
Theory of Literature

(offered by the Department of Afrikaans and Theory of Literature)
Telephone number 012 429 6308

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Introduction

The modules in Theory of Literature have been designed to provide an overview of current issues and debates in literary studies and to develop the critical skills for students to engage in literary theoretical study and communication. The modules represent a detailed study of each of the three literary genres, and include a demonstration and the application of reading strategies appropriate to poetic, dramatic and narrative texts.

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General Information

- The modules offered in Theory of Literature may be taken either by students intending to major in Theory of Literature, or any one or more modules may also be taken by students majoring in any of the literature study units offered in the School of Arts, Education, Languages and Communication, or related disciplines such as Communication, Cultural Studies, Art History, Philosophy or Religious Studies etc, in the College of Human Sciences.
- BA students who select Theory of Literature as a major subject are advised to take at least one or more of the following before or together with Course III: a language, Biblical Studies, Classical Culture, Communication Science, Linguistics, Modern Romance Literatures in English, Philosophy, Psychology, Sociology.
- In Theory of Literature examples will be selected from written and oral texts from Africa, England, Europe and North America, as well as from the visual and performance arts.
- Credit for a degree is granted for either:
 - (i) THL801 and 802 or ALI100 (or ALW100)
 - (ii) either THL202 or THL821
 - (iii) either THL203 or THL824
 - (iv) either THL301 or THL302 or THL305

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Theory of Literature as a Major Subject

Compulsory modules for a major subject combination:

First level: THL801, 802

Second level: THL201 and TWO of THL821, 822, 823, 824

Third level: THL305 and TWO of THL821, 822, 823, 824 *plus* ONE interdisciplinary module

Students can choose for the interdisciplinary module either one third-level module from any language (and Linguistics) or choose from the floating modules provided all prerequisites are met.

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Transitional Arrangements

Students who passed only ONE or TWO of the three papers of ALW300 prior to 1998 retain credit for the paper(s) concerned and can complete the course by registering for and passing TWO or ONE of the five papers listed below. See the Transitional Arrangements below. Such registration will be for non-degree purposes (NDP) only but, on passing the paper(s) concerned the student will be credited with a pass in the full course ALW300.

Study unit passed	Modules/papers which may not be taken	Outstanding modules
ALI101	THL801	THL802
ALI102	THL802	THL801
ALW201	THL201	
ALW202	THL821	
ALW301	THL305	
ALW302	THL821	
ALW303	THL821, 822, 823	
ALW311	THL305	
ALW312	THL821	
ALW313	THL822	
ALW314	THL823	
ALW315	THL305	

FLOATING MODULES**NB**

These floating modules may be taken on first, second or third level.

THL801U Introduction to theory of literature (S1 and S2)

Purpose: to introduce students to the theoretical approach and to show how it differs from other approaches in literature; to familiarise students with definitions of literature and other aesthetic objects; to acquire the ability to understand or interpret literature, and to appreciate or evaluate literature and other cultural and aesthetic objects.

THL802V Introduction to literary genres (S1 and S2)

Purpose: to provide an introduction to literary genres; to introduce students to the main types and characteristic features of oral and written literature, and to familiarise students with the analysis and interpretation of poetic, narrative and dramatic texts.

NB

These modules may be taken only at second or third level.

THL821Y Advanced narrative theory (S1 and S2)*

Prerequisite: THL802

Purpose: to introduce students to two main components: advanced structuralist theory and strategies for reading contemporary and/or postmodernist narrative texts. The module has two parts: the first is a critical analysis of complementary theories on the complexities of narrative structure, and the second entails an in-depth study of contemporary narrative texts aimed at developing greater understanding of narrative texts.

THL8223 Theory of drama (S1 and S2)*

Prerequisite: THL802

Purpose: to introduce students to the semiotics of drama and theatre and the social dimension of drama and theatre; to familiarise them with a critical introduction to contemporary theories on drama, theatre and performance, to make them aware of the social dimension of drama and theatre by analysing recent productions.

THL8234 Theory of poetry (S1 and S2)*

Prerequisite: THL802

Purpose: to introduce students to a detailed exposition of aspects of poetic structure, for example metaphorical constructions, syntactic-typographic organisation, sound exploitation, rhythm and metre, and to the intertextual and extratextual relationships in poetic texts; to provide a critical introduction to intratextual, intertextual and extratextual relationships in poetry, and to develop the necessary analytical skills to arrive at a profound understanding of poetic communication.

THL8245 Theory and practice of South African literary studies (S1 and S2)*

Prerequisite: THL802

Advice: Knowledge of a South African language and literature and a basic knowledge of literary theory is assumed.

Purpose: to introduce students to the theories, methods and practical skills for comparative and interdisciplinary learning in South African Literary Studies.

FIRST-LEVEL MODULE**THL1016 Introduction to creative writing: a practical course (S1 and S2)****NB**

Final assessment in this module will be based on creative work which the student must hand in.

Prerequisite: THL801, 802

Advice: Basic language skills in the language in which students are going to take this module is assumed.

Purpose: to introduce students to the aesthetics and practice of creative writing in the various literary genres.

SECOND-LEVEL MODULES**THL201A Theory of the sign in literature and culture (S1 and S2)***

Prerequisite: THL801

Purpose: to introduce students to the theories on structuralism and semiotics, those beyond semiotics and those on reading and interpretation.

THL204D Advanced creative writing: a practical course (S1 and S2)**NB**

Final assessment in this module will be based on creative work which the student must hand in.

Prerequisite: THL821, 822, 823

Advice: Advanced language skills in the language in which students are going to take the module is assumed.

Purpose: to further develop and advance the knowledge and practical skills required for creative writing in various genres.

THIRD-LEVEL MODULES

THL304G Creative writing workshop and portfolio (S1 and S2)

NB

Final assessment in this module will be based on creative work which the student must hand in.

Prerequisite: THL204

Advice: Advanced language skills in the language chosen as the major subject and knowledge of document and manuscript design is assumed.

Purpose: to provide practical assistance for students to enable them to produce a portfolio of creative writing in the language of their major.

THL305H Literary theory in contexts (S1 and S2)

Syllabus: Social semiotics, ideology (with special emphasis on Marxist literary criticism) and discourse (with special emphasis on Foucault's theory of discourse); Critical practice today: readings from postcolonial and feminist (gender studies) discourses; theory as critical tool: poststructuralism and options from deconstruction (Derrida), psychoanalysis (Lacan), discourse analysis (Foucault), and psychosemiotics (Kristeva); poststructuralist theory as a literary analysis tool.