

## FRENCH 4095. Literary Theory Capstone

Fall 2021  
Dr. Alain Lescart



| Class time and Place:   | Contact Information:  |
|---|---|
| <i>Period:</i> 8/ 31 – 12/17<br><i>Class Hours:</i> Tuesday - Thursday<br><i>Classroom:</i> 12:20-1:35 PM | <i>Office:</i> Bond Academic Center 112<br><i>Phone :</i> (619) 849-2727<br><i>e-mail:</i> alescart@ptloma.edu<br><i>Office hours:</i> as posted on office door |

| <u>FINAL EXAM DATE &amp; TIME</u>  | <u>FINAL EXAM LOCATION</u> |
|--|----------------------------|
| <b>FRE 4095</b><br><b>ORAL PRESENTATION</b><br><b>DECEMBER 9<sup>th</sup> 12:20-1:35</b> | <b>In class</b>            |

### Required Texts

- Ann B. Dobie. *Theory into Practice. Introduction to Literary Criticism*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. (4<sup>th</sup> ed. 2014)
- Wadsworth. Cengage Learning. University of Louisiana at Lafayette. 2012.
- Ryan, Michael. *Literary Theory: A Practical Introduction*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2017. [Referred to as *Practical Intro* on the syllabus]

### Recommended supplemental texts

- *A Handbook of Literature*. Harmon & Holman. Last ed. (9<sup>th</sup>).
- *Handouts (excerpts) are on CANVAS for other authors*.
- Rivkin, Judith and Michael Ryan, eds. *Literary Theory: An Anthology*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2017. [Referred to as *Anthology* on the syllabus]
- *Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 7<sup>th</sup> ed.
- *Bressler, Charles L. Literary Criticism: An Introduction to Theory and Practice*. 4<sup>th</sup> or later ed. Boston: Longman.
- *Suggested text—McEntyre, Marilyn. Caring for Words in a Culture of Lies*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009.

### Course Goals and Objectives

This course is one of the components of the Major in French. The faculty supports the survey of human endeavors from a historical, cultural, linguistic, and philosophical perspective, including developing critical appreciation of human expression – both artistic and literary.

In this course, we focus on reading, understanding, and applying literary theories, and honing research and academic writing skills. The class is designed not only to prepare you for graduate school and/or for teaching literature, but it will also sharpen critical thinking skills for a host of other professions and increase your ability to read critically using a variety of theoretical lenses. We will also examine the theories as products of their eras and cultures, as a mode of seeing philosophical evolution from the ancient through post-modern periods. The final paper in this course will be part of your Senior portfolio.

### **Catalogue description:**

This capstone course provides an in-depth study of contemporary critical trends, such as Structuralism, New Historicism, Feminism, Deconstruction, Gender Studies, Reader-Response and Psychoanalytic criticism. Students will also familiarize themselves with the critical commonplaces to which these new approaches are a response as well as with a traditional overview of trends and styles from medieval through modern literature. Students will be expected to engage in some research and in written critical work. Preparation of a portfolio and summative evaluation will be an important part of this class.

### **Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)**

*Students who complete the French Program will be able to:*

1. Write essays without significant errors of grammar, spelling, or vocabulary usage that would impede comprehension by a native speaker.
2. Comprehend the main idea and most details of connected oral discourse by a native speaker on a variety of topics.
3. Converse in a participatory fashion with a native speaker using a variety of language strategies to convey meaning.
4. Analyze and Interpret target language texts and data sets according to their cultural, literary, and/or linguistic content.
5. Display knowledge of the nature and structure of language.
6. Discuss the influence of their own perspective on cultural interconnections through engagement with local, national, or international communities.

### **Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)**

*Students will be able to:*

- a. Closely read (comprehension, analysis) and critically analyze (analysis) texts in their original languages and/or in translation. (LPLOs 2, 3, 5, 6) (FPLOs 4)
- b. Recall (knowledge), identify (knowledge), and use (application) fundamental concepts of literary study to read and discuss texts. (LPLOs 2, 3, 6) (FPLOs 4)
- c. Standard literary terminology
- d. Modes/genres of literature
- e. Elements of literary genres
- f. Literary periods (dates, writers, characteristics, and important developments)
- g. Contemporary critical approaches
- h. Extra-literary research

- i. Analyze (analysis) the social, cultural, ethnic, gendered, and/or historical contexts of the works and their authors, and connect (synthesis, evaluation) the texts with their own lives. (LPLOs 1, 2, 3, 5) (FPLOs 4)
- j. Create (synthesis, evaluation) detailed and informed textual analysis of literary works employing secondary sources and applying concepts of literary study and literary theory. (LPLOs 2, 3, 5, 6) (FPLOs 1, 4)

### **COURSE CREDIT HOUR INFORMATION**

This class meets the Carnegie Unit minimum requirement of 750 minutes of instructional time + 1500 minutes of out-of-class work per 1 unit of credit. Specific details about how the class meets these requirements are included here in the course syllabus.

### **Course Activities and Resources**

We will use an instructional ensemble whose core program is designed to prepare students to be exposed to either full or part of literary pieces.

Homework is assigned on a daily basis **and should be turned in as listed in the daily schedule.**

### **Requirements**

1. Attendance. Your physical presence in class is very important to get the full immersion experience. If you are not present in class, you cannot perform oral exercises and you will lose participation points. Students, whether present or absent, are responsible for the material listed in the class, syllabus as well as for any extra material presented in class. If a student misses a class, s/he should procure notes from another student and study the material in the book.
2. Participation in classroom assignments. It is not enough to come to class. You need to engage actively in the oral and written exercises presented in class. Class participation is measured by one's willingness to talk in class and to communicate as fully as possible. It is also measured by one's willingness to attend class regularly and to complete assignments. Participation consists of attendance, group and partnered discussions, answer and intervention around class questions, brief writing assignments in and out of class, pop quizzes on the day's reading or previous readings or discussions.
3. Completion of daily assignments. Before you come to class, finish readings and preparations for the day and hand it in. Late work will not be accepted for credit, though it will be corrected. Work is considered late if it is handed in after it has been handed back or discussed in class. Homework is to be turned in at the beginning of the class. No reminders will be provided since it is assumed that students are adults capable of reading the syllabus. **Write one original reflective dialogue papers of 5 pages** on assigned topics. These papers needs to follow the MLA style to acknowledge the sue of others' words and ideas.
4. Preparation for the two exams. Get ready well in advance for the exams. **THERE ARE NO MAKE-UPS!** A missed exam counts as a zero. If the student has an official excuse (doctor's note or family tragedy) for an absence, the zero is deleted.

Such excuses need to be given to the professor within a few days of the absence. If an absence is prolonged (more than three classes), the student must contact the professor immediately. One low mark will be dropped from the interrogations before they are averaged at the end of the semester. Do not buy your plane ticket before the class exam. Day of exam cannot be changed.

5. Writing: All standards of academic writing that you were taught in LIT 250 are required of your writing in this class as well. Each student will complete Reading Responses, Abstracts, and a Major Paper (including a paper proposal, annotated bibliography, and abstract).
6. Exams: Each student will complete a Midterm and Final Exam.
7. Research: Follow your intellectual curiosities and start now. The primary text for your major paper will be chosen in consultation with me. You may use some of our course readings for secondary sources for your paper. Other secondary and tertiary sources are for you to search out, read, annotate, and evaluate as you research your major paper. Please read as much secondary material as possible and use what is appropriate for your paper. No Wikipedia or similar guides are to be used for papers or used as a substitute for the reading. This is a Senior capstone course, and you will need to seek out university-level sources.
8. Research Presentations: You will present your major research paper in a department conference entitled Literary Scholarship on Point. The date for the conference is Monday, April 30, 2017, 4:30-7:00pm. You will receive a Gmail invitation to this event. Please accept it and get this important assignment date on your calendars now.
9. Gmail, Canvas, and Live Text: You are responsible for routinely checking your campus accounts for electronic messages from me (and sometimes from your classmates). You are fully accountable for all course material, announcements, communications that are distributed to these online sites. I will send messages only to these sites, so please let me know if you encounter any technical problems with them. Your Senior Portfolio must be submitted on Live Text and may be requested in hard copy as well.
10. Extenuating Situations & Grades: No “Incomplete” grades will be assigned unless extenuating circumstances (e.g., death in the family, automobile accidents, hospitalization) prevail. If you find yourself in such a
11. situation, contact me immediately. You must submit, in a timely fashion, any necessary and valid documents to verify your situation (e.g., doctor's letter on letterhead).

#### GRADE SCALE

|           |           |           |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 95-100: A | 90-95: A- | 85-90: B+ | 80-85: B  | 75-80: B- |
| 70-75: C+ | 65-70: C  | 60-65: C- | 55-60: D+ | 50-55: D  |

#### Grading of the class

Your grade will be based on the quality of your work in these areas:

- Abstracts, Reading analyses, Sample Theoretical Essay 40%
- In-Class Exercises, Participation 10%
- Portfolio: Literary Scholarship on Point, Portfolio Assignments & Submissions 50%

## **COURSE WORK SUMMARY**

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- Consistent class attendance and thoughtful participation in discussions
- Reading of all assignments
- Ten 400 words response assignments to different theoretical approaches
- Other short homework exercises to be assigned, such as responses to readings
- Occasional quizzes
- Abstracts of the assigned theoretical essays ; Sample theoretical essay
- One 10-12 page Major Analytical Paper, MLA format, using a critical-theoretical approach to an approved literary work or works, including your own analysis, theoretical grounding, research, and critical engagement with your sources
  - A formal oral presentation on your researched paper
  - A reflective paper on your LJWL experience—as part of the LJWL Portfolio
  - The LJWL Department Exit Exam and Portfolio—required for graduating seniors

### **Academic Accommodations**

If you have a diagnosed disability, please contact PLNU's Disability Resource Center (DRC) within the first two weeks of class to demonstrate need and to register for accommodation by phone at 619-849-2486 or by e-mail at [DRC@pointloma.edu](mailto:DRC@pointloma.edu). See Disability Resource Center for additional information.

### **Departmental Policy on Academic Honesty**

The Department of Literature, Journalism, and Modern Languages deems intellectual and academic integrity critical to academic success and personal development; therefore, any unethical practice will be detrimental to the student's academic record and more character. Students who present the work of others as if it were their own commit plagiarism. Presenting another's work as one's own includes, but is not limited to, borrowing another student's work, buying a paper, using the thoughts or ideas of others as one's own (using information in a paper without citation), and copying information from the Internet without citation. Plagiarized work will result in a failing grade for the assignment and possibly for the course. In either event, a written report will be filed with the department chair and the area dean. The dean will review the report and submit it to the Provost and the Vice President for Student Development. It will then be placed in the student's academic file.

### **Originality and editing**

All work presented for a grade in this class must be written in French from scratch after the assignment is given. NO papers written for high school or other college classes (simultaneously or otherwise) should be submitted. Originally of thought, creative presentation, and appropriate use of scholarly concepts and terms, without turning the essay into a jargon-driven text, are encouraged. Always edit and proofread out-of-class writing of a polished presentation in MLA form. Assistance in editing and proofreading for preferred French diction and syntax is permitted; the ideas, organization, and expression are to be the student's own. All papers need to be in print (no hand written papers).

## Classroom Rules

Please do turn off your cellular phone when you come in class. If you use a computer to take note, you are not allow to check your email or go on the internet and to play any game.

## **FINAL EXAMINATION POLICY**

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination **on its scheduled day**. The final examination schedule is posted on the Class Schedules site. No requests for early examinations or alternative days will be approved.

In the rare case that a student is scheduled for more than three (3) final examinations on the same day, the student is authorized to contact each professor in order to work out an alternate time for one of those examinations. Department chairs/school deans and college deans need not be involved in the process of making this accommodation.

| <b><u>FINAL ORAL DATE &amp; TIME</u></b>                | <b><u>FINAL ORAL LOCATION</u></b> |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <b>FRE 4095 section 1<br/>= December 9<sup>th</sup></b> | <b>In CLASS</b>                   |

## **USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

Point Loma Nazarene University encourages the use of technology for learning, communication, and collaboration. This course requires access to computers, software programs, and the Internet. At some point during the semester you will have a problem with technology, but these problems will not normally be accepted as excuses for unfinished work. Protect yourself by doing the following: Save work often and make regular backups of files in a different location from the originals, plan ahead so that you will have time to use the on-campus computers and printers if necessary, and practice safe computing when surfing the web and checking email.

When you are online on CANVAS, in connection with the class lesson, YOU CANNOT access any other page or internet, or your email, or Facebook, etc, unless requested by your professor. If you are not on CANVAS, you will asked to leave the class and will lose the point of participation for this class. You also need to turn off your phone or other electronic device.

## **TUTORIAL SERVICES**

The PLNU Tutorial Center is available free of charge for all current **undergraduate** PLNU students. It offers tutoring for most subjects, as well as general help with paper editing, study skills, etc. The Tutorial Center is located on the south end of Bond Academic Center, next to the Study Abroad offices. The Tutorial Centers is typically open Monday-Thursday from 8:00AM until 9:00PM and Friday from 8:00AM until 3:00PM. Please note that the Tutorial Center is closed from 9:30-10:30AM, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and 5:00-6:00PM every evening. Tutoring is available by appointment only, and appointments must be made at least one day in advance. Appointments may be arranged in person at the Tutorial Center, over the phone at (619) 849-2593, or via email at TutorialServices@pointloma.edu.

### ***Class Proposed Schedule***

The class schedule, provided at the end of this syllabus, includes 5 columns of information. Under **Date** is the date of class days. Under **Class Activities** are items to be covered in class for the corresponding day.

In the third column (**Study**) are items in the book to be studied for that day.

In the fourth column (**Read**) are passages to be read, identified by the page in the text on which they appear. Reading passages are set in a boxed screen in the text.

In the last column (**Homework**) are exercises to be written and handed in for that date.. Exercises are identified by page number.

### **Schedule Changes**

Changes can be made in the class schedule at any time, at the discretion of the professor. Changes may be necessitated by illness, class rhythm or by instructional need. Students are responsible to note all schedule changes.

### **E-class**

Most of the class assignments and documents are on e-class. Please do check your e-class before coming to class and download the appropriate documents.

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

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### Analytical Questions for Theory Introductions (8 Responses)

[Critical Thinking, Oral Communication]

Prepare responses to all of these questions for each theory introduction assigned. Keep your responses concise (400 words limit). Be prepared to share your response to these six questions when called on during class discussion.

1. How did this theory develop—what are its origins? Who are some important practitioners of this approach? (Name three and briefly cite their significance.)
2. What are the goals of this critical-theoretical approach?
3. What are the underlying assumptions of this critical approach? What is the value-system of this theory?
4. What are the methods of this critical approach? If students were to apply this theory to an analysis of a text, what would they need to do?
5. What are the advantages of this approach? What can be learned through using it? How does this approach open up the text?
6. What are the problems/shortcomings of this approach? Is it self-contradictory or limiting in any ways?
7. Find in a library search one article that looks like an interesting example of this critical approach. (The article may be in a journal or in an edited collection.) Write a correct MLA citation and a one sentence annotation focusing on the thesis or main claim of the essay.

### Theoretical Essay Example (1)

[Information Literacy, Critical Thinking]

**To Turn In to Me:** Staple a cover page to the example critical essay you have printed out or photocopied (or save it in pdf and post in on Canvas). On your cover page include a heading with your name, date, course number and name, and the full bibliographic citation of the sample critical essay. Below this heading write your response to #2 below.

**To Distribute in Class:** Make 10 copies of your cover page & response to #2 and bring the copies to class on your assigned day. (or according the number of students in the class)

1. Example: Find a journal article or essay from an edited collection (outside of our course texts) that uses a particular theoretical approach to examine a work of literature. Choose the work of literature on which you are writing your major paper.
2. Response (400 words): What theory or theories are used in your journal article or essay? What are two or three key insights gained in the use of this approach to read the literary work?
3. Bibliography: What two or three scholarly sources in the bibliography of your example do you recognize (say how) or want to investigate further (say why)? List these sources in a bibliography at the bottom of your cover page response.



## **TEXTS ANALYSIS (8 Abstracts) MAUPASSANT / YOURCENAR**

[Critical Thinking, Written Communication]

You will write and informally present eight 3 pages (MLA format) essays of your assigned theoretical readings. You will also be prepared to answer questions about your understanding of the theoretical reading and to pose follow-up questions about it to the class.

Instructions, tips, samples, and helpful videos for writing abstracts may be found on these sites: <http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/guide.cfm?guideid=59> (Informative & Descriptive) <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/abstracts.shtml> (Indicative) <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/656/1/> <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/abstracts/> (Informative & Descriptive) <http://www.sccur.uci.edu/sampleabstracts.html> (Samples) <http://users.ece.cmu.edu/~koopman/essays/abstract.html>

### **Capstone Key Assessment assignments—more information to follow**

[Critical Thinking, Written Communication, Oral Communication, Information Literacy]

1. Senior Portfolio: Reflective Essay, FRE 495 Major Paper (Live Text)
2. Literary Scholarship on Point—Research Colloquium (Formal Oral Presentation)

### **Literary Scholarship on Point—Research Colloquium**

[Oral Communication]

On assigned date December 9<sup>th</sup> a special department colloquium will take place during which you will formally present your Major Analytical Paper to an audience of LJWL students and faculty. Full guidelines for your oral presentation will be given in a separate document.

Your oral presentation will be assessed with the AAC&U Oral Communication Rubric which you may find here: [http://assessment.pointloma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/AACU-VALUE\\_-Oral-Communica..1.pdf](http://assessment.pointloma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/AACU-VALUE_-Oral-Communica..1.pdf) and on Canvas in the Rubrics module. Please review this rubric carefully so that you will know the criteria and level of quality we will be looking for in assessing in your oral presentation.

## **APPROACHING AN ACADEMIC ESSAY**

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For this course, you will be expected to learn to read and analyze the language of the literary profession: you need to be able to understand the conversations of the interpretive community so that you can also engage in them in your own papers, as well as critically examine their premises. This task demands higher-level thinking in dealing with often abstract concepts. It is quite challenging to “decode” some of the rhetoric used by academics; literary critics have their own language, as do practitioners in every academic discipline. Here are some tips to help:

1. Scan the essay first to gain a general idea of the thesis and approach—i.e. get an overview of the work.
2. Now read the essay rigorously, underlining and annotating major, irritating, and provocative points. A good reader is a re-reader who goes back through the work and marks up his or her text.
3. Outline the work. List the main claim (thesis), subpoints, and evidence used for support (backing).
4. Interrogate the text, writing in the margins or your notes what your questions are.

5. Consider what value system(s) the essay rests upon.
6. If the essay is theoretical (rather than applied theory), think about how you would apply it to a work of literature.
7. Decide if you accept or reject the essay in whole or in part, based upon its argument and premises. It is probably not very helpful for the purposes of this class to focus on whether or not you like the writing style of the essay, as we are trying to deal with concepts. This is a different type of reading than reading a work of literature (although some literary theories do not distinguish between categories of writing, but that is for another discussion).
8. Don't allow yourself to be intimidated by the text or to give up.
9. Grapple with the reading first and then bring the questions you have concerning it to class. Chances are very good that other students may be wondering the same things, so you are doing a favor to all by raising the questions. We will grapple with the difficulties together.
10. Please see me in my office for further assistance.