

**MENG 6010**  
**CRN 20096**  
**Introduction to Graduate Studies**  
**Weber State University**  
**Fall 2015**

Facebook: Facebook.com/WSUartsandhumanities.com  
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**Professor:** Dr. Mali Subbiah  
**Meeting Place:** EH  
**Meeting Time:** W 5:30-8:10

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**Required Texts:**

Hall, Donald. *Literary and Cultural Theory: From Basic Principles to Advanced Applications*

Yan, Mo. *Frog*

Readings on WSU Canvas for MENG 6010

A writer's handbook of your choice—print or online—published 2011 or later, that covers MLA style. (Suggested titles include: *Hodges Harbrace Handbook*; *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, *The Bedford Handbook*; *The St. Martin's Handbook*, etc.).

**Suggested Reading / Secondary Sources:**

You will be introduced to a dozen different professional journals relevant to your interests.

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*The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*

Any book on literary theory that, as a result of your introduction to theory, piques your interest in reading more about the field or a particular approach.

*Literary Criticism Online* (available through library databases)

*The Oxford Guide to Literature in English Translation* (available through library databases)

Reading About the Profession:

<http://www.ade.org/bulletin/index.htm>

<http://www.ade.org/reports/index.htm>

<http://www.ade.org/facts/index.htm>

**Course Description:**

This course will provide instruction in the process of researching and writing academic papers, and it will also help professionalize your work in the context of the field of English studies. To these ends, you will learn (or review, as the case may be) appropriate academic databases, methods of research, the theories informing critical approaches, how to apply these approaches to a primary text, how to write an academic paper, and how to use MLA style and documentation. Additionally, you will learn how to identify professional organizations, conferences, and journals relevant to your work. Part of this process will include learning how to write and submit a proposal for acceptance at a professional academic conference and how to write and submit a book review for publication in an academic journal. We'll also explore how to streamline your work, so that work on any one project (e.g., a longer paper) can tie into conference presentations, book reviews, and/or journal publication. As graduate students, the level of work required from you—and your ability to work independently to problem-solve—will be significantly different than what was necessary as an undergraduate. Expect to be challenged beyond the boundaries of this particular classroom, as this course is intended to prepare you for success in your other courses and the program as a whole, by encouraging the independent work that is at the heart of graduate studies.

## **Policies:**

### **Attendance:**

I realize that “life happens”—work conflicts, illness, children’s needs, and so forth. Over the last decade of teaching I have worked out a policy that is equitable for all class members and that also preserves your privacy. Here are the details: *There are no “excused absences,” but you get one absence without penalty. Illness, work conflicts, child care issues—in the interest of fairness, all are treated the same. The second absence will reduce your final grade by 4 points. Three absences or more typically results in a failing grade.*

### **Class Participation & Conduct:**

Please come to class on time and prepared to discuss assigned reading and your writing. Habitually arriving late to class will negatively impact your grade. Active participation—defined as asking thoughtful questions, contributing meaningful insights to the class discussion and the like improves your final grade; lack of such contributions hurts your final grade.

**Late papers:** All work is due (either hard copy or online Canvas submission), as specified for each assignment. Late papers will not be accepted unless you have made prior arrangements. Late paper penalties may apply.

**Academic Dishonesty:** As specified in PPM 6-22 IV D, cheating and plagiarism violate the Student Code. Plagiarism is “the unacknowledged (uncited) use of any other person’s or group’s ideas or work.” Students found guilty of cheating or plagiarism are subject to failure of a specific assignment, or, in more serious cases, failure of the entire course and referral to the MENG Program Director.

**Core Beliefs:** According to PPM 6-22 IV, students are to “[d]etermine, before the last day to drop courses without penalty, when course requirements conflict with a student’s core beliefs. If there is such a conflict, the student should consider dropping the class. A student who finds this solution impracticable may request a resolution from the instructor. This policy does not oblige the instructor to grant the request, except in those cases when a denial would be arbitrary and capricious or illegal. This request must be made to the instructor in writing and the student must deliver a copy of the request to the office of the department head. The student’s request must articulate the burden the requirement would place on the student’s beliefs.”

**Disability Accommodation:** PPM 3-34 notes: “When students seek accommodation in a regularly scheduled course, they have the responsibility to make such requests at the Center for Students with Disabilities before the beginning of the quarter [semester] in which the accommodation is being requested. When a student fails to make such arrangements, interim accommodations can be made by the instructor, pending the determination of the request for a permanent accommodation.”

**Emergency Campus Closure:** In the event of an extended campus closure, check your WSU Wildcat email account for further instructions about how to keep up with class. It will be your responsibility to check in frequently with your WSU email account in order to complete the class.

## **MENG Learning Outcomes**

Learning Outcome 1: Gather, analyze, and communicate information effectively as well as think creatively and critically.

Learning Outcome 2: Cultivated skills in close reading, critical thinking, logical argument from evidence presented, creative expression, and persuasive writing.

Learning Outcome 3: Apply various theoretical perspectives and literary terminology to interpretations of literary texts to showcase an understanding of theoretical perspectives.

Learning Outcome 4: Acknowledge and articulate the significance of key primary text(s) in one specific literary genre, period, culture or style.

Learning Outcome 5: Demonstrate knowledge of an interaction with current scholarly criticism.

Learning Outcome 6: Ability to employ academic conventions and protocols for written or multimodal presentations, including the application of appropriate conventions, citation formats and style manuals.

By the end of the semester, you will be able to:

1. Produce a written text that demonstrates knowledge of MLA style and that effectively integrates sophisticated research;
2. Understand and apply a variety of critical approaches in your written work;
3. Know how to identify appropriate academic conference venues for your work and write and submit a proposal for consideration;
4. Know how to identify appropriate academic journals in your field and write and submit a book review for publication.
5. Understand how to effectively combine various academic projects and to streamline your work processes.

### **Assignments and Grades:**

Your grade for the course is based on 100 points, and consists of the following assignments, posted on Canvas.

- Two Short (600-800 words) Papers (5 points each--10 points total) (LO 1-6)
- Biographical Statement + Resume/CV (5 points) (LO 1-6)
- Annotated Bibliography (10 points) (LO 2,3,6)
- Journal Evaluation (10 points) (LO 3,4,5,6)
- Thesis Abstract (7.5 points) (LO 3,4,5)
- Academic Conference Proposal (**Submitted** in response to a conference RFP of your choice) (7.5 points) (LO 1-6)
- Book Review (**Submitted** to an academic journal in your area of interest) (10 points) (LO 1-6)
- A 12-15-Page Paper (30 points) (LO 1-6)
- Active classroom participation: frequent, quality contributions to class discussions, completed reading and writing assignments, participating in peer editing workshops. (10 points)

### **Course Outline**

#### **Week One: Course Overview**

9/2 Syllabus • Project Management • WSU Canvas • Identify Interests, Professional Organizations, Conferences, Journals • Using the Library: Literary and Related Databases • Principles of Research

On Canvas: Glossary of Terms—familiarize yourself with terms and concepts essential to graduate-level work.

#### **WEEKS 2-7: Literary Criticism: Theory and Practice**

#### **Week Two:**

9/9 Read: Mo Yan, *Frog*—(the entire novel, though we'll be discussing it over the next five weeks).  
Read: Gregory Castle, "The Rise of Literary Theory"; Download PDF File on Canvas.

#### **Week Three: New Criticism • Reader Response**

9/16

Read: Chapters 1 and 2 in *Literary and Cultural Theory (LCT)*

Review: Mo Yan, *Frog*

**Due: Draft of Resume/CV & Biographical Statement**

#### **Week Four: (Guest Lecturer) Marxist & Materialist Analysis • Feminist Analysis**

9/23

Read: Chapters 3 and 7 in *LCT* + Read: Bressler, "Feminism" (Canvas)

Review: Mo Yan, *Frog*

**Write: Short Paper #1 Due**

**Week Five: Race, Ethnicity, and Post-Colonial Analysis**

9/30 Read: Chapter 9 in *LCT*  
Read: McLeod, "From 'Commonwealth' to 'postcolonial'" (Canvas)  
Review: Mo Yan, *Frog*  
**Due: Final Draft of Resume/CV & Biographical Statement**

**Week Six: Cultural Studies and New Historicism**

10/7 Read: Chapter 10 in *LCT* + Guerin et al: "Cultural Studies" (Canvas)  
Review: Mo Yan, *Frog*  
Guest Speaker

**Week Seven: Environmental Literary Criticism**

10/14 Read: Barry, "Ecocriticism" (Canvas)  
Read: Campbell, "Asking Ecocritical Questions" (Canvas)  
Review: Mo Yan, *Frog*  
**Write: Short Paper #2 Due**

**Week Eight: Identifying & Planning Projects / Review of Online Sessions in WSU Canvas**

10/21 • Journal Evaluations • Thesis Abstract • Conference Proposal • Book Review • Guest Speaker

**WEEKS 9-13: Mentored Research & Writing In Class and Online**

We will be working together in person and online using chat and discussion formats on Canvas during our usual class time. Work from whatever location you prefer—but consider this portion of the class equally as important as the face-to-face meetings. During these five weeks you will have an opportunity to work in a different medium, to share your work and review that of others, and to receive written feedback from me and others.

**Week Nine: ONLINE Workshop: Journal Evaluations**

10/28 Due: Draft of Journal Evaluations

**Week Ten: Annotated Bibliography Workshop—IN CLASS**

11/4 Due: Final Draft of Journal Evaluations  
Due/Work on: Draft of Annotated Bibliography  
Guest Speaker

**Week Eleven: ONLINE Workshop: Thesis Abstract and Conference Proposal**

11/11 Due: Initial Drafts of Thesis and Conference Proposal

**Week Twelve: ONLINE Workshop: Conference Proposal & Submission / Book Review & Query Letter/Email**

11/18 Due: Final Drafts of Thesis and Conference Proposal  
Due: Draft of Book Review & Query Letter/Email

**Week Thirteen: Book Review Workshopping—IN CLASS**

11/25 Due: Final Draft of Book Review & Query Letter/Email  
Guest Speaker

**WEEKS 14-15: Final Paper**

**Week Fourteen: Revision Workshop for Final Paper**

12/2 Due: Completed 12-15 Page Draft of Paper

**Week Fifteen: Research Presentations**

12/9 5-Minute Research Presentations  
Due: Final Draft of Annotated Bibliography

**Final Draft of 12-15 Page Paper due by Wednesday, December 9th. Upload to Canvas.**

## Grading Criteria Used for MENG 6010 Essays

(NOTE: ONLY Grades of B- or Higher Count Toward Degree Requirements)

**A:** An essay or paper in this category:

- is well developed and well organized
- clearly illustrates and develops key ideas
- displays a high degree of inventiveness & originality
- displays a sophisticated and superior use of language
- demonstrates syntactic variety
- is virtually free from errors in mechanics, usage, sentence structure, and diction

**B:** An essay or paper in this category:

- is well organized and developed, though it may have small flaws in organization or paragraphing
- illustrates and develops some key ideas
- displays good control of language and a consistent tone
- demonstrates some syntactic variety
- is generally free from errors in mechanics, usage, sentence structure, and diction

**C:** An essay or paper in this category:

- is adequately well developed and organized
- illustrates and develops one or two key ideas
- displays capable and accurate use of language
- may display occasional errors in mechanics, usage, sentence structure, and diction, but not a consistent pattern of such errors