

Course Syllabus

Course Information

<i>Course Number/Section</i>	ARHM 3342 001
<i>Course Title</i>	Advanced Interdisciplinary Study in the Arts and Humanities: The Idea of Interpretation
<i>Term</i>	Fall 2022
<i>Days & Times</i>	TR 11:30-12:45
<i>Room</i>	FN 2.104

Professor Contact Information

<i>Professor</i>	Daniel Wickberg
<i>Office Phone</i>	x8333
<i>Email Address</i>	wickberg@utdallas.edu
<i>Office Location</i>	JO 5.428
<i>Office Hours</i>	T 2:00-3:30 and by appointment. Email to set appointment time

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

Upper division

Course Description

This course develops and focuses the practice of interdisciplinary study in the Arts and Humanities, and is intended primarily for upper-division majors in Arts and Humanities disciplines. One of the key concepts in the arts and humanities in the modern era is the concept of “interpretation”. Historians interpret past events; literary critics interpret texts; philosophers concern themselves with the meaning of statements and how they are to be interpreted; writers, artists and performers interpret the world, the script, the musical score. This course will examine the multiple meanings of “interpretation” and the ways in which they have come to structure the interdisciplinary practices of the arts and humanities since the late nineteenth century. Issues discussed will include: the distinction between explanation and interpretation; the origins of modern interpretive thought in Nietzsche, Freud, and Marx; Is there one “right” interpretation of a text, a historical event, or work of art, or is interpretation entirely subjective?; critique and the “hermeneutics of suspicion”; the relationship between the surface of a work of art or literature, and depth; new developments in historical interpretation and historiography; postmodern criticism of the assumptions of interpretive thought; the relationship between authorial intention and the meaning of a work of art; visual culture and interpretation. The goal is to understand what has defined modern humanistic understanding and artistic practice in an era dominated by scientific, empiricist and mechanistic modes of

knowledge, and the ways in which artists, scholars in the humanities, and critics have sought alternative ways of approaching reality.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Students will demonstrate familiarity with a wide range of theories and philosophies of interpretation in the arts and humanities.

Students will demonstrate understanding of how interpretation as a practice differs for historians, literary scholars and critics, philosophers, and artists.

Required Textbooks and Materials

Required Texts

The following texts are available for purchase at the campus bookstore. Additional readings are noted in the syllabus by * and are on electronic reserve. There is a link to the library reserve page on the course E-Learning page.

Friedrich Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo
978-0679724629

Sigmund Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents
978-0393304510

Terry Eagleton, Culture
9780300228731

Rita Felski, Hooked: Art and Attachment
978-0226729633

Sarah Maza, Thinking About History
978-0226109336

A.O. Scott, Better Living Through Criticism
978-0143109976

Assignments & Academic Calendar

Tuesday August 23
Introduction: No Reading

Thursday August 25
Susan Sontag, "Against Interpretation," in Against Interpretation and Other Essays, pp. 3-14*

Tuesday August 30

Louis Menand, The Free World, pp. 572-600*

Thursday September 1

Theodore George, "Hermeneutics" (2020), Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hermeneutics/>

Tuesday September 6

Friedrich Nietzsche, "Good and Evil, Good and Bad," in On the Genealogy of Morals, pp. 24-56

Thursday September 8

Friedrich Nietzsche, "'Guilt,' 'Bad Conscience,' and the Like," in On the Genealogy of Morals, pp. 57-96

Tuesday September 13

Friedrich Nietzsche, "What is the Meaning of Ascetic Ideals?," in On the Genealogy of Morals, pp. 97-163

Thursday September 15

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "The Communist Manifesto"*

Tuesday September 20

Sigmund Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents, chaps. 1-4

Thursday September 22

Sigmund Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents, chaps. 5-8

Tuesday September 27

Terry Eagleton, Culture, pp. 1-48

Thursday September 29

Terry Eagleton, Culture, pp. 49-95

Tuesday October 4

Terry Eagleton, Culture, pp. 96-148

Thursday October 6

Terry Eagleton, Culture, pp. 149-162

Tuesday October 11

Louis Menand, The Free World, pp. 452-511*

Thursday October 13

W. K. Wimsatt Jr. and M. C. Beardsley, "The Intentional Fallacy," The Sewanee Review, 54. 3 (Jul. - Sep., 1946), pp. 468-488*

Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author"*

Tuesday October 18
Steven Knapp and Walter Benn Michaels, "Against Theory," Critical Inquiry 8.2
(Summer 1982): 723-742*

Thursday October 20
Rita Felski, Hooked: Art and Attachment, preface and pp. 1-40

Tuesday October 25
Rita Felski, Hooked: Art and Attachment, pp. 79-120

Thursday October 27
Rita Felski, Hooked: Art and Attachment, pp. 121-164

Tuesday November 1
Sarah Maza, Thinking About History, pp. 1-44

Thursday November 3
No Reading. No Class Meeting

Tuesday November 8
Sarah Maza, Thinking About History, pp. 45-117

Thursday November 10
Sarah Maza, Thinking About History, pp. 118-156

Tuesday November 15
Sarah Maza, Thinking About History, pp. 157-198

Thursday November 17
Sarah Maza, Thinking About History, pp. 199-238

Thanksgiving Break

Tuesday November 29
A.O. Scott, Better Living Through Criticism, Introduction + chapters 1-2 (pp. 1-89)

Thursday December 1
A.O. Scott, Better Living Through Criticism, chapters 3-4, pp. 91-164

Tuesday December 6
A.O. Scott, Better Living Through Criticism, chapters 5-6, pp. 167-267

Thursday December 8
Conclusion. No Reading

Friday December 16
Final Paper Due, 1:00 PM through E-Learning

Grading Policy

Requirements are 1. attendance and participation in class discussion; 2. four short response papers (1-2 pages) on assigned readings, and one term paper (10-12 pages). All assignments must be completed in order to pass the class.

Participation and Attendance

Class participation is an essential part of this class. Participation will be based on 1. Submission through E-learning of a question on the reading for **each class meeting** at least 1 hour prior to the meeting time. You may miss up to 3 submissions in the course of the semester before missing submissions begin to lower your participation grade; 2. Discussion in class. You will be evaluated on the quality of contributions (good questions, demonstration of careful reading of texts, strong analytic insight) rather than quantity. Speaking a lot when you have not done the reading will not aid you in your participation grade. Typically, if you consistently attend class but fail to speak and participate, and your question submissions on E-learning don't show strong evidence of comprehension, you will receive a grade of C for participation; if you consistently attend class and demonstrate a good engagement with the material by occasional comments on the reading and regular submission of questions on E-learning, you will typically receive a B for participation; if you are consistently in class, always do the reading, consistently submit thoughtful questions on E-learning, offer insightful comments, and demonstrate a deep engagement with the material, you will typically receive an A for participation. Failure to attend and participate in class discussions will result in failure of the class. Repeated absence and tardiness will result in a significant lowering of your grade. To be specific: more than two unexcused absences will result in a drop of one full letter grade for the class participation component of the grade; more than four unexcused absences will result in a drop of two full letter grades for class participation; more than eight unexcused absences will result in failure of the class. Persistent lateness will also result in lowered grades.

Response Paper Guidelines

You will be required to turn in four short response papers in the course of the semester, two by October 11, and the other 2 between October 13 and December 6. Your responses should be one to two double-spaced pages (300-600 words) and represent your thinking about some aspect of the day's reading. Papers are due through E-learning before the beginning of class on the day of the assigned reading; late papers will not be accepted. **Your paper should not be a statement of your feeling or opinion, but should attempt to analyze or**

understand the implications of some aspect of the reading. You might tie the argument in the text to something we have read previously, or some text you are familiar with from another class; you might ask questions about the logic, assumptions, or use of evidence in the reading. You might give reasons why you agree or disagree with the position being put forward in the reading. You might apply the insights of the reading to a particular work of art or literature or historical event. The source responses are formal writing assignments; they are not casual expressions or off-the-cuff remarks. Papers will be graded on the basis of clarity, concision, correct understanding of arguments in the text being responded to, and successful prioritization of content. Grammar, spelling, and punctuation are important. This is not something you should use Wikipedia or other external sources for; I want you to read the work and engage with it directly.

Term Paper

You will have a term paper of 10-12 pages (2500- 3600 words) due on December 16. This is not a research paper, but will be a paper that asks you to use the readings we have done throughout the semester, and apply them to a specific question or problem. More information about the term paper will be available in November.

Grades will be determined on the following basis:

Class participation (including E-learning question Submission	40%
4 response papers (total)	20%
Term Paper	40%

All assignments must be completed in order to pass the class. Late term papers without a previously arranged extension will be graded down 1/3 letter grade for every calendar day late.

Course Policies

There will be no extra credit work. If you must miss class for unavoidable reasons, please let the instructor know. Absences will be excused for the following reasons: medical illness, family emergency, religious holiday. Examples of absences that will not be excused include: employment; had assignment due for other course; scheduling conflict; non-emergency family obligation. If you have excessive excused absences such that the course participation portion of the class cannot be completed, you must consult with me about how to proceed. All excused absences require a note or other form of

documentation. **Academic dishonesty (plagiarism) is a serious offense, and will be dealt with according to the policies of the University.** You are expected to know and understand what constitutes academic dishonesty and to behave accordingly; ignorance of what constitutes academic dishonesty is not a legitimate excuse.

Classroom Citizenship

Students are expected to attend class regularly and on time. Late arrivals disrupt the class, so please make every effort to be in class at the scheduled start time. Please give the class your undivided attention. The class meeting time is not an appropriate time to work on reading and assignments for other classes. Please treat fellow classmates with civility and courtesy. It is fine to disagree with another student's ideas or analysis, but avoid personal comments and attacks. **We are reading some advanced and difficult material; it is normal to feel that you don't understand or are confused by something you have read.** Do not hesitate to ask for clarification. All questions in good faith are welcome. Debate and disagreement are the lifeblood of intellectual work and are encouraged. Hostile, negative remarks, especially those addressed to students' gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, political affiliation, military status, or ethnicity are not welcome.

University Policies

<http://provost.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies/>