Academic course description

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| MASTER ’S PROGRAMME  **AMERICAN STUDIES**  2ND YEAR OF STUDY, 1ST SEMESTER |

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| **Course title** | | **CRITICAL THINKING, LITERARY THINKING** |
| Course code | |  |
| Course type | | full attendance |
| Course level | | 2nd cycle (master’s degree) |
| Year of study, semester | | 2st year of study, 1st semester |
| Number of ECTS credits | | 5 |
| Number of hours per week | | 3 (2 lecture hours + 1 seminar hours) |
| Name of lecture holder | | Dana BADULESCU |
| Name of seminar holder | | Dana BADULESCU |
| Prerequisites | | C1 (and above) level of English |
| A | **General and course-specific competences** | |
|  | **General competences**:   * Familiarise students with literary and cultural approaches, literary and cultural theory and terminology   **Course-specific competences**:   * Trace the connection between literary and critical thinking in the U.S. from E. A. Poe to the present day * Present and discuss the main stages of this connection * Critically read literary texts and analyse cultural and media products (films) in the light of the approaches discussed | |
| B | **Learning outcomes** | |
|  | * Recognise and describe the connection between critical thinking and literary thinking * Discuss the variety of literary approaches * Apply the literary and cultural approaches discussed to literary texts and cultural and media products (films) | |
| C | **Lecture content** | |
|  | What are critical thinking and literary thinking, respectively? How can they be approached together in order to account for the principles and mechanisms of each « individual talent »’s creativity ?  E. A. Poe’s literary thinking and critical thinking; Poe as a poet-critic of the 19th century America, shaping the critical and literary thinking of three generations of French poets (Baudelaire, Mallarmé and Valéry) spanning a century of French poetry  Henry James’s literary theory and criticism; James as a self-conscious novelist with a clear agenda  T. S. Eliot the poet-critic and new criticism  Northrop Frye and archetypal criticism  Contemporary critics: Harold Bloom and “the anxiety of influence”  Edward Hirsch the poet-critic  Jean Baudrillard’s theory of simulacra and hyperreality applied to the American postmodern culture (literature and film) illustrated by Don DeLillo’s *White Noise* (novel), *The Truman Show* (film)and *Eternal Sunshine of a Spotless Mind* (film)  Umberto Eco and America’s hyperrealism in *Travels in Hypereality* | |
| D | **Recommended reading for lectures** | |
|  | Baudrillard, Jean. *Selected Writings*, Stanford University Press: Stanford, California, 2001.  Kevin, J. Hayes. *The Cambridge Companion to Edgar Allen Poe*, CUP, 2004. (“The Poet as Critic”: pp. 7-21 and “Poe’s Aesthetic Theory”: pp. 42-57)  Bloom, Harold. *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*, Oxford University Press, 1997.  Malpas, Simon & Paul Wake (Editors). *The Routledge Companion to Critical and Cultural Theory,* Routledge, 2013.  Mendelssohn, Michèle. *Henry James, Oscar Wilde and Aesthetic Culture,* Edinburgh University Press, 2007. (Introduction and Chapter 1, pp. 22-89)  Newton, K. M., *Interpreting the Text: A Critical Introduction to the Theory and Parctice of Literary Interpretation,* St. Martin’s Press, 1990  Rawlings, Peter. *American Theorists of the Novel: Henry James, Lionel Trilling, Wayne C. Booth,* Routledge, London and New York, 2007.  <http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/> | |
| E | **Seminar content** | |
|  | Reading and discussing literary and cultural theory in connection with literature and film | |
| F | **Recommended reading for seminars** | |
|  | Virginia Woolf, “How Should one Read a Book?”  E. A. Poe, “The Poetic Principle”  Henry James’ “unreadable text” in *The Turn of the Screw*  T. S. Eliot, “Tradition and the Individual Talent”  Edward Hirsch, *How to Read a Poem and Fall in Love with Poetry*  Jean Baudrillard, “Simulacra and Simulations” and chapter 1 of Umberto Eco’s *Travels in Hyperreality* | |
| G | **Education style** | |
| learning and teaching methods | | Lecture, discussion (group works), seminar presentations |
| assessment methods | | Final written exam or essay 60% + seminar paper 40% |
| Language of instruction | | English |