



**Faculty of Arts and Social  
Sciences**

**School of the Arts and Media**

**ARTS3047**

**Contemporary Critical and Cultural Theory**

**Session 2, 2015**

## UNSW Course Outline

### Staff Contact Details

Position	Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
Course Authority	Associate Professor Elizabeth McMahon	<a href="mailto:e.mcmahon@unsw.edu.au">e.mcmahon@unsw.edu.au</a>	Monday 2-3	Webster 223	9385 1164
Convenor	Dr Kate Livett	<a href="mailto:k.livett@unsw.edu.au">k.livett@unsw.edu.au</a>	tba	Webster	

### School of the Arts and Media Contact Information

Room 312, level 3 Robert Webster Building

Phone: 9385 4856

Email: [sam@unsw.edu.au](mailto:sam@unsw.edu.au)

Website: <https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au>

### Attendance Requirements

- A student is expected to attend all class contact hours for a F2F or blended course and complete all activities for a blended or fully online course.
- A student who attends less than 80% of the classes/activities and has not submitted appropriate supporting documentation to the Course Authority to explain their absence may be awarded a final grade of UF (Unsatisfactory Fail).
- A student who arrives more than 15 minutes late may be penalised for non-attendance. If such a penalty is imposed, the student must be informed verbally at the end of class and advised in writing within 24 hours.
- If a student experiences illness, misadventure or other occurrence that makes absence from a class/activity unavoidable, or expects to be absent from a forthcoming class/activity, they should seek permission from the Course Authority, and where applicable, should be accompanied by an original or certified copy of a medical certificate or other form of appropriate evidence.
- A Course Authority may excuse a student from classes or activities for up to one month. However, they may assign additional and/or alternative tasks to ensure compliance. A Course Authority considering the granting of absence must be satisfied a student will still be able to meet the course's learning outcomes and/or volume of learning. A student seeking approval to be absent for more than one month must apply in writing to the Dean and provide all original or certified supporting documentation.
- A student who has submitted the appropriate documentation but attends less than 66% of the classes/activities will be asked by the Course Authority to apply to discontinue the course without failure rather than be awarded a final grade of UF. The final decision as to whether a student can be withdrawn without fail is made by Student Administration and Records.
- For more information about the SAM attendance protocols, see the SAM policies and guidelines webpage: <https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/>

### Essential Information For SAM Students

For essential student information relating to: attendance requirements; requests for extension; review of marks; occupational health and safety; examination procedures; special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure; student equity and disability; and other essential matters, see the SAM Policies and Guidelines webpage: <https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/>

## **Course details**

**Credit Points:** 6

### **Summary of the Course:**

This course introduces you to some of the central texts and concepts in the key intellectual movements and theories from the early twentieth century to the present as these bear on literary analysis. You will examine a range of related issues including:

1. how the very assumptions of language, communication and meaning have been questioned from early twentieth century to the present;
2. the re-conception of identity and its impact on literary construction;
3. the ways political structures construct the relationship between human subjects and objects such as commodities.

### **Aims of the Course:**

The course aims to

1. promote an understanding of a range of theoretical texts as frameworks for literary studies in their capacity to open up the processes and practices of critical reading; in their capacity to open up the processes and practices of critical writing in their relation to contemporary debates in the humanities and their implication for literary studies.
2. raise questions concerning: vectors, intersections and disputes informing contemporary practices of textual analysis; the location of literary analysis in the humanities; the intersections between intellectual and cultural practices
3. develop students' proficiency in: reading theoretical texts; the critical analysis of literary texts; the deployment of theoretical texts in literary analysis; situating themselves as critics within contemporary debates in the humanities and literary studies

### **Student learning outcomes:**

At the conclusion of this course the student will be able to:

1. deploy theoretical texts in literary analysis
2. compare various theoretical positions and approaches
3. conduct research in the area of contemporary critical theory
4. write a clear and fluent essay engaged with theoretical issues
5. work independently and in collaboration

### **Graduate Attributes:**

At the conclusion of this course the student will be able to:

1. relate literary texts to the contexts in which they were produced;
2. reflect upon his/her own practice as a literary critic within the discipline of English;
3. understand how texts are produced.

### **Rationale for the inclusion of content and teaching approach**

The modules are organised around three of the major categories taken up by critical theory in the humanities from the twentieth century: language, identity, social and cultural structures thereby providing a solid base for critical reading in and across these fields. The course enables students to analyse distinctions and connections between these theories and approaches.

This course is informed by an approach to teaching and learning that fosters interactivity, student agency and the pleasure of knowledge. It promotes new ways for students to develop productive possibilities from the disciplinary bases of their study and to recognise the potential in interdisciplinary engagement in the humanities. As a third year course, ENGL3651 promotes independent learning as reflected in student-focussed seminars, the emphasis on research, and the course symposium.

### **Teaching strategies**

This course is informed by an approach to teaching and learning that fosters interactivity, student agency and the pleasure of knowledge. It promotes new ways for students to develop productive possibilities from the disciplinary bases of their study and to recognise the potential in interdisciplinary engagement in the humanities. As a third year course, it promotes independent learning as reflected in student-focussed seminars, the emphasis on research, and the course symposium. There will be a one-hour lecture each week. A lecture is more than a presentation of information; it is an active and interactive forum where ideas and reading practices are rehearsed, tested and challenged. It is the site where students encounter the conventions of presenting academic research and staging academic debate. Lecture attendance is supported by two revision tools: ilecture and on-line material posted in the week after the lecture. Neither of these supports is a replacement for attendance. The ilecture is a record of an event not a summary of information. In keeping with the objectives of third-year study, the seminar mode provides a more independent and collaborative learning environment. While fully supported and directed, the seminar allows students to assume increased responsibility for the direction of each class and for the formulation of research tasks. They are also able to critically reflect on their own processes of learning, which is of particular importance in a course introducing new critical reading practices. The seminar requires each student to undertake: preparation, including some collaboration with other students; discussion and presentations; collaborative work in small groups. In Week 13 we will hold a themed Symposium in place of seminars. Pre-arranged groups will each give a 12 minute presentation on a topic that has been approved by the convenor. This will enable students to engage with the full range of topics and interests raised in the course and to situate their own position as an intervention in an academic discussion. This course is supported by Moodle components, providing course information and updates, copies of texts and additional links to related scholarly resources, online discussion groups for group work.

## Assessment

Seminar preparation 10%

Seminar preparation requires students to write 300 words in response to questions on the set texts each week. This work is collected on three unannounced occasions.

Description of Feedback Process:

Seminar preparation is collected on three occasions throughout the semester and marked with a grade but no comments.

Assessment task	Length	Weight	Learning outcomes assessed	Graduate attributes assessed	Due Date
Symposium (25%)	1000 words plus 12 minute group presentation	25%		1,2,3	Week 13 seminars
Seminar preparation (10%)	300 words per week	10%		1,2,3	
major essay (40%)	2500 words	40%		1,2,3	12 October
Research task (25%)	1000 words	25%		1,3	20 August

## Submission of Assessment Tasks

Students are expected to put their **names** and **student numbers** on **every page** of their assignments. If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on [externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au](mailto:externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au). Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally in SAM there will no longer be any hard-copy submission; assessments must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible it will be stated on your course's moodle site with alternative submission details.

All tasks to be submitted online only unless prior arrangement is made re the seminar notes.

## Late Submission

PLEASE NOTE THAT THESE RULES APPLY FOR ALL COURSES IN SAM.

If your assignment is submitted after the due date, a penalty of 3% per day (including Saturday, Sunday and public holidays) will be imposed for up to 2 weeks. For example, if you are given a mark of 72 out of 100 for an essay, and your essay were handed in two days late, it would attract a penalty of 6% and the mark would be reduced to 66%. If the same essay were handed in seven days late (i.e. a penalty of 21%) it would receive a mark of 51%. If your assignment is not submitted within 2 weeks of its due date, it will receive a mark of 0. For more information on submission of late work, consult the SAM assessment protocols at <https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/>

## Extension Procedure

- A student seeking an extension should submit a SAM extension application form (found in Forms on SAM website) to the Course Authority before the due date.
- The Course Authority should respond to the request within two working days of the request.
- The Course Authority can only approve an extension of up to five days. A student requesting an extension of more than five days should complete an application for Special Consideration.
- If a student is granted an extension, failure to comply will result in a penalty. The penalty will be invoked one minute past the approved extension time.
- This procedure does not apply to assessment tasks that take place during regular class hours or any task specifically identified by the Course Authority as not subject to extension requests.
- A student who missed an assessed activity held within class contact hours should apply for Special Consideration via myUNSW.
- For more information, see the SAM extension protocols on the SAM policies and guidelines webpage: <https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/>

## Special Consideration

In the case of more serious or ongoing illness or misadventure, you will need to apply for Special Consideration. For information on Special Consideration please go to this URL: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration>

Students who are prevented from attending a substantial amount of the course may be advised to apply to withdraw without penalty. This will only be approved in the most extreme and properly documented cases.

## Academic honesty and plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

- **Copying:** using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.
- **Inappropriate paraphrasing:** changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit. It also applies to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without referencing and a student's own analysis to bring the material together.
- **Collusion:** working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.
- **Inappropriate citation:** Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.
- **Duplication ("self-plagiarism"):** submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Details of what plagiarism is can be found on the Learning Centre's Website Plagiarism & Academic Integrity website (<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/academic-integrity-plagiarism>), in the myUNSW student A-Z: Guide <https://student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism> and in Appendix A of the Student Misconduct Procedure (pdf- <https://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/studentmisconductprocedures.pdf>).

The Learning Centre also provides substantial education written materials, workshops, and tutorials to aid students, for example:

- Correct referencing practices;
- Paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing and time management
- Appropriate use of and attribution for a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre. Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

## Course schedule

Week	Topic	Lecture Content	Seminar Content
<b>Week 1: 27-31 July</b>	Week 1	Introduction: Why Theory?	No seminar.
<b>Week 2: 3-7 August</b>	Week 2	Ferdinand de Saussure, Structuralism	Introduction to Norton Anthology.
<b>Week 3: 10-14 August</b>	Week 3	Jacques Derrida, Post-structuralism and Deconstruction.	Ferdinand de Saussure, bionote plus from 'The Course in General Linguistics' (850 - 866).
<b>Week 4: 17-21 August</b>	Week 4	Barthes, Foucault, Cixous, Text and Authorship.	Jacques Derrida, bionote plus from 'Plato's Pharmacy' (1697 -1734).
<b>Week 5: 24-28 August</b>	Week 5	Sigmund Freud, The Constructed Self.	Roland Barthes, bionote plus 'Death of the Author' (1322 - 1326)  Michael Foucault, bionote plus 'What is an Author?' (1475 - 1490)  Helene Cixous, bionote plus 'The Laugh of the Medusa' (1942 - 1959)
<b>Week 6: 31 August - 4 September</b>	Week 6	Jacques Lacan, The Linguistic Self.	Sigmund Freud, bionote plus from 'The Interpretation of Dreams' and 'The Uncanny' (814 - 841).
<b>Week 7: 7-11 September</b>	Week 7	Judith Butler and Judith Halberstam, The Performative Self.	Jacques Lacan, 'bionote plus The Mirror Stage' and 'The Agency of the Letter...' Signification of the Phallus' (1169 - 1181).
<b>Week 8: 14-18 September</b>	Week 8	Julia Kristeva, Dissolution of the Self.	Judith Butler, bionote plus from <i>Gender Trouble</i> (2540 - 2552)  Judith Halberstam bionote plus 'The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly' (2639-2653)
<b>Week 9: 21-25 September</b>	Week 9	Louis Althusser, Interpellation of the Subject.	Julia Kristeva, from 'Powers of Horror' (access online library copy).
<b>Week 10: 6-9 October</b>	Week 10	Foucault, Subjects and objects	Louis Althusser, 'Ideology and the State Ideological Apparatuses' (1335 - 1361)
<b>Week 11: 12-16 October</b>	Week 11	Public holiday no classes	No class.
<b>Week 12: 19-23 October</b>	Week 12	Walter Benjamin, Subjects and objects	Michel Foucault, from <i>Discipline and Punish</i> (p1636 - 47), from <i>History of</i>



**Course evaluation and development**

This course has been taught several times before and has received very high ratings from students. It is perceived as demanding in that it teaches a new reading practice with some challenging material but, overwhelmingly, students respond that they find this challenge exciting and rewarding. Many write that it is a course that changed and enriched their lives by providing the means to access major thinkers of the twentieth century who formed, identified and responded to the radical changes at work in culture and, specifically, art and literature.