Welcome to the Department of English. For the Spring 2023 semester, we offer a rich selection of introductory and upper-division coursework in English and American literature and culture, and creative writing workshops. Please feel free to speak with any faculty in the English department, with one of our undergraduate program coordinators, or with Professor William Handley, our Director of Undergraduate Studies, to help you select the courses that are right for you.

All Department of English courses are “R” (open registration) courses, except for our GE-B courses that begin as "R" and then switch to "D," and the following “D” courses, which always require departmental clearance: ENGL 300, 302, 303, 304, 305, 310, 407, 408, 490, 491, 492, and 496. Departmental clearance 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 ENGL classes besides large GEs will be closed—admission is granted only by the instructor’s direct approval (please find more details on our FAQ page).

Be sure to check the class numbers (e.g., 32734R) and class hours against the official Spring 2023 Schedule of Classes at classes.usc.edu.

Online undergraduate registration for the Spring 2023 semester will begin Wednesday, October 26th, 2022. To check for your registration date and time, log on to OASIS via MyUSC and then click on “Permit to Register.” Registration times are assigned by the number of units completed. Students can and should be advised prior to their registration appointment times. Students should also check for any holds on their account that will prevent them from registering at their registration appointment time.

If you are in Thematic Option, follow the advising information from both the Department of English and your TO advisors. Clearance for registration in CORE classes will be handled by the TO office.

All courses for the Spring 2023 semester in the ENGL department are 4.0 units, besides our ENGL 499: Special Topics section which is 2.0 units.

Who doesn't love a good comic book? Dive more into this form of storytelling that combines verbal and visual texts with Professor M.G. Lord in ENGL-376g "Comic and Graphic Novels". See full description on page 28.

Image: Photo by Dev at Unsplash
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“The Bard of Avon”

Investigate the endurability of Shakespeare’s imaginative worlds through his original works, contemporary film adaptations, and a local stage production in ENGL-430 “Shakespeare” with Professor Heather James. See description on page 31.

Image: Illustration from front matter of printing of The Merchant of Venice, American Book Company (1898)
Reading the Heart: Emotional Intelligence and the Humanities

Gustafson, Thomas
MW | 10-11:50AM
SECTION: 32613

The university upholds itself as a place devoted to the study of critical thinking, and college curriculums always give a pre-eminent place to courses on the history of Western thought. But where in our education do we study and develop emotional intelligence? Can emotional intelligence even be taught? What if the university offered a course where we had the chance to study not just the head but the heart, not critical thinking but emotional intelligence, and where love of knowledge was combined with knowledge about love? English 174 will be such a course: It will draw upon literature ranging from the writings of Epicurus and Montaigne to stories by James Baldwin and Sandra Cisneros and films such as “Groundhog Day” to study such emotions as love, jealousy, anger, fear, hate, compassion, joy and happiness. It will also consider the place of emotional intelligence in such fields as medicine and business and how concepts such as empathy and our responses to anger can help us study moments of crisis in politics and international relations from the Peloponnesian War through the American Revolution and Civil War and 9/11. At the heart of the course will be an attempt to study how and where we learn forms of intelligence not measured by a SAT test but significant for your life including what one author calls such “essential human competencies” as “self-awareness, self-control, and empathy, and the arts of listening, resolving conflict, and cooperation.”
ENGL-176G  Los Angeles: the City, the Novel, the Movie

Berg, Rick  
MW | 2-3:20PM  
SECTION: 32620

Los Angeles has been mocked as a city 500 miles wide and two inches deep. It is famous for its movies and music, but critics claim that it lacks cultural depth. This course seeks to prove otherwise. The region of Southern California has a remarkably rich literary heritage extending deep into its past, and over the past three decades Los Angeles has become a pre-eminent center of literary creativity in the United States, the home of a new generation of writers whose works address questions and concerns of special significance as we confront the problems of 21st century urban America arising from divisions of social class, the injustices of racism and xenophobia, inequalities of economic opportunity, predatory capitalism, failures of empathy and the too often sensational and reductive portrayal of these issues. Los Angeles is a storyteller to the world through its music and films, and this course will argue that the best stories told in these mediums—as well as in the arts of fiction and poetry—offer us something much more than escape and entertainment: they can be acts of engagement with our pressing social issues. Study of the literature of this region can help perform one of the crucial roles of education in a democracy and in this urban region famous for its fragmentation and the powerful allure of the image: It can teach us to listen more carefully to the rich mix of voices that compose the vox populi of Los Angeles and thus create a deeper, broader sense of our common ground and its fault-lines. Texts for the course will include literature by such writers as Anna Deavere Smith, Budd Schulberg, Nathanael West, Karen Yamashita, Christopher [cont.] Isherwood, Yxta Maya Murray, Luis Rodriguez, Walter Mosley, Joan Didion and such films as “China - town,” “Sullivan's Travels,” and “Quinceanera.”

ENGL-230G  Shakespeare and His Times

Tomaini, Thea  
TTH | 2-3:20PM  
SECTION: 32627

In this course we will examine several of Shakespeare's plays and discuss his sources, motives, and creative process. We will do this via close, methodical readings of the plays in lecture, and we will use film clips to view some key scenes and performances. We will also discuss the culture and business of the Elizabethan/Jacobean theatre, its locations, agendas, patrons, players, and audiences. In addition, we will discuss Shakespeare's life and legacy—who he was, who he wasn't, who he became and why, and who he is today. In discussion sections students will engage in deeper analysis and debate about the issues of the plays and the relevance of those issues to today’s audiences.
ENGL-297G
Introduction to the Genre of Nonfiction

Freeman, Christopher
TTH | 3:30-4:50PM

Nonfiction is writing that’s true. Well, sort of. It comes in many guises—essays, reviews, histories, biographies, memoirs, philosophy, scientific and sociological studies. But of course, it is also crafted. In this course, we will work through various forms of nonfiction writing. We will study the craft and the process, starting with the end product, the published work. When you read for this class, read as a reader and as a writer. Craft, style, form, and content will all figure into our work.

We will do all we can to make this class a conversation about nonfiction writing—how it works, how its forms have changed, how research is involved, how to read it, how to write it and write about it. In lecture, we will cover important writers, movements, forms, theories, and larger questions about the medium and the messages. How do texts connect to their historical moment? To the past? The future? Whose voices are included? Whose are absent?

My job is to get you more interested in what nonfiction writing is and what it does; your job, is to be fully engaged with our material; to read our material, to think about it, and to come to lecture prepared to discuss it, to read it out loud, and to try to interpret it.

In your discussion sections, your instructors will elaborate on lecture material, but at the same time, they will pursue their own passions about writing by working with you on some of their favorite authors. The idea is that you’ll get introduction and intermediate take on nonfiction in lecture and an advanced immersion in section.

ENGL-299G
Introduction to the Genre of Poetry

Freeman, Christopher
TTH | 12:30-1:50PM

What can we learn from poetry as we learn about it? That will be a motivating question of this course. The English poet William Blake wrote of “the Bard, who Present, Past, & Future sees”—our work will take us to poets of the past and the present, poets whose work continues to speak to us across centuries. In this course, we have the privilege and pleasure of savoring poetry, contemplating it, discovering it anew, and finding its wisdom. We will also write some poems.

We will use an anthology in lecture for the first ten weeks or so; after that, we will all be reading the same two single volumes of poetry for deep dive “case studies.” In discussion section, you’ll work on one book of poetry for the first ten weeks, and your writing will be essays and poems (yes, you can do some creative writing!) based on the readings from lecture and section.
ENGL-261G

English Literature to 1800
"The Monstrous in Medieval and Early Modern Literature"

Tomaini, Thea
TTH | 11-12:20PM
SECTION: 32635

This section of English 261 traces the development of poetry and drama in England during the centuries between the First Millennium and the English Civil War. Specifically, this course will focus on the concept of The Monstrous in these works of literature. Students will learn the basics of Monster Theory, and will then discuss how the various types of monstrosity reflect the major social, political, cultural, and religious issues of the premodern era. There will be ghosts, faeries, witches, dragons, hybrid creatures, and demons; but we will also discuss how Monster Theory of the medieval and early modern periods describes persecutory and prejudicial attitudes of race, class, and gender/sexuality, and targets women, immigrants, the disabled, Christian sectarians, non-Christians, and non-Europeans. Major authors and works of poetry and drama will include Beowulf, Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, Spenser's The Faerie Queene, Marlowe's Dr. Faustus, Shakespeare's Richard III, and Milton's Paradise Lost, among other texts. Course texts include the Norton Anthology of English Literature, plus handouts TBA. We will also look at important source texts and backgrounds that influenced these authors and their major works. There will be three papers, all 8-10 pages in length.

ENGL-261G

English Literature to 1800

Rollo, David
TTH | 12:30-1:50PM
SECTION: 32636

Through the close analysis of literary works written in English before 1800, the course will address: the implications of authorship at various times in English and Irish history, with a particular emphasis on the theme and practice of political exclusion; the development of literacy and its initially restrictive force; the rise of empire and the attendant questions of dynastic legitimacy, religious determinism, gender empowerment and colonial expansion; urban foppery. Texts studied will include: selections from The Book of Margery Kempe and Chaucer's Canterbury Tales; Shakespeare's Macbeth; lyric poetry by Donne, Marvell, and Aemelia Lanyer; Milton's Paradise Lost; Congreve's The Way of the World; Aphra Behn's The Rover and Oroonoko; Defoe's Robinson Crusoe; and Swift's Gulliver's Travels. Students will write three papers, take a final exam, attend class and participate in discussion.
ENGL-261G  
**English Literature to 1800**

*Kemp, Anthony*

**MW | 2-3:20PM**  
**SECTION: 32637**

A study of the development of English literature from its origins to the Renaissance. The course will examine the development of the language itself, and of literary forms, but will particularly emphasize an understanding of the cultures of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, their material and intellectual conditions of existence. Through the literature and through art and other physical artifacts, we will attempt to comprehend (perhaps even empathetically) cultural worlds that are in many ways utterly estranged from modernity, and to respond to their brilliance, harshness, and strangeness. Rather than attempting a relatively superficial survey of many extracts, we will drill a limited number of deep cores into English medieval and early-modern culture.

Welcome to the real Middle Ages and Renaissance!

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ENGL-262G  
**English Literature since 1800**

*Sanford Russell, Bea*

**TTH | 9:30-10:50AM**  
**SECTION: 32640**

"All that is solid melts into air." This is how Marx described the experience of modernity as it exploded religious certainties, ate away at centuries' old social formations, poured humans from rural areas into cities and across the globe, and above all, turned everything into money, money, money.

This class follows modernity's melting as it shapes British literature since 1800. We will sketch a big-picture sense of literary history from Romanticism to Victorianism and Modernism to the 21st century. And engaging closely with writers including William Blake, William Wordsworth, Charles Dickens, Oscar Wilde, Virginia Woolf, T. S. Eliot, and Mohsin Hamid, we will try out a series of tentative answers to the question, “how did we get here?” That is, how did we get to the global, hyperconnected, capital-bloated world we live in today?
ENGL-262G

English Literature since 1800
"The Novel and the Long Poem"

Minas, Steven
TTH | 3:30-4:50PM

This survey course examines two generic trajectories in English literature from the Romantic period to the present: the novel and the long poem. Although stylistically different, both genres rely on narrative to drive their work, which means that many long poems read like novels and many novels read like long poems. By examining the long poem and the novel in relation to one another across an extended period of time, we will be able to track how the two genres respond to cultural change. The novel, for example, remains a strong generic vehicle that reflects the increasing complexity of modern society while the long poem begins to recede (though it never disappears) as a central narrative form shortly after World War II. Although this class will focus on genre, form, and style as we examine the content of the works, we will also contextualize these aesthetic features through an examination of the cultural forces that surround their production. Authors that might appear on the syllabus include William Wordsworth, John Keats, Jane Austen, George Eliot, Alfred Lord Tennyson, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Walter Pater, Virginia Woolf, T. S. Eliot, H.D., W. H. Auden, Penelope Fitzgerald, and Alice Oswald.

Photo by David Levenson/Getty Images.

ENGL-262G

English Literature since 1800

Freeman, Chris

TBD

SECTION: TBD


ENGL-263G

American Literature

Berg, Rick

TBD

SECTION: TBD

Intensive reading of representative writers.
ENGL-263G

American Literature
"American Horror Story"

Treuer, David
TTH | 11-12:20PM
SECTION: 32645

In this course we will use a variety of great works of American horror to interrogate the very idea of America itself. From road trips to acid trips, and from the well of slavery to western epics we will read American horror stories and in so-doing try to find new ways to think about the country and ourselves. Readings include: Stephen King, Toni Morrison, Charles Brockden Brown, Edgar Allen Poe, Erika Wurth, H.P. Lovecraft, Truman Capote, Henry James, and Patricia Highsmith among others. Along the way we will—seemingly accidentally—become familiar with a body of work that suggests but can’t completely represent some of the best (and most disturbing!) that American literature has to offer.

ENGL-263G

American Literature

Ingram, Kerry
TTH | 12:30-1:50PM
SECTION: 32646

We all know that we need words; we know that we need stories. When do they help us the most? When do they limit our choices? ENGL 263 covers selected works of American writers from the Colonial period to the present day, with an emphasis on why history, genre, and medium are important. In this course, we will interpret the aesthetic and thematic aspects crucial to any evolving definition of the “American Dream.” We will relate the works we investigate to their historical and literary contexts, and in the process, understand relevant criticism. What notions of the self or of a collective identity do you find when you read? What do you think about religion, government, philosophy, or genre? In our shared American literature, where do you find yourself?
Creative Writing Workshops | Spring 2023 Course Descriptions

ENGL-105X
Creative Writing for Non-Majors
Ingram, Brian
TH | 2-4:20PM

Stephen King once said that if you want to be a writer, you must do two things above all others: read a lot and write a lot. That’s what we’ll do in this course. In the process, we’ll explore methods and strategies for a daily writing habit in a safe space where you get to express and share. Broadly speaking, this class will allow for all the genres: prose and poetry, fiction and non-fiction narratives, and journaling. You will also be responding in a workshop setting to the writing of your peers. Often, we aren’t super clear about even our own feelings and observations until we’ve revised and found the most effective forms of expression. Reading is an act of discovery; so is writing. The ambition of this course is to facilitate your journey as you explore your insights. We are living in interesting times. There is so much we need to write for each other. Do you want to join in?

ENGL-300
Advanced Expository Writing
“The Art and Craft of the Essay”
Lord, M.G.
W | 2-4:20PM

This course will make you excited about essays again. It will also stress the importance of revision in the essay-writing process. The first part of the course will involve reading some superb practitioners of the form and discerning how they achieved what they achieved. Then you will apply techniques from the assigned texts in short creative exercises. The second part of the course will involve writing an original essay, workshopping it in class, revising it, and—yes—workshopping the revision. In real life, editors require more than one polish of a so-called finished version.

The assigned texts will include essays by James Baldwin, Virginia Woolf, Joan Didion, E.B. White, Rebecca Solnit, Jia Tolentino, Nora Ephron, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Geoff Dyer, Jonathan Lethem, and others.

This course will be useful for students considering the Literary Editing and Publishing (LEAP) progressive degree program at USC.
ENGL-302
Writing Narrative
Mullins, Brighde
T | 4:30-6:50PM
SECTION: 32681

Mark Twain, like most writers, found it easier to write long than short. He received this telegram from a publisher: “NEED 2 PAGE SHORT STORY 2 DAYS.” Twain replied: “NO CAN DO 2 PAGES 2 DAYS. CAN DO 30 PAGES 2 DAYS. NEED 30 DAYS TO DO 2 PAGES.” With Twain’s telegram in mind, this seminar will consider the difficult artistry of the short form, including prose poems, flash fiction and dramaticules. Writing exercises will give students a chance to try their hand at many of these forms, and the class will include both a creative and analytical writing component.
ENGL-302
Writing Narrative

Sligar, Sara
W | 2-4:20PM

This course combines seminar discussions and workshops to explore the limits of narrative in theory and practice. We will begin by asking: What is narrative? Why do we tell and consume stories? How can a deeper understanding of narrative theory help us craft more compelling narratives? We will examine texts from multiple genres and media to understand core elements of narrative studies, such as plot, character, conflict, narrative time, and causality. Then you will apply these lessons to short writing assignments in prose fiction, prose nonfiction, and audio and/or visual narrative media.

ENGL-303
Introduction to Fiction Writing

Ulin, David
T | 2-4:20PM

What is fiction? It seems the most basic of questions to answer: Fiction tells a story that is made up. And yet, there is a lot of truth in fiction; there has to be, if it is to be believed, and to work. In this class, we will look at fiction as a form that grows out of a series of relationships — between memory and imagination, truth and emotion — and investigate the way they are transmogrified through the lens of art. These are the issues faced by every fiction writer, and they will be at the center of our work. Although primarily a workshop — and it is the instructor’s intention that each student have the opportunity to be workshopped twice during the semester — the class will also use select assigned readings to frame a discussion of the larger issues involved in fiction writing, from structure and point-of-view to empathy and revelation, as well as character development and conflict, and the inherent subjectivity of point-of-view. During the semester, students will write two short stories, each of 10-15 pages in length, and will be asked to experiment with different styles and approaches to narrative. At the end of the semester, students will be asked to choose one of their stories and turn in a revision as a final project.
ENGL-303

Introduction to Fiction Writing

Wayland-Smith, Ellen

F | 2-4:20PM

SECTION: 32685

In this class, we will both study and practice the art of short literary fiction. Class time will be divided evenly between discussing published short fiction and relevant craft essays, on the one hand, and workshopping students’ own stories-in-progress, on the other. You will be expected to write two short (5-15 page) pieces of fiction/stories, one of which you will substantially revise for the final portfolio, in addition to a series of smaller 2-page reading response-and-reflections throughout the semester. We will study a wide range of story-telling styles and plot structures, and you will be encouraged to explore everything from classic Aristotelian plot structure to fairy tale logic to contemporary experiments with hybrid storytelling and narrative fragmentation. Among the broader aesthetic questions we will dive into: what does it mean to say that a fictional story “feels true”? What is the relationship between life and art, and how do our own lived experiences influence (or not) the fictional stories we construct on the page?

ENGL-304

Introduction to Poetry Writing

Bendall, Molly

W | 2-4:20PM

SECTION: 32689

In this course we will read and study a 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 lively and constructive participation is necessary with attention to analytical and critical skills. Hopefully, each person will discover ways to perfect and revise his or her own work. There will always be lots of room for misbehaving in poems and other adventurous pursuits. Several poems and written critiques are required. Poets include Frank O’Hara, Harryette Mullen, Natalie Diaz, Michelle Brittan Rosado, Ruth Madievsky, Khadijah Queen, Jake Skeets, and others. 5+ poems, written critiques, class participation required.

ENGL-304

Introduction to Poetry Writing

Bendall, Molly
M | 2-4:20PM

In this course we will read and study a 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 lively and constructive participation is necessary with attention to analytical and critical skills. Hopefully, each person will discover ways to perfect and revise his or her own work. There will always be lots of room for misbehaving in poems and other adventurous pursuits. Several poems and written critiques are required. Poets include Frank O’Hara, Harryette Mullen, Natalie Diaz, Michelle Brittan Rosado, Ruth Madievsky, Khadijah Queen, Jake Skeets, and others. 5+ poems, written critiques, class participation required.

ENGL-305

Introduction to Nonfiction Writing

“The Impersonal Art of the Personal Essay – and Vice-Versa”

Dyer, Geoff
T | 2-4:20PM

Both a workshop and a survey of the history of the essay, this course will use a number of classic examples to help guide us through the pitfalls and possibilities of the form. How to avoid crossing the line from the personal to the willfully self-indulgent? We know that you are interesting to you but how to make that ‘you’ interesting to everyone else? Conversely, how to imbue essays with the stamp of personal testimony without the support of a participating authorial personality? To help us navigate this potentially slippery terrain we will enlist the support of work by William Hazlitt, George Orwell, Joan Didion, James Baldwin, Nicholson Baker, Annie Dillard, Jia Tolentino and others.
ENGL-402

Narrative Composition

Prerequisite(s): ENGL-302 or ENGL-305

Dyer, Geoff

M | 2-4:20PM

This is an intermediate course for writers who have completed Engl-302 or Engl-305.

Our starting point will be E. M. Forster’s famous response to his own question in Aspects of the Novel: “Yes – oh dear yes – the novel tells a story.” How does this stand up all these years later? And what about other forms of writing? To what extent does Forster’s lament apply to non-fiction (when facts can sometimes get in the way of a good story)? These questions will lead to others, to considerations of the difference between narrative and story. What are the other ways, besides, story-telling, of keeping readers glued to the page while doing justice to the material? How do narratives gain traction? If you can’t come up with stories but want to write how can story-less writing be made gripping? How can readers be dissuaded from noticing the lack of the very thing that most of us want from books? Finally, since books are not cars, can wheel-spinning itself – i.e. an apparent inability to gain traction -- become compelling?

The course will be a combination of workshop and survey. Students will have their own writing vigorously examined while a wide range of writing -- fiction and non-fiction, “journalism’ and “memoir”, documentary and other forms -- will provide historical and generic context and inspirational guidance.

Writing requirements: A paper of 12-20 pages either on one or more of the authors read, or on one or more of the issues raised in the course, or a piece of narrative composition demonstrating a way of resolving the above questions.

In addition, each student will be expected to present on – or lead the discussion about – the featured book or books and then to submit any notes for this used in a revised form the following week so that it constitutes a short paper in its own right (3-5 pages).

ENGL-403

Nonfiction Writing

Prerequisite(s): ENGL-303 or ENGL-305

Nelson, Margaret

TH | 2-4:20PM

This course is an advanced nonfiction workshop in which students will have the opportunity to garner feedback about original works of nonfiction, written in response to class prompts. We will also do some reading, concentrating on recent and contemporary works of nonfiction divided into the categories of “expedition/encounter,” “portraits,” and “cultural criticism.” Along the way, we will touch on questions of memory, narration, ethics, form, style, research, audience, and genre. Please come ready to write new work, respond to the work of your peers, and engage deeply with the work of published writers. Note: this course is open to students who have completed ENGL 303 or 305, or by submission of a writing sample and subsequent permission of the instructor. To apply via sample, please submit a short piece of nonfiction (under 20 pages) to margarmin@usc.edu.
ENGL-404
The Writer in the Community
Sims, Hiram
T | 2-4:20PM
SECTION: 32728

The Writer in the Community is a course focused on giving students an introduction to the creation and development of community writing workshops, and the development of community performance spaces. Students will learn the fundamental skills necessary to facilitate poetry workshops that are accessible to community members in the neighborhood surrounding USC and develop a monthly open mic at The Sims Library of Poetry.

ENGL-405
Fiction Writing
Sligar, Sara
M | 2-4:20PM
SECTION: 32732

Prerequisite(s): ENGL-303 or ENGL-305

In this continuation of the fiction workshop series, we break down how structural and stylistic choices contribute to a story’s meaning, and how you can improve your writing through greater intentionality and purpose-oriented revision. Topics will include character, setting, pacing, and tone. In addition to producing your own creative work during the course, you will practice close-reading and feedback skills through workshops and in-depth discussions of published stories.
**ENGL-406**

Poetry Writing

"Enlarge the Temple / Intermediate Poetry Writing Workshop"

Prerequisite(s): ENGL-304

Irwin, Mark

**M | 2-4:20PM**

Using contemporary models of poetry, including those of Jorie Graham, W. S. Merwin, and Arthur Sze, three poets whose work has successfully evolved through numerous forms, students will hopefully engage new poetic strategies and risks in their own work. Critiques will focus on how form and new forms reinforce content. Students will set individual goals and new objectives for their own work. Fiction, imagination, and emotional amplitude will be stressed, and numerous examples from contemporary painting and music will be applied. Several essays on craft and form will also be discussed. Rewriting will play an integral part of this workshop, and revisions of well-known poems also will be discussed. Additionally, we will examine the work of award-winning, contemporary poets such as Rick Barot, Anne Carson, Natalie Diaz, Angie Estes, Thomas Sayers Ellis, Forrest Gander, Peter Gizzi, Laura Kasischke, Yusef Komunyakaa, Mary Ruefle, and Tracy K. Smith.

**ENGL-407**

Advanced Fiction Writing

Prerequisite(s): ENGL-405

Segal, Susan

**T | 2-4:20PM**

This course is a workshop focusing on student work as well as regular readings of published short stories, most selected by class members. Students will be expected to turn in four pieces over the course of the semester, as well as comments on assigned readings and peer work. As this class is for students who have significant workshop experience, we will focus on expanding our understanding of what makes a successful short story and how revisiting our work can open up new possibilities in structure, voice, scope, etc. Admission is by selection only.
ENGL-408

Advanced Poetry Writing

Prerequisite(s): ENGL-406

Journey, Anna

TH | 4:30-6:50PM

SECTION: 32738

In this reading and writing intensive advanced poetry workshop, students will read six collections of contemporary American poetry; write and carefully revise five to six poems for inclusion in a final portfolio; and post weekly Blackboard responses (two paragraphs or longer) to the required texts. Admission by application only. Prerequisites: ENGL 304 and 406.

Photo by Zagranyasha at Unsplash
The event that launched Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi on the world stage was the publication of a book: Hind Swaraj (1909), an English-language tract that made the case for Indian self-rule. Over the course of his life, Gandhi founded six journals and edited two weekly publications. His literary output was prolific: his collected works span 98 volumes and more than 50,000 pages! Gandhi clearly believed that the pen was a crucial—perhaps the most crucial—weapon in the fight for freedom from British colonial rule in India.

Other freedom fighters agreed. Across the political spectrum, from Marxist revolutionaries to Hindu fundamentalists, independence activists used literature to write India's future into being. They took up the pen to oppose British rule and to stake a claim on the subcontinent’s emerging postcolonial nations. Most of all, they debated the very nature of “freedom.” What did true freedom from colonialism entail? Was political “independence” enough? Or did caste and gender hierarchies also need to be overturned? What about economic inequalities and capitalist exploitation? Freedom fighters also debated what strategies should be used to win freedom. Was violence ever justifiable? Or was non-violence the only legitimate tactic in the independence movement?

In this course we will investigate how the independence movement’s leaders and foot soldiers historically answered these questions. Our primary source material will be “literature” broadly conceived: novels, manifestos, poems, speeches, short stories, films, songs, and essays. Taking a deep dive into the decades before and after 1947, we will explore a sequence of key topics in the independence movement: Gandhism, underground revolutionary movements, caste, partition, communalism, and capitalism.
ENGL-351

Periods and Genres in American Literature
“Wastelands and Apocalypse in Modern and Contemporary Poetry”

Bendall, Molly

MWF | 12-12:50PM

SECTION: 32706

Civilizations facing ruin and doomsday conditions have been played out in film, novels, visual art, and graphic novels. Modern and contemporary poets have also been compelled to depict devastations, such as environmental and climate catastrophes, nuclear disasters, the AIDS crisis, our current pandemic, A.I. takeover, and other various catastrophic events and their aftermaths. In this class we will discuss particular poetry texts, analyzing how a poetic consciousness navigates these particular worlds—both real and imagined ones—and how strategies and formal constructs contribute to a poem’s vision. We will read The Waste Land by T.S. Eliot and contemporary collections of poems including: Cold Pastoral by Rebecca Dunham, Tsunami vs. the Fukushima 50 by Lee Ann Roripaugh, Creature Sounds Fade by Shana Compton and Death by Sex Machine by Franny Choi, and poems by Shoda Shinoe, Alexis Pauline Gumbs, Tim Dlugos, Brian Barker, Matthea Harvey and others. 3 Papers, responses, creative assignments, and much participation.

Gandhism, underground revolutionary movements, caste, partition, communalism, and capitalism.

Image on Top Right: Death by Sex Machine by Franny Choi (Sibling Rivalry Press 2017)

ENGL-352G

Bookpacking

“BOOKPACKING AMERICA - exploring US regional cultures through classic and contemporary novels"

Chater, Andrew
TTH | 9:30-10:50AM

This class is an exercise in ‘bookpacking,’ an innovative form of literary adventure in which novels serve as portals through which to explore American regional history and culture.

Over the course of the semester, we’ll take a metaphorical road trip through the different regions of the USA - New England, the Appalachia, the South, the Hispanic Southwest and so on — and we’ll use one novel per region to unpack each region’s culture, past and present.

The course promises a vibrant overview of the myriad facets of the American experience, offering an important exercise in cultural empathy and understanding - all the more vital in this age of profound division.

Offered for both English and GE, the course offers a holistic approach to the humanities, combining elements of literature, history, geography, politics and social studies. If you are interested in a course that celebrates literature with a real world application, this class is for you. All majors welcome.

The class is led by Andrew Chater, a contemporary educator and award-winning BBC historian who has designed a variety of classes for USC students on the ‘Bookpacker’ model. Please visit www.bookpackers.com for a wealth of content on bookpacking at USC, and www.andrewchater.com for more information on the class instructor.

ENGL-352G

Bookpacking

“BOOKPACKING LOS ANGELES - an immersive journey through the culture and literature of L.A.”

Chater, Andrew
S | 10AM-5PM

This 4-unit class offers students a unique opportunity to dive deep into USC’s vibrant and extraordinary home city.

This is an immersive class - meaning that we’ll travel beyond the classroom. Every Saturday for 10 weeks in the Spring Semester, we will meet for a seminar on campus in the morning - and then, in the afternoon, we will head out in a minivan and explore a different facet of Los Angeles.

The class is an exercise in ‘Bookpacking’, a cross-humanities experience using novels as ‘guidebooks’ to places and people. Over the semester, we will read a variety of classic and contemporary LA fiction - from Raymond Chandler to Joan Didion - and we’ll explore these fictional worlds both conceptually and on the ground. We’ll walk the same streets as the characters in the stories, we’ll dig into context and history - and we’ll reflect on the intersection between literary landscapes and the contemporary cultures of LA.

The class is led by Andrew Chater, a contemporary educator and award-winning BBC historian who has designed a variety of classes for USC students on the ‘Bookpacker’ model. Please visit www.bookpackers.com for a wealth of content on bookpacking at USC, and www.andrewchater.com for more information on the class instructor.

The class is accredited for General Education - all majors welcome.
ENGL-355G

Anglo-American Law and Literature

“Tyranny and Sovereignty in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries”

Lemon, Rebecca
TTH | 12:30-1:50PM

This course investigates the legal and political concept of “tyranny” in the works of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. From Richard III to Macbeth, and from Shylock to Caliban, Shakespeare exposes the workings of the tyrant and interrogates the bondage of service. His portraits pose questions of agency and law: when can political subjects rise against a tyrant? Shakespeare’s answers resonate with vociferous debates on resistance and tyrannicide in the political writings by his contemporaries: we will read selections from the works of French jurist Jean Bodin, English monarch King James I, and Italian political theorist Niccolò Machiavelli next to Shakespeare’s plays with an eye to investigating how early modern writers imagined the categories of tyrant and servant; and how their writings deepen our understanding of the long history of these categories in Western legal thought. Readings will likely include: Shakespeare, Merchant of Venice, The Tempest, Richard III, Macbeth, Marlowe’s Doctor Faustus and Jonson’s Volpone in addition to Machiavelli’s The Prince and King James VI and I’s Trew Law of Free Monarchies.

Writing requirements include two essays (6-8 pages) or one longer paper (15-20 pages) and a few short responses to our course units.

Photo by Taisia Shestopal at Unsplash
ENGL-360

Modern Poetry

McCabe, Susan

TTH | 12:30-1:50PM  SECTION: 32690

We will examine poetry written between 1916 to 1946, examining experiment and social tensions for each of the above (pictured below in order of list), using close reading of their poems, lives, and the social, political and cultural fabric of "modernism." How do words create worlds?

We will examine the PRE-RAPHAELITE movement, CUBISM, EARLY FILM, HARLEM RENAISSANCE, QUEER identities, IMAGISM, BLUES, and the OCCULT as well as the impact of Two World Wars and a pandemic on these major Anglo-American poets—delineating their persistent "affects" and influences. Among the poets we read will be W.B. Yeats, H.D., Jean Toomer, T.S. Eliot, Gertrude Stein, Langston

Image: Nude Descending a Staircase (No. 2) by Marcel Duchamp 1912 // Philadelphia Museum of Art
ENGL-362G
Contemporary Poetry
“Contemporary Poetry: Poetics of the Grotesque”

Journey, Anna
TTH | 2-3:20PM
SECTION: 32712

Our literatures abound with the grotesque, often as a contrast to the “normal” and all too frequently as a way to put down other people or groups of people as somehow “abnormal” or inferior. But the grotesque can also act as a powerful creative force. In this reading and writing intensive poetry course, we will explore the diverse ways in which contemporary poets employ grotesquerie in recent American literature through reading, discussing, and responding—both critically and creatively—to three volumes of poetry published during the twenty-first or late twentieth centuries as well as the critical study Grotesque. Class time will be devoted to discussing the assigned literature and, occasionally, to sharing student response poems. The coursework consists of weekly two-paragraph critical responses on Blackboard, three papers (4-5 pages each), and three poems (minimum length per poem: 20 lines) that employ the grotesque and respond to the assigned readings.

ENGL-363G
Contemporary Drama

Mullins, Brighde
TTH | 2-3:20PM
SECTION: 32713

This class explores contemporary writing for the stage. Our aim is to develop an understanding of the breadth of contemporary theatrical forms, and to develop informed and intuitive responses. Playwrights under consideration may include Caryl Churchill, Suzan Lori Parks, Lin Manuel Miranda, and Qui Nguyen. Because theatre is a collaborative form, and draws upon many existing energies, we’ll also consider the contributions of designers, actors and directors. Our time in class will be divided into lecture, discussion, and class visits by theatre practitioners. Students will be expected to complete weekly reading, viewing and writing assignments and to complete a final project of 10-15 pp. of creative or critical writing.
ENGL-372

Literature and Related Arts

St. John, David

TH | 4:30-6:50PM

This course will engage the many illuminating intersections between poetry, fiction and nonfiction with a broad range of the visual and performing arts: painting, film, music and dance. The class will welcome distinguished visitors and your class work will include both creative and critical assignments.

ENGL-373G

Literature and Society

“On Borders”

Leal, Jonathan

MWF | 10-10:50AM

It's often implied across discourses that borders mark fixed, natural boundaries—hard edges between stable, timeless categories, permanent separations between unchanging communities. It's also often believed, mistakenly, that border spaces, be them geopolitical, conceptual, linguistic, artistic, or otherwise, are inexorably and definitively hazardous—zones of vice, lawlessness, and corruption in need of regular policing and martial intervention. Yet as we'll discover together in this course, such narratives omit far more than they advance. For as much as every border marks an edge, a boundary, a limit, so too does it mark a center—a place of contact, creation, curation, and community.

In this interdisciplinary course, we'll work to understand what borders are, how they work, and what they reveal about the pasts, presents, and potential futures of human movement and relation. We'll think through borders as myths, metaphors, physical materials, geopolitical contact zones, spaces of containment, sites of resistance, and much more, all while considering how concepts like nation-state and empire, representation and media, cartography and narrative, politics and surveillance capitalism, ontology and epistemology, gender and sexuality, race and ethnicity, class and culture, and art and experience are linked to what today's conceptual and geopolitical borders are and do.

We'll explore these matters together by way of theory, history, and scholarship from across disciplines, as well as through music, literary art, television, movies, journalism, podcasts, documentaries, murals, photographs, and other materials and artifacts produced by thinkers from multiple countries. Throughout the semester, our primary case study will be the U.S.–Mexico border, and through it, we'll consider ideas of national sentiment, linguistic and cultural conflict, local, regional, national, and transnational identity, and, importantly, artistic and activist intervention.
ENGL-376G
Comics and Graphic Novels

Lord, M.G.
TTH | 2-3:20PM
SECTION: 32721

Graphic novels have much in common with screenplays. They combine dialogue and scenes to tell a story. Once dismissed as “comic books,” they came into their own in 1992 when Maus, Art Spiegelman’s two-volume graphic novel that deals with the Holocaust, won the Pulitzer Prize. The graphic novel has since become a hot literary genre.

In this course, we will look at storytelling that combines verbal and visual texts. Most of the course will deal with contemporary graphic novels. Students will look at the elements that are common to successful narratives as well as elements that make certain narratives unique or groundbreaking. The class will begin by looking at early conventions in visual narration, including work by William Hogarth (1697-1794). Students will have an opportunity to create a short original sequence of verbal/visual narration. (The exercise will not be graded on quality of artwork but on the degree to which the finished exercise reflects an understanding of narrative in sequential art. Participation is required.) The course will end with an overview of Webcomics, digital storytelling that isn’t constrained by the limitations of print.

ENGL-392
Visual and Popular Culture

“The Appearance of Truth: Mockumentaries & Other Delusions of Realism”

Berg, Rick
MWF | 12-12:50PM
SECTION: 32725

This course is about liars and lying, about fakes and faking it, about creating and making it up.

It is a course that intends to deal with true frauds and real lies. Along the way, we will also concern ourselves with true creative non-fiction, ‘new journalism,’ and real documentaries, all those other representations that struggle to ‘capture reality’ and tell the ‘whole’ truth.

The texts we will read and view demand that we grapple with the problems of realism and representation, and we will. We will concern ourselves with media and mediation, the circulation of mass cultural products that arrive on our Computer Screens, Big Screen TVs, Smart Phones and no doubt our new AR glasses. We will examine the ways in which Pop Cult’s ‘innocent entertainment’ and Mass Media’s ‘serious programs’ fill our leisure time and consume our expendable income even as they shape, confirm, and validate what we know, what we believe and what we wish and desire.

Some of the texts we will view and read are: What We Do in the Shadows, This Is Spinal Tap, Man Bites Dog, 84C MoPic, Norman Mailer’s Miami and The Siege of Chicago, as well as some instances of AR, VR and Mixed Reality.
ENGL-420

English Literature of the Middle Ages (1100–1500)

Prerequisite(s): ENGL-261

Rollo, David
TTH | 11-12:20 PM

As a result of early Christian commentaries on the Book of Genesis, women were considered throughout the medieval period as sensual agents of deceit who scarcely deserved the privileges of education and social autonomy. By the High Middle Ages, however, a secular countercurrent to these views had developed: Representatives of the male hierarchy that perpetuated this tradition and monopolized the prerogatives of knowledge and literacy themselves came to be seen as the true inheritors of the devil’s gifts, demonic agents of falsehood who manipulated their superior (indeed, largely exclusive) erudition as a device of control. This course will be a detailed analysis of these two trends as they are manifested in 14th and 15th century English literature, with a particular emphasis on: Geoffrey Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales, The Legend of Good Women, and Troilus and Criseide; Thomas Malory, Le Morte D’Arthur; Margery Kempe et al., The Book of Margery Kempe; and the anonymous Sir Gawain and The Green Knight.
English Literature of the Victorian Age (1832–1890)

“Annihilating Space and Time: Technology, Transformation and the Victorian Imagination”

Prerequisite(s): ENGL-262

Schor, Hilary

TTH | 2-3:20PM

This class is a seminar in Victorian literature and culture, one that takes as its subject two questions, growing out of a single insight. The insight is that following the vast upheavals of the French Revolution, the Victorians invented a series of devices, objects and social structures that promised, in a recurrent phrase of the period, to “annihilate time and space.” Among these were the railways, the postal system, the telegraph, the radio, evolution, séances, the historical novel and the photograph. Note the sheer number of gadgets and apparatuses; note the rich historical period they constitute (even leaving out, say, the phonograph and the computer); note the way they circulate endlessly around the figure of the woman, be it “the telegraph girl,” “the New Eve,” Galatea 2.0 or Her, and ask yourself these two questions: one, if space and time were to disappear, what would happen to the realist novel, which depends so heavily on the deployment of characters who change over time, progress through the landscape, who live in our world, and yet see glimpses of a future not quite here yet? Travelling, counting, writing to, hearing from, seeing, listening—where would the novel be without these activities? How does the novel change, as they do? And why do contemporary novelists, from Kate Atkinson’s Life After Life to Natasha Pulley’s The Kingdoms, continue to return to this moment? Why, to borrow a title from William Gibson and Bruce Sterling, does the Victorian “difference engine” still generate (new/old) plots today? And just how many film versions of The Time Machine (or “The Minority Report” do we need? Texts will include

Charles Dickens, Dombey and Son; Elizabeth Gaskell’s Cranford; Nathaniel Hawthorne’s House of the Seven Gables; Bram Stoker’s Dracula; H.G. Wells’s The Time Machine; Jules Verne’s Around the World in Eighty Days and Joseph Conrad’s The Secret Agent as well as contemporary time-travel films and readings in the history of technology and transport – of all kinds!
ENGL-430

Shakespeare

“Poetic inspiration in Shakespeare's England: pagan revival in the age of reform"

James, Heather

MWF | 12-12:50PM

SECTION: 32730

William Shakespeare knew at least two textual authorities by heart. One was his Bible, which had undergone many transformations in Tudor England, and focused on the incarnate Christian God. The other was his Ovid, the great love poet of ancient Rome, who was most famous for his Metamorphoses, an epic poem about the transformation of human bodies to stone, tree, mineral, bird, beast, flower, and star—and every other element of the physical world. Although medieval thinkers solved the problem of Biblical and pagan forms of knowledge and truth, English men and women of Shakespeare’s day grew up in a world that doubted and debated the viability of pagan inspiration. And yet they found themselves torn between competing models and modes of knowing the world and the word.

We will place our texts in a variety of contexts: history (ancient and early modern), religion, political philosophy, education, art, and history of the book.
ENGL-440

American Literature to 1865
"Early Americans at Work"
Prerequisite(s): ENGL-263

Batra, Ajay
TTH | 9:30-10:50AM
SECTION: 32748

This course examines the lives, hardships, and freedom dreams of ordinary working people in early America. From the colonial period to the end of the nineteenth century, American authors used a multitude of different literary forms to illuminate the often dire conditions that working women and men of all races confronted—and struggled to transform—as they earned their daily bread. Across works of poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, and testimony, these authors documented in unprecedented detail the effects of racism, sexism, and capitalism on a range of different communities: farmers, sailors, enslaved people, sex workers, factory girls, hustlers, and more. Through close attention to these diverse stories and perspectives, this course will assess the formal and aesthetic strategies early American writers used to depict the distinct experiences and shared desires of a growing working class. In the first part of the course, we will compare colonial fantasies of free labor and proprietorship to harsh realities of enslavement, with a particular emphasis on the biographies of formerly enslaved fugitives. Then, using factual and fictional accounts of women’s work across industrial and domestic settings, we will analyze the intersecting oppressions of gender and race that working women navigated during the mid-nineteenth century. In the latter phases of the course, we will turn to short fiction, poetry, manifestos, and realist novellas from the mid- to late nineteenth century that explore progressive and radical solutions to the problems work presented in the era of urbanization: protest, refusal, revolution, and reform. In a final unit, acclaimed works of contemporary cinema will foster discussion about how the challenges of representing labor and building working-class solidarity have changed—and remain the same—in our present age of globalization. Throughout the term, students will complete critical and creative projects designed to improve their skills in writing, research, and literary analysis. Major authors examined in this course include Benjamin Franklin, Karl Marx, David Walker, Harriet Wilson, Herman Melville, Walt Whitman, Rebecca Harding Davis, Lucy Parsons, and Charles Chesnutt, as well as directors Bong Joon-ho (Parasite, 2019) and Barry Jenkins (The Underground Railroad, 2021).
ENGL-447M
African-American Narrative
“The African American Novel and the Nadir, 1877-1919”
Daniels-Rauterkus, Melissa
TTH | 12:30-1:50PM
SECTION: 32749

In his 1954 book, The Negro in American Life and Thought, the celebrated African American historian and activist Rayford Logan dubbed the period from the end of Reconstruction through the early 20th century the “nadir” because it was without a doubt one of the lowest moments in the history of American race relations since the Civil War. Having lost many of the civil rights acquired in the aftermath of emancipation, African Americans were introduced to a new form of racial oppression vis-à-vis Jim Crow. Predicated on the premise that segregation was necessary to preserve white supremacy and racial purity, Jim Crow found its most virulent expression in the landmark U.S. Supreme Court case, Plessy v. Ferguson (1896), which not only implemented the infamous “separate but equal” ruling, but also gave legal sanction to racial discrimination, violence, and disenfranchisement against blacks. This course will explore how African American writers responded to and transformed these events through the artistic and political space of the novel. In the course of reading a selection of representative work, we will consider many questions, including, What did it mean to be a black American at the turn of the century? What is the relationship between literature and society? How does the unfinished business of Reconstruction continue to play out in today’s racial environment? Required texts include: Frances E.W. Harper’s Iola Leroy (1892), Pauline Hopkins’s Contending Forces (1900), Charles W. Chesnutt’s The Marrow of Tradition (1901), and James Weldon Johnson’s The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man (1912). Assignments consist of: a short reaction paper (2-3 pages) at midterm and a longer reflective essay at the end of the semester (10-12 pages).

ENGL-461
English Drama to 1800
“Monstrosity, Cruelty, and Violence in Early Modern Drama”
Prerequisite(s): ENGL-261

Tomaini, Thea
TTH | 9:30-10:50AM
SECTION: 32753

In this course students will study the use of monstrous cruelty and violence in drama of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods. Many plays of the Early Modern period include gratuitous violence, tyrannical behavior, and cruel exploitation. Interestingly, much of this behavior takes place in the context of revenge for a wrong perpetrated on an innocent person. In addition to reading the plays, students will also learn about the context of those plays and their performances in London during that time. What was it like to be a playwright, an actor, a theatre owner, an audience member, or a patron in London? What were the relationships among these groups, and what was the relationship between these groups and the State? In the first week of the course students will learn about the background of medieval drama, such as the cycle plays and morality plays, and will become familiar with the deep cultural traditions that produced the lasting dramatic themes and stage characters of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Students will then learn about the develop-
ENGL-499

Special Topics

Contemporary Poetry by Women Around the Globe

2 units

Bendall, Molly

TH | 3:30-5:10PM

SECTION: 32771

WOMEN POETS AROUND THE GLOBE UNITE!

This class will consider female and female-identifying poets around the world who are writing right now. What are their concerns? What do they face in the world at this current moment? Can there be a conversation through poetry among women around the globe?

We will read some poets who write in English and some poets who don’t, and we’ll read those poets in English translations—poets from Africa, the Caribbean, Mexico, South Korea, Japan, the UK, Ukraine, and elsewhere. We will discuss how pressing issues enter into their poems, such as the climate crisis and the environment, violence, war, LGBTQ issues, reproductive rights, labor and class issues, immigration, and much more.


2 papers, responses, creative project with presentation and much discussion REQ.

Not for the faint of heart.

A revolution is stirring!

Photo by Jan Kopřiva at Unsplash
ENGL-352G

Bookpacking

“BOOKPACKING NEW ORLEANS - a cultural and literary journey”

Chater, Andrew

MAYMESTER | NEW ORLEANS | 11-12:20 PM  
SECTION: 32708

‘Bookpacking’ classes at USC are immersive experiences in which students read classic and contemporary novels on location. They combine cultural exploration with literary adventure.

This Maymester class offers students the chance to go ‘bookpacking’ through New Orleans and the bayou regions of Southern Louisiana.

‘Bookpacking’ is all about cultural connection, using fiction to make empathetic connections with the world around us. New Orleans makes for a wonderful destination for this kind of ‘bookpacking’ experience because it’s so culturally dynamic, formed of a fusion of folk pathways (French, Creole, Cajun, Haitian, African-American, White Protestant) unlike anywhere else in America.

Over the course of a four week journey, we will explore this vibrant region through a handful of classic and contemporary novels, which we will read as we travel - using fictional texts as cultural guidebooks through which we can ‘unpack’ place and people, past and present.

The class is led by Andrew Chater, a contemporary educator and award-winning BBC historian who has designed a variety of classes for USC students on the ‘Bookpacker’ model. Please visit www.bookpackers.com for a wealth of content on bookpacking at USC, and www.andrewchater.com for more information on the class instructor.

The class is accredited for General Education - all majors welcome.
Senior Seminar in Literary Studies
"Contemporary Literature"

Roman, David
TH | 2-4:20PM

What are writers writing now? This course sets out to explore contemporary literature across a wide range of genres. We will be reading works published in the past few years by authors famous and obscure; some emerging, others established, all of them alive. We will also consider the temporality of the “contemporary”---when does it begin and when does it end? And we will trouble the term “literature” itself, mindful that the works we are reading are decidedly non-canonical, at least at this point in time. The course reading will include poetry, drama, fiction, and autobiography and the various hybrids emerging from these traditional literary forms. We will be open to new forms of creative literary expression and curious about the continuation of established literary histories. In what ways do contemporary writers engage the current worlds in which we live? These are only some of the questions we will be considering throughout the semester.

Senior Seminar in Literary Studies

Roman, Elda Maria
T | 2-4:20PM

This course takes an in-depth look at the dynamic world of ethnic novels. The twentieth century witnessed radical changes in this genre as ethnorracial groups gained greater access to education and publishing outlets and were able to produce literary works in ways that had not been previously possible. Focusing on the Bildungsroman in particular, we will examine the resulting experiments in storytelling by Latinx, Asian Americans, and Black Americans. We will pay attention to the narrative strategies that enable authors to portray race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and social class. Students will gain a deeper understanding of the Bildungsroman as a genre, theories of race and ethnicity, and the social and political contexts giving rise to the formal and thematic concerns of US ethnic literature in the past century.
ENGL-491
Senior Seminar in Literary Studies
"Ovid in the Renaissance: Metamorphosis in Worlds of Change"

James, Heather
MW | 2-3:20PM

This course focuses on the idea of metamorphosis and the astonishing influence of an ancient poem about the transformation of human bodies to stone, tree, mineral, bird, beast, flower, and star—and every other element of the physical world— in the literature, art, and imagination of early modern England. We will to some degree also engage modern poetry, fiction, film, and criticism that deals with the legacy of Ovid on the changing understanding of the body; the physical environment; the relationships among humans, animals, and gods; the emergence of heroines in fiction; and the norms of sex and gender.

The course begins with readings of Ovid’s Metamorphoses, an epic poem about bodily change, alongside some of Ovid’s early love poetry and his later poems from exile. We will then explore the impact of Ovid’s tales of bodily change on early modern writers, including Edmund Spenser, Christopher Marlowe, William Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, and John Donne in addition to women writers, including Isabella Whitney, Lady Mary Wroth, and Hester Pulter.

Requirements include a 10-minute presentation; a short essay; and a final research paper of 20-pages.

ENGL-492
Narrative Studies Capstone Seminar

Sanford Russell, Bea
TH | 2-4:20PM

This seminar will help you create and complete your narrative capstone project. We will go step by step through the process, from defining and refining your capstone plan, to undertaking the necessary research and integrating that research into the final product, to practicing your culminating capstone presentation. The seminar will be highly interactive and workshop based, and you will develop the components of your project in conversation and collaboration with your classmates. Requirements include completing three workshops of your own project along the way.
ENGL-492 Narrative Studies Capstone Seminar

Sligar, Sara

T | 2-4:20PM

SECTION: 32764

Capstone workshop in Narrative Studies. Through rigorous critical work, research, and peer workshops, students will create semester-long original independent projects that mark the culmination of their Narrative Studies major.

ENGL-492 Narrative Studies Capstone Seminar

"Telling Your Story/Telling Our Story"

Freeman, Christopher

TH | 5-7:20PM

SECTION: 32765

The NARS Senior Seminar provides a way to fulfill the required individual capstone in the context of a seminar. Students will meet weekly to discuss a mix of fiction, poetry, film, graphic novels, theory, and creative writing, while creating their own materials and critiquing one another’s work. Their materials will be presented throughout the semester as a series of at least three self-directed portfolios that will draw upon their prior studies in narrative, bringing those varied studies into a whole and individualized vision.

The seminar is restricted to NARS majors in senior standing. Admission is by application only and preserves the application process already used for independent NARS capstones. Admission to the seminar will be based on the quality of a student’s proposed portfolio projects.

We will do some reading of essays on craft, but most of our in-class time will be spent workshopping. You are expected to respond thoughtfully and constructively to your colleagues’ work and to do the best you can do to create the project only you can produce.

ENGL-492 Narrative Studies Capstone Seminar

Sanford Russell, Bea

TBD

SECTION: TBD

This seminar will help you create and complete your narrative capstone project. We will go step by step through the process, from defining and refining your capstone plan, to undertaking the necessary research and integrating that research into the final product, to practicing your culminating capstone presentation. The seminar will be highly interactive and workshop based, and you will develop the components of your project in conversation and collaboration with your classmates. Requirements include completing three workshops of your own project along the way.
ENGL-496

Senior Honors Thesis

Prerequisite(s): ENGL-491

Handley, William

TH | 2-4:20PM

SECTION: 32768

The goal of this seminar is to support seniors in writing a critical honors thesis, a substantive writing project of at least 35-40 pages that is supervised and evaluated by faculty but conducted with a great deal of independence in its formulation, research, and execution. We will focus on finding your research materials, developing your thesis, and working through chapter drafts, with the goal of presenting your work orally at the end of the semester before turning in your thesis, which is a great opportunity to get feedback. Students in this seminar will have developed the necessary scholarly skills by completing at an excellent level the prerequisite ENGL 491 "Senior Seminar in Literary Studies."

Photo by Birmingham Museums Trust at Unsplash
ENGL-602

Writers in the World: Text and Context

Senna, Danzy
TH | 4:30-6:50PM
SECTION: 32802

How is the persona we construct in our fiction always, as Alexander Chee puts it, a golem of our self, "more or less careless than you, more or less selfish, more or less remorseful... More or less you, but not you." This cross-genre class will examine the murky relationship between autobiography and fiction. Students will investigate both works of memoir and fiction, sometimes written by the same authors, and examine how the choice to fictionalize or not to fictionalize influences our text. We will explore questions of veracity, persona, inclusion and omission — and the process of writing the self onto the pages of both memoir and fiction. What facts do we choose to include in a story about ourselves, what part of the story do we choose to leave out? How is a character who resembles us in fiction still not exactly us? Students will share their own writing in a workshop setting, and also read selected fiction and non-fiction that walks the line between the two genres. Included in our readings will be works by Lydia Davis, Alexander Chee, Amy Hempel, Ben Lerner, Junot Diaz and Justin Torres.

Photo by Clem Onojeghuo at Unsplash.
ENGL-607

Digital Publishing and Literary Writing for New Media
"Permutations of the Book"

Gambrell, Alice
M | 2-4:20PM

This is a course in digital authorship and publishing tailored to the interests and prior training of Creative Writing, Literature, and Narrative Studies students who are nearing completion of USC’s progressive MA in Literary Editing and Publishing. In the class, we will combine more-or-less traditional discussion of literary texts with hands-on digital design practice. (We will actually compose, design, and fabricate electronic texts, prepare them for publication, and put them out into the world.) No prior experience in digital authorship or editing is expected. We will start from scratch, work (and play) hard, and produce and assess examples of literary expression that are as informative and critically engaged as they are beautiful, affecting, and provocative. The experience of doing it ourselves will prepare us for the kinds of obstacles and opportunities we might encounter in future work.

The larger questions framing the course involve a variety of formal, technical, and philosophical debates that have arisen over the last two decades, as tools for the design and making of digital texts have become cheaper, easier to use, and more familiar, and as the World Wide Web has evolved into an expressive medium and publication venue offering as many obvious possibilities as it does limitations. The physical book has not (as many had earlier predicted) been displaced by the digital screen; instead, books and screens are undergoing a process of expressive cross-pollination, making this an especially volatile transformational moment that is as exciting as it is fraught with difficulty.

More narrowly, we will read and discuss literary texts (print, digital, and hybrid) in contexts that encourage exploration of the impact of publication medium upon meanings that are or might be communicated. Along the way, we will encounter a range of issues that, while not exactly “new,” have nonetheless assumed a new kind of centrality in recent years. These include (among others): (1) typography and text design as tools in the hands of the public at large, not just the province of expert designers; (2) interaction with a variety of reading interfaces including but not limited to the printed page; (3) reader attention: how to engage and sustain it; (4) audiences, communities, and public conversation: how they are shaped, and how they should (or should not) be moderated; (5) ownership, sharing, theft, and intellectual property.

During the semester, we will produce small creative and critical experiments encompassing a range of media (print, photography, video, digital/interactive, audio, etc.) as well as a more substantial final project created on a subject and a digital platform of our own choosing. At the end of the course, each of us will have will have a small portfolio of work in multiple media.
ENGL-608

Publishing on Both Sides of the Transom

Ulin, David

w | 4:30-6:50PM

SECTION: 32808

What are writers writing now? This course sets out to explore contemporary literature across a wide range of genres. We will be reading works published in the past few years by authors famous and obscure; some emerging, others established, all of them alive. We will also consider the temporality of the “contemporary”—when does it begin and when does it end? And we will trouble the term “literature” itself, mindful that the works we are reading are decidedly non-canonical, at least at this point in time. The course reading will include poetry, drama, fiction, and autobiography and the various hybrids emerging from these traditional literary forms. We will be open to new forms of creative literary expression and curious about the continuation of established literary histories. In what ways do contemporary writers engage the past? And in what ways are they engaging the current worlds in which we live? These are only some of the questions we will be considering throughout the semester.

ENGL-609B

Internship in Editing and Publishing: Eloquence and Ethics

Prerequisite(s): ENGL-609a

Banerjee, Neela

Ulin, David

w | 3-4:20PM

SECTION: 32809

This course takes an in-depth look at the dynamic world of ethnic novels. The twentieth century witnessed radical changes in this genre as ethnorracial groups gained greater access to education and publishing outlets and were able to produce literary works in ways that had not been previously possible. Focusing on the Bildungsroman in particular, we will examine the resulting experiments in storytelling by Latinxs, Asian Americans, and Black Americans. We will pay attention to the narrative strategies that enable authors to portray race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and social class. Students will gain a deeper understanding of the Bildungsroman as a genre, theorizations of race and ethnicity, and the social and political contexts giving rise to the formal and thematic concerns of US ethnic literature in the past century.

Photo by Rafaela Biazi at Unsplash
Courses that meet major & minor requirements

Courses numbered 300-499 not listed here usually meet the upper-division elective requirement for the English Literature or Creative Writing majors. Additional courses may be recognized as semester-specific substitutions (please check our website as these are updated). Pay attention to pre-requisites, co-requisites, and special permissions. You cannot go “backwards” in sequences and get credit for courses taken out of order, per the USC Catalogue.

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### COURSES THAT REQUIRE D-CLEARANCE

- The courses below are always set to require D-clearance, but please note that our ENGL GE-B courses also require D-clearance for much of the registration period.
- It is your responsibility to request D-clearance.
- D-clearance is not automatically granted to all English and Narrative Studies majors for ENGL classes. It is granted on a per-student, per-section basis.
- Spaces are assigned to students prior to registration. It may appear that there are spaces available on the Schedule of Classes, even though those spaces have already been assigned.
- Be sure to indicate which section (this is the five-digit number ending in “D”) you’d like D-clearance for during advisement.

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# Faculty

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# Undergraduate Advisors

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<tr>
<td>Laura Hough</td>
<td>THH 406</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lhough@usc.edu">lhough@usc.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrea Leal</td>
<td>THH 404H</td>
<td><a href="mailto:leala@usc.edu">leala@usc.edu</a></td>
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# Director of Undergraduate Studies

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<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Professor William Handley</td>
<td>THH 404E</td>
<td><a href="mailto:handleylea@usc.edu">handleylea@usc.edu</a></td>
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# Department Chair

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<td>Professor David St. John</td>
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