Note that the English major and other English-related programs have changed! Learn more here. For general information on advisement, have a look at the Advisement Guide.

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Overview: What Counts Where

**English - Literature Track**
- Early (pre-1700): ENGL 454 (Stelzig), ENGL 366 (Drake), ENGL 382 (Drake)
- Modern (1700-1900): ENGL 439 (Woidat), ENGL 458 (Greenfield), ENGL 458 (Rutkowski), ENGL 458 (Schacht), ENGL 439 (Cooper), ENGL 329 (Gillen), ENGL 367 (Asher), ENGL 313 (Akman)
- Recent (1900-): ENGL 329 (Cooper), ENGL 424 (Harrison), INTD 288 (Doggett), FMST 100 (Okada), ENGL 488 (McCoy), ENGL 342 (Akman)

**Comparative Literature**
- Emphasis on theory: ENGL 329 (Cooper)
INTD 105 - Critical Writing and Reading

Critical Reading and Writing: The Woman Writer (Beltz-Hosek)

This course centers on writings by notable 19th-20th century female authors, which students will examine from a feminist critical perspective. Works by Emily Bronte, Sylvia Plath, and Virginia Woolf will be thoughtfully analyzed in conjunction with seminal sociopolitical literature by Mary Wollstonecraft and Simone de Beauvoir. With each text we will explore how the author approaches the domestic sphere, sexual agency in patriarchal culture, and the transcendental power of creative expression.

Required Texts: A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (Wollstonecraft); Wuthering Heights (Bronte); To the Lighthouse (Woolf); Ariel (Plath)

Critical Reading and Writing: Metafiction (Perri)

Metafiction is a realm of literature that is chiefly concerned with its own nature as a verbal construct. Novels and stories of this genre possess a self-awareness of their essence as little more than words on a page. Thus, the business of metafiction is not to render the world as we know it, but to make a world from the medium of language. This course will examine the medium of storytelling as it applies to metafiction and its “linguistic oversoul,” as well as the questions raised regarding the messages (or lack thereof) inherent within the form.

Critical Reading and Writing: Visions of the Future (West)

From Plato’s Republic to The Matrix Trilogy, thinkers, artists, and writers throughout history have hypothesized the future in many different forms. Through regular reading, discussion, research, and writing assignments, students will rhetorically analyze visions of the future presented in a range of historical texts. The ultimate goal is to discover how and why the future is addressed in political and artistic contexts of our current cultural moment.

Critical Reading and Writing: The Haitian Diaspora (Lima)

As the first nation in the Americas to both abolish slavery and declare its independence from a European power, Haiti has been paying the price for such audacity since. Both history and natural disasters would have been enough to stifle the creativity of a people, but Haitians have continued to create at home and across the diaspora, despite the horrors that have driven many away from their homeland. Some of these tragedies (the cholera epidemic, for example) have been man-made and could have been avoided. Haitian writers across the diaspora have resorted to the noir genre to represent such realities—we will try to understand some of their choices.

This course is a writing seminar designed to give you many opportunities to practice your critical thinking, argumentative and writing skills. We will read each other's writing, collaborate on presentations, and revise our work to almost perfection. With this class, I hope, we'll see writing as both work and play, understanding that if language creates reality, language prevails makes all the difference in the world. Yes, we are talking about power—about whose writing to persuade more often than not. The first argument you will be making is about yourself, in the shape of an autobiographical essay—more on this later.

Required Texts:
Paul Farmer. Haiti after the Earthquake [ISBN# 9781610390989]

Edwidge Danticat, Ed. The butterfly’s way: Voices from the Haitian Diaspora in the United States [ISBN# 9781569472187]

Edwidge Danticat, Ed. Haiti Noir [#978-1-936070-65-7]


Intended Learning Outcomes:

1. The ability to read significant texts carefully and critically, refining our ability to make inferences from telling facts (induction). From these inferences we will generate a central thesis (an argument) for our essays.

2. The ability to write sustained, coherent, and persuasive arguments on significant issues that arise from both the readings and the context at hand (remember that you will be joining a conversation).
3. The ability to write clearly, following the conventions of Standard English and understanding the value of revision.

4. The ability to develop research skills, including the ability to search data bases, evaluate published materials, and incorporate information gleaned from source texts, articles of literary criticism, and works of historical/sociological background to students’ own critical writing skills to produce a final research paper.

5. The oral ability to present individual ideas to the class and persuasively discuss the complexity of the texts and the contexts under discussion and, consequently, their different interpretations.

**Portfolio Grading:** The writing assignments you turn in are first drafts. While they should be free of spelling errors and grammatical mistakes (i.e. not rough drafts), they won’t be finished products. Think of them as work-in-progress—not graded until revised and reworked to "perfection." Your portfolio will be an extension and development of your work during the semester. We will spend time in class discussing revision strategies and grammar. Revision is, as Adrienne Rich writes, “the act of re-seeing and rediscovering” the significance and purpose of your writing. The function of editing days is to supply you with two readers whose feedback will suggest ways to improve your essays. Not all the ideas will be useful every time, but consider each carefully. You are ultimately responsible for the final product.

This course is non-graded until the very end of the semester. I have included a percentage value in brackets—for your information—as to the weight of each assignment towards the final grade. Your final grade will depend upon active and engaged class participation, which includes daily quizzes to make sure you are doing the reading, and peer-editing "helpfulness" [25%] PLUS overall progress in writing (one autobiographical essay [10%], two 3-4 page persuasive essays/response papers and their many revisions [30%], and one 5-6 page research paper, including the oral presentation of the argument [35%]). So, keep all your writings in a folder (the ones with your classmates’ and my comments, not the copies!) because I will collect everything yet one more time on the last day of class, to reach a final decision about your grade. Books need to come to class every day—readings done.

**WRITING:**

Papers are to be typed, preferably Times New Roman 11’ font, with 1.5 spacing and 1” margins. Your name, the title of the course, my name, and the date the paper is turned in should be typed on the top-left of the page, single-spaced; the title should be centered on the page, below all that. No name and page number on title page (yes, I disagree with MLA conventions here). There will a header with your last name and page number starting on page 2. The paper should be stapled together--no fancy folders or covers.

**HUMN 220 - Humanities I**

**Humanities I (Akman)**

Western Humanities I examines developments in the intellectual history of the western world from the ancient Hebrew and Greek civilizations to the seventeenth century. Lectures and class discussions will place significant written works in their historical and cultural contexts, outlining the position of these works in the evolution of a western tradition.

**Humanities I (Harrison)**

A search for moral, social, and political alter- natives and meaning embodied in the institutions, culture, and literature of Western Civilization from the beginnings to 1600. The course is factual as well as conceptual, including a narrative history of the period covered.

**Humanities I (McClure)**

Humanities I uses the disciplines of History, Literature and Philosophy to explore the big questions of the Western Tradition. We cover questions of democracy, free speech, personal responsibility, justice, and intellectual/moral development within the context of the ancient Greeks and Hebrews as well as the Romans (both pagan and Christian), the early Muslims, and several authors from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. My section includes significant discussions on the role of women in the Western Tradition as well as the way in which music both reflects and drives many of the big ideas. I use a variety of instructional tools, including multi-media, small/large group discussions, student presentations, lecture, and current events discussion.

**HUMN 221 - Humanities II**

**Humanities II (McClure)**

Western Humanities II covers many key questions in the disciplines of History, Literature, Philosophy and Science from Galileo to modern day writers. We explore the fall of European monarchies and the subsequent rise of democratic nation states. We take an extended look at the effects of colonialism on culture, economics, and politics. Hum II also follows the emergence of scientific thought and its subsequent abuses. Since I am a musician, my section shows how music plays an important role in the development of these questions and ideas. I also include a significant examination of non western perspectives on the Western tradition.

**Humanities II (Rutkowski)**

Standard description of HUMN2 applies. Our texts for my section:*American History Documents packet; Baudrillard, Jean. America (Verso); Franklin, Benjamin. The Autobiography. (Dover); Freud, Sigmund. Civilization and Its Discontents (Norton); Locke, John. Second Treatise (Crofts Classics); *Marx & Engels Reader, (Norton); Otsuka, Julia. The Buddha in the Attic. (Anchor 2012); *Shelley, Mary. Frankenstein (Norton critical); Walker, David. An Appeal To The Coloured Citizens of the World, but in particular, and very expressly, to those of the United States of America (Hill and Wang); Wollstonecaft, Mary. A Vindication of the Rights of Women. (Penguin); Woolf, Virginia. Mrs. Dalloway (Harcourt Brace)

**ENGL 100 - College Writing**

College Writing: Loss in Literature (Beltz-Hosek)
This course examines the complex theme of loss (loss of life, control, potential, innocence, faith in humanity, etc.) within contemporary American literature. In addition to frequent writing assignments, students will thoughtfully analyze short stories by Joyce Carol Oates, Ernest Hemingway, and Andre Dubus as well as longer works by Galway Kinnell, Gregory Orr, Eugene O'Neill, and Judith Guest. We will consider how these various authors cope with the inevitability of loss by accessing the transcendental power of creative expression. Note: there will be a creative writing element to this class.

Required texts:

- *Ordinary People* by Judith Guest
- *The Book of Nightmares* by Galway Kinnell
- *Long Day's Journey Into Night* by Eugene O'Neill
- *The Blessing: A Memoir* by Gregory Orr

**ENGL 101 - Topics in Literature**

**Topics in Literature: Short Stories (Perri)**

"My notion of the KGB came from romantic spy stories. I was a pure and utterly successful product of Soviet patriotic education." —Vladimir Putin

"But I think the real tension lies in the relationship between what you might call the pursuer and his quarry, whether it's the writer or the spy." —John le Carre

While some critics consider spies to be the knights of our time, I question that analogy. Knights took oaths to a code of conduct. That's not to say they always (or even mostly) followed that code — much less to say the code itself is just — but it gives us a yardstick for evaluation. But both spies and knights lay claim to an agenda greater than personal interest, and this brings us to politics. The novels I've selected here give a variety of political views and allegiances, with some attempts to present the thinking of the enemies of the West and several critiques of US policies and positions.

We will begin with the recent novel *The Counterfeit Agent*, written by NY Times reporter Alex Berenson. The hero, John Wells, was under cover with the Taliban in Afghanistan for over a decade, converting to Islam. While the CIA doesn't hesitate to use Wells, that conversion makes them hesitant to trust him.

The real life case of Valerie Plame, a CIA officer deliberately exposed by the Bush administration, raises the question of whether it's possible to preserve even the most fundamental element of trust. The movie *Fair Game*, with Naomi Watts and Sean Penn, shows a shocking behind-the-scenes fight leading up to the invasion of Iraq. After losing her job at the CIA, Plame began writing spy novels. We will watch the film about her life and read her first book, *Blowback*. In addition to reading about US and UK spies, we will also read one of Daniel Silva's novels about Gabriel Alon, Israeli art restorer, spy, and one of the assassins who avenged the murders at the Munich Olympics. One of the authors, Jon Stock, a Brit journalist, has promised to correspond with you about both the spy business and writing about it. There will be 8 or 9 novels and two films; your work will consist of a brief team report, a book review, a short analytic paper, and a final exam.

**Topics in Literature: Short Story Cycle (Gentry)**

The short story composite straddles the line between the novel and the short story collection. It is comprised of independent and interdependent stories. Much like the genre, many of the characters found within short story cycles are caught between two worlds as a result of factors like ethnicity, religion, and socio-economic status.

In this course, you will gain an understanding of the short story composite by reading texts that fall on various points within the genre’s wide identification spectrum. You will explore various types of composites, the structural elements that unify and create dissonance amongst the stories, and the significance of literary form in connection to content.

**ENGL 201 - Creative Writing**

Creative Writing (Gentry)

By enrolling in this class, you have decided to become a writer. Understand that I take this as no light thing, and you are expected to respond to me, this course, the teaching assistant, and your peers in a corresponding manner.

In this introductory writing course, we will explore the craft elements of poetry, literary fiction, and creative non-fiction. By "literary" fiction, I mean that we won't be reading or writing genre fiction such as science fiction, mystery, horror, gothic, Western, romance, fanfiction, etc. I say this not to discourage you from exploring those genres of writing on your own time, but to warn you before you begin work on a piece that I won't accept for this class. If you are sketchy about where your work stands ask so that you don't face a canceled workshop.

Through writing exercises, assigned readings, reading responses, class discussion, and workshops, you will become a stronger writer, able to intelligently discuss, question, and analyze the elements of poetry, fiction, and non-fiction to gain a better understanding of the choices writers make, why, and apply that knowledge to your work.

Over the course of the semester, you will complete two assignments in each genre. At the end of the semester, you will turn in a final portfolio comprised of all of the writing assignments, a polished revision of your original work in the genre of your choice (five poems, a ten-page story, or a ten-page piece of non-fiction), and a two-page double-spaced letter to me about your revision and development as a writer over the course of the semester.
ENGL 202 - Reading as a Writer

Reading as a Writer: The Lyric Essay (West)

The lyric essay is restless. It roams the space between objectivity and subjectivity, between art and fact, between poetry and prose. For many writers it is the heathen of creative nonfiction, a wolf in sheeps clothing that threatens the sanctity of the oldest genre of writing we have. For others it is a form as old as writing itself, a magical antidote for the failure of information to provide a reliable means to truth. In the words of essayist Deborah Tall, the lyric essay is "a kind of essay propelled not by its information, but rather by the possibility for transformative experience."

As this is a creative writing course, the majority of class time will be spent reading, writing, discussing, and debating the lyric essay in its many forms, with the goal of developing a perspective on the form that can be put into practice. In addition, students will regularly read and critique each other's writing through written and verbal commentary in class. By the end of the course, students will have created a portfolio of critical responses to readings, in class writing exercises, peer responses, and lyric essays that have undergone significant revision.

ENGL 203 - Reader and Text

Reader and Text: Contemporary American Drama (Blood)

This course will use plays written by and about Americans since the turbulent 1960's as an introduction to the study of English literature and to examine the contested signification of "America" and "American" on stage from the 1980's to the present. Examples of texts will include African American dramas like Suzan Lori Parks' The America Play and August Wilson's Pittsburgh Cycle, plays examining LGBT Americans' experience like Tony Kushner's Angels in America pt 1 and the collaboratively penned Belle Reprieve, Feminist plays like Maria Irene Fornes' Fefu and Her Friends, and plays specifically addressing American history and politics like Fires in the Mirror, Tracers, and Assassins. Genres will include American realism, theatre of the absurd, political theatre, and postmodern pastiche texts, as well as less often studied genres like docudrama, musical theatre, devised scripts, and performance art.

Reader and Text: Shakespeare on Page, Stage and Screen (Herzman)

We will examine three different genres in this course: lyric poetry, drama, and film, all by an intensive encounter with some works of William Shakespeare. We will read and analyze the sonnets and four representative plays. We will take a look at film versions of two of these plays. The plays will include Hamlet, I Henry IV, and Twelfth Night. The fourth play TBA. We will develop a vocabulary for talking about literature, and with intensive writing assignments sharpen our interpretive and critical skills.

Reader and Text: Introducing the English Major (Doggett)

This is an introductory course in literary analysis for English majors, one that's designed to provide you with a foundation in literary studies before you move on to upper division courses. In the first part of the semester, we will consider the various answers provided by literary theorists to some basic and increasingly pressing questions: Why read literature? What is the value of literature and literary study? What place does it have in the university and in the culture at large? Later in the semester, we will meditate on the following questions: What is literature? Who determines that a text is literature? How and what is the function of a literary canon? The final part of the semester will be devoted to questions about how we read: What are the interpretive strategies that have been brought to bear on literature in the 20th century? How do they work? What are their objectives and implications?

Reader and Text: Jean Toomer's Cane and Intertextualities (McCoy)

This course provides an introduction to the discipline of English through the study of particular topics, issues, genres, or authors. Subtitles of "Reader and Text" help students develop a working vocabulary for analyzing texts and relating texts to contexts; understand the theoretical questions that inform all critical conversations about textual meaning and value; and participate competently, as writers, in the ongoing conversation about texts and theory that constitutes English as a field of study. This section will engage Jean Toomer's Cane, a genre-complicating book associated with the Harlem Renaissance. We will consider the book as being in conversation with Euripides' The Bacchae, and Percival Everett's Zulus and Alice Walker's Meridian as texts continuing that conversation. Also required: Moran, Interdisciplinarity; Graff and Birkenstein, They Say/I Say; Murfin/Ray, The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms.

Reader and Text: Islands and Archipelagos (Smith)

From recent T.V. series like Lost through classic novels such as Robinson Crusoe and all the way back to medieval travel narratives, islands have offered us ways to understand ourselves, to express beliefs about others, and to come to new understandings of the worlds we live in. We'll read about the first Icelanders discovering “America,” see Renaissance authors “discovering” the New World, and encounter contemporary attempts to resist gendered hierarchies in New York City and Georgia. This seminar will give you a familiarity with a variety of textual genres across historical periods, and help you develop skills such as placing texts in historical, political, and/or cultural contexts; analyzing literary craft; constructing sophisticated argument; using citation effectively; and recognizing varied critical methodologies. Texts will likely include The Vinland Sagas (trans. Lefur Eiriksson), William Shakespeare’s The Tempest, Daniel Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe, Jean Rhys’s Wide Sargasso Sea, Gloria Naylor’s Mama Day, Craig Santos Perez’s from unincorporated territory [hachaj], and episodes from J.J. Abrams Lost.

ENGL 288 - Experimental

Experimental: Legal Writing (Ellis)

Students will learn basics of legal writing. They will write as though seeking a position at a prestigious law firm and then, as associate-level attorneys, will receive basic legal assignments to be submitted to their supervising partner.

ENGL 301/303 - Poetry Writing Workshop I and II

Poetry Writing Workshop I and II (Smith)
ENGL 302/304 - Fiction Writing Workshop I and II

Fiction Writing Workshop I and II (Gentry)

This is an advanced course for those with a sincere interest in literary fiction. This is not a course for students interested in writing formulaic genre fiction such as science fiction, mystery, horror, Western, romance, fanfiction, etc. I say this not to discourage you from exploring those genres of writing on your own time, but to warn you before you chum out your masterpiece of a CSI: Chattanooga murder mystery or prequel to Twilight that I won’t be accepting work of that sort for this class. If you are sketchy about where your work stands, ask so that you don’t face a canceled workshop. In this class, you will further explore the craft elements of fiction presented in the introductory course, primarily through workshop, but you will also read and respond to work by established contemporary authors, and, of course, you will write.

Over the course of the semester you will write two short stories (the minimum goal is ten pages; the maximum is twenty-five pages) and revise them. With that said, this is also not the course for you if your intentions are to get feedback on your novel. It is ineffective for the class to read a story that has no resolution and offers the author a built-in defense against criticism (“It doesn't make sense because I forgot to tell you that her house caught fire in 1987 in chapter four,” or “I can't tell you if she takes the job until the next chapter”). So unless your novel is comprised of autonomous chapters, continue to pursue that endeavor on your personal time.

If you are serious about writing, love reading, have a desire to understand how and why great writers do what they do, are willing to spend frustrating hours in front of blank space, face workshop with open ears and a closed mouth, courageous enough to “kill your little darlings,” curious enough to confront what you do not understand and be unflinchingly honest about the things you do understand, this is the course for you.

ENGL 305/307 - Creative Non-Fiction Workshop I and II

Creative Writing Workshop I and II (Gentry)

In this advanced writing course, we will study creative non-fiction, considering the various ways to move work rooted in the real beyond a stale recounting of facts to pieces that inform, inquire, inspire, and entertain. You will become a stronger writer, able to intelligently discuss, question, and analyze the work in (and elements of) the genre to gain a better understanding of the choices non-fiction writers make, why, and apply that knowledge to your work.

ENGL 313 - Eighteenth Century Literature

Eighteenth Century Literature: Global 18th Century (Akman)

This course looks at the eighteenth century literature from a multicultural standpoint building on the recent scholarship of Srinivas Aravamudan, Felicity Nussbaum and Rosalind Ballaster. Being at the crossroads of the early modern era and the golden age of British imperialism, the eighteenth century is a critical era in understanding the development of the idea of “Great Britain.” As a result of the enterprise of forging the imperial project that is to become “Imperial” Britain in the following era, narrative energy and creativity of the long eighteenth century is inseparable from economic and colonial ventures of the era. In each case, the British subject is constituted in a process of overseas discovery. This is not the world of Richardson and Fielding, whose novels achieve their density precisely by restricting their scope to interior spaces and landscapes. On the contrary, in all the three basic genres of the time, aspirations to, and paradoxically, mis/representations of, the Other contribute to the formation of the national self. This discourse about the Ottoman Other particularly plays a seminal role in this context. These features create a complicated, ambiguous and sometimes contradictory network of cultural definitions and performances of both the self and the Other. This “gaze” to the Turkish Other, let it be in the form of a spectator to the stage, or the “reverse gaze” as in the Turkish Spy, or “gazing back” to classical Rome in the forging of the “greatness” of Britain tell us a lot about the process of the formation of colonial power structures and the ensuing relationship between knowledge and power. Therefore in this course, we will look at the early stages of this imperial identity in its formative years as developed in a variety of genres with a particular focus on the Turkish discourse.

Course evaluation will include at least one mid-term exam, one final exam, one research paper, weekly blog responses, quizzes, and active class participation.

Srinivas Aravamudan, Enlightenment Orientalism
Felicity Nussbaum, selections from Global Eighteenth Century and The New Eighteenth Century
Billie Melman, selections from Women's Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718-1918--Sexuality, Religion and Work
Rosalind Ballaster, selections from The Fables of the East: 1662-1875
Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Turkish Embassy Letters
Daniel Defoe, Turkish Spy
Selections from eighteenth century historiographies (pdf)
William Eton, Paul Rycaut, Edward Gibbon
Defoe, Robinson Crusoe (Norton Critical Editions)
ENGL 329 - American Visions

American Visions: Filming the Seventies (Cooper)

In his film "The Velvet Goldmine," writer/director Todd Haynes tells us that "Histories, like ancient ruins, are the fictions of empires. While everything forgotten hangs in dark dreams of the past, ever threatening to return." It would be difficult to imagine a decade less threatening than the 1970s but that is precisely the premise of this cultural studies course, which proposes that its popular iconography—smiley faces, polyester, disco, crappy pop music, and so on—functions as a sort of historical ellipsis. Aside from a few acknowledged political events like Watergate or the Iran hostage crisis, it seems to be a decade when nothing happened, defined almost entirely in terms of its (cheesy) popular culture. With the advantage of hindsight, however, it becomes possible to reinterpret Seventies cheese in relation to truly revolutionary events: the emergence of a globalized information economy, arguably the unleashing of our own strange days. And if the manifestation of some New Age requires that we forget the circumstances of its creation, all those historical roads not taken, then the Seventies will contain many “dark dreams of the past” worth revisiting. Accordingly, the thirteen films to be screened this semester will be approached via a critical parallax view: as important artistic works of the 1970s, and as a means of reformatting wide swaths of contemporary culture. What happens when you take the Seventies seriously?

American Visions: American Visions: Thoreau Harding Project Part 4 (Gillin)

Students will study Henry David Thoreau’s Walden as a base text and use skills of research, analysis and organization to address a practical task: constructing on the Geneseo campus, as a lasting tribute to the scholarship of our late English Professor Walter Harding, a museum-quality replica of the cabin Thoreau wrote about. The course emphasizes initiative and imagination on the part of students, the ability to communicate well and work effectively in teams.

ENGL 342 - World Literature

World Literature: Global Literatures and Islam (Akman)

This course looks at the representations of Islam in novels written by authors coming from a variety of cultures. By taking Said’s Orientalism thesis as a starting point, we will try to see if this theoretical lens can still be applied to today’s post-9/11 discourse. Looking at texts from as many different cultural traditions as possible (i.e. the Turkish, Pakistani, British, French, and Russian), we will compare and contrast how each culture perceives the Other and (re)produces the East-West contrast. The readings will be arranged according to certain paradigm shifts and themes such as: the role of Islam in European Civilization, co-existence of cultures, “clash” or “fusion” of civilizations, the image of Islam in post-9/11 discourse, etc. Theoretical and historical readings include Daniel, Said, Bhabha, Ahmad, Spivak, Ngugi, Viswanathan, Hall, and Achebe.

Course evaluation will include at least one mid-term exam, one final exam, one research paper, weekly blog responses, quizzes, and active class participation.

Readings:

Edward Said (Routledge Critical Thinkers)

Tariq Ali, Shadows of the Pomegranate Tree (Vol. 1) (The Islam Quintet)

Mohja Kahf, The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf


Mohsin Hamid, The Reluctant Fundamentalist

Orhan Pamuk, My Name Is Red

Amin Maalouf, Leo Africanus

Leo Tolstoy, Hadji Murad (Modern Library Classics)
ENGL 360 - Post-Colonial Literatures: Black British Literature

Post-Colonial Literatures: Black British Literature (Lima)

"The imperial English may have carried British passports—as did the Scots, Welsh, and some of the Irish—but they really didn’t need to think too hard about whether being 'English' was the same as being 'British': the terms were virtually interchangeable" (Jeremy Paxman, The English: A Portrait of A People, vii).

Our course explores Black British literature, film, and culture from 1948 to the present—these cultural texts will be studied in relation to larger socio-historical contexts. Whereas Black in the US refers mostly to peoples of African descent—whatever their countries of origin—in Britain it is a political category grounded on shared ex-colonial origins and/or social marginalization. Unlike writers of the first wave of post-colonial migrants to Britain, such as Sam Selvon, who have lived the contradictions of being Black and British, a younger generation finds itself less conflicted as it attempts to (re)create identities within more global paradigms. Some of these texts move from one culture to another, allowing for a more fluid, transnational and transcultural model for both the production and consumption of art.

Initial Reading List:


Films:

Bhaji on the Beach
Bend It like Beckham

Intended Learning Outcomes: With this class students will hopefully

1. Understand the complex interactions of gender, sexuality, religion, race, and class permeating the cultures within Britain today;
2. Understand the various negotiations Black British writers make when they choose to write within/against traditionally western genres.
3. Demonstrate the oral ability to present their individual ideas to the class and persuasively discuss the complexity of the texts and cultures under discussion and, consequently, their different interpretations.
4. Demonstrate the ability to develop research skills, including the ability to search data bases, evaluate published materials, and incorporate information gleaned from articles of literary criticism, source texts, and works of historical/social background into their own critical writing skills to produce a final research paper.
5. Demonstrate the ability to write sustained, coherent, analytical, and persuasive arguments, following the conventions of Standard English.

Assignments and Portfolio Grading:

You must complete ALL written work to pass the course. You are also responsible for ALL readings—whether or not we have time to fully discuss them. Your final grade will depend upon attendance, active and engaged class participation (25%), and progress in writing critically: a midterm essay and all its revisions (25%) and a final essay of literary criticism that incorporates recent scholarship (50% includes the oral presentation of your argument) will be assessed.

ENGL 366 - Connections in Early Literature

Connections in Early Literature: British Literature Before 1700 (Drake)
This course charts the historical movement of literature in the British Isles from earliest Anglo-Saxon documents to the Restoration. The major periods of Anglo-Saxon/Early Celtic, Anglo-Norman, Middle English, and Early Modern anchor a survey of representative works and authors (e.g. Beowulf, Chaucer, Julian of Norwich, Malory, Spenser, Donne, Milton). The course emphasizes historical, political and cultural events through which this literature was produced; the development of genres and poetics over time; and changes in language, especially in the ways that English has changed from Old English to Early Modern. The course also features a memorization/ performance project (two pages from our Norton Anthology of English Literature) with a connected research and myCourses project.

Connections in Early Literature: Art, God, Math (Walker)

As sites of connections, cathedrals are virtual libraries of varied and intersecting narratives. National politics, local social issues, regional rivalries, and varied culture wars all played roles equal to theology in forming the narrative that is a Gothic cathedral. Our main texts will be the cathedrals — specifically Chartres, Notre Dame Paris, Reims, and Beauvais in France; Canterbury, Wells, Salisbury, York, and Durham in England.

These are multi-media texts, obviously, but they are also multi-cultural, as none of these monuments could have been designed without the advanced mathematics that came to Spain with the Moors. We will look at the connections of Biblical narratives, sculpture, stained glass, architectural chutzpah, class war, and the struggle for the throne of England in Ken Follet's novel The Pillars of the Earth. For more info, see the the course website.

Grading: in small teams you will adopt a cathedral, study it, prepare a presentation of some aspect of its history, and — as your final project — build a chapel for it, choosing the theological focus, the size, shape, height, art, and window, as well as subscribing likely patrons. You'll write a brief paper about your chapel and there will be a final exam.

ENGL 367 - Connections in Modern Literature

Connections in Modern Literature: British Literature from 1700-1900 (Asher)

A study of selected Anglophone literary texts written between 1660 and 1900 focusing on the dynamic relationship between individual works and the broader culture from which they emerge. The course emphasizes historical, political and social events through which this literature was produced; the development of genres and poetics over time; and important changes in language. Representative offerings include: Poetry of the Augustan Age; Victorian Comedy; Literature of 19th Century Social Reform; Napoleon in British Literature; Antebellum Literature; Silver Fork Fiction; Virtual Thoreau; Transatlantic Romantic Prose. (May be taken for credit twice under different subtitles.) This course fulfills the major requirement for "Modern" literature. Offered at least once a year.

ENGL 382 - The Bible as Literature

The Bible as Literature (Drake)

This course evaluates the English Bible as a literary text, with readings from the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures (including the Apocrypha). Along with historical and cultural backgrounds, emphasis will be placed on literary genres present in (and sometimes unique to) the Bible, aspects of biblical language and poetics, and the intratextuality of biblical texts. The course will also compare the Bible’s relationship with the text of the Qur’an and with readings and research in biblical influences on Western and world literature. Our texts include a SPECIFIC edition of the Bible (the HarperCollins Study Bible) and Bart Ehrman's The Bible: A Historical and Literary Introduction. NOTE: This course will meet in class from 6-8.30 PM. We will have an additional online project on myCourses that will cover the fourth credit hour each week.

ENGL 424 - The Novel

The Novel: Dandyism and the Twentieth Century (Harrison)

Fifty years ago, Ellen Moers defined the Dandy, the fashionable man, as "a creature perfect in externals and careless of anything below the surface, a man dedicated solely to his own perfection through a ritual of taste." We will trace the nineteenth-century evolution of this cultural and literary type from its Regency beginnings through its mid-century French revival to its seeming parallel in both the Decadent and the Aesthete. Twentieth-century literature, however, reflects the Dandy's troubled confrontation with both mass and modernist culture. Some critics, like Roland Barthes, believe that the Dandy is extinguished by this conflict, yet others understand Dandyism in newer contexts: Jessica Feldman concentrates on the Dandy's androgyny; Monica Miller recognizes the Dandifled aspects of diasporic African cultures; and Rhonda Garelick suggests that the Celebrity becomes the Dandy's analog. We will investigate these critical paradigms and attempt to place the Dandy within the last's century's literature, focusing on the novel as the primary genre of Dandyism. Among our readings are works by Waugh, Van Vechten, Huxley, MacInnes, Crisp, and others. Works only available in electronic editions are required. This course fulfills the English department requirement in Recent literature.

ENGL 427 - Literary Representations of Disability

Literary Representations of Disability (Paku)

This course will approach literary and theoretical texts from the perspective of disability studies. While this semester’s reading list is not yet finalized, our focus will be on disabilities that affect communication: autism, but also stammering and stuttering, Tourette’s syndrome, or mutism. We will read literary texts that represent these disabilities, non-fiction, and film. Our theoretical material will focus on disability studies, with particular attention to how theory of mind relates to how and why we read fiction.

ENGL 439 - American Ways

American Ways: Plotting Women (Woidat)
This course examines American women's fiction from the late 1700s to the turn of the twentieth century, focusing upon the development of sensational plots and subversive female characters with attention to the cultural, social, and political concerns of the early republic and expanding nation. We will concentrate mainly upon novels, with readings that include narratives of seduction, madcap adventures, captivity, economic reversals, ghosts, violence, and revenge. The course will foreground gender issues as we examine thematic and formal elements of the texts, situating them in relation to various genres and traditions: romantic, sentimental, gothic, etc. Course texts will likely include authors such as Hannah Webster Foster, Tabitha Tenney, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Harriet Wilson, Fanny Fern, E.D.E.N. Southworth, and Sarah Orne Jewett.

American Ways: Bioregional Literature (Cooper)

What place do you inhabit? Since at least the industrial revolution, all trends have pointed toward a national, global, or virtual consciousness: we don’t really inhabit anywhere. Conversely, recent efforts to create more environmentally sustainable ways of living are rethinking the bioregional: local foods, local economy, local cultures. Smaller-scale agricultural practices turn out to be very sophisticated, not "simple"; what sorts of local knowledge can be recovered for post-carbon use? Think of this course as a synthesis between literature defined in regional terms--poetry & prose from Western New York--and more explicitly ecological considerations. Its texts, therefore, will be quite diverse; its activities will entail your collaboration upon projects that take you off-campus--both physically and conceptually. I anticipate that students will work in partnership with at least one local organization so as to present their work beyond the Geneseo campus.

ENGL 454 - Shakespeare

Shakespeare (Stelzig)

This course will examine a large and representative selection (8 to 10) of Shakespeare's plays, with special attention to generic, poetic, linguistic, dramatic and cultural conventions that inform the play-texts of this most canonical of English poets and playwrights. There will be a significant amount of writing required, including two reflection/response essays and a longer critical paper using secondary sources.

ENGL 458 - Major Authors

Major Authors: Shaw, Wilde, and Coward (Greenfield)

Coward, Plays Volume 1. Signet.
Shaw, Plays by George Bernard Shaw. Signet.
____, Major Barbara. Dover.
____, Pygmalion. Dover.

Wilde, Plays and Selected Writings, Signet.

1 Restoration comedy TBA

The course will examine the plays of Bernard Shaw, Oscar Wilde, and Noel Coward as literary and theatrical texts as well as repositories for various ideas, on British drama, politics, and culture of the late 19th and early 20th century. The course will take up such matters as the Restoration tradition of British comedy of manners and high comedy; traditional (19th century and earlier) concepts of wit; anticipations of modernistic and post modernistic challenges to sexual and gender conventions; and the influence of these playwrights on the American theater.

Major Authors: Herman Melville (Rutkowski)

Although initially popular as a writer of escapist adventure novels, Herman Melville produced increasingly complex -- and often experimental – fiction as his career went on. Melville’s own adventurous sailor’s life ultimately produced what many consider one of the greatest novels in English, Moby Dick. In this course, we’ll trace Melville’s development from early to mature, including both short stories and novels as well as Melville’s poetry about the Civil War.

Major Authors: Charles Dickens (Schacht)

Everyone knows the adjective "Dickensian," but you probably don’t know the writer Charles Dickens as well as you think you do. We’ll read a selection of works by the man who edited a periodical called Household Words and became one in his own time.

ENGL 488: Experimental

Experimental: Post-Apocalyptic Black Fiction (McCoy)

This Investigations-level course will allow us to talk about art, contemporary concerns with the archive (especially that of the Atlantic Slave Trade), humanity, memory, and “the book” itself. We will read the following: Percival Everett, Zulus (Cheese. Slogans. Evil Empire vs. Plucky Rebels? Serious interrogation of body image discourse); Octavia Butler, Lilith’s Brood/Xenogenesis trilogy (Sea anemone people come to earth after nuclear war); Colson Whitehead, Zone One. Zombies (I hate zombie stuff. I started and gave up on The Walking Dead tv series. This book, however, is magnificent); Mat Johnson, Pym (A rewriting of Edgar Allan Poe’s only novel, Little Debbie™ Snack Cakes); Saidiya Hartman, Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route (Amid slavery’s “afterlife,” scholar goes looking in archives for ancestors. Non-fiction but meta- about fiction); Harriet Washington, Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present. You will find that this book connects with many other texts beyond this course. For instance, Home, Toni Morrison’s most recent novel, engages this material directly).

INTD 288
INTD 288: Northern Irish History and Literature (Doggett)

This course, which is team taught by Dr. Rob Doggett and Dr. Joe Cope, will explore the intersections between history and literature in Northern Ireland from the 1960s to the present. We will engage with the longer history of the six counties that comprise Northern Ireland, including political and cultural connections to the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. Readings will be a combination of fiction, poetry, drama, and primary source historical evidence generated by key events such as partition and the establishment of a unionist-dominated political culture in the early- to mid-20th century, the emergence of the Catholic civil rights movement in the 1960s, the “Bloody Sunday” shootings, the rise of nationalist and unionist paramilitary organizations and terrorism, the prison protests and hunger strikes, and the peace process of the 1980s-90s.

This course will provide a basic grounding in the field of Irish studies, and will grapple with key themes such as the dynamics and significance of historical memory in different communities, attempts to reclaim, create, and/or protect various Irish identities, diversity and pluralism (including Catholic and Protestant communities, but also including racial and ethnic diversity, gender and sexuality, social class), and connections between the history of Ireland and other global contexts including imperialism and post-imperialism.

WMST 201 - Topics in Women's Studies

Topics in Women's Studies: Masculinity (Doggett)

The goal of this course is to examine the complex ways in which varied discourses of masculinity produce (rather than portray) varied categories of maleness. On this way of thinking, biology and gender are equally fluid, discursively produced categories. Both are unstable, both are performed, and both are bound up with power. The course title, “Masculinities,” as opposed to “Masculinity,” is designed to highlight this fluid dynamic. Specifically we will explore how maleness is repeatedly gendered through multiple forms of masculinity that are influenced by gender, race, social class, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality, and ability. Body image, female and transgender masculinity will also be explored. The ultimate aim is to interrogate how these multiple intersections consistently produce, regulate, and challenge power structures in contemporary America.

AMST 201 - American Studies

AMST 201: Civil War & Memory

This is a team-taught course with one faculty member from History (Behrend) and one from English (Rutkowski). Rather than being about the American Civil War itself, this course will explore the way the war is remembered long after the battles were over. As we are in the midst of the 150th anniversary of the war, we seek to understand how American memories of the war have changed from one era to the next, and why Americans still debate the meaning of the war. The course will be organized roughly into two sections. The first half will cover the late nineteenth-century when “Lost Cause” mythology became the predominant interpretation of the war. The latter half of the course will look at late twentieth-century uses of the Civil War and ideas that still haunt our his-torical present: Civil War re-enactors, debates over the continuing presence of the Confederate flag, Civil War historical novels. Because this is an interdisciplinary course, students will read broadly in scholarly and popular history, art history as well as in literary genres such as fiction and poetry.

FMST 100 - Introduction to Film Studies

Introduction to Film Studies (Okada)

Introduction to Film Studies is an overview of film as an art form as exemplified by a selection of films, filmmakers, film movements, and theories from the U.S., Europe, and Asia. In covering the diverse possibilities presented by the cinematic form, including narrative, editing, cinematography, mise-en-scène and sound, we will explore how to “read” a film, taking into consideration its formal, cultural and historical contexts.

FMST 310 - Screenwriting

Screenwriting (Munnell)

This course is designed as an introduction to the theory and practice of screenwriting. The course will be conducted in a seminar style where students are expected to actively participate in writing, readings and discussion. Significant subjects addressed will be story development, character and relationships, conflict, plot and structure, style and theme. In addition, attention will be paid to conventions and format of screenplays as blueprints for a final film product.

Textbooks:


The Art and Craft of Playwriting, Jeffrey Hatcher. Story Press, 1996
ISBN: 978-1-88491-046-3

FMST 459 - Film Authors

Film Authors: David Cronenberg (Okada)

This course focuses on the work of David Cronenberg, an internationally recognized Canadian director whose films range from black and white independent horror films from the early 1970s to recent big budget, global co-productions and major literary adaptations. Cronenberg’s films are obsessed with the dichotomy between, on the one hand, order, reason, repression, and control, and on the other, liberation, sexuality, disease, and the disintegration of self and of the boundaries that define society. Through close viewings of his most insightful films as well as accompanying theoretical readings on authorship, the science fiction genre, affect studies, phenomenology, psychoanalysis, gender studies, and many other topics, we will navigate the strange and provocative world of Cronenberg through critical writing, discussion, and presentations.