Introduction to Literary Studies

Groups:  
I BA 1  
I BA 2

Time and Venue:  
Fri, 11:45-13:15, room -25  
Fri, 13:30-15:00, room -25

Format: discussion, final quiz

Course objectives:  
- practise close reading, with attention to detailed use of diction, syntax, metaphor, and style  
- practise recognising subtle and complex differences in language use  
- learn to defend a critical judgment against the informed opinion of others  
- learn to seek out further knowledge about literary theory and methodologies  
- use critical discourse with confidence

Assessment (grade):  
class contribution [including class attendance] moderated by results of the final test

You are allowed two absences. Should you miss more than two classes, you need to e-mail the teacher or talk to him as soon as you’re back, as you may be assigned some extra work to make up for the absence. Failure to do so and non-completion of the extra tasks may compromise your grade and result in your failure of the entire course. It is your right to stay at home when you are ill, yet at the same time it is your duty to make up for the missed class material.

If you do not accept this condition, you are not eligible for being listed for the course in this group.

Mimesis |
| Class 2  | (12 Oct.) | New Criticism and Formalism  
Literariness; Defamiliarization  
Mimesis; Imagery; heresy of paraphrase |
| Class 3  | (19 Oct.) | Close reading of poetry  
William Shakespeare – sonnet 18  
John Keats – “La Belle Dame Sans Merci”  
Meter; Metrical feet  
Ambiguity; Tension; Diction; Figurative language; Close reading; Poetic speaker; |
| Class 4  | (26 Oct.) | Close reading of prose  
Jane Austen – “Pride and Prejudice” (opening fragments)  
Narration (types of)  
Narrative; exposition, complication, climax, resolution. Plot vs. Story  
Verisimilitude |
| Class 5  | (8 Nov.) | The intention of the author; the death of the author (Barthes)  
William Wordsworth – “Daffodils”  
Emily Dickinson – “I heard a fly buzz”  
Percy Bysshe Shelley: “Ozymandias”  
Intentional fallacy., Affective fallacy, Pathetic fallacy |
| Class 6  | (15 Nov.) | Literary conventions; generic conventions  
William Carlos Williams – “This is Just to Say”, “The Red Wheelbarrow”; Kenneth Koch – “Variations on a Theme”  
Metaliterariness; Metaphor v. Metonymy  
Genre as a critical concept  
Literary conventions  
Metalliterary readings, Metaphor; Metonymy  
Simile; Synecdoche  
Symbol vs. allegory |
| Class 7  | (22 Nov.) | The role of the reader in the hermeneutic process  
Stanley Fish – “How to Recognize a Poem When You See One”  
William Blake – “London”, “Tyger”  
Hermeneutics  
Hermeneutic Circle |
| Class 8  | (29 Nov.) | Structuralism - binary thinking and literature  
Sign; Signifier; Signified |
| Class 9  | (6 Dec.) | Structuralism continued - poststructuralism  
Sign; Signifier; Signified |
| Class 10 | (13 Dec.) | Structure of drama. Aristotelian poetics.  
William Shakespeare - Hamlet  
Protagonist / Antagonist; Hamartia; Hubris  
Catharsis; Peripeteia  
Soliqouy; Climax  
Denouement; Closet drama; Metatheatricality; stock / flat / deep / static / dynamic character |
| Class 11 | (20 Dec.) | William Shakespeare - The Tempest  
Culture and discourse. Historical discourse. Discourse and counterdiscourse.  
Discourse (here: colonialist)  
Postmodernism  
Grand narrative |
| Class 12 | (3 Jan.) | Postmodernism and narration. Literature and philosophy. Adaptations and appropriations - John Gardner - Grendel  
Orality and literacy  
Oral literature, formulaic diction |
| Class 13 | (10 Jan.) | | |
| Class 14 | (17 Jan.) | Final quiz  
Dr Piotr Spyra - piotr.spyra@uni.lodz.pl |