

University of Jordan Faculty of Foreign Languages English Department

Course Title: Literature and Society

Course Code: 1502718 Prerequisite: None 3 Credit Hours

Course Description and Objectives:

This course selects a number of key literary texts in English and American Literature as ground for investigating various aspects of the relationship between the literary product and the surrounding social environment. The main objectives of this course are to introduce students to literary works that contain new approaches to various aspects of society. The course contains two sections. The first includes the theoretical aspect and the second includes some selected works by leading writers such as Charlotte Bronte, Charlotte Perkins Gillman, Thomas Hardy, Virginia Woolf, F. Scott Fitzgerald, George Orwell, Terry Tempest Williams, and others. Each selection reflects different aspects of social life in American or British life, from gender and feminist issues to multicultural society and to ecological and philosophical/moral issues. Special emphasis is laid on such major issues as: women's social status, human beings and the environment, urbanization, minorities, race, politics, psychology, morals and ethics and the preservation of ancient architecture in a modern city.

Learning outcomes:

Students will be able to

- a. acquire a better understanding of the relationship between literature and society,
- b. read and analyze social text types,
- c. comprehend and apply various approaches to literature.

Learning /Teaching Methods:

Lectures, student presentations, discussions, analysis and feedback.

Assignments:

Students will be asked to read the assigned texts in order to familiarize themselves with the subject of each unit and to prepare a short presentation on a selected part of the material required.

Assessment:

First Test: 30 % Term Paper: 20 % Presentation and participation: 10 %
Final Exam: 40 %

Course Schedule:

Week 1: Orientation & Introduction

Week 2: Lois Tyson's *Critical Theory Today*. "Psychoanalytic Criticism," 13- 34";
Lacanian psychoanalysis and literary interpretation

Week 3: Herman Hesse's *Steppenwolf*

Week 4: Lois Tyson's *Critical Theory Today*. "Marxist Criticism"; F. Scott
Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*: 50-79

Week 5: Assia Djebar's *Children of the New World*

Week 6: Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*

Week 7: Lord Byron's *Don Juan*

Week 8: Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*

Week 9: Midterm Exam

Week 10: Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper"; Doris Lessing's "To
Room Nineteen"

Week 11: Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*

Week 12: Terry Tempest Williams's *Refuge*.

Week 13: Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*.

Week 14: George Orwell's *Animal Farm*.

Week 15: Presentation of papers

Week 16: Final exam

References:

Bhabha, Homi. "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse". In.
Philip Rice and Patricia Waugh..Eds. *Modern Literary Theory*.

Buell, Lawrence. *Writing for an Endangered World: Literature, Culture, and
Environment in the U.S. and Beyond*. England: Harvard College, 2001

Cokinos, Christopher. "What is Ecocriticism?," 1994

<http://www.asle.org/site/resources/ecocritical-library/intro/defining/cokinos/>

Conor, Steven. *Postmodernist Culture*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1996.

.Davis, Robert Con and Ronald Schleifer. *Criticism and Culture*. London: Longman,
1991.

Devereux, Joanna. *Patriarchy and Its Discontents: Sexual Politics in Selected Novels
of Thomas Hardy*. London: Routledge, 2002.

Eagleton, Terry. *Marxism and Literary Criticism*. Berkley: University of California Press, 1976.

Freud, Sigmund. "'The Interpretation of Dreams"; "The Psychopathology of Everyday Life".

Gilbert, Sandra. *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*. 1976.

Glotfelty, C and H. Fromm.. Eds.. *The Ecocriticism Reader: Land Marks in Literary Ecology*. Georgia: Georgia Press, 1996

Lacan, Jacques. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacques_Lacan

Showalter, Elaine. "Towards a Feminist Poetics"; "The Marxist-Feminist Collective".

In Philip Rice and Patricia Waugh, eds. *Modern Literary Theory*. 92-102; 102-107.

Trilling, Lionel. *The Liberal Imagination: Essays on Literature and Society*. 1950

Williams, Raymond. *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977.