Fall 2012
English 6013:001
Theoretical and Research Methods
Thursdays, 5:30 pm to 8:15 pm
1604 Campus; MB 1.204

Instructor: Dr. Catherine Kasper
Office: MB 2.484  phone: 7722
email: Catherine.Kasper@utsa.edu
Office Hours: Thursdays 4:30-5:30 by appointment

Content and Goals:
This course is an introduction to the tools and technology of professional literary research, to basic theoretical areas of focus, and practical concerns of the profession. Students will have the opportunity to discover and explore methods of research leading to a final research project. They will be introduced to archives and special collections available to them in the area. Students will have the opportunity to develop the skills of bibliographical and textual scholarship foundational to literary research and writing, and to participate in class discussions of theoretical approaches. Students will be encouraged to participate in hands-on research at the UTSA library and will be required to present their findings to the class.

Texts:
Sontag, Susan. Against Interpretation. Picador, 2001 [08-0312280864].
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).” University policy further dictates that “Should a student be accused of scholastic dishonesty, the faculty member may initiate disciplinary proceedings.” The section on plagiarism in The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7th ed. 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 at any time you are at all uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism, please make an appointment to meet with me. Should any student intentionally plagiarize or otherwise cheat in my class, I will lobby for their expulsion from the graduate program and from the university.

Please consult the UTSA Student Code of Conduct regarding the penalties and policies on plagiarism, scholastic dishonesty, and expected conduct as well as the Blackboard requirements and code of conduct. You need to remember to participate with professionalism at all times. Links to Roadrunner and Honor Code:
www.utsa.edu/about/creed
www.utsa.edu/about/creed/honorcode.html

It is the student’s responsibility to have access to the applicable computer equipment. Computer problems will not be accepted as a reason for late assignments or problems completing course work. In the first week of class, be CERTAIN you can access Blackboard and are able to attach documents. If you have technological problems, please contact the computer and technology departments of the university. All assignments in attachments need to be posted in Mac-readable Word docs, double-spaced, in 12 point Times Roman or Garamond fonts only. Each assignment MUST have YOUR name at the top, and the course number and date, and pagination. See instructions later in syllabus for document attachments.

UTSA POLICY LINKS (You are responsible for reading these and adhering to their guidelines and rules.):
Academic dishonesty: http://www.utsa.edu/infoguide/appendices/b.html under section 203
Disability: http://www.utsa.edu/disability/students.htm

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. If you need accommodation related to a disability, please make an appointment with me to discuss your needs as soon as possible.
**Class Discussion:** As this is a graduate course for Graduate English majors, you are required to come to class with the entire book/assignment read on the first day the book is discussed. You should be ready with notes, questions for the class, highlighted quotations marked as necessary, and general reactions. You should, whenever possible, use literary terminology. You should be ready at all times to be called on, but should not rely on this. It is your responsibility to participate several times during each class discussion if you want to receive a passing grade in this course. The quality of your comments will be taken into consideration. As a graduate level course, we will discuss “adult content” contained in the literature being discussed. If you are uncomfortable with this, or if you are uncomfortable talking in class, this may not be the appropriate course for you, as this is a seminar style course built on discussion, arguments, and interactive thinking through discussion, as well as a research course that requires independent research and writing.

*Please review the grading criteria. Note that ALL assignments must be submitted to the corresponding Blackboard course area (even when passing out handouts in class), and the posted Blackboard time and date will be used to determine late penalties. Assignments are downgraded one full grade for each day late. Grades cannot be reported by telephone, fax, email or by office staff. Please note: Incompletes are not offered for this course. Please contact the Professor immediately if there is an emergency.*

In addition to use of the UTSA library and its electronic databases, your UTSA graduate student ID entitles you to varying other library facilities and loan privileges. You will learn about these at the library orientation. However, you should begin your research as soon as the course begins and look into library privileges at the University of Texas at Austin’s internationally recognized research collection, (includes the Harry Ransom Center and the Benson Collection), Trinity University’s library, The Institute of Texan Cultures, and interlibrary loan.

It is never too early to research fellowship and grant opportunities to support your travel to key research libraries through the course of your degree, and conferences to attend that focus on your area of research. If you have questions, feel free to ask me, and if I can’t answer them, I will try to direct you to someone/someplace that can.
UTSA NEW GRADING SYSTEM
*Below is the chart of UTSA’s plus/minus grading system and corresponding course points:

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<tr>
<th>UTSA GPA</th>
<th>GRADE</th>
<th>6043 Points Equivalents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>98-100</td>
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<td>3.67</td>
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<td>3.33</td>
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<td>3.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>81-84</td>
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<td>2.33</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78-80</td>
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<td>1.67</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>71-74</td>
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<tr>
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*GRADING:*
(see previous page for plus/minus point equivalents and UTSA grading system)

Your grade will be determined by both the timely completion of course requirements and the quality of your responses. Because your class grade is heavily dependent on class discussion, three absences is a failing grade, regardless of your performance.

“A” (91-100 points)
Regular attendance; no more than one absence; student is prepared for every class, shows that he/she has read the assignments, participates in every class in a positive and constructive way; student’s writing is virtually free of grammatical and spelling errors, is thoughtful, creative, well-researched, and interesting, and above all, original; student has turned in all required in-class writing and homework on time and student demonstrates enthusiasm in class and concern and dedication to the course itself; student is adult and responsive to others’ work and is encouraging and supportive to all other writers; student’s comments show both sensitivity and honesty; student has demonstrated complex critical thinking in both class discussion and in written work.

“B” (81-90 points)
Regular attendance; no more than two absences; student is prepared for every class, shows that he/she has read the assignments, participates in every class in a positive and constructive way; student’s writing has very few grammatical and spelling errors, is thoughtful, creative, well-researched, and interesting; student has turned in all required in-class writing and homework on time and student demonstrates enthusiasm in class and concern and dedication to the course itself; student is adult and responsive to others’ work and is encouraging and supportive to all other writers; student’s comments show both sensitivity and honesty; student has demonstrated complex critical thinking in both class discussion and in written work.

“C” (71-80 points)
Regular attendance; no more than two absences; student is prepared for every class, shows that he/she has read the assignments, participates in every class in a constructive way; student’s writing, has some grammatical errors, and lacks originality; student has turned in all required in-class writing and homework on time, and student often demonstrates enthusiasm in class; student is adult and responsive to others’ work and is encouraging and supportive to all other writers; student has demonstrated graduate level critical thinking in both class discussion and in written work.

“D” (61-70 points)
No more than two absences; student is usually prepared for class, participation is lacking in quality; student’s writing has frequent grammatical errors, lacks originality; and/or is not turned in on time; student has turned in all required in-class writing and homework, however, student fails to show interest in others’ writing or in the class materials; nevertheless, student is adult and responsive to others’ work, and student has demonstrated some critical thinking in both class discussion and in written work.

“F” (60 points and below) or any performance less than that of a “D”. More than two total absences automatically constitutes a failing grade, regardless of other grades in the course. Repeated lateness will be accrued as absences. Late assignments are automatically downgraded one full grade, except for fully documented emergencies. Any assignment not turned in by the last day of class is given a zero.
Course Requirements:
Class Participation, Regular Attendance, and Short Assignments 10%
There are various due dates on the short assignments, many sent to my email address: Catherine.Kasper@utsa.edu Please check the schedule for further details.

Due: at your scheduled time on the sign up sheet. Sign up will take place Sept. 6th in class.  

Presentation One: Discussion Leader of Theoretical Text: 10%
Each student will have a chance to practice their skills in teaching, in demonstrating their understanding of the theoretical text, in presenting it to the class, and conducting a discussion according to the sign up date and time period. Students are required to present an outline of critical ideas from their reading to share with the class and turn in on Blackboard.

Due: September 27th by 5:30 PM to the Blackboard Assignment area.  

Research Proposal (2-3 pages) 5%
In 2-3 pages, propose a research topic and outline your research plans for this course. This topic should be your dissertation topic, or related to it, or a topic that reflects current interests for a scholarly article you want to write for a journal or conference, or your M.A. scholarly thesis topic. You may modify your topic as your research progresses, but given the time constraints, it is not advisable to change this topic. Topics can focus on a single author or group of authors, a genre, a period, a critical tradition, a theme, etc.

Due: November 1st, by 5:30 PM to the 6013 Blackboard Assignment area.

Thesis/Dissertation/Article Prospectus: 5%
In a 5-7 page prospectus, describe the argument of your dissertation, M.A. thesis, or scholarly article. Indicate the specific critical question that you plan to address in your work, explain why it is important, and outline a preliminary thesis. The prospectus should also include your detailed assessment of the critical or theoretical tradition for your topic.

Presentation 2: Due Thursday, November 29th: 15%
Written materials should be posted to Blackboard. Presentation will be given during scheduled time. Sign up will take place in class.

In a three-part presentation (approx. 10-15-mins.):  
1) Discuss the most important single text, manuscript, or critical source that you discovered during your research process required for this course. Be sure to explain: a. what resources you used to find this work, b. insights gained (or mistakes made), and c. why this work will be important for your project.  
2) Discuss an unanswered biographical question, controversy, theoretical problem, unsolved mystery or interdisciplinary conflict concerning your topic. How would you go about researching this issue to develop your own interpretation? You may bring handouts for the class, and/or share an abstract of your project as well.  
3) To turn in to the professor: include the full details of a) topic, date, location, submission date of a conference where you could submit an abstract of your research, and b)a pertinent grant you could apply for to continue your research, present your findings, be involved in teaching/research crucial to your work.
Due: November 15th, 2012 by 5:30 PM to the Blackboard Assignment Area.

**Annotated Critical Bibliography  20%**
Some of the short assignments could be incorporated into your annotated critical bibliography. A complete bibliography should include the following items, including call numbers and library name and locations for each citation: (45 annotations minimum)

1. Primary Sources: (Annotate) (at least 10 sources annotated) (May vary according to area of research.)
   
   A. Relevant standard editions or important editions
   B. Standard biography
   C. Correspondence
   D. Manuscripts and their locations
   E. Concordances
   F. Bibliographies
   G. Electronic Texts or Resources

II. Secondary Sources (at least 20 annotations)
   
   A. Reviews and contemporary critical opinions
   B. Critical essays, books, book chapters
   C. Dissertations

III. Relevant Genre/Period/Form/Theme (at least 10 sources annotated)
IV. Relevant Cognate Area (at least 5 sources annotated)

**Abstract  5%** Due December 15th, 2012 at 5:30 pm to the Blackboard Assignment area:
( Last Day of Class):
In a single page abstract, summarize your argument, and its outstanding and unique features (how it is original, how it responds to previous scholarship, how it revises previous scholarship, how it is an important contribution to scholarship in the area of your topic, why this is an important argument to make, etc.).

**Research Paper**  (10-12 pages)  25%  Due December 15th, 2012 PROMPTLY by 5:30 pm to the Blackboard Assignment area:
Using your research, write an argumentative paper (article) incorporating your research to this point. You should have completed sufficient research to write a foundational paper of 10-12 pages for future use as foundational work or a conference paper.

**Personal Research Evaluation  5%**
During our Last Day of Class (Final Exam time) on December 15th, PROMPTLY at 5:30 p.m., each student will fill out a written personal research evaluation in class. The questions will cover course progress, and personal goals for continued work toward the dissertation.
Schedule: 6013: Theoretical & Research Methods
Fall 2012

Week One  TH: August 30th:
Syllabus, overview of class and reading materials
Schedule Note: per the UTSA requirements, you should have
access to Blackboard, as assignments will be submitted via
Blackboard to the Professor as noted.
*For Thursday, September 6th, Read & Be Prepared to
Discuss: *The Art of Literary Research.*
  •A) By Sept. 6th, send me an email message with the Universal
  Resource Locator (URL) for a WWW site that has to do with one of
  your literary interests or your topic.

Week Two  TH: September 6th: Research Discussion
Research discussion including Altick
Professional protocol, professional journals,
Theoretical approaches, resources
Bibliographic Methods & Annotated Bibliography
Sign-up for First Presentations
•B) Due by September 13th: Send me an email naming the
materials/collection of a library outside of Texas that has related
holdings in your topic area.

Week Three  TH: September 13th: Library Orientation
Meet in UTSA Library, 1604 campus,
reception/checkout area
Library Orientation
Special Collections Orientation
•C) Due by Sept. 20th send me an email with a Word
attachment that lists 5 citations for your topic in MLA format.
•D) Due Sept. 20th: send me an email containing 1 interlibrary
loan order you placed, and (E) 1 name of a scholarly journal (and its
website) in your topic area.

Week Four  TH: September 20th: Theoretical Texts
(Meet in the Main Building Classroom.)
Presentations on Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*

Week Five  TH: September 27th: Theoretical Texts
Presentations on Susan Sontag, *Against Interpretation*

*Research Proposals Due*
Week Six  TH: October 4th: Theoretical Texts  
Presentations on Edward Said, *Orientalism*

Week Seven  TH: October 11th: Theoretical Texts  
Presentations on Linda Hutcheon, *The Politics of Postmodernism*  
Sign up for personal conferences/project consultations

Week Eight  TH: October 18th: Research practicum

Week Nine  TH: October 25th: Research practicum

Week Ten  TH: November 1st: Prospectus Due (to Blackboard)  
[meet in classroom]  
MLA/Job market/career placement/grants  
Sign-up for Research Presentations  
Discussions of problems/questions on research

Week Eleven  TH: November 8th: Personal conferences/Project Consultations  
(Meet according to sign up sheet in my office)

Week Twelve  TH: November 15th: Annotated Critical Bibliography due to  
Blackboard Assignment Area. Research Practicum

Week Thirteen  TH: Nov. 22nd: Thanksgiving University Holiday

Week Fourteen  TH: November 29th: Research Presentations

Week Fifteen  TH: December 6th: Research Practicum

Week Sixteen  Saturday: December 15th: Last day of class during Finals Week  
Meet in Classroom at 5:30 pm sharp.  
Final Research Papers and Abstract Due to Blackboard  
No exceptions. Assignments not turned in by this date are given a zero.

[Please include self-addressed, stamped envelope if you want your final research paper and other graded assignments returned.]

The professor reserves the right to alter this schedule to meet the changing needs of the class.