RESEARCH METHODS & BIBLIOGRAPHY

ENGL 5300, CRN 10246
T 6:00–8:50pm
Hudspeth 213

Dr. Joseph M. Ortiz
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Hudspeth 320

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to prepare you for graduate-level research. It will help you develop your professionalization in the field of literary studies, and it will familiarize you with the various kinds of research currently being done in the field. Most of the course will focus on conventional literary criticism—the kind of scholarship that graduate students in English Literature are expected to use in various research projects (master's thesis, extended seminar paper, journal article, dissertation). But we will also practice other kinds of research, including archival research, interviews and oral history, and journalistic research. Ideally, after this course, you will be better prepared to write in a number of genres at a professional level.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To develop and improve your ability to read and write about literary criticism in a sophisticated and professional manner
- To increase your familiarity with the different approaches currently being practiced in literary criticism
- To improve your ability to do research on literary topics, particularly as part of a substantial research project (thesis, seminar paper, article)
- To teach you how to use both primary and secondary research in literature to inform your teaching and to lay the groundwork for original criticism of your own
- To introduce you to other kinds of research sources, particularly those that are useful for writing in "public humanities" or journalistic contexts

TEXTBOOKS

- Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*
- *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 9th edition
- E. M. Forster. *Howards End*
- Matthew Lopez, *The Inheritance*
- Ruben Espinosa, *Shakespeare on the Shades of Racism*
- Arturo Islas, *Mollie and the King of Tears*
- Frederick Aldama, *Dancing with Ghosts: A Critical Biography of Arturo Islas*
- Other readings as made available on Blackboard

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Seminar Participation (20%)
Discussion Leader (15%)
Article Review (15%)
Conference Abstract/Grant Proposal (15%)
Archive Presentation (15%)
Final Project (20%)

Seminar Participation. As graduate students you are expected to contribute regularly to class discussion and to raise issues and questions that guide our discussion. In this respect, I consider myself a facilitator more than an instructor. You are expected to have read all assigned material at the start of each class. Occasional short or in-class assignments will be included here.

Discussion Leader. You will each lead part of a class discussion on one of the literary works assigned. To prepare your discussion, you will do secondary reading on the work *in advance* of the class meeting. You will also develop discussion questions to facilitate the class conversation.

Article Review. You will learn the form of an academic book review (often a good publishing opportunity for graduate students) by writing a review of a peer-reviewed journal article. This exercise will also enable me to give feedback on your writing style.

Conference Abstract/Grant Proposal. You will write an abstract for a paper that you could *potentially* write and deliver at an academic conference. You will then use this abstract as the basis for a travel grant proposal.

Archive Presentation. Near the end of the semester you will give a short presentation on a specific archive that can be used for primary research. The archive may be digital or physical. You can propose an archive to present to the class, or I can assign one for you.

Final Project. Your final project will be the creation of a proposal and bibliography for a possible research project. In theory, your bibliography will involve much of the research you would do in preparation for writing an extended seminar paper or master's thesis.

Attendance. Regular attendance is absolutely required. Because we meet only once a week, missing even a single class means losing a significant amount of instruction. More than three absences will automatically lower your grade by one full grade. More than four absences constitutes failure of the course.

Classroom Decorum. Mobile phones should never be used in class. If you need to check your phone for any reason, please excuse yourself from the room. Laptops are permitted at the instructor's discretion. Drinks are allowed in class; food is not.

Office Hours. Tuesdays 4:00-6:00 p.m. and by appointment. You are encouraged to visit my office hours to follow up on issues raised in class or to get coaching on assignments.

SCHEDULE

Week 1 Aug. 27	Introductions *How Scholars Write*, ch. 1 (Blackboard)
Week 2 Sept. 3	6:00–6:30 Graduate Student Orientation Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*
Week 3 Sept. 10	Selected essays/articles on *The Taming of the Shrew* *How Scholars Write*, ch. 2 (Blackboard)
Week 4 Sept. 17	**Bibliography Exercise due** *How Scholars Write*, ch. 5 (Blackboard)
Week 5 Sept. 24	**Article Review due** Espinosa, *Shakespeare on the Shades of Racism*, chapter 3
Week 6 Oct. 1	Islas, *La Mollie and the King of Tears*, pages 1–107
Week 7 Oct. 8	Islas, *La Mollie and the King of Tears*, pages 109–198 *How Scholars Write*, ch. 15 (Blackboard)
Week 8 Oct. 15	Aldama, *Dancing with Ghosts*
Week 9 Oct. 22	**Conference Abstracts due** *How Scholars Write*, ch. 5; Driscoll, "Interviews" (Blackboard)
Week 10 Oct. 29	E.M. Forster, *Howards End*, chapters 1–24
Week 11 Nov. 5	E. M. Forster, *Howards End*, chapters 25–44 Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation* (Blackboard)
Week 12 Nov. 12	Matthew Lopez, *The Inheritance*, part 1 **Grant Proposals due**
Week 13 Nov. 19	Matthew Lopez, *The Inheritance*, part 2
Week 14 Nov. 26	**Archive Presentations**
Week 15 Dec. 3	TBD
Week 16	**Final Project due Tuesday, December 10**