

TERM: Fall 2026

COURSE CATEGORY: ENGL 2500: Theory, Power, and Rhetoric

COURSE NUMBER & TITLE: Theory, Power, and Rhetoric

SECTION TIMES/DAYS: MW 11:50 am-1:30 pm

INSTRUCTOR: Dermot Ryan

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS:

This course has two main goals:

1. To introduce students to key concepts and arguments within contemporary literary, cultural, and rhetorical theory
2. To use these concepts and debates to analyze literature and cultural practices and products.

While our discussions will be organized around important contributions to literary, cultural, and rhetorical theory, we will also look at a range of material (“case studies”) from the world of literature, film, advertisement, music, and social media. By closely analyzing these “primary texts,” we will come to see that one does not necessarily apply theory to texts and practices; rather, we use theoretical concepts to figure out and better describe what is already happening in texts and the world around us.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Students will be able to read primary texts of literary, cultural, and rhetorical theory.
- Students can identify key concepts of literary, cultural, and rhetorical theory.
- Students will be introduced to ways that theory helps them write about different aspects of literary texts and their contexts.

CLASS LEVEL RESTRICTION:

N/A

RECOMMENDED/PREREQUISITES:

N/A

COURSE ATTRIBUTES:

- DISCIPLINARY RESEARCH (LD)
- HISTORY OF LIT, MEDIA, AND CULTURE (LD)
- READING AND WRITING GENRES (LD)
- THEORY, POWER, AND RHETORIC (LD)
- PRE-1800 (UD)
- CREATIVE ARTISTRY (UD)
- RACE, INTERSECTIONALITY, AND POWER (UD)
- UPPER-DIVISION ELECTIVE (UD)
- 5000-LEVEL SEMINAR (UD)

CORE ATTRIBUTES:

N/A