Syllabus: Critical Theory

2017­-2018

Ms. Bundy

Room 50

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Course Description

This upper-level course offers students a broad but deep understanding of literary theory. Students will learn to read texts critically and openly, using theories to view those texts through a variety of lenses. Each lens allows the students a unique perspective with which to approach the texts, their own writing, and the world around them. We will look closely at source materials, short stories, poems, and other works.

Additionally, this newly redesigned course will incorporate content designed to support upperclassmen and allow for creative projects, introspection, special Writers’ Festival or Dodge Poetry Festival projects (depending on the year), and room to cultivate their craft in deeply personal ways. We will examine theories around creativity (neurologically, metaphysically), personality, artistic intent, and more.

Required Materials––bring with you every day!

Notebook

3-ring binder (2 inch) with college-ruled paper

Folder (ideally a sturdy plastic one you can clip into your binder)

USB drive

Grading

Grades are based on a point value system. Points will be assessed for participation in discussion, use of class time, classwork, homework, quizzes, and exams.

Homework Policy

Unless a student has an *excused absence validated by the school*, late work cannot be accepted. Assignments are due at the beginning of class and must be completed/printed beforehand.

Class Expectations

All Creative Writing department policies and Duval County rules will be observed in this class. Cell phones must be silenced and put away. The success of this class relies heavily on meaningful discussion, which requires everyone to be present, attentive, and respectful. Attendance is imperative! See department policies for attendance details. (It’s easier in the long run to *just show up*.)

Course Objectives

1. Improve student’s reading skills, giving them more tools to help solve problems of understanding.
2. Expand students’ awareness of different critical approaches and perspectives, thus increasing their repertoire of responses and expanding their capacity to engage with literature.
3. Encourage students to identify their own reading (and writing!) theories and to explore beyond the boundaries of their current dispositions, thus expanding the territory of their thinking.
4. Give students the confidence and responsibility to develop their own critical standards and judgments.
5. Sharpen students’ interpretive and analytical skills to sharpen their overall critical thinking ability.
6. Improve ability to make an argument and organize thoughts clearly.
7. Sustain and even deepen students’ enjoyment of reading and their appreciation for the value of literature.
8. Provide juniors and seniors with a space to deepen their craft and explore works/theories that will support their idiosyncratic creative pursuits.