

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

FALL 2009 (20093)

Welcome to the Department of English. For fall semester 2009 we offer a rich selection of introductory and upper-division courses in English and American literature and culture, as well as Creative Writing workshops. Please feel free to talk to Lawrence Green (director of undergraduate studies), Rebecca Woods (departmental staff adviser), or other English faculty to help you select the menu of courses that is right for you.

All Department of English courses are “R” courses, except for the following “D” courses: Engl. 303, 304, 404, 407, 408, 490 & 491. A Department stamp is not required for “R” course registration prior to the beginning of the semester, but is required for “D” course registration. On the first day of classes all courses will be closed—admission is granted only by the instructor’s signature and the Department stamp (available in Taper 404). You must then register in person at the Registration office.

Departmental clearance is required for all “D” class courses.

Be sure to check class numbers (e.g., 32734R) and class hours against the official Fall 2009 Schedule of Classes at www.usc.edu/academics/classes.

All students who want to major, double-major, or minor in English must take three lower-division courses in the 200-300 range, of which AT LEAST TWO must be from the 261, 262, 263 sequence. The third course may be from that sequence, OR from other specified courses in 200-300 range.

Visit our web site and contact us:

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<http://www.usc.edu/english>
Taper Hall of Humanities (THH) Room 404
213-740-2808

261 (English Lit to 1800) 32604R 9:30-10:45 TTH Dane

The course will cover a selection of English authors from medieval to the eighteenth century. We will include selections from all genres (narrative, lyric, drama), and all levels of seriousness. Readings will include selections from Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*, Shakespeare’s *King Lear*, Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, Pope’s “*Rape of the Lock*”, and a healthy dose of lyric poetry by Shakespeare and John Donne. Basic requirements: three short papers, two major quizzes, participation in class discussion.

261 (English Lit to 1800) 32605R 10-10:50 MWF Cervone

English 261 is an introductory course that will familiarize students with medieval and renaissance literature. The course will follow the development of English poetry, drama and prose, and it will also examine the translation of the Bible into English during the Reformation. In addition to the study of aesthetic, the course will employ an examination of the various social, cultural, and political movements that influenced literature during the key centuries between the Norman Conquest and the English Civil War. Authors will include Marie De France, Chaucer, Spenser, More, Marlowe, Shakespeare, and Milton. Texts will include the Norton Anthology of English Literature vol. A (edition to be announced), plus handouts. There will be five papers, all 5-7 pages in length.

261 (English Lit to 1800) 32608R 12-12:50 MWF Cervone

English 261 is an introductory course that will familiarize students with medieval and renaissance literature. The course will follow the development of English poetry, drama and prose, and it will also examine the translation of the Bible into English during the Reformation. In addition to the study of aesthetic, the course will employ an examination of the various social, cultural, and political movements that influenced literature during the key centuries between the Norman Conquest and the English Civil War. Authors will include Marie De France, Chaucer, Spenser, More, Marlowe, Shakespeare, and Milton. Texts will include the Norton Anthology of English Literature vol. A (edition to be announced), plus handouts. There will be five papers, all 5-7 pages in length.

262 (English Lit since 1800) 32624R 1-1:50 MWF Bruce

In this course, we are faced with the challenge of “surveying” more than 200 years of literature—no easy task. To unite what might otherwise seem an arbitrary selection of readings, I have arranged our texts primarily into two groupings: “earnest” texts that aim to reform a culture and “cautionary tales,” which aim to edify readers via fear and the fantastic. There are no neat demarcations between these categories (I’ve imposed them); my hope is that reading the “earnest” texts of these literary periods next to their gothic poetry, ghost stories, and children’s fantasies, for example, may enrich our understanding of these eras. Although we will read from all of the major genres, we will focus on poetry, non-fiction prose, and the novel. The novels I have selected (Elizabeth Inchbald’s *Nature and Art*, George Eliot’s *Adam Bede*, Jean Rhys’s *Good Morning Midnight*, and Aravind Adiga’s *White Tiger*) will allow us to examine changing fictional representations of individuals responding to extreme stress throughout the period. Finally, we will read both canonical authors (e.g., William Wordsworth, Charles Dickens, and James Joyce) and those who traditionally have been marginalized (such as Margaret Oliphant and Mary Prince) in order to question the process of canonization and to better appreciate the rich diversity of this long period.

262 (English Lit since 1800) 32619R 10-10:50 MWF Du Plessis

To what extent does the advent of the “modern,” that is, a radical break with the past and tradition, transform our ability to make sense of what happens to us? Simply put: what happens to “experience” in modernity? This class will frame answers to this question by intensive readings of texts from British and American literature from the period of approximately 1800 to 1950. We will consider the transformed sense of self, the possibilities for a community or a group, the implication of changes in experience for communication and education, the role of text-making and art production in relation to events and spaces that appear to be in constant flux. (We will examine William Blake’s illustrations for his works as well as his writing, for example, and we will look at different illustrations for Edgar Allan Poe’s work.)

We will study three key literary periods, namely, Romanticism, Victorianism, and modernism, and different genres and modes, such as the epigram, the novel of education, the short story, and the literary fairy tale. We will study verse as well as prose and familiarize ourselves with forms variations in rhyme, free verse, and questions of metre. We will work together in the course of the semester to build skills and strategies for analyzing literary texts both in detail and in context.

Requirements:

Students are expected to read all assigned readings and participate in and contribute to class discussion. Three papers (5-6 pages each) will be required: student writing is an essential part of learning in this class. Students may choose to revise and resubmit a paper for a different grade. We will have a mid-term as well as a final exam.

262 (English Lit since 1800) 32623R 12:30-1:45 TTH Freeman

Two hundred years of British culture in fifteen weeks? It can be done, especially when students take an active role in researching and presenting ideas and topics that help contextualize what we’re reading and thinking and talking about.

This course traces various literary movements and historical and social contexts for British literature since 1800. That means we’ll be reading Romantic poetry and talking about the role of the poet in society; Victorian poetry and fiction and thinking about the rise of the middle class, anxieties about gender, family, and modern science; turn of the century texts dealing with the transition into a more urban and internationalized world and the demise of the British empire; poetry, fiction, and film about the devastation of World War I and II and the rise of modernism, feminism, and postmodernism, and closing with texts of the last twenty-five or so years, including music, film, and other aspects of British popular and literary culture.

The material in this class helps provide a solid foundation for further exploration of literature and culture, and it will definitely give students a real understanding of the development of British culture and society in the modern era.

263 (American Literature) 32631R 9-9:50 MWF Gustafson

This course seeks to help students read with insight and appreciation significant works of American literature, including short stories, novels, or essays by Fitzgerald, Hawthorne, Melville, Douglass, Hemingway, Twain, Hurston, Baldwin and Cisneros. Since these writers, like so many American authors, were preoccupied with the fate of America itself--or since their works can be read in part as commentaries upon the success or the failure of the country to fulfill its ideals as articulated in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution--this course emphasizes the relationship of literary works to their political and cultural contexts. The United States is a country governed by the words of the founding fathers, but American writers have constituted another republic of words--a literary tradition--that will be studied for its perspective on American ideals and their contradiction.

263 (American Literature) 32635R 11-12:15 TTH Gordon

Designed for majors and minors, this course introduces students to a variety of important American writers and literary traditions. Students will encounter a range of genres – including poetry, autobiography, speeches, novel, short fiction, and film – while developing knowledge of the scope and variety of American literature’s artistic, cultural, and political concerns. The syllabus is divided into two units, “The Ways and Means of Freedom” and “Geographies of Home,” which lay out overarching themes of the course: the meaning and practice of freedom and oppression, the formation of national identity and social order(s), the role of place in literature, metaphors of travel, and the realms of imagination. With these themes, the class will engage deeply issues of race, class, gender, sexuality, and how they play out in literature and American culture. Throughout this discussion-based course, students will sharpen their skills in critical reading, writing, and argumentation, and be expected to take active part in the class. Two formal essays, midterm, and final exam. Writers studied will include Thomas Jefferson, Phillis Wheatley, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Frederick Douglass, June Jordan, Malcolm X, Walt Whitman, Langston Hughes, Richard Wright, Flannery O’Connor, Sherman Alexie, and Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

263 (American Literature) 32636R 12-12:50 MWF Kemp

The collective myths and ideologies of most cultures precede historical self-consciousness; that of America, by contrast, arises in the very recent past, and comes into being simultaneously with European modernity. As such, it provides an extreme and simplified exemplar of all of the movements and conflicts of the modern. The course will introduce the student to the major themes and issues of American literature and culture from the seventeenth century to the present. We will concentrate particularly on attempts to find a new basis for community, divorced from the Old World (the continent of Europe and the continent of the past), and the dissatisfaction with and opposition to that community that comes with modern subjectivity. The journey will take us from raw Puritan colonies to the repressive sophistication of Henry James’ and Kate Chopin’s nineteenth-century salons--worlds of etiquette and porcelain in which nothing can be said--to the mad transgressive road trips of the Beats and of Pynchon, all united by a restless desire to find some meaning beyond the obvious, some transcendence that will transfigure and explain the enigma of the self and of the unfinished errand, America.

290 (Cultural Studies: Theories and Methods) 32820R 12:30-1:45 TTH Lloyd

This course is designed to introduce students to the concept of culture. We will begin with a look at the history and evolution of its various usages from the late 18th to the mid-20th century. Commencing with readings that track the emergence of the idea of a distinct field or object, “culture”, principally in aesthetic philosophy, it will introduce students to the differentiated use of the term in anthropology, sociology, including mass culture and media, and critical theory. We will reflect both on the term and its various usages and will provide a self-critical history of the origins of the discipline of cultural studies. In light of this historical background, we will then explore some examples of the theory, methods and practice of contemporary cultural studies, focusing on some of the main approaches to cultural analysis. The course will consider the principal strands of influence on each “school”, the typical modes and assumptions of its practice, and some examples of the kind of analysis it produces. The specific approaches considered will be selected from short readings in the Birmingham School, French cultural criticism, Latin American cultural critique, U.S. critical race theory, and postcolonialism.

298 (Intro to the Genre of Fiction) 32643R 11-12:15 TTH Johnson

Register for lecture and one discussion 32817R 1-1:50 W or 32816R 2-2:50 T

Who tells a story and what are the means of creating engaging forms of fiction? How does fiction in its beginnings link to contemporary writing? 298: Introduction to the Genre of Fiction will prepare students for either the Creative Writing or Literature track in the major (and can substitute for another 200 level requirement). Students will be asked to study the history of narrative, story-telling, character and plot development and experiment across a range of stories and novels, [from the novel’s beginning to the present day.] The class will be primarily lecture but will be accompanied by a discussion section that requires both critical analysis and creative writing. Thus, students will get a chance to engage in both creative writing exercises and close analysis of texts. This particular course will focus upon the genre’s development of narrative voices and personae.

303 (Intro to Fiction Writing) 32645D 2-4:20 M Wiggins

Introduction to the techniques and practice of writing prose fiction.

303 (Intro to Fiction Writing) 32649D 2-4:20 W Tervalon

This course will introduce students to the methods and practice of creative writing with a focus on fiction. During the first few weeks of the quarter we'll engage in writing activities that address various issues of movement, invention, imagery, revision, dialogue etc.--and then you'll put those techniques to work in your own work. By the third meeting of the course we'll begin meeting in workshop, with good humored in-class discussion and evaluation of student writing.

Requirements: four stories (1000-2000 words); oral and written critiques of stories submitted to workshop; short writing activities; active and enthusiastic class participation.

The WORKSHOP will be the heart of this class. Please be prepared to contribute in the constructive discussion of the work submitted! Bring a copies of your story the day it is to be workshopped. DO NOT REVEAL YOUR NAME! Stories will be read anonymously to engender honest, but fair class critiques. I believe that the best work stands on its own and doesn't need to be defended by the author. You learn from grievous mistakes far more than from unwarranted praise, or sometimes well intentioned praise. The shroud of anonymity is a wonderful tool to engender risk in the workshop and we shall use it. Please email me your story the following day so that I can be astonished at my poor assumptions of who wrote what. The workshop works best when it's insightful and critical, but good humored.

303 (Intro to Fiction Writing) 32653D 2-4:20 F Tervalon

See above course description 32649D.

303 (Intro to Fiction Writing) 32650D 4:30-6:50 W Segal

How do you take the vision of the perfect story that you carry around in your head and get it out—intact—onto the page? This course begins to answer that question by introducing the novice writer to the craft of fiction writing, with an emphasis on the literary short story. We will also try to answer the “how do they do it?” question that plagues us when we read wonderful work. By studying a combination of student-generated stories and many published works, we will examine and learn to integrate the elements of fiction into our own work. We will also wrestle with the eternal question of how to show rather than tell what we want to say. Everyone is expected to read, write comments on, and discuss in depth each story that passes through the workshop.

304 (Intro to Poetry Writing) 32657D 2-4:20 T Irwin

Using Robert Wallace's classic text, *Writing Poems*, as a model, we will examine the craft of poetry writing from inspiration through final revision. Form, content, metaphor, and image will be discussed, and we will carefully examine diction, syntax, rhythm, meter, and the line in the work of many modern and contemporary poets. Writers in this class will complete a number of formal exercises and will provide numerous revisions of their own work, which will become part of the final portfolio required for this course.

304 (Intro to Poetry Writing) 32659D 2-4:20 W Bendall

In this course we will read and study of wide range of contemporary poetry in order to become acquainted with many styles, trends, forms, and other elements of poetry. Students will write poems exploring some particular strategies. The class is run as a workshop so participation and written critiques are expected. There is also substantial reading from various texts required. Poets include Elizabeth Bishop, Lynn Emanuel, Frank O'Hara, Pablo Neruda, Norman Dubie, Harryette Mullen, and others. Five poems, written responses, participation, and attendance mandatory.

304 (Intro to Poetry Writing) 32660D 4:30-6:50 W Woloch

This course is open to any student, from any discipline, with a serious interest in reading and writing poetry. The class will be run as a workshop, with a focus on writing assignments and exercises to help students generate their own creative work, using their own life experience and perceptions to write original poetry. We'll read and discuss a wide variety of contemporary American poetry, from neo-formalist verse to spoken word; students will be encouraged to use these poems as models, to experiment with different styles and subject matter, and to incorporate elements of their other interests -- music, science, theatre, history, filmmaking, etc ... -- into the poems they write. Writing exercises will utilize free verse, traditional, non-traditional and invented forms, and will facilitate creative risk-taking. Class discussions are expected to be lively and constructive, with all students participating and offering feedback on one another's work. There will be no final exam; instead, each student will submit a final portfolio of poems written and revised over the course of the semester.

400 (Advanced Expository Writing) 32671R 2-4:20 W Woloch

This class is open to any student with a serious interest in learning to transform personal experience into prose that has the narrative power of fiction and the lyricism and intensity of poetry. Creative Non-Fiction is a fluid and inclusive genre; one in which a writer may not only recount life-shaping events, but may also interweave his or her larger concerns about society, politics, relationships, history, science, art, spirituality, the environment -- any topic about which he or she cares deeply, any area he or she wishes to explore in language. Students will read a diverse selection of published personal essays, paying attention to the ways in which accomplished writers handle the form, studying how the essayist engages in an intimate conversation with the reader while simultaneously crafting that conversation into a focused meditation and a work of literature. In-class writing exercises will help students discover both subject matter and a tone or "voice" with which to begin the sustained work of writing their essays. Weekly writing assignments will be aimed at helping them develop a prose style that suits their sensibilities as well as their subjects. The bulk of class time will be devoted to reading and workshopping drafts of student essays, therefore attendance and participation will be of the utmost importance. Students will also have opportunities to go over their revisions in conference with the instructor. There will be no final exam; instead, each student will submit a final portfolio of three or four revised and polished personal essays.

404 (The Writer in the Community) 32673D 2-4:20 M Woloch

This course is designed to offer a hands-on learning experience for students with an interest in both creative writing and community service, providing them with an opportunity to share their passion for imaginative language and a training ground for leading creative writing workshops in community settings. Students will prepare to become workshop leaders via reading and study of resource materials, discussion of pedagogical approaches, and collaborative lesson planning sessions. Students will develop their own lesson plans during classroom labs, observe classroom workshops led by the instructor and guest instructors, and will then team-teach and, later, individually lead workshops in classrooms in a local school. While the focus of this semester's course will be on the teaching of poetry writing, students will learn lesson planning strategies applicable to a variety of genres, including fiction and creative non-fiction. At the end of the semester, students will collaborate on the editing and production of an anthology of workshop participants' writing. The course will culminate in a publication reading by workshop participants on the USC campus, organized and hosted by the students in the course and open to the public.

The course will also cover strategies for publicizing the program in the community and the media, adapting the classroom model for use in other community settings, and seeking out other venues and sources of funding for community workshops in creative writing. Each student will keep a journal documenting his/her experiences throughout the course, to be submitted at the end of the semester in lieu of a final exam. The course will require approximately four hours of class time per week, one hour of which will be spent in a community classroom.

The course is open to any student who has completed at least one creative writing workshop course in poetry or fiction.

405 (Fiction Writing) 32674R 2-4:20 M Everett

This is an intermediate workshop in fiction. The course assumes a basic understanding of the language of fiction writing. During the workshop we will discuss student manuscripts and outside readings. Also, there will be a push toward more experimental work. The class will be asked to challenge and perhaps corrupt perceived notions of form and presentation.

405 (Fiction Writing) 32676R 2-4:20 TH Segal

An intermediate workshop for fiction writers who have completed English 303. This course will focus on revision as the cornerstone of good writing. How does one become a good editor of one's own work? How does one resist the urge to put away a story that has been workshopped and never look at it again? To that end, we will focus on developing the skills to differentiate and select the most useful criticism received in the workshop in order to improve our own fiction. The goal, of course, is to best make use of workshop feedback in order to realize our creative vision. We will be concentrating on exploration of literary fiction both in our own work and in close readings of published short stories. Students will be expected to read, write comments on, and discuss in depth each story that passes through the workshop.

405 (Fiction Writing) 32679R 4:30-6:50 W Tervalon

This course will introduce students to writing of the longer narrative. The first few meetings we'll discuss structure and character development. By the third meeting of the course we'll begin meeting in workshop, with in-class discussion and evaluation of chapters, longer stories, or the beginning of a short novella. (6000-8000 words);

Requirements: two chapters, or longer stories, or maybe even a short novella. (6000-8000 words); oral and written critiques of stories submitted to workshop; short writing activities; active and enthusiastic class participation.

The WORKSHOP will be the heart of this class. Please be prepared to contribute in the constructive discussion of the work submitted! Bring copies of your story the day it's to be work-shopped. DO NOT REVEAL YOUR NAME! We'll discuss how to blind e-mail fiction submissions. Stories will be read anonymously to engender honest, but fair critiques. I believe that the best work stands on its own and doesn't need to be defended by the author. You learn from grievous mistakes far more than from unwarranted praise, or sometimes well intentioned praise. The shroud of anonymity is a wonderful tool to engender risk in the workshop and we shall use it. Please email me your story the following day so that I can be astonished at my poor assumptions of who wrote what. The workshop works best when it's insightful and critical, but good humored.

406 (Poetry Writing) 32686R 2-4:20 TH Bendall

In this course we will read and study a wide range of contemporary poetry in order to experiment with some various forms and approaches. For instance, we'll work with jargons and specialized lexicons, ekphrastic poems, and long meditation poems. The class is run as a workshop so participation and written critiques are expected. There is also substantial reading from various texts required. Poets include Charles Simic, Jorie Graham, Lois-Ann Yamanaka, Amy Gerstler, C.K. Williams, Harryette Mullen and others.

407 (Advanced Fiction Writing) 32830D 4:30-6:50 M Wiggins

Prerequisite: ENGL 405. Submission and instructor approval.

408 (Advanced Poetry Writing) 32831D 4:30-6:50 TH St. John

This course will be conducted on a workshop basis and will consider new student writing each week. Reading assignments will also be given. Admission is by submission only. Prerequisite: English 406 or permission of instructor.

409 (The English Language) 32706R 2-4:20 W Segal

(Editing for Writers)

This course is designed for writers in all genres—fiction, poetry, journalism, expository, etc. When working on a piece of writing, if you've ever selected one word over another, rephrased a question, erased a phrase or added a comma, you've done what professional editors do. The goal of this course is to harness the skills you already have to quantify and qualify the job of an editor in order to improve your own writing and help you become a better analyst of what makes an effective piece of literature. Along with practical guidance on how to implement the various levels of editing—shaping and sculpting, cutting and condensing, copyediting and fact checking—we will be considering the role of editors in the creative process by examining their function across various genres of writing. In what ways is an editor a partner in the creative act? Is there such a thing as too much of a good thing? Everyone who is truly invested in what they are writing will benefit from this hands-on approach to acquiring more skills that help a writer achieve his or her artistic vision.

421 (Engl Lit of the 16th Century) 32710R 2-3:15 MW Cervone

This course will follow the development of English literature from the onset of the Reformation to the death of Elizabeth I. The first half of the course will focus on the Reformation period and will include drama, poetry, and polemic. The second half of the course will focus on the creative explosion of the Elizabethan era. Authors will include (but are not limited to) Wyatt, More, Bale, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Marlowe. The course will also discuss the translation of the Bible into English. Texts will include critical editions, various online texts accessible through USC's Homer catalog, and handout materials. There will be three papers, 8-10 pages in length.

426 (Modern English Literature) 32715R 2-3:15 MW Eggenschwiler
(1890-1945)

This offering of 426 will trace the course of the course throughout the 20th century as the topic expands and contorts from England as a “fortress built by Nature for herself” to English as a global language of many places and of many species of the genus “modern English literature.” The readings will be quite varied except for their quality, which is delightful. I assign them for our pleasure as well as profit.

The course begins, as any course on modern English should, with 1910, the year in which, according to Virginia Woolf, human nature changed. This change is partly begun by her Bloomsbury friend, E.M. Forster, who published “Howard’s End” that year (although he had several other swell novels earlier in the decade). Then to Ms. Woolf herself with her London West End novel, “Mrs. Dalloway” (a day-in-the-life novel) and to Ford Maddox Ford’s “Some Do Not,” the first (and I think best) novel of a tetralogy that takes “the last Tory” deeply into romantic confusion and W.W.!

We shall then spend time on John Bull’s Other Island, reading works by W.B. Yeats and James Joyce (“Portrait of the Artist “ by the latter and decidedly Irish poems by the former). They are arguably the finest English as well as Irish poet and novelist of the century.

To realize that the English are not all dead, white writers, we’ll read some works by living Brits whose families come from the former colonies, possibly Hanif Kureishi or Sir V.S. Naipaul And to realize that some fine writers in English do not live in England and Ireland, we’ll read a couple of very different novels by two South African writers, Nadine Gordimer and J.M. Coetzee (now living in Australia). Both are Nobel Prize winners.

The course will be conducted mostly by discussion, although I talk a lot, and you must be prepared each meeting to discuss the plats and plots du jour. There will be no exams, but there will be three or four papers, and you will be required to write discussion topics for each class meeting. A lovely time will be had by all, or else!

430 (Shakespeare) 32716R 10-11:40 WF Lemon

This course will offer a close study of several of Shakespeare’s plays and poems in order to introduce you to Shakespeare’s language, his stagecraft, his literary “genius,” and his legacy. After an opening unit on Shakespeare’s sonnets, we will turn for the rest of the course to four of Shakespeare’s major plays: *Richard III*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, and *King Lear*. We will examine these plays both as literary texts and as theatrical performances. Some key questions include: how was Shakespeare himself a rewriter, taking literary or historical texts and adapting them for the stage? How have Shakespeare’s plays been adapted for film by modern directors and actors? In each unit, we will start with Shakespeare’s adaptation of his source text for the stage, examining how he revised his Renaissance source material such as Holinshed’s *Chronicles*, More’s *History of Richard III*, or Cinthio’s *Hecatombithi*. We will then spend two weeks on each Shakespeare play. Each unit will end by discussing twentieth-century filmic adaptations of the play. The class may include a visit to a local Shakespeare theatre production, if I can find anything good on offer!

Texts:

Richard III, Macbeth, King Lear, Othello; Shakespeare sonnets.

Films:

Richard 3 (1995) with directed by Richard Loncraine, and starring Ian McKellen
Macbeth (1978), directed by Philip Casson, and starring Ian McKellen and Judi Dench

Macbeth (1948), directed by and starring Orson Welles

Throne of Blood (1957), directed by Akira Kurosawa, and starring Toshiro Mifune

Othello (1995), directed by Oliver Parker, and starring Laurence Fishburne

The Tragedy of Othello (1952), directed by and starring Orson Welles

King Lear (1984), directed by Michael Elliot, and starring Laurence Olivier

King Lear (1975), directed by Grigori Kozintsev, and starring Yuri Yarvet

Ran (1985), directed by Akira Kurosawa, starring Tatsuya Nakadai

Requirements:

Attendance/participation

Two essays (one 5-7 page essay; one 8-10 page essay)

Two exams (midterm; final)

Film viewing (9 films, which you will need to view outside of classtime)

Class presentation/performance

441 (American Lit, 1865 to 1920) 32719R 12:30-1:45 TTH Berliner

In this course, we will consider American fiction, poetry, and nonfiction from the mid-nineteenth century to the First World War. The course is divided into four units: realist fiction, social and economic reform writing, poetry from Walt Whitman to early T. S. Eliot, and literary naturalism. Throughout the semester we will be asking the following questions of our course texts: What is the relationship between genre and reform? In what ways are gender, race, class, and sexuality constructed in our course texts? How do these writers present the relationship between the aesthetic, the historical, the personal, and the political? Readings will include the works of Mark Twain, Charles Chesnutt, Willa Cather, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Henry James, Emily Dickinson, W. E. B. Du Bois, and Jack London.

445m (The Lit of America: Cross-Cultural Perspectives) 32725R 11-12:15 TTH Berliner

This course examines American fiction and poetry from the second half of the twentieth century. We will read works by writers who hail from a variety of backgrounds—Native, African, Mexican, British, Chinese, Puerto Rican, Irish, Jewish, Indian, and Korean—and investigate the ways in which these texts explore the complexities of American life. Close reading analysis will be emphasized throughout the semester. We will consider how each of our course texts is constructed artistically vis-à-vis techniques of narration, characterization, imagery, metaphor, and literary language. During the course of the semester, we will be considering the following thematic questions: How are individual characters constructed as racial and ethnic subjects? How do gender and ethnicity intersect to create particular subjectivities? How flexible is the dominant culture in adapting to the ways and needs of the perceived outsider? What are the productive and the destructive aspects of assimilation?

Finally, what are the common features of these texts and crucial sites of cultural difference? Readings will include works by Louise Erdrich, James Baldwin, Mary McCarthy, Agha Shahid Ali, John Updike, Judith Ortiz Cofer, Maxine Hong Kingston, Isaac Bashevis Singer, José Antonio Villareal, Chang-Rae Lee, and Barack Obama.

452 (Modern Poetry) 32732R 2-4:20 TH St. John

This course will consider many of the classic High Modernist poets as well some lesser known figures. We will also look at the influence of these poets throughout the latter part of the 20th Century and upon contemporary poetry as well. In-class reports and a major paper will be required.

456 (Contemporary Poetry) 32734R 11-12:15 TTH Irwin

Using J.D. McClatchy's Vintage Book of Contemporary World Poetry, along with individual volumes by Amichai, Milosz, and Szymborska, we will focus on the work of fifteen major poets. We will specifically focus on those poets whose work translates well into English, while discussing the issue of successful translation. Completion of this course will include a paper and presentation on the particular work of one author. We will also practice the art of translation through generating different versions of various works. Knowledge of a second language such as French, German, Italian, Polish, or Spanish would be helpful for this course but not necessary. Additional authors include Alegria, Bonnefoy, Celan, Bei Dao, Herbert, Juarroz, Neruda, Paz, Pilinsky, Soyinka, Stanescu, Zagajewski, and several others.

463 (Contemporary Drama) 32738R 1-1:50 MWF Berg

What is contemporary drama? When did it start? Where is it found? And what does it look like? Is it just Modern Drama with a new twist? Or is it just more Post-Modern parody passing for drama? Rhetorical questions all, but nonetheless with some import. This course will not attempt to answer any of them but these questions and others like them will set the stage for the course. In order to begin the investigation we will say the contemporary began in 1960. We will read texts written in English from a number of cultures, and we will ask how these contemporary theatrical texts confront and engage the political and historical aspects of these contemporary time(s). We will be concerned not only with the ways the requirements of drama shape these issues but also how a concern with the political and historical might reshape the dramatic as well as the theatrical. Since this is a course dealing with contemporary works, and since most drama usually keeps its distance from the political, many of the texts we will read will not be as well known as others. But while we will read works by Sarah Kane, Martin McDonagh, Judith Thompson and others, we will also read texts by Hansberry, Pinter and Valdez.

466 (The 19th Century English Novel) 32740R 10-11:40 MF Schor

19th century novels reach us today in many forms – not only in textbooks and our beloved paperbacks, with their cover art heroines with big eyes and paintings of village squares filled with people, but in Hollywood films, BBC costume dramas, and contemporary fictional and cinematic rewritings. It is this process of adaptation that fascinates me – how do these novels reach us; what questions do they continue to rise; how do they change over time; and how do they change us, their readers, which was their avowed purpose? We will be reading novels of curious heroines, angry young men, mysterious houses and desperate communities – and we will also be watching movies and TV, and asking ourselves, why, oh why, does the novel still matter? We will also read some theoretical accounts, write several short papers and participate in some creative writing exercises of our own, all in our attempts to understand what it is novels do to and for us. Texts will include Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations*, Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day*, Jane Austen’s *Emma*, George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, Henry James, *The Portrait of a Lady*, A.S. Byatt, *Possession*, and Sarah Waters’ *Fingersmith*. Films will include Amy Heckerling’s *Clueless* and Jane Campion’s *The Piano*.

473 (Literature and Society) 32747R 1-1:50 MWF Bruce

What can portraits of childhood and children in fiction tell us about a society’s values? Just how much reality is acceptable in children’s fiction? Are children harmed by fantasy novels, or are their imaginations exercised by them? In this class, we’ll begin considering these and related questions by reading from Mary Sherwood’s *The History of the Fairchild Family* (1818), an enormously popular text that joins violent imagery, prayers, and hymns to educate middle-class, Christian children. We’ll then move into what scholars have called the “Golden Age” of children’s literature (roughly 1850-1920), exploring the ways in which fictions such as Horatio Alger’s *Ragged Dick* (1867), the anonymously penned *Sweeney Todd* (1847-1849), Frances Hodgson Burnett’s *The Secret Garden* (1911), and George MacDonald’s *The Princess and the Goblin* (1872) entertain, socialize, and indoctrinate children using various degrees of realism and fantasy.

We’ll finish the semester by comparing our Golden Age texts to *The Northern Lights* (1995), Philip Pullman’s Carnegie award-winning novel that has generated calls for boycotts in the U.S., and which was censored as it was made into an American film (*The Golden Compass*). To discover how fiction written for children can expand our understanding of this literary period and the child’s place in it, you will write a creative assignment (a prequel, sequel, or scene script), a review of a film adaptation of one of our texts, and an analysis of one of our novels.

480 (Modern Literary Criticism:) 32754R 11-11:50 MWF Berg
Theory and Practice

Sex, Violence and Contemporary Literary Theory:

Is there aesthetics of porn? Is art violent? Hardly unreasonable or even merely rhetorical questions, but questions none the less that might stimulate thought to move beyond the usual all too clichéd answers about sex, violence and their place within our many representations. We are all aware that the spectacle of violence and the exploitation of sexuality litter our cultural and social landscape. The porn of violence is everywhere; the aesthetics of rutting sells just about everything. How we perceive and understand, conceive and comprehend this sex and violence, as with most things, is shaped and impacted by the range, scale and wealth of other cultural representations. This course wants to explore the ways in which contemporary theory and criticism affords us a means for looking at this ecstasy of violence, the banality of sexuality, and the many ways we have learned to explain all this to ourselves. In short it is a course about thinking our way through texts and representations, in this case the many representations of violence and sexuality. It is not for the fainthearted and the passive. The course means to challenge, to question, and to explore; comfortable answer will be hard come by. The usual comfortable positions we are all familiar with, those that provide satisfaction but little real understanding about the startling and often uncomfortable presentations of sex and violence will be avoided. In short the course might ask more questions than it answers. The course will deal with a variety of texts, some recent some old, (e.g., plays by Sara Kane and Tourner; some novels and short stories by writers like Mailer and Califia, as well as a film and a graphic novel or two). There will also be a number of readings from theorists and thinkers like Foucault, Althusser, and Fanon to name a few.

481 (Narrative Forms in Lit and Film) 32755R 11-11:50 MWF Shoop

Conspiracy, paranoia, existential anxiety. This course explores a range of literature and film from the postwar period (1945 to the present) in which protagonists, narrators, and even readers/viewers find themselves caught up in plots beyond their understanding. If an older convention of the detective genre entailed a central character who solved the mystery through the sheer power of his/her reason to order the clues into a coherent account of ‘whodunit,’ the texts in this course offer no such clear resolution nor any agent capable of standing outside of the mystery and verifying its final meaning. On the contrary, these characters and protagonists inhabit uncertain worlds, negotiate abstract systems of power, and experience unstable relationships to both their own identities and the larger realities around them. This is not a course on the detective genre, but we will begin with film noir as an aesthetic sensibility and analytic lens through which to frame broader questions about the literature and film of postwar period. More particularly, we will be interested how the epistemological and ontological uncertainties that motivate these plots speak to some of the larger issues of postmodernism, globalization, and the cultural politics of the sixties, seventies and eighties. Is paranoia only a delusional mode of experience, or can it be seen as a critical means of interpreting the world? Are conspiracy theories the work of overactive imaginations, or are they reflective of more specific historical situations and circumstances? Finally, how does our own act of reading/viewing reduplicate the experience of the protagonists at the center of these plots? Are we caught in the plot as well? If so, what is the meaning of our own capture in these elusive narratives? Possible authors may include Raymond Chandler, Thomas Pynchon, Joan Didion, Paul Auster, Don DeLillo, Clarice Lispector, Patricia Highsmith, Alain Robbe-Grillet, John Le Carre, Haruki Murakami, Orphan Pamuk, Roberto Bolano and Alan Moore. Possible film directors may include Alfred Hitchcock, Nicholas Ray, Orson Welles, Francis Ford Coppola, Roman Polanski, Alan Pakula, and David Lynch.

491 (Senior Seminar in Literary Studies) 32758D 2-4:20 T Anderson

“Self-Justifying Fictions”: This course will analyze “self-justifying fictions”—fictional texts concerned with the issues at stake in their own production—to prepare students for their own thesis research, writing, and revision. Our discussions will focus on the ideas of authorship, revision, and audience reception that are embedded in our primary texts and seek to apply these ideas to the students’ own independent thesis projects. Supplemental texts will include essays on canon formation, the evolution of literary theory, and research methodologies.

Primary texts will include *Shakespeare, Hamlet*; *Miguel Cervantes, Don Quixote* (excerpts); Laurence Sterne, *Tristram Shandy* (Vols. 1 through 4); Luigi Pirandello, *Six Characters in Search of an Author*; James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*; Vladimir Nabokov, *Pale Fire* and Ian McEwan, *Atonement* (accompanied by a screening of the film adaptation). Additional readings will include selections from *The Craft of Research* and *Falling into Theory*.

Requirements will include a series of response papers, a research exercise and essay review, an in-class presentation, and a final thesis prospectus and annotated bibliography.

491 (Senior Seminar in Literary Studies) 32759D 2-4:20 TH Modleski

In this course we will look at the popular film, both past and present, and perhaps some television as well, and read theory and criticism related to the issue of spectatorship. Students will be exposed to different methodologies (which are generally also of use in thinking about questions of literary reception), in particular psychoanalysis and ethnography. One focus will be to consider differences between the audience implied by the film and the actual audiences of the film. We will examine how spectatorship varies across gender, race, class, and sexuality. We will begin by examining several films by Alfred Hitchcock whose work has provided a testing ground for many theories of spectatorship—Marxist, feminist, queer, etc, and then we will move on to other approaches. One such approach will involve looking at a few literary works that have been adapted for film—for example, “*Rebecca*,” the novel written by Daphne du Maurier. Critics have debated the extent to which Hitchcock’s adaptation has been true to the intended and actual audience (i.e., women for this classic female Gothic. A second example might include Steven Spielberg’s adaptation of Alice Walker’s novel “*The color Purple*,” which has been controversial both in white liberal critical circles and among and between African American women and African American men. Another approach might be to construct other pairings of films and novels to understand the act of interpretation as it is practiced by different groups of people. Thus we might view the film “*The Cat People*” directed by Jacques Tourneur, and then read Manuel Puig’s novel “*Kiss of the Spider Woman*,” which begins with two cell mates in an Argentinian prison—a Marxist and a gay man—arguing over the correct interpretation of the film.

Students will write a series of 1-2 page reaction papers, and, in addition, will either singly or in groups be responsible for presenting to the class an analysis of a critical or theoretical texts which will be designed to promote class discussion. A final paper, along with a bibliography of primary and secondary texts will be due the last day of class.

THE ENGLISH MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

Required Courses for the BA in English: (10 courses minimum for a total of 40 units)

Required Courses, Lower Division:

- 261 – English Literature to 1800
- 262 – English Literature since 1800
- 263 – American Literature

One of the courses may be a 100-300 level course that introduces students to a particular genre or to the study of literature generally. Students should take at least two introductory courses before enrolling in upper-division electives or creative writing workshops.

Seven Upper-Division Courses Required in English

At least two courses in Literature written before 1800 from:

- 420 - English Literature of the Middle Ages (1100-1500)
- 421 - English Literature of the 16 Century
- 422 - English Literature of the 17 Century
- 423 - English Literature of the 18 Century (1660-1780)
- 430 – Shakespeare
- 461 – English Drama to 1800
- 465 – The English Novel to 1800
- 469 – Women in English Literature before 1800

At least one course in Nineteenth-Century Literature from:

- 424 - English Literature of the Romantic Age (1780-1832)
- 425 – English Literature of the Victorian Age (1832-1890)
- 440 – American Literature to 1865
- 466 – The 19th Century English Novel

At least one course in American Literature from:

- 350 – Literature of California
- 440 – American Literature to 1865
- 441 – American Literature, 1865 to 1920
- 442 – American Literature, 1920 to the Present
- 445m – The Literatures of America: Cross-Cultural Perspectives
- 446 – African-American Poetry and Drama
- 447m – African-American Narrative
- 448m – Chicano and Latino Literature
- 449m – Asian-American Literature
- 451 - Periods and Genres in American Literature

Three Upper Division English Electives

Required Courses for BA in English with an Emphasis in Creative Writing (10 courses minimum for a total of 40 units)

Required Courses, Lower Division:

- 261 – English Literature to 1800
- 262 – English Literature since 1800
- 263 – American Literature

One of the courses may be a 100-300 level course that introduces students to a particular genre or to the study of literature generally. Students should take a least two introductory courses before enrolling in upper-division electives or creative writing workshops.

Seven Upper-Division Courses Required in English, including three but no more than four Creative Writing Workshops from the following list:

At least one course must be in Fiction from: At least one course must be in Poetry from:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 303 – Introduction to Fiction Writing | 304 – Introduction to Poetry Writing |
| 405 – Fiction Writing | 406 – Poetry Writing |
| 407 – Advanced Fiction Writing | 408 – Advanced Poetry Writing |

At least one course in Literature written before 1900 from:

- 420 - English Literature of the Middle Ages (1100-1500)
- 421 - English Literature of the 16 Century
- 422 - English Literature of the 17 Century
- 423 - English Literature of the 18 Century (1660-1780)
- 424 - English Literature of the Romantic Age (1780-1832)
- 425 – English Literature of the Victorian Age (1832-1890)
- 430 - Shakespeare
- 440 – American Literature to 1865
- 461 – English Drama to 1800
- 465 – The English Novel to 1800
- 466 – The 19th Century English Novel
- 469 – Women in English Literature before 1800

At least one course in Literature written after 1900 from:

- 426 – Modern English Literature (1890-1945)
- 441 – American Literature, 1865 to 1920
- 442 – American Literature, 1920 to the Present
- 445m – The Literatures of America: Cross-Cultural Perspectives
- 446 – African-American Poetry and Drama
- 447m – African-American Narrative
- 448m – Chicano and Latino Literature
- 449m – Asian-American Literature
- 452 – Modern Poetry
- 455 – Contemporary Prose
- 456 - Contemporary Poetry
- 462 – British and American Drama 1800-1950
- 463 - Contemporary Drama
- 467 - The Modern Novel

Two Upper Division English Electives