In this ONLINE class we will study multiple theoretical orientations related to the study of literature, including Russian Formalism, New Criticism, Reader-Response Theory, Structuralism, Poststructuralism/Deconstruction, Postmodernism, Psychoanalytic Theory, Marxism, Feminisms, Queer Theory, Postcolonial Theory, and Ecocriticism.

The goal of the class is for you not only to understand these diverse theoretical perspectives, but also to be able to apply them to your own readings of texts.

Theory is challenging. You will need background in literary analysis before you take this class. To help make sense of the often difficult readings, I’ll offer detailed lessons with abundant examples, including multimedia clips, music videos, comedy sketches by Monty Python, clips from theorists like Slavoj Žižek, etc.

To make theory especially accessible and fun I’ll ask students to apply theory to the readings of poems, short stories, and films. Films and video include Tarsem Singh’s The Fall, Tom Tykwer and The Wachowskis’ Cloud Atlas, the Bollywood classic Lagaan, and episodes from The Idea Channel, Star Trek: The Next Generation, and Charlie Brooker’s Black Mirror. Click here for full information about prerequisites and the course’s online format.