

**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION**

**CARE GHANA PROGRAMME
EBS 432SW: LITERARY CRITICISM**

SECOND SEMESTER, 2023

Course Description

Criticism is the description and analysis of judgment of a work of art. The roots of literary criticism can be traced into traditional and ancient theories of art, mimesis, and the various processes thought to influence the production of a literary text and the manner of its consumption. In a sweeping movement from the Greek classification to contemporary African literature this course explores the theoretical, philosophical, historical and ideological foundations of literary criticism and practice. It considers such received principles as the immanent history of literature, the nature of art, concepts of beauty in art, and the creative process in literature. The course aims at leading students to critically reflect on the practice of art and criticism by considering a selection of canonical texts which are constituted from reflections by writer and thinkers from Classical through Modern Europe to Africa and America hinging on major literary theories. The following essay would provide the basis for our discussion.

Course Objectives: By the end of the course, students will be able to

- a. explain the principles governing literary criticism.
- b. critically examine the given essays and critic each in the context of relevant theories.
- c. discuss the relevance or otherwise of the issues discussed in contemporary contexts.
- d. provide personal views on the essay in relation to other literary texts.

Outline

Unit One	–	The Concept of Criticism Aristotle: <i>The Poetics</i> Arthur Miller: “Tragedy and the Common Man”
Unit Two	–	T.S. Elliot: “Traditional and the Individual Talent” Toni Morrison: “Rootedness: The Ancestor as Foundation” Toni Morrison “The Language Must not Sweat”
Unit Three	–	T.S. Eliot: “The Metaphysical Poets” Samuel Johnson: “Preface to Shakespeare” William Wordsworth: “Preface to Lyrical Ballads”
Unit Four	–	Adrienne Rich: “When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Re-Vision” Virginia Woolf: “A Room of one’s Own” Carole Boyce Davis: “Some notes on African Feminism”

- Unit Five – Chinua Achebe: “Colonialist Criticism”
Wole Soyinka: “Drama and African World View”
- Unit Six – Frantz Fanon: “On National Cultural”
Homi Bhabba: *Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse*

Course Requirements

The mode of delivery would be interactive, student-led seminar and discussion to examine the essays in the contexts of the literary theories. The essays must be accessed online and read before the interaction. Students would be expected to share their understanding and judgement through Online and Face to Face interactions.

Assessment modes

Quiz I	–	20
Assignment		
Quiz II	-	20
End of Semester Examination	–	60

Secondary Readings

Tyson, L. (1999). *Critical theory today: A user-friendly guide*. New York & London: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Handy, J.W. & Westbrook, M. (1974). *Twentieth century criticism: The major statements*. New York: The Free Press.