

COMENTARIO DE TEXTOS LITERARIOS EN LENGUA INGLESA

Curso 2011/2012

(Código: 64021028)

1. PRESENTACIÓN DE LA ASIGNATURA

This course is a compulsory (= *obligatoria*) part of the First Year of the *Grado en Estudios Ingleses: Lengua, Literatura y Cultura*. You will be studying *Comentario...* together with other subjects (= *asignaturas*) directly related to English Studies such as *Literatura inglesa I: ejes de la literatura medieval y renacentista* and *Mundos anglófonos en perspectiva histórica y cultural*.

In *Comentario...* you will read and analyse closely literary texts in English learn how to comment on them. Together with practical examples of modern literature in English, *Comentario...* will also introduce you to some of the most important critical and literary theories of the 20th century. Applying these theories to the literary texts will be a central part of *Comentario...* You will also be introduced to certain critical vocabulary.

Do not expect to find a conventional "Comentario de textos" subject. Only minimal or peripheral attention will be paid to systematically identifying literary terms (metaphor, allegory, etc.). The Bibliography suggests dictionaries and links/*enlaces* that provide literary terms.

The entire course will be taught and assessed in English.

2. CONTEXTUALIZACIÓN EN EL PLAN DE ESTUDIOS

As stated, *Comentario...* is part of a group of subjects that relate to English Studies directly, but also to *estudios ingleses* generally. Thus, together with *Comentario...*, *Literatura inglesa I* and *Mundos anglófonos* (all of them compulsory), you will be able to study *Inglés Instrumental I & II*, *Comunicación oral y escrita en lengua española I & II*, *El lenguaje humano* and *Teoría lingüística. Métodos, herramientas y paradigmas*.

Comentario... is one of your first literature-related subjects. It will ask you to think about the relation between critical theory, close reading and literary texts, something you will need to keep in mind throughout your *Grado en Estudios Ingleses*. You will be introduced to certain concepts such as feminist critical theory or poststructuralism and you will have some experience in discussing them in English. This training will be essential later on both professionally and academically if, among things:

- you are considering going into higher education (= *enseñanza superior*) as a teacher of *Estudios Ingleses*;
- you want to be an English language teacher in a secondary school;



- you need to communicate sophisticated concepts in written or spoken English;
- you wish to work in sectors such as publishing or arts and cultural management;
- you decide to do a *posgrado* in literature, whether in English or Spanish.

You will also begin to acquire certain general competencies such as using the internet as a learning and study tool; working in a team with fellow students; time and work management; analysing and summarizing complex material; and reading and critical skills/*destrezas*.

3. REQUISITOS PREVIOS REQUERIDOS PARA CURSAR LA ASIGNATURA

Level B1 English (intermediate) of the Common European Framework of Reference.

Internet access and basic computer skills.

4. RESULTADOS DE APRENDIZAJE

Learning activities/Actividades de aprendizaje: *Comentario...* will:

- introduce you to a selection of short texts in English written by leading critics and cultural theorists of the twentieth century;
- introduce you to a selection of literary texts in English;
- introduce you to ideas about reading and commenting on literary texts;
- require you to read, analyse and write about literary texts in English from differing critical and cultural points of view;
- introduce you to concepts and vocabulary in English associated with critical reading;
- train you in certain academic skills such as reading comprehension, summarizing texts, writing extended answers in English.

Learning outcomes: after completing *Comentario...* you should have acquired:

- a general understanding of important critical theories regarding literature and culture;
- familiarity with certain literary texts in the English language;
- the ability to read and analyse literary texts in English from different critical and cultural perspectives;
- a familiarity with concepts and vocabulary in English associated with critical reading;
- certain academic skills such as reading comprehension, summarizing texts, writing extended answers in English.



Remember: critical reading and analysis is at the heart of *Comentario...*, not a mechanical identifying of certain literary or rhetorical devices/*recursos*.

5. CONTENIDOS DE LA ASIGNATURA

UNIT 1: Introduction to Poststructuralist Theories

Critical writings: Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida (in study material).

Literary texts: Dylan Thomas, "A refusal to mourn the death, by fire, of a child in London" (Appendix 2, Peter Barry, *Beginning Theory*, 275-276).

Readings: Barthes and Derrida extracts; Peter Barry, *Beginning Theory*, Chapter 3; Michael Ryan, *Literary Theory*, Chapter 4; Dylan Thomas.

Activities: readings, online and face-to-face discussions with Course team (Equipo docente), tutor or in groups, critical practice, self-assessment questions.

UNIT 2: Introduction to New Historicism

Critical writings: Hayden White, Stephen Greenblatt (in study material).

Literary texts: Elizabeth Bishop, "Twelve O'Clock News" (on *curso virtual* in pdf file).

Readings: White and Hall extracts; Barry, *Beginning Theory*, Chapter 9; Ryan, *Literary Theory*, Chapter 9; Elizabeth Bishop.

Activities: readings, online and face-to-face discussions with Course team (Equipo docente), tutor or in groups, critical practice, self-assessment questions and written assignments (*Prueba de Evaluación a Distancia: PEC*).

UNIT 3: Introduction to Feminism

Critical writings: Sandra Gilbert & Susan Gubar (in study material).

Literary texts: Elizabeth Bishop, "Roosters" (on *curso virtual* in pdf file).

Readings: Gilbert & Gubar extract; Barry, *Beginning Theory*, Chapter 6; Elizabeth Bishop.

Activities: readings, online and face-to-face discussions with Course team (Equipo docente), tutor or in groups, critical practice, self-assessment questions and course assignments.

UNIT 4: Introduction to Gender and Queer Studies

Critical writings: Adrienne Rich, Barbara Smith (in study material).

Literary texts: Elizabeth Bishop, "In the Waiting Room", "Exchanging Hats" on *curso virtual* in pdf file).

Readings: Rich and Smith extracts; Barry, *Beginning Theory*, Chapter 7; Ryan, *Literary Theory*, Chapter 7; Elizabeth Bishop.

Activities: readings, online and face-to-face discussions with Course team (Equipo docente), tutor or in groups, critical practice, self-assessment questions and course assignments.

UNIT 5: Introduction to Ethnic and Post-Colonial Studies

Critical writings: Chinua Achebe, Edward Said (in study material).

Literary texts: Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (link to e-text provided); Morrison, *The Bluest Eye*.

Readings: Achebe and Said extracts; Barry, *Beginning Theory*, Chapter 10; Ryan, *Literary Theory*, Chapters 9 & 10; *The Bluest Eye* and *Heart of Darkness*.

Activities: readings, online and face-to-face discussions with Course team (Equipo docente), tutor or in groups, critical practice, self-assessment questions and course assignments (*Prueba de Evaluación Continua: PEC*).

Exam Preparation Unit

Activities: summary of course units, discussion of queries (=dudas + consultas) and problems on line, in tutorials or groups, mock exam.



6.EQUIPO DOCENTE

- [ISABEL CASTELAO GOMEZ](#)
- [JESUS CORA ALONSO](#)
- [DI DAC LLORENS CUBEDO](#)

7.METODOLOGÍA Y ACTIVIDADES DE APRENDIZAJE

UNED is a distance university and its pedagogy is too. The 'distance' component is complemented by attendance-based tutorials/*tutorías presenciales* at its regional study centres (= *Centros Asociados*) as well as online activities, and interaction with the Course team, tutors and fellow-students. There is a significant component of autonomous learning.

Comentario de textos literarios en lengua inglesa is a 5 ECTS course, equivalent to 125 hours or approximately 13 weeks. There are 5 course units + a two-week preparation unit immediately prior to the exams.

Below is a suggested plan for how you should distribute and manage your time.

UNIT 1: Introduction to Poststructuralist Theories
Duration: approx. 2 weeks

UNIT 2: Introduction to New Historicism
Duration: approx. 2 weeks

UNIT 3: Introduction to Feminism
Duration: approx. 2 weeks

UNIT 4: Introduction to Gender and Queer Studies
Duration: approx. 2 weeks

UNIT 5: Introduction to Ethnic and Post-Colonial Studies
Duration: approx. 3 weeks

Exam Preparation Unit
Duration: approx. 2 weeks

Contact hours with course supervisors and tutors – about 40% of your time – distributed thus:

- Theoretical activities (reading, online or face-to-face queries/*dudas* + *consultas*); going over your work with your tutor and fellow students; exam revision with your tutor or Course team member.
- Practical activities (attending tutorials, reading and Study Guide instructions).

Autonomous learning – 60% of your time – distributed thus:

- Theoretical activities (studying course material, participating in study groups, interacting online with fellow students, searching for information on the internet with supervisor or tutor).
- Practical activities (problem solving, textual analysis and commentary, written and online group activities).

**Autonomous study and self-assessment (see below) are an integral part of



8.EVALUACIÓN

Evaluation takes place through:

- a) Exams, i.e. the *pruebas presenciales* held at the UNED study centres at the end of the first semester, and the September session. These will be set/*preparados* by the UNED Course team in Madrid at the Senda del Rey campus. The exams count for 80% of the final mark/*nota final*.
- b) Two assignments or *Pruebas de Evaluación Continua (PECs)*. These represent 20% of the final mark.
- c) Tutorial attendance/*asistencia* and participation, whether written or oral.
- d) Group activities either in tutorials or on line, through the *curso virtual*.
- e) Self-assessment exercises. These form the backbone of *Comentario...* and give you the opportunity to practice and self-correct your English language skills through analysis of critical and literary texts. All the exercises as well as the answers are provided through the *curso virtual*.
- f) Answers to exams and *PECs*. Again, you will find these on the *cv*.
- g) A mock exam before the official exam. This is an unofficial exam and provides extra preparation for the *pruebas presenciales*. Answers will be posted/*subidas* on the *cv*.

9.BIBLIOGRAFÍA BÁSICA

Comentarios y anexos:

Introduction to critical and literary theory

BARRY, Peter. *Beginning Theory. An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2009

RYAN, Michael. *Literary Theory: A Practical Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2007.

Critical texts

Brief extracts from the following literary and critical theorists: Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Hayden White, Stephen Greenblatt, Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, Adrienne Rich, Barbara Smith, Chinua Achebe, Edward Said. (1)

Literary texts

Dylan Thomas, "A refusal to mourn the death, by fire, of a child in London" (Barry, *Beginning Theory*, Appendix 2, 275-276).

Elizabeth Bishop poems: "Twelve O'Clock News", "Roosters", "In the Waiting Room", "Exchanging Hats". (1)

CONRAD, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness* (1899, 1902). This is widely available free on the internet. The following is one of the better *e-editions*:
<http://www.enotes.com/darkness-text/>

MORRISON, Toni. *The Bluest Eye* (1970). London: Vintage: 1999. This edition is recommended for the afterword it includes by the author.

You must buy Barry's *Beginning Theory*, Ryan's *Literary Theory* and Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*. Amazon.co.uk is an excellent online bookseller and purchase orders/*pedidos* over £25 are shipped/*enviados* to Spain free of charge. Amazon prices are lower than those of Spanish booksellers.



The *Guía de Estudio. Plan de trabajo* for *Comentario de textos literarios en lengua inglesa* gives you study guidelines on how to proceed through the course in terms of activities, time management and resources, etc. You will find it on the *curso virtual*. UNITS 1-6 are essential: they provide you with all the material you need to successfully complete the course: critical texts, study materials, self-assessment-exercises and answers.

The books by PETER BARRY and MICHAEL RYAN provide reasonably accessible introductions to literary and critical theory together with practical examples of close critical readings of literary texts. They will be used in conjunction with the rest of the study material.

(1) The extracts from the critical authors (Barthes, Derrida, etc.) and all of Elizabeth Bishop's poems will be posted in pdf files on the *curso virtual*.

10. BIBLIOGRAFÍA COMPLEMENTARIA

Comentarios y anexos:

LEITCH, VINCENT B., *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. New York: W.W.Norton and Co., 2010.

BALDICK, CHRIS. *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Literary Terms*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.

CASHMORE, ELLIS. Ed. *Dictionary of Race and Ethnic Relations*. London: Routledge, 1996.

CUDDON, J.A. (1977) *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1999.

HABIB, M. A. R. *Literary Criticism: from Plato to the Present. An Introduction*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.

LENTRICCHIA, FRANK and McLAUGHLIN, THOMAS, Eds. *Critical Terms for Literary Study*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

WOLFREYS, JULIAN. *Critical Keywords in Literary and Cultural Theory*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

----- Ed. *Introducing Criticism at the 21st Century*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002.

None of the above texts is compulsory. They provide a suggested *bibliografía complementaria*. The list will be updated on a regular basis and suggestions from tutors and students alike are welcome.

The Norton Anthology provides an extraordinary selection of critical writings from Georgias of Leontini (ca. 483-376 B.C.E.) to Stuart Moulthrop (b. 1957). It is divided into thematic sections, each one accompanied by a clear introduction. There is an extensive bibliography.

The rest of the suggested texts all combine extensive glossaries with useful added commentaries.

Websites

<http://www.uta.edu/huma/illuminations/>

Illuminations: The Critical Theory Website



<http://vos.ucsb.edu/browse.asp?id=2718>

Voice of the Shuttle: Literary Theory

<http://www.virtualsalt.com/litterms.htm>

<http://www.uncp.edu/home/canada/work/allam/general/glossary.htm>

Literary terms

None of the above texts is compulsory. They provide a suggested *bibliografía complementaria*. The list will be updated on a regular basis and suggestions from tutors and students alike are welcome.

The *Norton Anthology* provides an extraordinary selection of critical writings from Georgias of Leontini (ca. 483-376 B.C.E.) to Stuart Moulthrop (b. 1957). It is divided into thematic sections, each one accompanied by a clear introduction. There is an extensive bibliography. A new edition is forthcoming.

The rest of the suggested texts (= *bibliografía complementaria*) all combine extensive glossaries with useful added commentaries.

Websites

<http://www.uta.edu/huma/illuminations/>

Illuminations: The Critical Theory Website

<http://vos.ucsb.edu/browse.asp?id=2718>

Voice of the Shuttle: Literary Theory

11. RECURSOS DE APOYO

Together with the *Guía de Estudio*, the *curso virtual* (which is the backbone of *Comentario...*), and online interaction with your course supervisors and tutor, among others, you have access to the UNED Humanities library. It is one of the best university libraries in Spain and offers students an extensive loan collection, as well as electronic resources and online journals (= *publicaciones científicas*).

12. TUTORIZACIÓN

The UNED's blended/*dual* distance methodology means that students have the chance to meet with tutors and fellow-students at local study centres (*Centros Asociados*) on a regular basis. You are strongly encouraged to attend these sessions, since they provide a human context to your studies and allow you to discuss issues and problems directly with your tutor and/or classmates. All study centres have facilities such as a library and computer terminals.

Though the UNED is a distance university, remember that it is committed to being "*La universidad más cercana*". This is no idle claim. Through your tutorials, the *curso virtual*, email and more traditional means such as the telephone, letters or even personal appointments, you will receive the support you need.

Please try to contact your tutor and course supervisors at the appropriate office hours. If you call us by phone and we are away from our desk, remember always to leave your name, reason for calling and, most importantly, a contact number.

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