

## **ALT 303: Theory and History of Literature**

### **Unit Description**

This unit introduces students to the major theories of literature and their postulations about literary works. It is concerned with the nature and development of literature and also looks at the major literary movements and their impact on literature; they include classicism, Negritude, The Beat Generation, Realism among others. It will also delve into aspects of (Post)Structuralism, Formalism, New Criticism, Feminism, Reader-Response et cetera. Topics of the unit will arise out of readings of selected creative works as well as works of literary theory. The course shall introduce students to the relationship between literary theory and literary creativity using several historical contexts across epochs in the English-speaking world in general and the 20<sup>th</sup> Century in particular. The methodology will involve lectures, classroom presentations and discussions.

### **Unit Objectives**

This unit has the following objectives:

- ❖ To define the nature and functions of literature.
- ❖ To define theory and discuss its place in the study of literature
- ❖ To trace the historical development of literature.
- ❖ To discuss selected theories and show how they can be used in the study of literature.
- ❖ To analyse some creative works in the context of literary theory.

### **References**

- ✓ Warren, Austin and Wellek, Rene. *Theory of Literature*
- ✓ David Lodge. *Modern Criticism and Theory*
- ✓ E. M. Forster. *Aspects of the Novel*
- ✓ Patricia Waugh. *Literary Theory and Criticism*
- ✓ Penelope Murray. *Classical Literary Criticism*
- ✓ William K. Wimsatt JR. and Cleanth Brooks. *Literary Criticism: A Short History*.