

D. Looney M 2:30-5:00  
Introduction to the Study of Literature (18959)  
French 2710, German 2110, Italian 2710  
Office hours: M 5-6; T Th 3-6 (fine to drop in but appointment recommended)

CL 202  
Fall 2006  
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The course will present a chronological survey of the concepts and underlying assumptions that shaped thinking about literature from the birth of western literary theory in antiquity to its institutionalization in early modern Europe. The course will examine norms and innovations in the shifting definitions of literature, literary theory, and criticism across these periods. Readings from Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Horace, Quintilian, Longinus, Augustine, Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Rabelais, Tasso, Sidney, Corneille, Boileau, Dryden, among others. Topics include Platonism, mimesis, Aristotelianism, rhetorical criticism, relation between pagan and Christian culture in late antiquity, allegory, humanism, classical vs. vernacular, *imitatio*, intertextuality, canonicity, genre theory, neoclassicism, among others. There will be a sustained focus on the ways in which thinking about literature in the early modern period (how we define that is itself up for discussion) was influenced by various classical considerations, imitation first among them. Students will read Sophocles's *Oedipus the King* (and see the production at Pittsburgh Public Theater in October), and Vergil's *Aeneid* in order to assess how many of the authors above applied their theories to these works. Readings and discussion in English but students will be encouraged to engage with texts in original languages.

#### Required Texts:

Allan Gilbert, *Literary Criticism: Plato to Dryden* (Wayne State UP)  
Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. R. Janko (Hackett)  
Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus*, trans. P. Meineck and P. Woodruff (Hackett)  
Vergil, *Aeneid*, trans. S. Lombardo (Hackett)

The majority of readings are on Courseweb where I have posted selections of ancient, medieval, renaissance, neoclassical, and modern theory: <http://courseweb.pitt.edu>. In addition to the reading in its respective slot in the historical survey, for each week there is a more recent critical essay that responds in some way or other to one of the week's readings. We will use the modern pieces as prompts for discussion.

#### Evaluation:

Regular attendance and participation	20%
short response papers	20%
annotated bibliography	10%
midterm exam	20%
final exam	30%

Students will write short, succinct response papers (250-500 words) on an assigned topic most weeks (details to follow week by week), which they will present to each other in small groups and to the class as a whole. These response papers, meant to be shared among the students (and also submitted to me), will help everyone organize material in

preparation for the midterm and final exams. The typical class meeting will roughly follow this order:

1. Introduction 15 minutes
2. Overview by DL 30 minutes
3. Group work 45 minutes
4. Class discussion 60 minutes

Students will also develop an annotated bibliography (in consultation with me to avoid overlap with peers) on one of the authors on the syllabus that will include: standard text, commentary, translation, electronic resources, reception and fortune of the author in subsequent periods, and contemporary critical responses to the author. These bibliographies will be distributed to the entire class.

Schedule:

- Aug 28 Introduction to course.  
J. Culler, "What is Literature and Does it Matter?"
- Sept 4 No class. Labor Day.  
Read Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus* and begin reading Vergil's *Aeneid*
- Sept 11 Plato on poetry and mimesis.  
*Ion the Rhapsode* and selections from *Republic* and *Laws* (Gilbert)  
Jessica Moss, "What is Imitative Poetry and Why is it Bad?"
- Sept 18 From Plato to Aristotle  
Aristotle, *Poetics* (Janko trans.)  
Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus*  
R. McKeon, "Literary Criticism and the Concept of Imitation in Antiquity"
- Sept 25 Aristotle's Response to Plato  
Aristotle, *Poetics* (Janko trans.)
- In late September, I intend to get us tickets to see the Pittsburgh Public Theater's production of *Oedipus the King*, trans. by W.B. Yeats, Directed by Ted Pappas. Aristotle uses the play as one of the main texts he analyzes in the *Poetics*. From the PPT's blurb: A terrible secret. An unsolved murder. A horrifying curse. The young king must use both his power and his cleverness to unravel a mystery and save his nation. But who will save *him* when he learns the shocking truth? PPT proudly launches its 32<sup>nd</sup> season with one of the greatest plays ever written in a brilliant translation by William Butler Yeats. Artistic director Ted Pappas re-imagines Sophocles' work in a contemporary setting, breathing new life into this enduring classic.
- Oct 2 Introduction to classical rhetoric  
Aristotle, *On Rhetoric, Book 3* (Courseweb)  
*Rhetorica ad Herennium* (Courseweb)  
G. Kennedy, "A's *Rhetoric*" + "Technical Rhetoric in the Roman Period"

- Oct 9            Technical Roman rhetoric and literary criticism  
 Cicero, *Pro Archia* (Courseweb)  
 Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria*, Books 10 + 12 (Courseweb)  
 Charles E. Little, “Quintilian’s Literary Criticism”
- Oct 16           Roman adaptations of classical Greek theory  
 Horace, *Ars poetica* (Gilbert)  
 Robert Durling, “Two Roman Poets,” from *Figure of the Poet*
- Oct 23           Longinus, literary rhetoric, and ancient theory  
 Longinus, *On the Sublime (On Literary Excellence)* (Gilbert)  
 Donald A. Russell, “Greek Criticism of the Empire”  
 IN-CLASS MIDTERM second half of class
- Oct 30           Allegorical interpretation from late antiquity into the Middle Ages  
 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* (Courseweb)  
 Proclus, *The Nature of Poetic Art* (Courseweb)  
 Fulgentius, *Exposition of Vergil* (Courseweb)  
 Finish reading Vergil’s *Aeneid*  
 O.B. Hardison, “General Introduction to Medieval Criticism” (Courseweb)  
 Frederic Jameson, *The Political Unconscious* (excerpt)
- Nov 6            Revival, retrieval, renaissance  
 Averroes, *Middle Commentary on the Poetics of Aristotle* (Courseweb)  
 Dante, *Literary Criticism of Dante Alighieri* (Courseweb)  
 Petrarch, *Coronation Oration* (Courseweb)  
 Boccaccio, *On the Genealogy of the Gentile Gods* (Courseweb)  
 D. Looney, “*Collatio laureationis*: The Beginning of Humanistic Oratory”
- Nov 13           Italian renaissance criticism: the rediscovery of Plato and Aristotle  
 Rabelais, *Prologue to Gargantua* (Courseweb)  
 Trissino, Giraldi, Minturno, Castelvetro (Gilbert)  
 E. Duval, “Interpretation and the ‘Doctrine Absconce’ of Rabelais’s  
                   *Prologue to Gargantua*”
- Nov 20           Italian renaissance criticism: Tasso on epic  
 Tasso, *Discourses on the Art of Poetry*, trans. Rhu (Courseweb)  
 Tasso, *Discourses on the Heroic Poem* (Gilbert)  
 Visit to class by Prof. Daniel Javitch, NYU, to speak on:  
                   “Tasso, Genre Theory, and European Epic”

- Nov 27      English and German vernacular classicism  
Sidney, *Apology for Poetry* (Gilbert)  
Ben Jonson, selections (Gilbert)  
Martin Opitz, *The Book concerning German Poetry* (Gilbert)  
Deanne Bogdan, “Sidney's Defence of Plato and the ‘Lying’ Greek Poets”
- Dec 4        French neoclassical theory  
Corneille, Scudéry, Nicole, Saint-Evremond (Gilbert)  
Boileau (Courseweb)  
John Lyons, *Kingdom of Disorder* (excerpt)
- Dec 11      English neoclassical theory  
Milton, selections (Gilbert)  
Dryden, *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (Gilbert)  
Phillips, *Theatrum poetarum* (Gilbert)  
David Quint, “*Paradise Lost* and the Fall of the English Commonwealth”
- Dec 18      Take-home final due 10 a.m. in CL 1328