REQUIRED:

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:
Advanced and intensive study of the major literary critics from Aristotle to modern times. Questions that will frame our discussions are as follows:

**Craft or genius:** To what degree is the production of art an exercise of skill and knowledge? To what extent is it a matter of inspiration or genius? What is the nature of these latter two concepts?

**Knowledge and value:** Does art offer any kind of knowledge to its audience? If so, what kind of knowledge does it provide? If not, what is it good for?

**The representation of nature:** To what extent is faithful representation of nature a standard of merit for artistic works? Is such faithfulness in representation a matter of reflecting general truths or of capturing individual peculiarities?

**The canon:** What is a classic work of art or literature? Are works of the ancients privileged over those of the moderns? Under what conditions can a work of art or literature serve as a model by which other works are judged?

**The special quality of literary language:** What distinguishes the poetic or literary use of words from other uses of words? How is such a use of words to be interpreted? What is its value?

In order to prepare for class discussions, you should consider the following questions while reading the assigned selections:

- Why do human beings make art?
- What distinguishes art from other things?
- What is the difference between aesthetic experience and other kinds of experience?
- What is the role of the artist?
- Is art related to the moral, social, political, technological, economic and cultural context in which it is created? If so, how?
COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

- 5 papers (50%) – You will choose the theoretical work you want to write about. In the 2- to 3-page paper, you will describe the content of the work, present a few of its most salient points, and evaluate its usefulness for particular situations. You should include: reflection on the scope and purpose of each work (i.e. the thesis or main argument); the use of two or three quotes from each work to help illustrate the thesis and explicate the work; analysis of any bias you note, or presentation of objections you might have to overall argument; evaluation, if possible, of how the work might illuminate a specific literary text or situation.

- Presentation on a secondary source (10%) – You will present to the class an argument made in a scholarly article about the work of a theorist we are covering. This presentation will be made during the class period in which we cover the theorist or during the subsequent class period. You should be able to talk intelligently about the technique by which the ideas from the theoretical work are employed to advance an argument about a work of art. I can make some suggestions for secondary sources if you have difficulty finding one.

- Final Assignment: Make-Your-Own-Exam (15%)—Imagine that you are teaching this course. You will create a final exam to administer to your students. Your exam will have two sections: a passage identification section, and an essay section. Your passage identification section should list 20 of the most memorable quotes or short passages from the works we have covered in this course, along with the author, title, and page citation from our textbook. You should include an explanation for why you chose these particular quotes— in a brief sentence after each one, justify why these particular quotes were chosen (why chose this theorist, this work, and how does this particular quote help to illustrate the main thesis of the work. You will also come up with two major topics for essay questions. The essay questions should ask for analysis and synthesis of important concepts across multiple works and should ask for elaboration on topics of class discussion. You do not have to provide answers for the essay questions.

- Debate (15%) -- Participate in a Debate with Class members (“worksheet” handed in previously). For this, you will take on the role of one theorist we discussed. You will thoroughly research the theorist’s background and entire oeuvre and hand-in a “worksheet” detailing this research. This “worksheet” should include all of the major details of this critic’s biography and his/her oeuvre. In addition, this “work-sheet” should make preliminary observations as to how the particular critic would feel about contemporary issues (details TBA). During the debate itself, the students will argue about these contemporary issues (details TBA) from the perspective of their chosen theorist’s attitudes, values, and beliefs.

- Attendance and Participation (10%)
ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES, AND PARTICIPATION:
There are no excused absences. You should attend every class meeting. Because this is a night class that meets once a week, missing one class is the equivalent of missing a whole week of classes.

LATE WORK:
You should turn your work in on time. Late assignments will be appropriately downgraded.

PLAGIARISM:
Any suspicion of plagiarism will be turned over to Student Judicial Affairs and could result in your failure of the course and/or expulsion from the university.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY:
According to the University Catalog, California State University does not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, disability, race, color, or national origin. If you have a disability and need reasonable accommodation for equal access to education and services at CSU Chico, you must register with Disability Support Services V/TTY: 898-5959.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

1/22 Introduction & Institutionalization of Literary Study: Contemporary Theory
Leitch
Eagleton
Graff
And more. . .

1/29 Beginnings: Classical Theory
Plato, pp.33-85
Aristotle, pp. 86-120

2/5 Defenses of Criticism
Alexander Pope, pp. 438-458
Shelley, pp. 695-716
Ohmann, pp.1877-1894

2/12 Aesthetics
Plotinus, pp.171-184
Augustine, pp.185 -195
Hume, pp. 483-498
Lessing, pp. 551-570

2/19 Aesthetics – 1st Paper due
Kant, pp. 499-535
Burke, pp. 536-550
2/26 Aesthetics
Hegel, pp. 626-644
Baudelaire, pp. 789-801

3/5 The Canon/Tradition
Aquinas, pp. 240-252
Arnold, pp. 802-832
Eliot, pp. 1088-1098
Bloom, pp. 1794-1805

3/12 Interpretation Theory – 2nd Paper due
Alighieri, pp. 246-252
Schleiermacher, pp. 610-625
Fish, pp. 2067-2088

3/19 NO CLASS

3/26 Language
Baudrillard, pp. 1729-1740
Kristeva, pp. 2165-2178
Levi-Strauss, pp. 1415-1426

4/2 Language and Culture – 3rd Paper due
Vico, pp. 399-415
Saussure, pp. 956-965
Hedeigger, pp. 1118-1134

4/9 Authorship
Horace, pp. 121-134
Mallarme, pp. 841-850
Iser, pp. 1670-1681

4/16 Authorship – 4th Paper due
Benjamin, pp. 1163-1185
Barthes, pp. 1457-1460; 1466-1475
Foucault, pp. 1615-1635

4/23 Narrative
Bakhtin, pp. 1186-1219
Jakobson, pp. 1254-1268
Todorov, pp. 2097-2105

4/30 Representation and Realism – 5th Paper due
Nietzsche, pp. 870-894
Lukacs, pp. 1030-1057
White, pp. 1709-1728

5/7 Vernacular and Nationhood – Debate “worksheet” paper due
Fanon, pp. 1575-1592
Anzaldúa, pp. 2208-2222
Baker, pp. 2223-2239

5/14 Debate 8:00-9:50 p.m. -- Make-Your-Own-Exam Assignment due