

## Masters Program in Literature, Program-specific Course 2. Literary Worlds: Narrative

Instructors: Bo G. Ekelund (course co-ordinator), Stefan Helgesson, Marion Helfer Wajngot.

### Seminar schedule

**(For the introductory lecture series, please see separate schedule.). Please also check your online schedules in Time Edit at [www.english.su.se](http://www.english.su.se) on a regular basis in the event of any unforeseen changes to the below dates.**

7 Sep, 12-2, E379	Introduction for PS1 and PS2. Paul Schreiber, Bo G. Ekelund.
21 Sep, 12-14, E890	Trajectories in narrative theory. Stefan Helgesson Reading: Bakhtin; Jameson; Todorov; Ricoeur
26 Sep, 10-12, E890	Interpretive narrative. Marion Helfer Wajngot Reading: Eliot; Jauss; Bloom; Fisch (not Fish) Literary text: Defoe, <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> , an excerpt
5 Oct, 13-15, E890	Narrative theory, gender and sexuality. Stefan Helgesson Reading: Gilbert & Gubar; B Smith; Woolf; Spivak Literary text: Rhys, <i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i>
12 Oct, 15-17, E890	Fictional worlds and rewriting as critique. Bo G. Ekelund Reading: Lanser; Mezei; Dolezel Literary text: Rhys, <i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i>
19 Oct, 13-15, E890	The Reader in the Narrative. Marion Helfer Wajngot Reading: Culler; Fish; Hirsch; Iser
26 Oct, 13-15, E890	Narration, internal distantiation and ideology critique. Bo G. Ekelund Reading: Marx & Engel; Althusser; Kavanagh Literary text: Melville, <i>Benito Cereno</i>
3 Nov, 13-15, E355	Fictional Worlds, Possible Worlds, Social Worlds. Marion Helfer Wajngot, Bo G. Ekelund Reading: Ryan; Bourdieu, Norton and "Flaubert"

### Course description

This course offers a survey of modern narrative theory, concentrating on fundamental concepts like plot, narrator, point of view, narrative genres, and fictionality as well as the relations between fictional worlds, and their relations to the actual world and the mind of the reader, while including a focus on various critiques of narrative as an ideological form. The course focuses on literary narratives, but touches also on theatre and film, and other narrative forms.

### Course Literature

#### Literary texts

Defoe, Daniel. *Robinson Crusoe*. Excerpt.  
Melville, Herman. "Benito Cereno"  
Rhys, Jean. *Wide Sargasso Sea*

#### Critical texts

Most of the readings are taken from this volume:  
Leitch, Vincent, et al., eds. *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. New York: Norton, 2001.

- Althusser, Louis. "A Letter on Art." (Norton 1480-1483)
- Bakhtin, M. M. from *Discourse in the Novel* (Norton, 1187-1220)
- Bloom, Harold. From *The Anxiety of Influence* (Norton, 1797-1805)
- Bourdieu, Pierre. "Flaubert's Point of View." *Critical Inquiry* 14.3 (Spring 1988): 539-562. (JSTOR)
- Bourdieu, Pierre. xxx
- Culler, Jonathan. "Literary Competence." *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics and the Study of Literature*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1975. 113-130. (hand-out)
- Doležel, Lubomír. *Heterocosmica: Fiction and Possible Worlds*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1998. 199-226. (Hand-out)
- Eliot, T. S. "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (Norton 1092-1098)
- Fisch, Harold. "The Hermeneutic Quest in Robinson Crusoe" *Midrash and Literature*. Ed. Hartman and Budick. New Haven: Yale, 1986. 213-35. (Handout)
- Fish, Stanley. "Interpreting the Variorum" (Norton, 1970-1992)
- Gilbert, Sandra M. and Susan Gubar, from *The Madwoman in the Attic* (Norton, 2021-2035)
- Hirsch, E.D. Jr. "Objective Interpretation" PMLA, 75 (1960). rpt in *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. New York: Norton, 2001. (hand-out)
- Jameson, Fredric. From *The Political Unconscious*; "Postmodernism and Consumer Society" (Norton, 1932-1960)
- Iser, Wolfgang. "Interaction between Text and Reader" (Norton, 1521-1532)
- Jauss, Hans Robert. From "Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory" (Norton, 1550-1564)
- Kavanagh, James H. "'That Hive of Subtlety': Benito Cereno and the Liberal Hero." *Bucknell Review* 29.1 (1984): 127-57. (Hand-out)
- Lanser, Susan S. "Sexing Narratology: Toward a Gendered Poetics of Narrative Voice." *Transcending Boundaries: Narratology in Context*. Ed. Walter Grünzweig and Andreas Solbach. Tübingen: Gunter, 1999. 167-183. (Hand-out)
- Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels, From *The German Ideology* (Norton 767-69); from *The Communist Manifesto* (Norton 769-73); "The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof" (Norton 776-83) and from Letter from Friedrich Engels to Joseph Bloch (Norton 787-88)
- Mezei, Kathy. "'And it kept its secret': Narration, Memory and Madness in Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea*" *Critique* 28.4 (Summer 1987): 195-209. (e-journal)
- Ricoeur, Paul. "The Human Experience of Time and Narrative," in *Research in Phenomenology* 9 (1979): 17-34. [Note that the e-journal indexing has hidden Ricoeur's article in the article by Samuel Ijselling, "Hermeneutics and Textuality: Questions Concerning Phenomenology." Go to SUB e-journals, search for *Research in Phenomenology*; choose volume 9, 1979, and then choose the article by Ijselling and get the pdf version of it. Ricoeur's article starts on page 17.]
- Ryan, Marie-Laure. "Possible Worlds and Accessibility Relations: A Semantic Typology of Fiction." *Poetics Today* 12.3 (Autumn, 1991): 553-576. (JSTOR)
- Smith, Barbara. "Toward a Black Feminist Criticism" (Norton, 2299-2315)
- Todorov, Tzvetan. "Structural Analysis of Narrative" (Norton, 2097-2106)
- Wimsatt, W. K. & Monroe Beardsley "The Affective Fallacy" (Norton, 1246-1261)
- Woolf, Virginia. From *A Room of One's Own* (Norton, 1017-1029)
- Additional material may be assigned by the instructors after the course has started.

## Course aims

At the end of the course, students should

- have acquired a broad knowledge about and understanding of different approaches to the study of narrative, as represented by the readings for the course.

- have acquired a critical perspective on the analysis of narrative form by reflecting on the literary works and the critical material read for the course.
- have the ability to analyze narrative form in different literary genres and to discuss the consequences of using different types of narrative analysis.
- have developed his or her ability to present such analyses in written or spoken English, using the appropriate concepts and making the appropriate references.

This is what we aim for. The means for this is conscientious preparation for each seminar, active participation in seminar discussion, focused responses to given assignments, and the independent production of written work.

## Course requirements

To achieve the goals of the course, and be given a passing grade, you will be required to

- Attend the seminars. That is, attendance is compulsory. Notify the course co-ordinator and the seminar instructor **by e-mail** ASAP if for some reason you will be/have been absent. For each seminar you miss you will be given an extra assignment to make up for your absence, but you are only allowed to miss two seminars. Three strikes and you're out; that is, if you miss more than two seminars you will automatically fail the course.
- Prepare for the seminars by reading the assigned texts in a critical and active manner. Also prepare by carrying out any other tasks that you have been assigned.
- Participate actively in class discussion. During the seminars every one of us will take part in a discussion that aims at finding and probing the difficult questions that come up when we analyze narrative form. Come well prepared and be ready to contribute to constructive and critical exchanges. Since at each seminar you will communicate your main findings and questions to others, it is important to be prepared for this task.
- Write and hand in responses to assignments given for each seminar by the instructors.

### Contact info

Course co-ordinator: Bo G. Ekelund; Office: E854. Work phone: 16 36 18; Home: 08-749 08 11 (Only within normal office hours).

Stefan Helgesson. Office: E860. Work phone: 16 36 23.

Marion Helfer Wajngot. Office: E808. Work phone: 16 19 70.

All e-mail addresses follow the department standard: `firstname.surname@english.su.se`

## Assessment and assessment criteria

You will be continually assessed according to your performance in class, and according to the quality of your submitted assignments: written assignments (70%), seminar work (30%).

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### OUTSTANDING

For a grade of **A** the student should ...

- Display wide-ranging knowledge of the themes and concepts covered by the course material and seminar presentations as well as a profound familiarity with the texts we have read.

- Show the ability, in written work and in active class discussion, to critically analyze theoretical arguments and literary works in a manner that is on occasion innovative and often illuminating, consistently deploying appropriate critical concepts in an elegant way.
  - Present his/her arguments in a persuasive and coherent manner, in correct, fluent and idiomatic English, in a consistently academic style of writing and spoken delivery.
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### EXCELLENT

For a grade of **B** the student should ...

- display a broad knowledge of the themes and concepts covered by the course material and seminar presentations as well as a solid familiarity with the texts we have read.
  - show the ability, in written work and in class discussion, to critically analyze theoretical arguments and literary works in a manner that is on occasion illuminating, with frequent and correct use of appropriate critical concepts.
  - present arguments in a solid and coherent manner, in correct and fluent English, in an academic style of writing and in an acceptably formal register of spoken delivery
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### GOOD

For a grade of **C** the student should ...

- display considerable knowledge of most of the themes and concepts covered by the course material and seminar presentations as well as an adequate familiarity with the texts we have read.
  - show the ability, in written work and in class discussion, to critically analyze theoretical arguments and literary works, with at least occasional and correct use of appropriate critical concepts.
  - present arguments in a coherent manner, in adequate English with only minor errors, with only some lapses from an academic style of writing and with a correct and fluent spoken delivery
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### SATISFACTORY

For a grade of **D** the student should ...

- display basic knowledge of most of the themes and concepts covered by the course material and seminar presentations as well as some familiarity with the texts we have read.
  - show the ability, in written work and in class discussion, to critically analyze literary works and theoretical arguments, with some, basic use of appropriate critical concepts.
  - present his/her arguments in a largely coherent manner, in adequate English with only minor errors, in a consistent, formal register of writing and with a largely correct and fluent spoken delivery
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### ADEQUATE

For a grade of **E** the student should ...

- display basic knowledge of some of the themes and concepts covered by the course material and seminar presentations as well as a basic knowledge of some of the elements of plots, characters, settings and narrative structure in most of the texts we have read.
  - show some ability, in written work and in class discussion, to critically analyze literary works and theoretical arguments, with at least a minimal employment of technical terms.
  - present his/her arguments in an intelligible manner, in adequate English, in a largely formal register of written or spoken delivery, with some fluency and few errors.
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### INADEQUATE

A grade of **F** will be set if the student

- fails the attendance requirements or fails to hand in assignments in time.

- shows scant or no knowledge of the themes and concepts covered by the course material and seminar presentations; likewise shows very little or no familiarity with the texts we have read.
- fails to reach a satisfactory level of critical analysis in written assignments and in class discussion, a failure that includes inability to properly use critical concepts.
- fails to communicate adequately in English, with many errors and no sense of stylistic register.

Any of these failures is enough for an overall fail.

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## INCOMPLETE

The **Fx** grade is set if the student has reached most of the Learning outcomes of the course, but must hand in revised or supplementary material in order to fully meet the requirements.