Description: This course provides a historical survey of the foundational thinkers, texts, and schools that orient contemporary work in the humanities, from Kant and Hegel to Cultural Studies and Postcolonial Theory. As an “advanced introduction,” the course is intended primarily for first-year graduate students and for those who may not have covered the development of critical theory in a systematic way. The course will include significant discussion of figures, including: Kant, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, Weber, Adorno, Barthes, Levi-Strauss, Lacan, Derrida, Foucault, Kristeva, Irigaray, Williams, Hall, Said, Spivak, Bhabha, Žižek, and Butler. Among the topics we will address: history, the subject, value, power, language, ideology, materiality, gender, sexuality, race, and colonialism. The purpose of this course is to ensure that graduate students receive a rigorous introduction to critical theories and methodologies central to a variety of fields in the humanities and to provide the basis for interdisciplinary conversation and intellectual community among graduate students and faculty members from across the university.

Format: The course will meet twice a week, once a week (the Tuesday evening meeting) in a public session that will include graduate students from Michael Rothberg’s English 581 course and the other Comparative Literature section, and once a week in a closed session limited to registered students. Drawing on the resources of the Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory, we will invite to class “guest experts” from around campus (and occasionally from off campus); these guests will visit the public sessions of the seminar throughout the semester.

Requirements: Attendance at all sessions; active participation; a 10 page paper that is a close, critical reading comparing the ideas of two theorists on a particular theme of importance (e.g., Kant & Hegel on aesthetics); a timed, 72 hour take-home essay exam of approximately 10 pages at the end of the semester.

Texts: Vincent Leitch, et al, ed. The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism; Friedrich Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morals (tr. Kaufmann); Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality: An Introduction. The Norton will provide the base readings for many of our sessions, but will be supplemented by photocopied readings.

Nota bene: Despite what Banner says, this course does not require any languages other than English—but you should learn some anyway. Like Latin. Yeah, that’s it. Go learn Latin. What are you waiting for?
Week One:

August 24: Introduction:
- Culler, “What is Theory?” in Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction (xerox)

Week Two:

August 30: Kant: Jennifer K. Uleman (Philosophy, SUNY Purchase) [NB: Gregory 100]
- Kant, Critique of Practical Reason, trans. and ed. Mary Gregor, “Preface” and “Introduction,” (pp. 3-13)
- Kant, Critique of Judgment (selections in Norton)
- Fredrick Beiser, “The Enlightenment and Idealism,” from Cambridge Companion to German Idealism (xerox and e-reserves)

September 1: Discussion

Week Three:

September 6: Hegel: William Schroeder (Philosophy)
- Hegel, Lectures on Fine Art (selections in Norton)

September 8: Discussion

Week Four:

September 13: Marx and Marxism: Jim Hansen (English)
- Marx, selections from Norton
- Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness (selections; xerox)
- Adorno, “On the Fetish Character in Music and the Regression of Listening” (xerox)

September 15: Discussion

Week Five:

September 20: Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morals: Melissa Orlie (Political Science)

September 22: Discussion
**Week Six:**

Monday, September 26, 8:00 pm, Levis Faculty Center, Third Floor: Unit for Criticism lecture: Matti Bunzl, “Were We Wrong? Rethinking the Postmodern Paradigm,” with responses by Karen Kelsky (EALC/Anthropology) and Manisha Desai (Sociology)

September 27: Structuralism: Andrea Goulet (French)
- Readings by Saussure, Barthes (from *Mythologies*), and Jakobson from *Norton*
- Barthes, “The Structuralist Activity” (xerox)
- Levi-Strauss, “The Structural Study of Myth” and “A Native Community and its Life-Style,” from *Tristes Tropiques* (xerox)

September 29: Discussion

**Week Seven:**

October 4: Freud: Lilya Kaganovsky (Slavic/Comp Lit)
- Freud, “Fetishism” and selections from *The Interpretation of Dreams* (*Norton*)
- Freud and Breuer, *Studies in Hysteria* (introduction and Anna O. case study; xerox)
- Freud, “Negation” (xerox)

October 6: Discussion

**Week Eight:**

October 11: Lacan and Kristeva: Nancy Blake (Comp Lit)
- Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language* (in *Norton*)

October 13: Discussion

**Week Nine:**

Monday, October 17, 8:00 pm, Levis Faculty Center, Music Room: Unit for Criticism lecture: Joel Pfister (English, Wesleyan University), “The How to Conquer Handbook: Mark Twain vs. Matthew Arnold,” with responses by Bruce Michaelson and Naomi Reed (English)

October 18: Foucault: Matti Bunzl (Anthropology)
- Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*

Secondary:
- Foucault readings from *Norton*

October 20: Discussion

**Week Ten:**

Monday, October 24, 8:00 pm, Krannert Art Museum: Unit for Criticism lecture: Jane Gallop (English, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee), “The Ethics of Close Reading”

October 25: Derrida: Jane Gallop (English, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee)
- Derrida, “Structure, Sign, and Play” and “Signature Event Context” (xerox)
- Derrida, “Plato’s Pharmacy” (selections in *Norton*)

Secondary:
- Austin, “Performative Utterances” (*Norton*) — discussion on next page —
October 27: Discussion

Week Eleven:

November 1: Cultural Studies: Williams, Hall, etc.: Cary Nelson (English)

- Williams, “Culture is Ordinary” (Xerox)
- Hall, “Cultural Studies and Its Theoretical Legacies” (*Norton*) & “Religious Ideology and Social Movement in Jamaica” (Xerox)
- Nelson, “Always Already Cultural Studies” (Xerox)
- Treichler, “AIDS, Homophobia, and Biomedical Discourse: An Epidemic of Signification”

November 3: Discussion

Week Twelve:

November 8: Queer Theory: Stephanie Foote (English)

- Butler, “Imitation and Gender Insubordination” and “Critically Queer” (xerox)
- Sedgwick, “Introduction: Axiomatic,” from *Epistemology of the Closet* (xerox)

November 10: Discussion

Week Thirteen:

November 15: Postcolonial Theory: Jed Esty (English)

- Fanon, “The Negro and Recognition,” from *Black Skin, White Masks* (pp 210-222; xerox)
- Said, “Introduction,” from *Orientalism* (*Norton*)
- Bhabha, “The Commitment to Theory” (*Norton*)
- Spivak, from *Critique of Postcolonial Reason* (pp. 112-140; xerox)

November 17: Discussion

Week Fourteen:

November 22-23: Thanksgiving Break

Monday, November 28, 8:00 pm, Levis Faculty Center, Third Floor: Unit for Criticism lecture: Debbie Hawhee (English/Speech Comm.), “Kenneth Burke, Mysticism, and the Body,” with a response by Julia Walker (English)

Week Fifteen (no lecture this week):

December 1: Film Theory

- Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure in Narrative Cinema” (*Norton*)
- Silverman, “Historical Trauma and Male Subjectivity” (xerox)
- Williams, “Film Bodies” (xerox)

Week Sixteen (no lecture this week):

December 8: The New Lacanians

- Copjc, from *Read My Desire* (xerox)
- Žižek, from *Looking Awry* and *Enjoy Your Symptom!* (xerox)
- McGowan, introduction to *The End of Dissatisfaction?* (xerox)