Description
This course is an introduction to literary criticism. Literary criticism should be based on more than personal opinion, but what should that “more” be? How are we to decide with any conviction what is worth reading and what is not? If you think that the novels of John Grisham or Stephenie Meyer are better than those of James Joyce, what standards would you use to make such an assertion? If you believe that a graphic novel is more important than the modernist transformations of Yeats or Eliot, how would you formulate such an argument to give it any credibility?

We will read and write essays concerning some of the continuing questions about art in general and literature in particular:
What is “art?” What works are “significant” or “important?” Who decides . . . and how?
Is there really a difference between “classic” and “popular” literature? If so, what is it?
Must art/literature serve a social function or is it sufficient to simply reflect a personal vision?

What should we, as readers and critics, consider as we judge a piece of literature?
- the historical and cultural events that may have influenced the writer?
- the personal beliefs and attitudes expressed by the writer in biographical studies?
- the writer’s expressed “intentions” concerning the work?
- simply the work itself, with no biographical or historical considerations?

Program Learning Outcomes
- read complex texts, closely and accurately
- comprehend and apply critical theories with relevant interpretation to texts
- demonstrate knowledge of British literary history
- effectively conduct literary research
- write clear, grammatically correct prose

Texts
MLA Manual of Style:
We will be reviewing MLA format in class (so bring your books) and I will answer questions that you bring to me during office hours. But as an upper level student, you are completely responsible for applying accurate MLA documentation to your critical essay.
**Course Requirements**
There will be assigned readings almost every day and classroom work will be a combination of lecture, questions and class discussion.

**Written Responses**
You will do written responses to at least two different readings from our readings in *The Norton Anthology*. These responses will follow a specific format that we will discuss. You may do more than two responses and I will average the two highest grades that you receive. 1-4 page responses will be insufficient and 9 pages or more will probably be too long.

**Annotated Bibliography & Critical Essay**
You will pick a book from a list that I will give you, read it, and write an 8-10 page critical analysis on a topic about that book that you will discuss with me. 8 pages does not count a cover sheet or works cited sheet or one line of text on page 8, but 8 full pages of textual analysis using accurate MLA format.
You will submit an annotated bibliography of credible research material that you have explored for your paper and have it accepted by me before you begin your final draft. In the bibliography you must connect to your topic and accurately cite a minimum of ten sources, at least three of which must be quotes and/or references to our readings in *The Norton Anthology*, and at least three of which must be hard copy articles and/or books that are available in the SFA library.

**Critical Essays should follow this basic procedure:**
I. Introduction to issue, assertion of significance, your position
II. Survey of representative criticism on the issue
   A. identify critics’ theoretical positions/agendas
   B. critique the critics
III. Analyze and illustrate your analysis with specific textual references
IV. Restatement and summary of key issues and arguments

**Participation—Attendance**
Mere attendance is not participation. I will take attendance each day, but there is no attendance grade. Participation involves careful pre-class preparation and willingness to engage the ideas that you’ve developed with your professor and classmates. The best possible format for such a class is one that mixes lectures and class discussion. In order for this format to be successful we must all read each assignment, take active notes about the various readings and our responses to them, and be willing to both assert our opinions and conscientiously listen to the opinions of others. Do not be afraid to ask questions and to offer opinions about the reading assignments. A substantial part of your final grade is based upon class participation, so I encourage you to attend regularly, be on time, and respond thoughtfully. Participation grades will be lowered by many absences, by late arrival to class, by phones or other electronics going off in class, by text messaging, sleeping, or any other disruption or discourtesy to the class. Quizzes will count toward your participation grade. I will not schedule quizzes but I may require one at any time. Missed quizzes may not be rescheduled.
**Final Exam**
Based on our class readings and discussions, as well as your own research for the critical essay, you will explain and defend your criteria for evaluating a work of literature as an in-class essay during finals week.

**Grades**
Participation .......................................................... 10%
Final Exam .......................................................... 10%
Annotated Bibliography ........................................... 20%
Critical Essay ...................................................... 30%
Written Responses ................................................ 30%

**WH Grades**
Only assigned if course work cannot be completed due to Unavoidable Circumstances that must be documented for and approved by Dr. Given (with possible review and advice from the Department Chair).

**Disabilities**
To obtain related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, Room 325, 468-3004/468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

**Definition of academic dishonesty**
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism include (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from the Internet or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of another into one’s paper without giving the author due credit.

Presenting someone else’s work as your own is a serious offense and will not be tolerated in the academic community of which you are a member. By this time in your academic career, you should be well acquainted with what constitutes plagiarism. If not, you should review the university policy on plagiarism at: http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp

I reserve the right to fail any student who plagiarizes.
If you have ANY doubts about whether the idea that you are considering or the language that you are using is “yours” or someone else’s, SEE ME before you turn in your work and we will discuss how best to present it. Unfortunately, there have been several incidents at all undergraduate and graduate levels in which students thought that they could take shortcuts in their work without being caught and/or penalized. They were wrong. Remember—any of the Internet shortcuts available to students are also available to my colleagues and me. Our entire department is very serious about this issue and plagiarism in my class will result in a failing grade.

I HAVE READ AND DISCUSSED THE ABOVE GUIDELINES. I UNDERSTAND AND WILL WORK WITHIN THESE GUIDELINES AS LONG AS I AM ENROLLED IN THIS SECTION OF ENGLISH 381.

(Sign and Print your name here)
English 381
Tentative Class Schedule-Spring 2016
Dr. Michael Given

WEEK 1: January 19-21
T- Introduction-Syllabus
R- Response Format

WEEK 2: January 26-28
T- Personal Books & Essay Topics
R- Annotated Bibliographies

WEEK 3: February 2-4
T- Plato Republic-Book X
R- Aristotle Poetics

WEEK 4: February 9-11
T- Johnson Rambler 4
R- de Stael Essay on Fictions

WEEK 5: February 16-18
T- Wordsworth Preface to Lyrical Ballads
R- Arnold The Function of Criticism at the Present Time

WEEK 6: February 23-25
T- Research Day
R- Essay Topics Discussion (my office)
WEEK 7: March 1-3
T- Pater *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*
R- James *The Art of Fiction*

WEEK 8: March 8-10
T- Du Bois *Criteria of Negro Art*
R- Woolf *A Room of One’s Own*
   ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIES DUE

WEEK 9: March 15-17
T-SPRING
R- BREAK

WEEK 10: March 22-24
T- Essay Topics Discussion (my office)
R- EASTER BREAK

WEEK 11: March 29-31
T- Eliot *Tradition and the Individual Talent*
R- White *The Historical Text As Literary Artifact*

WEEK 12: April 5-7
T- James *Turn of the Screw*
R- James *Turn of the Screw*
WEEK 13: April 12-14

T- Norton Essays on James *Turn of the Screw*
R- Norton Essays on James *Turn of the Screw*

WEEK 14: April 19-21

T- MLA Review (my office)
R- Research Day

WEEK 15: April 26-28

T- Optional Conferences
R- Optional Conferences

WEEK 16: May 3-5

T- CRITICAL ESSAYS DUE
R- Final Exam Review (classroom)

FINALS WEEK: May 10-12