How many times have people asked you why you study literature or what the purpose of getting a PhD in English is? And how many times have you, as English students, been told that your field of study lacks the scholarly rigor of the pure or social sciences? This course has four components: an advanced introduction to the basic resources necessary to conduct independent research on literary, historical, and cultural topics; a firm grounding in the history of Western critical philosophy since the enlightenment, especially (but not exclusively) as it applies to literary study; an introduction to writing in the various genres that you will encounter throughout your career as a grad student; and finally, a brief introduction to the profession, both past and present. Though these may all seem to be separate enterprises, you will find that these goals are closely related and that familiarity with all are essential for success in the PhD program and participation in broader scholarly debates. Among the topics that we will explore are the ways in which the profession has changed over the last several decades and how, in turn, practitioners have adapted new theoretical and technological resources suited to new scholarly goals and concerns. With that said, I think that in our search for novelty, we sometimes lose sight of some of the traditional approaches to literary scholarship that continue to temper our study of literary texts and their relationship with the larger social, political, and economic issues that impact their production and reception. This means that, in looking at research methods, we will pay some attention to the history of books, which remain the most common form in which we encounter literary texts, and which fundamentally influence the ways that these texts are disseminated, marketed, and read. It also means that, when we consider literary theory, we need to be mindful of the broader foundations of these ideas and recognize that literature and its study is to a large extent about understanding ourselves in relation to the world around us. For instance, we often think of literary interpretation as an isolated academic activity, but it is in fact a subspecies of something that we all do every day. Some of the topics that we will cover over the course of the semester, in addition to becoming familiar with basic research tools and modes of critical analysis, include literature and moral agency, debates over the canon, historicizing the discipline, and the philosophical utility of “theory” as its commonly defined.

**Required Texts:** (available at the campus bookstore):
- *Charles Taylor, Sources of the Self*
- A series of photocopied readings (on Blackboard)
**Course Requirements:** Your final grade will be based on a series of short assignments (20%), a short paper (20%), a final project (45%), and participation in class discussions (15%). Both papers must be typed according to the guidelines set out in the *MLA Handbook*.

**Short Paper:** (10-12pp). This paper is designed to develop your skills in analyzing critical arguments (something that you’ll be doing a lot of over the next few years). I want you to choose two or three articles on a given topic (this could be a literary work, theoretical issue, or some other NARROW topic) and then come up with an *argument* about their arguments and critical methodology. You want to illustrate your understanding about how the critic’s arguments work and be mindful of the *critical assumptions* they’re employing, their *purpose* in writing the piece, and, perhaps most importantly, the *question* they seek to address, their *thesis*, and *their provisional answer* to the question. For instance, in Althusser’s famous essay on ideological state apparatuses, you would note that his question is something like “how does the social system reproduce itself and indoctrinate individuals into a roughly common set of beliefs favorable to the interests of those in control of the state in an overtly non-coercive, almost invisible, manner?” You would note that he uses Marxist categories as well as the methods of structuralist critique to analyze the problem to argue that certain state apparatuses (primarily the educational system) play an important functional role in reproducing the status quo and rendering it normative for all individuals. You could talk about how, methodologically, he tries to blend Marxist theory with Lacanian psychoanalysis, and whether this merger makes any sense at all. You might then want to compare this to other (i.e. non-Marxist) treatments of the social order or ideology to assess the validity of his various claims. There are many articles that will help explain this process, but one thing I’ve found most helpful in not only thinking about critical arguments but also formulating your own, is the so-called “Phelan Matrix” that I’ll hand out in class. This paper is due the day we go to Austin, Monday, 24 October.

**Final Project:** As you’ll soon discover, being a graduate student and eventually a faculty member requires you to master a number of academic genres (for a humorous take on these “forms,” take a look at Terry Caesar’s *Conspiring With Forms*). These range from the tedious paperwork that we all have to fill out to get things done, to letters of recommendation, proposals of various kinds, annotated bibliographies, conference papers, journal or book articles, and, of course, your dissertation. We tend to focus on the latter few, but all are important in seeing a research project through to completion. Your final assignment then will consist in designing a research project and producing the necessary forms needed to get it started. The centerpiece for this will be a proposal (you could think of it as preparation for when you eventually write your prospectus for your dissertation). The proposal should consist of a detailed explanation of the topic, an extended statement of your argument and the methodology you wish to employ in constructing it, how your project will contribute to current research in the field, and a statement about how you wish to divide up the topic (i.e. a brief description of the chapters you will write). I know that you haven’t done enough research to write a fully turned-out dissertation proposal, but this will hopefully get you in the habit of thinking through the steps necessary in completing a large research project, even if the research contained in it isn’t as substantial as it will be one day. The proposal should be about 12-15 pages. In addition to this proposal, I want a few other things. Since this imaginary project is going to take years to complete, you’re going to want to present your work and get feedback somewhere along the way by road-testing some aspect of it at a conference. For this reason, write an abstract for a conference I want this to be a real conference (include the call for papers), and for your abstract to follow the format that they dictate (some are as few as 200 words, some a little longer). Bear in mind that this abstract should only represent a small portion of your projected research (a small portion of one chapter, for instance) since conference papers generally run about ten pages in length and at their best focus in detail on a single item, relating them to some general topic, rather than a cursory treatment of a broader issue. Next, because series academic research requires specialized resources, I want you to write a grant proposal to access collections that you feel will be essential in the completion of your project. For this, you’ll need to identify a collection or archive relevant to your proposed study, and write a proposal to spend some time in residence there. Here, you’ll want to spend some time outlining your topic and your argument, but most of all you will need to identify the specific materials available there and state their relevance to your work (I will give you a few examples, and I’m sure you can locate some on your own). This proposal will draw on the research skills we looked at earlier on in the semester, and it should be no more than three *single spaced* pages. Finally, an important component of any research proposal is the bibliography. For this reason, I want you to compile a biography of primary and secondary sources (in two sections) of material that you’ll need to consult (you need not, of course, read all of it). But I do want you to take three primary and three secondary sources and
annotate them: briefly explain their importance for your work, and offer a brief critical analysis (a brief version of what you did in the short paper). About 10 or 15 % of the project grade will be based on a presentation that you will give on it (sort of a prelude to the numerous sets of formal meetings that you will be required to have with your committee over the course of your graduate career). I want these to be interactive, with the rest of the class serving as respondents. We’ll do these on 14 November. There are no required readings for that day, but I want each of you to assign a brief introductory reading (an article or excerpt from a chapter) to orient us to the basic debates surrounding your topic. Please have these ready for distribution on 7 November, a week before the presentations. I know this all might seem a bit daunting now, but I’m always available when you have questions, and we’ll go over the specifics in much greater detail in the near future.

A Note on Plagiarism: The University of Texas at San Antonio defines “scholastic dishonesty” as including but not limited to, “cheating on a test or other class work, plagiarism (the appropriation of another’s work in one’s own written work offered for credit), and collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing course work offered for credit). Should a student be accused of scholastic dishonesty, the faculty member may initiate disciplinary proceedings” that could result in failure of the class or even expulsion from the university. The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers provides a detailed discussion of “Forms of Plagiarism” and “Other Issues,” including the impropriety of submitting the same paper to more than one instructor or in more than one class by the same instructor. If you have doubts as to what constitutes plagiarism, ask me. I am very good at catching cases of plagiarism, so don’t do it!

The University of Texas at San Antonio Academic Honor Code

Preamble
The University of Texas at San Antonio community of past, present and future students, faculty, staff, and administrators share a commitment to integrity and the ethical pursuit of knowledge. We honor the traditions of our university by conducting ourselves with a steadfast duty to honor, courage, and virtue in all matters both public and private. By choosing integrity and responsibility, we promote personal growth, success, and lifelong learning for the advancement of ourselves, our university, and our community.

Honor Pledge
In support of the ideals of integrity, the students of the University of Texas at San Antonio pledge:

“As a UTSA Roadrunner I live with honor and integrity.”

Shared responsibility
The University of Texas at San Antonio community shares the responsibility and commitment to integrity and the ethical pursuit of knowledge and adheres to the UTSA Honor Code.

For more information, see “The Roadrunner Creed” at http://www.utsa.edu/about/creed

The Tomás Rivera Center for Student Success: The Tomás Rivera Center offers a variety of programs to meet students’ individual learning assistance needs. The Tutoring Center provides tutoring for selected core curriculum courses. Academic Coaches are available for personal appointments. Information-packed Study Skills Workshops teach advanced techniques for studying, such as new ways to prepare for tests and how to remember information more effectively. All services are free to UTSA Students. They are located in UC 1.01.02.

Disability Services: Support services, including registration assistance and equipment, are available to students with documented disabilities through the Office of Disabled Student Services (DSS), MS 2.03.19. Students are encouraged to contact that office at 458-4157 prior to starting classes to make arrangements, though they can contact the office at any time.

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COURSE SCHEDULE

Tues, Aug. 30 - Introduction: What is literary scholarship today?

Tues, Sept. 6 – Basic Orientations to Theory, Scholarship, and Documentation
READ: Richard Dworkin, “Interpretive Concepts”
Charles Taylor, Sources, pp. 1-53.
Marjorie Garber, from Academic Instincts
MLA Handbook, Chapters Five and Six

Tues, Sept. 13 – How do we encounter literary texts?
READ: Williams, Bibliography and Textual Studies, Chapters Two, Three, and Four
Jerome McGann, from The Textual Condition
D.C. Greetham, from Textual Scholarship: An Introduction
Fredson Bowers, “Bibliography, Pure Bibliography, and Literary Studies”
***Short Quiz on MLA Documentation***

Tues, Sept. 20 – Research Databases
READ: Williams, Bibliography and Textual Studies, Chapters, Four, Five, and Six
James Harner, from Literary Research Guide, Chapters B, C, D, I, and J
***Meet in Lobby of JPL Library***

Tues, Sept. 27 – Rationalism and Empiricism
READ: Renee Descartes, From Meditations on First Philosophy
David Hume, from A Treatise of Human Nature
Charles Taylor, Sources, pp.143-159, 321-355

Tues, Oct 4 – Kant: Reason, Morality, and Aesthetics
READ: Immanuel Kant, from Critique of Pure Reason
from Critique of Judgement
Charles Taylor, Sources, pp. 355-85

Tues, Oct. 11 - Hegel
READ: G.W.F Hegel, from Phenomenology of Spirit
Charles Taylor, Sources, 419-55

Tues, Oct. 18 – Varieties of Ideology Critique
READ: Karl Marx, from Capital
Antonio Gramsci, from Prison Notebooks
Georg Lukacs, from History and Class Consciousness
Louis Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses”

Mon, Oct. 24 – ***Field trip to Austin: Henry Ransom Center and Benson Latin America Collection***
*****First Paper Due*****

Tues, Nov. 1 – Modernity and Its Challenges
Walter Benjamin, from Illuminations
Theodor Adorno, from Negative Dialectics
Jurgen Habermas, from Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action
Charles Taylor, Sources, 456-93

Tues, Nov. 7 – Postmodern Theory and its Discontents
READ: Michel Foucault, “What is an Author?”
from The Order of Things
Jacques Derrida, “Structure, Sign, and Play”
Charles Taylor, Sources, 53-107
Christopher Norris, from Uncritical Theory

Tues, Nov. 14 – PRESENTATIONS
READings to be determined
Tues, Nov. 21 - Academic Forms and Academic Labor
   READ: Lawrence Locke, from Proposals that Work
         Terry Caesar, from Conspiring with Forms
         Evan Watkins, from Work Time
         samples of thesis and grant proposals

Tues, Nov. 29 - How did we get here? A History of the Discipline
   READ: Gerald Graff, from Professing Literature
         Frank Donoghue, From The Last Professors
         Robert Scholes, from The Rise and Fall of English

Wed, Dec. 6 – Debating the Canon
   READ: Alan Bloom, from The Closing of the American Mind
         Barbara Herrnstein Smith, “Contingencies of Value”
         John Guillory, from Cultural Capital

Mon, Dec. 12 – Final Papers Due