



KIBABII UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

**[A CONSTITUENT COLLEGE OF MASINDE MULIRO UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE &
TECHNOLOGY]**

SECOND YEAR FIRST SEMESTER EXAMINATIONS (1)

FOR THE DEGREE

OF

BACHELOR OF EDUCATION (ARTS)

COURSE CODE: LIT 200

COURSE TITLE: LITERARY THEORY AND APPLICATION

DATE:

TIME:

INSTRUCTIONS:

Answer FOUR questions. Question ONE is compulsory.

TIME: 3 HOURS

KIBUCO observes ZERO tolerance to examination cheating

QUESTION ONE (COMPULSORY)

a) What do you understand by the following terms:

- i) Classical literary theories 2 marks
- ii) *Hamartia* ('fatal flaw' or 'tragic flaw') 2 marks
- iii) Theoretical and practical criticism 4 marks
- iv) The Socratic problem 2 marks
- v) The Socratic dialect/method 2 marks

b) "The *Republic* contains Plato's *Allegory of the Cave* with which he explains his concept of The Forms as an answer to the problem of universals." With close reference to the *Republic* by Plato, discuss the relevance of this statement. 5 marks

c) With reference to the *Republic*, explain THREE recurrent themes in the seminal works of Plato. 6 marks

d) Discuss TWO qualities of a good literary critic. 2 marks

QUESTION TWO

a) Explain Aristotle's theory of catharsis and its relevance in literature. 6 marks

b) Discuss Plato's theory of mimesis and Aristotle's defense. 4 marks

c) What are the six formative elements of tragedy as explored by Aristotle in the *Poetics*? 5 marks

QUESTION THREE

Compare the following theories:

- i) Structuralism 7 marks
- ii) Deconstruction 8 marks

QUESTION FOUR

b) Using any of the following theoretical approach(es) you think most appropriate, attempt an analysis of any **ONE** of the following books: (16 marks)

- i) *The Joys of Motherhood* (1979) - Buchi Emecheta
- ii) *Blossoms of the Savannah* (2011) - H. Ole Kulet

QUESTION FIVE

a) "Until philosophers rule as kings or those who are now called kings and leading men genuinely and adequately philosophize, that is, until political power and philosophy entirely coincide, while the many natures who at present pursue either one

exclusively are forcibly prevented from doing so, cities will have no rest from evils...nor I think from human race.” Basing your argument on this excerpt from Plato’s the *Republic*, explain what you understand by the term ‘philosopher king.’

7 marks

b) Discuss Platonic and Aristotelian views on Literature.

8 marks

QUESTION SIX

Evaluate the major principles by any **TWO** of the following theories: 15 marks

i) Psychoanalytic theory

iv) New Criticism

ii) Feminism

v) Formalism

QUESTION SEVEN

Do a feminist reading of Marjorie Oludhe Macgoye’s *Coming to Birth* (1986) and Mariama Ba’s *So Long a Letter* (1981). (15 marks)



KIBABII UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES, LITERATURE, JOURNALISM & MASS
COMMUNICATION

BACHELOR OF EDUCATION (ARTS) - 1 SEMESTER 2014/2015 ACADEMIC YEAR

Course Code: LIT 200

Course Outline: Literary Theory and Application

Lecturer: Zakayo Amayi Email: zakamayi@yahoo.com Twitter: @ZakayoAmayi

COURSE OUTLINE

Broad Objective: Learners should be able to demonstrate their understanding of theories of literature and their application.

Course Objectives:

- i. Explain the origins of literary criticism
- ii. Appreciate the writings of Plato and Aristotle
- iii. Examine in detail the history and philosophy of advanced literary theories

Expected Learning Outcome:

It is expected that at the end of the course, students should be able to:

- i. Have a solid mastery of classical and modern literary theories
- ii. Undertake informed literary criticism

Course Contents:

Introduction

Week 1: Literary Theory and Application

- Meaning of literary theory and criticism
- Theoretical and practical criticism
- Literary criticism and creative writing
- Classical and emergent East African critics (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Chris Wanjala, Okot p'Bitek, Taban Lo Liyong and the late Awuor Anyumba among others)

Classical Literary Theories

Week 2 - 3: Classical Origins of Literary Criticism

- Platonic and Aristotelian views on literature

Trends in Literary Theory

Week 4: Feminism

- Meaning and philosophy of feminist literary theory
- The four stages of feminist literary theory
- A feminist reading of *So Long a Letter* (1980) by Mariama Ba

Week 5: New Criticism

- Philosophy of new criticism
- What new critics do
- Arguments against new criticism

Week 6: Freudian Literary Theory

- Definition of Freudian theory
- A selection of Sigmund Freud's arguments
- Psychoanalytic approaches to literary texts
- Weaknesses of psychoanalytic theory

Week 7: Formalism and Structuralism

- Meaning of formalism
- Structuralism
- Post-structuralism

Week 8: Deconstruction

- Introduction
- The process of deconstruction in literary criticism

Practical Textual Examples

Week 9: Critical Reading of *Coming to Birth (1986)* by Marjorie Oludhe Macgoye

Week 10: Critical Reading of *Blossoms of the Savannah (2011)* by H. Ole Kulet

Week 11: Critical Reading of *The Joys of Motherhood (1979)* by Buchi Emecheta

Mode of Delivery:

The course will be conducted through lectures, tutorials and interactive learning sessions.

Course Evaluation:

Continuous Assessment Test	15%
Term Paper	10%
Group Work	5%
Final Examinations	70%
Total Score	100%

Grading:

70% and Above	A
60% - 69%	B
50% - 59%	C
40% - 49%	D
Below 40%	E

Reading List:

1. Plato. *The Republic* (Translated by Benjamin Jowett): Dover Publications, Inc: New York, 2000
2. Aristotle. *The Poetics* – E-Book
3. Waugh, P. & Rice, P. (Eds). *Modern Literary Theory*. (4th ed) Bloomsbury: New York, 2011
4. Eagleton, M. *Feminist Literary Criticism*. Basil Blackwell Ltd: New York, 1986
5. Lodge, D. & Wood, N. *Modern Criticism and Theory*. Pearson: London, 1987
6. Ba, Mariama. *So Long a Letter*. Heinemann Educational Books: Nairobi, 1981
7. Macgoye, M.O. *Coming to Birth*. EAEP: Nairobi, 1986
8. Kulet, Ole H. *Blossoms of the Savannah*. Longhorn Publishers: Nairobi, 2011
9. Emecheta, B. *The Joys of Motherhood*. Heinemann: London, 1979