

# EN4577: CRITICAL APPROACHES TO LITERATURE

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## Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

## Part I Course Overview

### Course Title

Critical Approaches to Literature

### Subject Code

EN - English

### Course Number

4577

### Academic Unit

English (EN)

### College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

### Course Duration

One Semester

### Credit Units

3

### Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

### Medium of Instruction

English

### Medium of Assessment

English

### Prerequisites

Nil

### Precursors

Nil

### Equivalent Courses

Nil

### Exclusive Courses

Nil

## Part II Course Details

### Abstract

The course aims to introduce students to major theoretical concepts and critical practices in literary studies. Students will focus on specific writers, genres or themes in the context of literary history and criticism. The critical perspectives that this course explores may include topics such as gender studies, postcolonialism, new criticism, psychoanalysis, postmodernism and reader-response theory. This course will enhance students' ability to analyse and interpret literary production from different cultural contexts through discussions of form, style, innovations on traditional creative paradigms and themes. Students will generate critical responses to selected texts throughout the course.

### Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs	Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1 Identify and use relevant terms and concepts related to literary criticism		x	x	
2 Analyze literary texts in relation to their literary and historical context.		x	x	
3 Deploy close reading skills and theoretical knowledge to achieve a nuanced understanding of literary texts.		x	x	x
4 Generate critical, analytical and theoretically informed responses to literature.		x	x	x

#### A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

#### A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

#### A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

### Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1 Lectures	Students will participate in lectures that will provide background on literary movements and theories, and guide students in approaching representative texts.	1, 2, 3	
2 Class Discussion and group activities	Students will take part in group and class discussions to facilitate an exchange of informed personal responses, ideas and perspectives on the texts.	1, 2, 3, 4	

3	Close readings	Students will engage in close readings of selected texts in order to practice their ability to link text and theory	1, 3	
4	Written responses	Students will generate a range of short written responses to practice their ability to make and support critical and theoretical claims	2, 3, 4	

**Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)**

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Class participation is crucial in this course, in order to encourage debate and discussion amongst students	1, 2, 3, 4	10	-	Yes
2	Quizzes/tests will assess the students' knowledge of the main critical theories and approaches introduced on the course	1, 2, 3, 4	40	-	No
3	A written assignment will allow students to apply the skills and knowledge acquired on the course by developing and supporting a claim about literary texts.	2, 3, 4	25	-	No
4	Assessed group discussions will evaluate students' abilities to reflect on and articulate views about the course's main critical approaches.	1, 2, 3, 4	25	-	No

**Continuous Assessment (%)**

100

**Examination (%)**

0

**Assessment Rubrics (AR)**

**Assessment Task**

A written assignment

**Criterion**

Argumentation

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Thesis is clear and appropriate for the writing task. There is a sense of originality in the way the writer has answered the question. Ideas are well supported and conclusions reveal a progression of ideas

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

The responses contain sharp ideas that are clearly expressed, original, and thoughtfully supported.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Elements of B and D

**Marginal (D)**

The topic is clear but there is little originality in the way that the writer has answered the question. Ideas are not always supported. There is little sense of progression as the paper develops.

**Failure (F)**

The essay appears to be off topic or only loosely related to the task. The writer may have misunderstood the question.

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**Assessment Task**

A written assignment

**Criterion**

Language

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Exceptionally well composed. Words are used with precision and accuracy. A wide variety of sentence structures are used.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Strong control of language and a wide lexical range. Grammatical structures are varied and well constructed. Small errors may persist but the meaning is sharp and clear.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Effective and functional control. Basic ideas are communicated effectively. Errors cause minimal distraction.

**Marginal (D)**

There is a high density of errors, causing strain for the reader. The meaning is sometimes lost or unclear

**Failure (F)**

Almost every sentence has some kind of error, which causes serious problems for the reader. The meaning is often lost or distorted.

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**Assessment Task**

A written assignment

**Criterion**

Engagement

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Sophisticated critical reading and interpretative skills apparent.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

The discussion of the primary texts is appropriate and sufficiently detailed. There is a sense of the writer critically engaging with the texts.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Elements of B and D

**Marginal (D)**

Some discussion of the primary texts, but mostly in general and broad terms. The selection of primary texts may not be appropriate for the task. Citation methods are not clear or inconsistently applied.

**Failure (F)**

Very little if any engagement with the primary texts

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**Assessment Task**

A written assignment

**Criterion**

Presentation

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

The written assignments are extremely well presented in terms of font, layout, spacing, headings, and citation

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

The written assignments are well presented in terms of font, layout, spacing, headings, and citation

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

The written assignments are adequately presented in terms of font, layout, spacing, headings, and citation

**Marginal (D)**

The written assignments are poorly presented in terms of font, layout, spacing, headings, and citation

**Failure (F)**

The written assignments are very poorly presented in terms of font, layout, spacing, headings, and citation

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**Assessment Task**

Quizzes

**Criterion**

Engagement and Support

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Demonstrates a very detailed and accurate understanding of the course content.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Demonstrates a good understanding of relevant course content.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Demonstrates fairly good understanding of course content.

**Marginal (D)**

Demonstrates a superficial understanding of course content.

**Failure (F)**

Demonstrates a minimal understanding course content.

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**Assessment Task**

Discussion

**Criterion**

Knowledge of subject

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Demonstration of subject knowledge in an exemplary way with evidence of in-depth reading/research and enquiry beyond the formal requirements of the course.

Application of knowledge to the spoken task is excellent.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Demonstration of good subject knowledge showing evidence of completing all readings/research as part of the formal requirements of the course.

Application of knowledge to the spoken task is good.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Demonstration of adequate subject knowledge but little reading/research evident beyond the minimum expectation of the subject.

Application is adequate only and could benefit from more reading/research.

**Marginal (D)**

Little evidence of subject knowledge and poorly applied to the spoken task.

**Failure (F)**

No evidence of subject knowledge, or fails to undertake the task.

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**Assessment Task**

Discussion

**Criterion**

Critical thinking and analysis

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Excellent critical analysis/interpretation/reflection/evaluation demonstrated for the required task.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Good critical analysis/ interpretation/ reflection/ evaluation demonstrated for the required task.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Adequate critical analysis/ interpretation/ reflection/ evaluation demonstrated for the required task.

**Marginal (D)**

Weak critical analysis /interpretation/ reflection/evaluation demonstrated for the required task.

**Failure (F)**

Fails to show any critical thinking/analysis in the completion of the task or fails to undertake the task

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**Assessment Task**

Discussion

**Criterion**

Task fulfilment

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Responds to the spoken task requirement in an exemplary way.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Responds to the spoken task requirements in a good way.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Responds to the spoken task requirements in an adequate way

**Marginal (D)**

Only addresses the requirements of the spoken task in a superficial way

**Failure (F)**

Fails to respond to the spoken task or does not complete the task.

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**Assessment Task**

Discussion

**Criterion**

Language use

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Demonstrates excellent grammatical /lexical range and accuracy

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Demonstrates good grammatical /lexical range and accuracy. May have occasional errors but does not interfere with comprehensibility of meaning.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Demonstrates an adequate grammatical/lexical range with some evidence of systematic errors that occasionally interfere with comprehensibility.

**Marginal (D)**

Unable to use linguistic resources to complete the task and relies on extremely limited grammar and lexis.

**Failure (F)**

Fails to use language to complete the task or does not complete the task.

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**Assessment Task**

Participation

**Criterion**

Participation in in-class activities

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Makes significant contribution to in-class discussion and completes tasks satisfactorily.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Makes occasional contribution to in-class discussion and completes the tasks satisfactorily.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Seldom makes adequate contribution to in-class group discussion and in class tasks.

**Marginal (D)**

Little evidence of participation in class; completes very few in-class tasks.

**Failure (F)**

Fails to sufficiently participate in in-class activities (including discussion and other tasks)

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**Part III Other Information**

**Keyword Syllabus**

Literature, poetry, fiction, drama, literary and cultural studies, critical theory

**Reading List**

**Compulsory Readings**

Title	
1	Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory: Barry, Peter.

**Additional Readings**

Title	
1	Leitch, Vincent (Ed.). The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism. London and New York: Norton, 2001.