

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

FIRST SEMESTER EXAMINATION

DECEMBER - 2012

COURSE TITLE : INTRODUCTION TO CRITICAL THEORY

COURSE CODE : ENG 204 / IDE-ENG 204

TIME ALLOWED : TWO (2) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Answer any **TWO** questions.
2. Each question carries 30 marks. The total marks for the examination is 60%.
3. Do not repeat material or write about the same text at length more than once.
4. Candidates are not allowed to bring any reading material into the examination room.
5. Correct use of English and literary conventions will be rewarded and the contrary will be penalised.

THIS PAPER IS NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
THE INVIGILATOR.

Question 1

“The Russian Formalists assert that through the notion of literariness, literary criticism could now become more focused and delve less into unrelated disciplines or subjects as was the practice before formalism.” Illustrate the relevance of this claim using the following poem:

Porphyria's Lover

By Robert Browning

The rain set early in tonight,
The sullen wind was soon awake,
It tore the elm-tops down for spite,
And did its worst to vex the lake:
I listened with heart fit to break.
When glided in Porphyria; straight
She shut the cold out and the storm,
And kneeled and made the cheerless grate
Blaze up, and all the cottage warm;
Which done, she rose, and from her form
Withdrew the dripping cloak and shawl,
And laid her soiled gloves by, untied
Her hat and let the damp hair fall,
And, last, she sat down by my side
And called me. When no voice replied,
She put my arm about her waist,
And made her smooth white shoulder bare,
And all her yellow hair displaced,
And, stooping, made my cheek lie there,
And spread, o'er all, her yellow hair,
Murmuring how she loved me – she
Too weak, for all her heart's endeavor,
To set its struggling passion free
From pride, and vainer ties dissever,
And give herself to me forever.
But passion sometimes would prevail,
Nor could tonight's gay feast restrain

A sudden thought of one so pale
For love of her, and all in vain:
So, she was come through wind and rain.
Be sure I looked up at her eyes
Happy and proud; at last I knew
Porphyria worshiped me: surprise
Made my heart swell, and still it grew
While I debated what to do.
That moment she was mine, mine, fair,
Perfectly pure and good: I found
A thing to do, and all her hair
In one long yellow string I wound
Three times her little throat around,
And strangled her. No pain felt she;
I am quite sure she felt no pain.
As a shut bud that holds a bee,
I warily oped her lids: again
Laughed the blue eyes without a stain.
And I untightened next the tress
About her neck; her cheek once more
Blushed bright beneath my burning kiss:
I propped her head up as before,
Only, this time my shoulder bore
Her head, which droops upon it still:
The smiling rosy little head,
So glad it has its utmost will,
That all it scorned at once is fled,
And I, its love, am gained instead!
Porphyria's love: she guessed not how
Her darling one wish would be heard.
And thus we sit together now,
And all night long we have not stirred,
And yet God has not said a word!

[30]

Question 2

Show the connection between Pragmatic criticism and the theories of literature of Cassius Longinus and Philip Sidney. [30]

Question 3

Plato passionately denies poets right of admission in his republic in *The Republic*. However, Aristotle and Sidney defend the poet and poetry against Plato's allegations. Discuss how Aristotle and Sidney defend the poet and poetry against Plato. [30]

Question 4

Briefly, but critically discuss any four of the following concepts of literature

- Catharsis
 - Literariness
 - The sublime
 - Condensation
 - Social reality
- [30]

Question 5

What is the relationship between Marxism and Literature? Sustain your argument with textual examples. [30]

Question 6

Modern Psychoanalytic Criticism relies on the promptings of the human mind in order to produce Literature. Argue for or against this idea, with reference to relevant texts, to substantiate your answer. [30]