting 3 due

Oct 20 Reading: *Literary Theory* 26-39

Module 2 Theoretical Perspectives Applied to Hamlet and Frankenstein

Oct 22 Reading: *Literary Theory* 180-94; Marx *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*
(Courselink)
Poster description on Courselink

Oct 27 Foucault "Panopticism" (Courselink)

Oct 29 Reading: *Literary Theory* 194-202, 39-45

Nov 3 Reading: Said *Orientalism* (Courselink); *Frankenstein* and History" LT 248-50;
"Frankenstein and Orientalism" LT 250-51

Nov 5 Reading: *Literary Theory* 203-10, "Hamlet and Gender" LT 241-42

Nov 10 Reading: *Frankenstein* and Homosexuality" LT 251-52; Butler "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution" (Courselink)

Module 3 Theoretical Approaches Applied to *Machines Like Me*

Nov 12 Reading: *Machines Like Me* ch 1-4

Essay Topics and Requirements available on Courselink

Poster due in Courselink

Nov 17 Reading: *Machines Like Me* ch 5-8

Nov 19 Reading: *Machines Like Me* ch 9-10

Posters Presented; Elevator Talk due in Courselink

Nov 24 Reading: *Literary Theory* 221-30

Nov 26 Reading: Kristeva *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (Courselink); "The Sublime, the Abject, the Uncanny" *LT* 253-54

Essay paragraph due in Courselink

Dec 1 Essay Writing

Dec 3 Essay help

Essay due Dec 10 in Courselink

6 Assessments

6.1 Marking Schemes & Distributions

Evaluation:

Discussion Board Posting (225 words each—best 2 of 3) 20%
Seminar 20%

Poster 20% (includes minimum 500 words of writing)

Group Elevator Pitch (250 words) 5%

Essay: 10% thesis paragraph (350 words) and 25% essay (1800 words)

Word limits are + or – 10%, so, for example, a 2000-word assignment could be between 1800 and 2200 words.

Discussion Board:

Within Courselink, each student will be responsible for *entering the discussion* during assigned weeks. In a 225-word response, speak to a conference question that will be posed by the instructor on the Courselink discussion board. This is a formal mode of communication different from social media. Make a draft of your thoughts, and proofread for spelling and grammar before sending. Entering a discussion means, **unless you are the first person responding, that in order to get full points you must speak to another student's insights**. Cited primary texts are not part of your Word Count. Late postings will not be accepted.

Seminar Presentation:

20 min. timed presentation in groups (including 5 min. for follow-up questions and discussion)

In self-determined groups, seminars entail application of critical theories and terminology to a **textual example (e.g. *The Hunger Games*) from outside of course texts that you provide. It is not enough** to provide a summary of an assigned Stevens reading or theory sample.

Introduce your own literary or cultural sample (such as a film clip, literary text or song) for analysis. Within the context of a school of criticism's wider aims, **choose salient aspects** from the assigned reading **to pursue in relationship to your cultural example**.

Seminars will be evaluated on (1) the strength of oral presentation (i.e., shared and equitable organization, smooth operation, volume, pitch), (2) analytic sophistication using theoretical concepts and terminology, (3) application of theoretical material to a cultural example, (4) quality of class engagement in discussion, (5) use of visuals (chart, pdf, powerpoint with no more than 5 slides), and/or dramatic performance to increase student interest.

Poster Presentation:

This is a summative activity for Modules 1 and 2 (on, for example, panopticism, or dream analysis, or class critique, etc.). In self-determined groups, work together to create a poster that addresses at least 3-5 aspects of the specified literary criticism. The topic of your poster should be contextualized in a critical analytic framework that clearly links your topic to a scholarly thesis about *Hamlet* or *Frankenstein*. See the Applications section of the *Literary*

Theory text for examples of scholarly theses about these works. In your poster, the aspects of literary criticism you develop must be briefly contextualized within the applicable literary or cultural theory (for example, New Historicism or Psychoanalysis or Marxism, etc.) that informs the criticism.

Elevator Pitch:

This short essay will promote your group's poster. Explain its precepts and the salient implications of your group's approach to literature and/or culture. Your presumed audience is a first-year student who might be interested in taking ENGL 2120 Critical Practices.

Essay:

The essay requires reading *Machines Like Me* and interpreting this novel using one or two theoretical approaches from the course.

Written work:

Further details about the Poster Presentation, thesis paragraph and Essay requirements will be posted on Courselink.

All written work will be submitted to Dropbox by 11:59 pm on the due date in the syllabus.

In this course, your instructor will be using Turnitin, integrated with the Courselink Dropbox tool, to detect possible plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration or copying as part of the ongoing efforts to maintain academic integrity at the University of Guelph. All submitted assignments will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site.

Missed and Late Work:

Missed examinations and class presentations will receive a grade of "0" unless explanation of compassionate reason or medical circumstance is received within one week after the missed work. Penalty for unexcused late written work is 5% per day, including weekends. Please note: this is different from extensions or accommodations made on the basis of documentable illness, family emergency or recommendations from the BA Counseling Office. In the case of extended absence or inability to work due to illness or personal situations, contact BACO and talk to a program counselor. The counselors work with faculty and students to come up with a viable way forward.

7 University Statements

7.1 Email Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

7.2 When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. The grounds for Academic Consideration are detailed in the Undergraduate and Graduate Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Consideration and Appeals

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-ac.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Grounds for Academic Consideration

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

Associate Diploma Calendar - Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/diploma/current/index.shtml>

7.3 Drop Date

Students will have until the last day of classes to drop courses without academic penalty. The deadline to drop two-semester courses will be the last day of classes in the second semester. This applies to all students (undergraduate, graduate and diploma) except for Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Associate Diploma in Veterinary Technology (conventional and alternative delivery) students. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available in their respective Academic Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Dropping Courses

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Registration Changes

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/genreg-reg-regchg.shtml>

Associate Diploma Calendar - Dropping Courses

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/diploma/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

7.4 Copies of Out-of-class Assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

7.5 Accessibility

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required; however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability.

Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to book their exams at least 7 days in advance and not later than the 40th Class Day.

For Guelph students, information can be found on the SAS website
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/sas>

For Ridgetown students, information can be found on the Ridgetown SAS website
<https://www.ridgetownc.com/services/accessibilityservices.cfm>

7.6 Academic Integrity

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity, and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community—faculty, staff, and students—to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff, and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that encourages academic integrity. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

7.7 Recording of Materials

Presentations that are made in relation to course work - including lectures - cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a student, or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

7.8 Resources

The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies, and regulations that apply to undergraduate, graduate, and diploma programs.

Academic Calendars

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/academics/calendars>

7.9 Disclaimer

Please note that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may necessitate a revision of the format of course offerings and academic schedules. Any such changes will be announced via CourseLink and/or class email. All University-wide decisions will be posted on the COVID-19 website (<https://news.uoguelph.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus-information/>) and circulated by email.

7.10 Illness

The University will not normally require verification of illness (doctor's notes) for fall 2020 or winter 2021 semester courses. However, requests for Academic Consideration may still require medical documentation as appropriate
