EN 499 English Capstone Course
Fall 2006
Professor: Kendall Dunkelberg
Office: Painter 104
Class: TTh 2:00-3:15
Phone: 329-7169
email: kdunk@muw.edu
Hours: TTh 9:30-11:00
WWW: http://www2.muw.edu/~kdunk
MW 1:00-2:00
M 3:15-4:15

Required Texts
David Lodge with Nigel Wood, Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader, 2nd Edition
Virginia Woolf, Orlando

Course Description:
The Capstone Course provides students with a broad overview of literary studies, a chance to reflect on their work as an English major, and a chance to prepare for further studies in English, a professional degree, or a career. In order to explore diverse issues and interpretive strategies in literary studies, we will read and discuss essays on literary criticism and theory, alongside a novel, fairy tales, detective stories, and Orientalist art. You will also review the literary periods studied in other English courses and review the mechanics of writing an essay in MLA style.

Goals:
• To review the work you have done in other English courses
• To demonstrate an understanding of literary criticism and theory
• To apply that understanding to literary texts, including Orlando
• To interpret non-print texts: e.g. detective magazine art and Orientalist paintings
• To examine the role of the author in written and oral texts
• To complete a substantial research project using literary scholarship

Requirements:
Students will complete a midterm and a final exam, and write a major research project (15-20 pp), which may involve a thorough revision of an essay that the student completed for another course, and which will include the use of scholarly sources or literary theory. Students will also write short precis on 3 articles from the textbook. All written work must be typed, double spaced, in 12 point Times or a similar font, with page numbers and 1 inch margins. Hard copy only. Students will also be responsible for two oral presentations: one on a literary period, the other on their research project.

Attendance:
Attendance is mandatory and will be recorded at the beginning of each class. If you arrive late, you must inform me after class that you were present, otherwise you will be counted absent. I will record late arrival (or early departure) as such, and it will be considered along with class participation in your final grade for the course. I reserve the right to count students absent if they miss a substantial portion of the class period. Students are required to attend a minimum of 75% of scheduled classes to receive a passing grade. Excessive absences (more than 4) will be considered due cause for lowering the final grade. Near perfect attendance and quality class participation may be considered cause for raising your final grade.

Method of Evaluation:
Precis will be graded on how clearly they summarize the original text. The research project will be graded on the strength of the argument and the breadth of research. Grammar and style will also be taken into consideration. Late assignments will be penalized, unless I have approved an extension prior to the due date of the assignment. The final due date for all late assignments is the last scheduled class day of the semester. Letter grades have the following numeric values:

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<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>98</td>
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<td>A</td>
<td>95</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>92</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>88</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>85</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>82</td>
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<td>C+</td>
<td>78</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>75</td>
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<td>C-</td>
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<td>D-</td>
<td>62</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>0-59</td>
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Final grades will be based on the same system and will be a composite of the following scores:

- Presentation of a Period: 5%
- Precis and Forum: 15%
- Midterm Exam: 20%
- Final Exam: 20%
- Research Project: 40%

**Students with disabilities:** A reasonable attempt will be made to accommodate students with documented disabilities. Students must first obtain an accommodations plan through Academic Support Services and make a request for accommodations prior to the due date of the assignment. When an accommodations plan is presented, it will be tailored to the demands of this course to create a plan that is fair to all. Information regarding a student’s disability will be kept confidential.

**A final reminder:** plagiarism will result in an F (0) on the assignment, and in severe cases is grounds for failure in the course. Plagiarism includes using paraphrased or quoted information from a source without proper documentation. Using quoted information without putting it in quotes (or indenting long quotes) is also considered plagiarism, regardless of whether the source is cited. If you are unsure whether you have used material and cited it appropriately, see me before the assignment is due. Once you have turned in your assignment it is too late to plead ignorance. As senior English majors, it is your responsibility to understand the rules regarding plagiarism. Please refer to the MUW Bulletin for MUW's policies regarding plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty.

**Presentation of a Literary Period**

Each student will be responsible for a fifteen-minute presentation on a literary period. You should name the major authors and briefly describe their work. You should also discuss the most important terms, movements, and genres associated with the period, and may include historical background of the period, the economic conditions or the social issues that affect our interpretation of its literature.

Your presentation should be well organized and you should use PowerPoint or other presentation software to list the major names, terms, and dates you discuss. Obviously, there is much more to be said about any period than can be covered in fifteen minutes, so you should concentrate on providing an overview that will help other students review this period when studying for the GRE or Praxis II or for teaching in a high school setting.

While the majority of your grade will be based on content, you should have compassion for your listeners and not rush through a list of names or terms. Write out unfamiliar names and provide some content to remember them by. Avoid reading long quoted passages from your notes. Instead it is much more effective to summarize and synthesize the information you have found.

After your presentation, you must turn in your notes or outline (everything you take with you when you make your presentation). While I will not comment on these as I would an essay, I am interested in seeing your methods and learning about your sources, and I will factor your notes into the grade you receive on the presentation as a whole. You must also give me a copy of your PowerPoint presentation to post online for other students’ reference.

There will be a sign-up sheet with a list of possible periods. You should choose one that already interests you or one that you have taken a course in, so you won't be starting from scratch. You should refer to literary histories and anthologies as you research your presentation: the Norton Anthologies and Oxford Companions to literature are good places to start. Since the main purpose of these presentations is for everyone to review, all students who are familiar with the period should come prepared to join in discussion of it after the presentation.
Precis Assignment (2-3 pp each)

**Purpose:**
To briefly summarize one of the theoretical essays we read, place it in its context, and indicate how one might apply the theory to a literary text. Such a summary could serve as a study aid or as an aid in your research. It is not meant to follow all the norms of a formal essay. However, you should cite the page numbers of specific information you use from the text, and you should provide a “Work Cited” listing for the essay you use. The main goal is to get as much information in as little space as possible and to organize it effectively so that you can review it at a glance. You may choose any of the essays we read from *Modern Criticism and Theory* as we read them (see the list accompanying each due date below). Choose essays you find most engaging or controversial.

**Format:**
I) In the first paragraph or two you should set the stage for the work you are going to summarize. Discuss the broader context in which it was written and perhaps show how it relates to other works we have read. You might consider when and why the author wrote the essay: was it a response to another critic, an author, or a literary or cultural movement?

II) In the next section you should outline the main points of the essay. Do not feel obligated to discuss the essay at length. The point is to sketch a diagram of the main argument as efficiently as possible. It may be helpful to use a table, chart, or outline to show the relationship between ideas. You needn’t write full paragraphs if there is a more efficient way of organizing the information. But be sure to include parenthetical citations so you can find the information in the essay when studying for an exam (and so you aren’t committing plagiarism).

III) In a paragraph or two you should discuss the importance of the argument, how it changed the way we look at literature or what role it played in a debate. You may have hinted at this in your introduction; however, in this section you should discuss the effect of the argument in greater detail. In this section you should compare the essay to one of the other essays we have read. You may choose one of the other essays assigned for this precis or an essay for a previous precis.

IV) In the last section, you should sketch out how you would apply this theory to a work of literature that you have read. You do not need to actually apply it, but outline how it might be applied and explain why you think it would be helpful in understanding the work. It is best to use a specific example of a literary text. If none comes to mind, you might use a specific genre of literature instead, but that is more difficult. Of course if you don't think the theory would be helpful, you could make that argument as well as long as you give specific reasons and examples.

**Due Dates:**
Précis #1 On De Saussure, Jakobsen, Bakhtin, or Todorov  September 7
Précis #2 On Bloom, Cixous, or Showalter  September 21
Précis #3 On Barthes, Foucault, Derrida, or Said  October 17

**Forum Option:** Instead of writing the third precis, you may accumulate points by posting substantive responses to the forum threads on the readings in literary theory and criticism. To do so, register in the forum and list your name in your profile. That way, I will be able to identify your posts. You can receive a maximum of 10 points per post and may earn up to 110 extra credit points toward the third précis. If you choose to write the third precis, you may still accumulate up to 30 extra credit points to be added to your third precis grade (for a maximum of 110 points total). That way, if you try the forum out and decide that it’s not for you, you will still get some credit for your posts. If you have 60 points or more in the forum by the deadline for the third precis, it may still be possible to accumulate enough points for a good grade by posting responses on *Orlando* and Greenblatt’s essay. Talk to me if you are unsure whether you should write the third precis or rely on your forum points.
Research Project (15-20 pp)

Purpose:
To present a well researched essay which makes use of the available literary criticism and theory related to the topic. The project should also demonstrate knowledge of bibliographic tools and stylistic conventions used in the field of English. You may choose any topic as long as it involves at least one primary literary source. You might choose to consider one or more texts in terms of their period, genre, historical context, philosophical underpinnings, psychological imagery, etc. Students in the Creative Writing concentration may write on aesthetic theory as an introduction to their senior portfolios. Secondary Education majors may focus on approaches to teaching a text. You may choose a text which you have previously explored in a response paper for another class and which you will now expand by applying literary theory where appropriate and responding to the extant literary criticism on your topic. Students in the Honors College may write on a topic related to their thesis; however, they may not duplicate their thesis. They might explore a related author in the same period or choose another work by the same author.

Procedure:
1) Abstract and Preliminary Bibliography: You will submit a formal abstract of your essay, which should consist of 250-500 words in which you summarize your proposal. You should have done enough preliminary research that you can present a clear focus for the work you intend to do, and you should indicate what your argument will be. As you continue your research and the actual writing of your essay, you may alter this argument somewhat; however, you should be able to commit to the main focus of your project by the time you write the abstract. Along with the abstract you should present a preliminary bibliography of at least ten sources. You don't need to have read them all yet, but you should know that they are available. If you plan to revise a paper you wrote for another course, you must include a graded copy of the original paper and discuss how you will address the instructor’s comments in your project. (10%, due Sept. 14)

2) Annotated Bibliography and Research Summary: You will submit an annotated bibliography of at least 8 sources, which you have examined and determined will be useful for your work. Follow MLA format for your Works Cited list, arranging your sources in alphabetical order and using hanging indents for each new entry. Immediately after each bibliographic entry, include two to four sentences summarizing the main argument of the source and describing how it will be useful to your essay. At the end, submit a one page summary of your research to date, including a list of the most fruitful sources of bibliographic information and a discussion of how your thinking on your topic has evolved as a result of your research. (10%, due Oct. 24)

3) Article Review: You will submit a critical review of one of the articles you plan to use in your essay. This should include an in-depth summary of the article (or chapter in a book), an objective look at the bias of the author, an analysis of the article's strengths and weaknesses, and a discussion of how you will use it in your essay. The review should be 3-4 pages in length. Don’t forget to use MLA in-text citations and to give a Work Cited reference for your source. You must turn in a copy of the article or chapter with your review. (10%, due Nov. 9)

4) Oral Presentation: You will present your research in the form of an oral presentation to the class. This presentation should run about fifteen minutes. You should present the basic argument for your essay in the oral presentation. Consider your presentation a very good rough draft, which you will expand and revise in response to comments and questions from the class, English faculty, and other students who will be invited to attend. (10%, due Nov. 7-21)

5) Final Draft: Your final draft should include proper documentation in MLA style, including a works cited page with an adequate number of references depending on your topic. You should refer to most important criticism on the texts you use, and you may also refer to other related criticism or theory. While the amount of criticism will vary from topic to topic, you should include at least 8 scholarly journal articles (or the equivalent from books) in your List of Works Cited. Internet sources may be used, but do not count toward the minimum number of sources unless they are reprinted journal articles or are from juried online journals. (60%, due Nov. 30)
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<tr>
<th>Week 1 — August 17</th>
<th>Thurs</th>
<th>Introduction and Survey</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2 — August 22-24</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Research Project and Methods: <em>MLA</em> Chapter 1.1-1.4.9</td>
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<td>Thurs</td>
<td>Ferdinand de Saussure “The Object of Study” 1-9</td>
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<td>Week 3 — August 29-31</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Roman Jakobsen “Linguistics and Poetics” 30-55</td>
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<td>Thurs</td>
<td>Mikhail Bakhtin “From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse” 104-136</td>
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<td>Week 4 — September 5-7</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Tsvetan Todorov “The Typology of Detective Fiction” 137-144</td>
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|                    | Thurs | Working Bibliography: *MLA* Chapter 1.5-1.7  
|                    |       | Works Cited: *MLA*, Chapter 5  
|                    |       | Internet Detective Fiction (see my homepage for links) |
|                    |       | Precis #1 |
| Week 5 — September 12-14 | Tues | Harold Bloom “Poetic Origins and Final Phases” 217-229 |
|                    | Thurs | Hélène Cixous “Sorties” 263-270 Abstract |
| Week 6 — September 19-21 | Tues | Elaine Showalter “Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness” 307-330 |
|                    | Thurs | Plagiarism and Format: *MLA* Chapters 2 & 4  
|                    |       | Internet Fairy Tales (see my homepage for links) |
|                    |       | Precis #2 |
| Week 7 — September 26-28 | Tues | Roland Barthes “The Death of the Author” 145-150 |
|                    | Thurs | Michel Foucault “What is an Author?” 173-187 |
| Week 8 — October 3-5 | Tues | Midterm Exam |
|                    | Thurs | Jacques Derrida “Structure Sign and Play in the Human Sciences” 88-103 |
| Week 9 — October 10-12 | Tues | Fall Break |
|                    | Thurs | Edward Said “Crisis [in orientalism]” 271-286  
|                    |       | Images of the Orient (See my homepage for links) |
| Week 10—October 17-19 | Tues | *Orlando* Chapter 1. |
|                    | Thurs | *Orlando* Chapter 2 |
|                    |       | Precis #3 |
**Week 11 October 24-26**

- Tues  *Orlando* Chapter 3

- Thurs  *Orlando* Chapter 4

**Week 12—October 31 - November 2**

- Tues  *Orlando* Chapter 5

- Thurs  *Orlando* Chapter 6

**Week 13—November 7-9**

- Tues  In-Text Citations: *MLA*, chapter 6
  - Presentation of Research Projects

- Thurs  Presentation of Research Projects

**Week 14—November 14-16**

- Tues  Presentation of Research Projects

- Thurs  Presentation of Research Projects

**Week 15—November 21-23**

- Tues  Presentation of Research Projects

- Thurs  Thanksgiving Holiday

**Week 16—November 28-30**


- Thurs  Course Review

**Final Exam: Wednesday, December 6, 3:00-6:00 p.m.**

**Important Dates:**
- Aug. 25 Last day to add a class for credit or change from graded to pass/fail
- Sept. 20 Last day to drop a class without WF or WP designation
- Last day to change from credit to audit
- Sept. 22 Last day to apply for a degree awarded in December 2006
- Oct. 18 Last day to drop a course (with WF WP designation)
- Nov. 10 Last day to withdraw from the university
- March 9 Last day to apply for a degree awarded in May 2007