

Title of the course	Critical Theory				
Title of the Academic Programme	Philology/Comparative Literature and Linguistics				
Type of the course	Elective				
Prerequisites	Ability to read difficult theoretical texts in English.				
ECTS workload	4				
Total indicative study hours	Directed Study	Self-directed study	Total		
	48	104	152		
Course Overview	<p>This course serves as an introduction to the ideas of some of the most important thinkers in the broad and dynamic field of modern “critical theory.” Topics we will explore include: the mechanisms of ideology, the history of knowledge, the instability of signifying systems, conceptions of the social imaginary, the interrelationship between culture and imperialism, psychoanalysis and the subject under “late capitalism,” as well as theories of the “post-human.” We will examine theorists such as Slavoj Žižek, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Benedict Anderson, Georges Bataille, Edward Said, Jean Baudrillard, Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan, Deleuze and Guatarri, Gayatri Spivak, Judith Butler, Donna Haraway, and others. <i>Readings and discussion in English.</i></p> <p>In the first module the focus will be on ideological constructs, the social imaginary, and culture.</p> <p>In the second module the focus will be on subjectivities, the psyche, and the self.</p>				
Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)	<p>General objectives of the course include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide experience reading complicated theoretical work written in English (or English translation); • hone students’ skills in discussion and critical thinking; • prepare the students who may be interested in graduate-level work in Anglophone countries for engaging in theoretically informed academic discourse; • convey the multiplicity of perspectives available for advanced work in the humanities. 				
Teaching and Learning Methods	Lectures, seminars, presentations, reading and writing assignments, video screenings.				
Content and Structure of the Course					
№	Topic / Course Chapter	Total	Directed Study		Self-directed Study
			Lectures	Tutorials	
1	Ideological Constructs, the Social Imaginary, Culture	76	12	12	52
2	Subjectivities, the Psyche, and the Self	76	12	12	52
Total study hours		152	24	24	104

Indicative Assessment Methods and Strategy

<p>Written in-class test at the end of the first module 25% Short essay questions on key topics from the lectures. <i>Some sample questions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain Edward Said’s conception of Orientalism. • What does Bataille mean by “the accursed share” within his conception of “general economy?” • Why do Adorno and Horkheimer argue that enlightenment has turned into a deception? <p>2 oral presentations 10 minutes, one in each module 30% Students will be given a choice of topics. The presentations should demonstrate a clear understanding of the theoretical concepts involved; they should cite and analyze key passages from relevant texts; and they should offer a critical assessment. The presentation should conclude with a question (or two) addressed to the class for further discussion. <i>Some sample topics:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Žižek’s conception of the Big Other. • The critique of Freudian psychoanalysis in Deleuze and Guatarri. • Post-humanism as a new ethical imperative. <p>Class participation and attendance 10%</p> <p>Final Examination Paper 35% (about 2000 words): You are free to choose your own topic. The one requirement is that your analysis should draw on the work of <u>at least two theorists</u> that we have covered (or the equivalent). You may want to apply theoretical perspectives to analyzing a literary text. Or you may write on a purely theoretical topic—how different theorists approach some common problem. <i>Some examples of purely theoretical topics:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human beings and machines in Deleuze and Guatarri, Donna Haraway • The rejection of the subject in Deleuze and Guatarri, Judith Butler • Language and money in Foucault and Derrida • Colonialism and the subject in Fanon and Spivak • Literary narratives in Said and Benedict Anderson • Gender, sexuality, and social control in Foucault and Judith Butler • The oedipal complex in Freud and Lacan • Consumerism and desire in Baudrillard and Žižek • The system of signs and differences in Derrida and Baudrillard
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Readings / Indicative Learning Resources

Mandatory

- 1) LaCapra, D. *History, Literature, Critical Theory*. Cornell University Press, 2013. *ProQuest*

Optional

- 1) Osborne, T. *The Structure of Modern Cultural Theory*. Manchester University Press, 2008. *ProQuest*
- 2) Taylor, D. *Michel Foucault: Key Concepts*. Routledge, 2014. *ProQuest*
- 3) Wortham, S. M., and S. Morgan Wortham. *The Derrida Dictionary*. Bloomsbury, 2010. *ProQuest*
- 4) Tally, Robert T. *Fredric Jameson: The Project of Dialectical*

	<i>Criticism. Pluto, 2014. ProQuest</i>		
Indicative Self- Study Strategies	Type	+/-	Hours
	Reading for seminars / tutorials (lecture materials, mandatory and optional resources)	+	60
	Assignments for seminars / tutorials / labs	+	24
	E-learning / distance learning (MOOC / LMS)	-	0
	Fieldwork	-	0
	Project work	-	0
	Other (please specify)	-	0
	Preparation for the exam	+	20
Academic Support for the Course	Academic support for the course is provided via LMS, where students can find: guidelines and recommendations for doing the course; guidelines and recommendations for self-study; samples of assessment materials		
Facilities, Equipment and Software	Classrooms must be equipped with computers, projectors, speaker systems, and screens for presentations.		
Course Instructor	Vadim Shkolnikov		

Annex 1

Course Content

№	Topics of Lectures & Seminars	Total	Directed Study		Self-directed Study
			Lectures	Tutorials	
Module 1: Ideological Constructs, the Social Imaginary, Culture					
1	Critique of Post-Ideology	12	2	2	8
2	Historical Ruptures in the Structure of Knowledge	14	2	2	10
3	The Irreducibility of Metaphor	14	2	2	10
4.	The Psycho-Ideological Experience of Community	12	2	2	8
5.	Cultural Imperialism	12	2	2	8
6.	Consumer Society and the Culture Industry	12	2	2	8
Module 2: Subjectivities, the Psyche, and the Self					
7.	Psychoanalysis and Its Critique	28	4	4	20
8.	History of Sexuality	12	2	2	8
9.	Gender and Identity	12	2	2	8
10.	The Post-Colonial Subject	12	2	2	8
11.	Post-Humanism	12	2	2	8

Total study hours	152	24	24	104
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Annex 2

Assessment Methods and Criteria

Assessment Methods

Types of Assessment	Forms of Assessment	Modules			
		1	2	3	4
Formative Assessment	Test	*			
	Essay				
	Report/Presentation	*	*		
	Project				
	In-class Participation	*	*		
	Other (write appropriate control forms for the course)				
Interim Assessment (if required)	Assignment (e.g. written assignment)				
Summative Assessment	Exam (essay)		*		

Assessment Criteria

In-class Participation

Grades	Assessment Criteria
«Excellent» (8-10)	A critical analysis which demonstrates original thinking and shows strong evidence of preparatory research and broad background knowledge.
«Good» (6-7)	Shows strong evidence of preparatory research and broad background knowledge. Excellent oral expression.
«Satisfactory» (4-5)	Satisfactory overall, showing a fair knowledge of the topic, a reasonable standard of expression. Some hesitation in answering follow-up questions and/or gives incomplete or partly irrelevant answers.
«Fail» (0-2)	Limited evidence of relevant knowledge and an attempt to address the topic. Unable to offer relevant information or opinion in answer to follow-up questions.

Oral presentations

Grades	Assessment Criteria
«Excellent» (8-10)	A well-structured, analytical presentation of project work. Shows strong evidence and broad background knowledge. In a group presentation all members contribute equally and each contribution builds on the previous one clearly; Answers to follow-up questions reveal a good range and depth of knowledge beyond that covered in the presentation and show confidence in discussion.
«Good» (6-7)	Clearly organized analysis, showing evidence of a good overall knowledge of the topic. The presenter of the project work highlights key points and responds to follow up questions appropriately. In group presentations there is evidence that the group has met to discuss the topic and is presenting the results of that discussion, in an order previously agreed.
«Satisfactory» (4-5)	Takes a very basic approach to the topic, using broadly appropriate material but lacking focus. The presentation of project work is largely unstructured, and some points are irrelevant to the topic. Knowledge of the topic is limited and there may be evidence of basic misunderstanding. In a group presentation, most of the work is done by one or two students and the individual contributions do not add up.
«Fail» (0-2)	Fails to demonstrate any appropriate knowledge.

Written Assignments (Essay)

Grades	Assessment Criteria
«Excellent» (8-10)	Has a clear argument, which addresses the topic and responds effectively to all aspects of the task. Fully satisfies all the requirements of the task; rare minor errors occur;
«Good» (6-7)	Responds to most aspects of the topic with a clear, explicit argument. Covers the requirements of the task; may produce occasional errors.
«Satisfactory» (4-5)	Generally addresses the task; the format may be inappropriate in places; display little evidence of (depending on the assignment): independent thought and critical judgement include a partial superficial coverage of the key issues, lack critical analysis, may make frequent errors.
«Fail» (0-2)	Fails to demonstrate any appropriate knowledge.

Recommendations for essay

An essay is a written self-study on a topic offered by the teacher or by the student him/herself approved by teacher. The topic for essay includes development of skills for critical thinking and written argumentation of ideas. An essay should include clear statement of a research problem; include an analysis of the problem by using concepts and analytical tools within the subject that generalize the point of view of the author.

Essay structure:

1. *Introduction and formulation of a research question.*
2. *Body of the essay* and theoretical foundation of selected problem and argumentation of a research question.
3. *Conclusion* and argumentative summary about the research question and possibilities for further use or development.

Special conditions for organization of learning process for students with special needs

The following types of comprehension of learning information (including e-learning and distance learning) can be offered to students with disabilities (by their written request) in accordance with their individual psychophysical characteristics:

- 1) *for persons with vision disorders:* a printed text in enlarged font; an electronic document; audios (transferring of learning materials into the audio); an individual advising with an assistance of a sign language interpreter; individual assignments and advising.
- 2) *for persons with hearing disorders:* a printed text; an electronic document; video materials with subtitles; an individual advising with an assistance of a sign language interpreter; individual assignments and advising.
- 3) *for persons with muscle-skeleton disorders:* a printed text; an electronic document; audios; individual assignments and advising.