



Fall 2025 Course Descriptions

Duke English Department

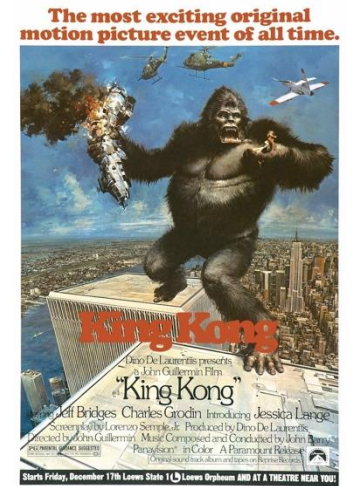
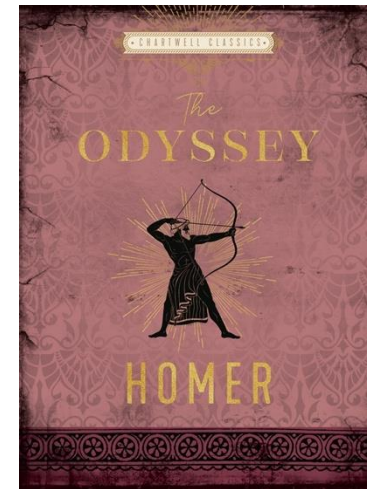
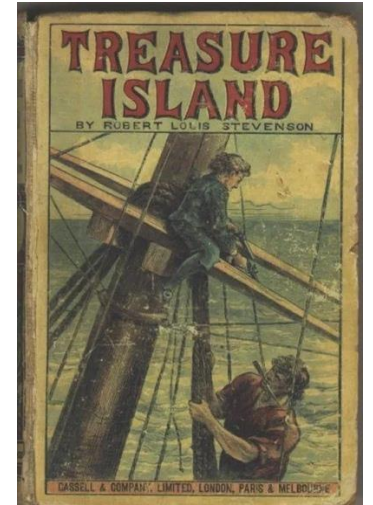
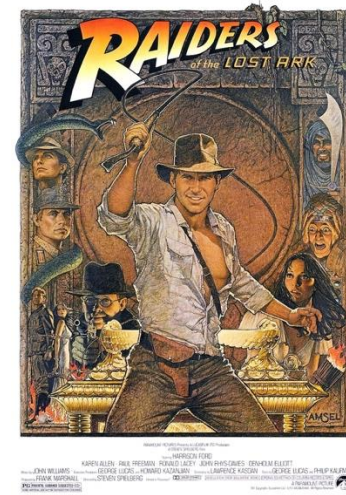
ENG 89S.02 1ST-YEAR SEM LIT: MONSTERS, PIRATES, AND EMPRESSES: THE LITERATURE AND CINEMA OF ADVENTURE

Timothy Heimlich

What constitutes a good adventure, and why do we all crave one? This course will explore the generic development of adventure literature: what it has been used for, where it came from, and how its tropes and preoccupations continue to influence contemporary Anglophone culture today. From the all-devouring monsters of the antique Mediterranean, to the forests and deserts of Africa, across the tempestuous Atlantic, through the uncanny ruins of recently abandoned and razed Native American cities in what is now the Southeastern United States, and onto the silver screen, this course tracks the steady infusion of travel writing with the heady blend of sexual transgression, martial derring-do, and exoticized Otherness that has made adventure literature and cinema a consistently popular—and bankable—genre.

The syllabus features a selection of poetry, fiction, and film including selections from Homer's *Odyssey*, the medieval epic *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Lady Margaret Cavendish's *The Blazing World*, Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, H.P. Lovecraft's "The Call of Cthulhu," and Hollywood blockbusters including *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and *King Kong*.

Except in cases where demonstrable medical need exists, screens are not allowed in the classroom. Course requirements include a close reading assignment, two short essays, and regular participation in weekly written and spoken discussion.



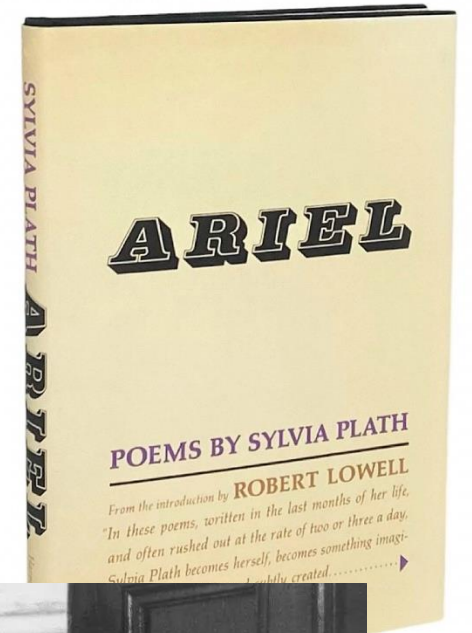
ENG 90S.01 SPECIAL TOPICS IN LITERATURE: CONFESSING POETRY

Will Brewbaker

What do you confess? Some people confess their love. Others confess to crimes. Some people confess their sins, while others confess their faith. At its Latin root, to “confess” means, simply, to speak. So why do we confess some things but only *say* others? Do we make a confession every time we talk?

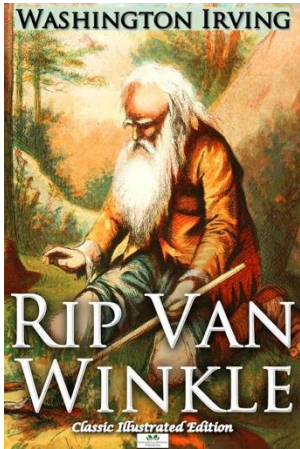
In the years after World War II, a generation of young Americans began to write frankly about their own lives. Known as the “confessional” poets, these women and men openly discussed such personal topics as marriage, divorce, children, sex, drugs, and mental illness. In this class, we will read these poets—from Robert Lowell to Sylvia Plath, from John Berryman to Anne Sexton—as we ask why poetry became the ideal genre for such personal disclosure. We’ll also consider such related—and yet divergent—poetic traditions as the Black Arts Movement, as we probe the limits of the “confessional” label. Like a wooden confessional booth in a stone cathedral, poetry sat in silence, waiting for a generation’s secrets, sins, and fears. But what made these poets enter the booth? Why did they start confessing?

Writing assignments for this course will consist of regular short responses (200 words), a short (3-5 pp.) close-reading essay, and a longer, final project (either critical or creative). Throughout the term, we will focus on each stage of writing—from brainstorming to drafting to final revisions—as we convene for a series of in-class collaborative workshops. No exams or quizzes will be given.



ENG 90S.02 SPECIAL TOPICS IN LITERATURE: WARPING TIME IN FICTION & FILM

Olivia DePue



“Mysterious thing, time. Powerful, and when meddled with, dangerous.”
— Albus Dumbledore

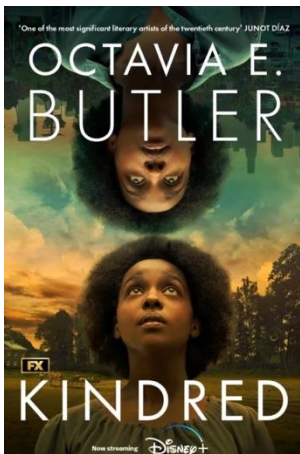
Magic spells, time machines, prolonged sleep, and hidden portals: imagining time travel has been a human phenomenon since as early as the Middle Ages, and it is still an obsession in our modern era. Tales such as these are crucial thought experiments, offering us an opportunity to contemplate world history, observe human nature, and explore the power/limits of the will. Considering the intriguing ethical dilemmas and paradoxes of time-bending, this course will investigate the ways that literature and film play with time: traveling forward, backward, or getting caught in an eternal loop.

Over the course of the semester, we will read classic literature such as: *Myth of the Seven Sleepers* (5th-century); *Legend of Urashimako* (8th-century); *Rip Van Winkle* (1819) by Washington Irving; *A Christmas Carol* (1843) by Charles Dickens; *The Time Machine* (1895) by H. G. Wells; *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1969) by Kurt Vonnegut; *Kindred* (1979) by Octavia Butler.

We will also discuss several popular films/shows such as: *Doctor Who* episodes (1963-present); *Back to the Future* (1985); *Groundhog Day* (1993); *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (2004); *Interstellar* (2014); *Everything Everywhere All At Once* (2022).

This class is a small discussion seminar in which students will be expected to add to class conversations and culture. 20% of your grade will be made up of creative projects, 50% will be made up of short writing assignments (1-4 pages), and 30% will consist of your final research paper (8-10). NO EXAMS.

The English course is cross-listed with Cinema.



ENG 101.01 ART OF READING: POETRY AND THE OCCULT

Priscilla Wald & Julianne Werlin

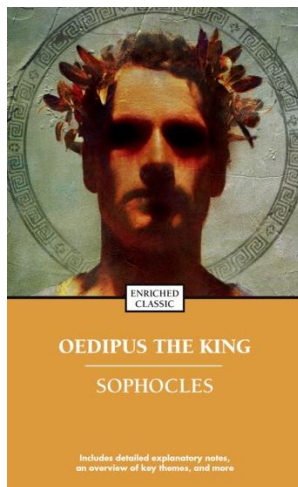
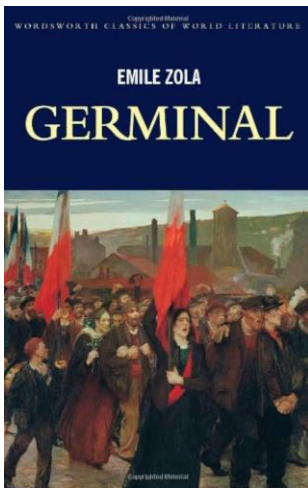
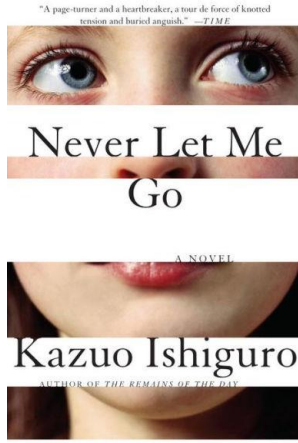
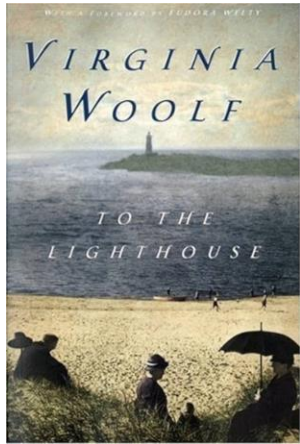
In the beginning was poetry, and poetry was word magic: spells, curses, riddles, prayers, heroic tales, dream visions, the secret names of the divinity. From the first, poetry in all of its forms offered a way to bend the world to the writer's (or singer's) will: to stir occult forces latent in nature and in invisible worlds beyond, and while much has changed since ancient times, this magic has remained. However much we conduct our lives by the light of rational ideals, when it comes to what we deeply (maybe secretly) desire, hope, or fear, how quickly we enter an occult world where a prayer, a hex, a chant, a song, are the verbal forms that most candidly address who we are or would like to be. Poetry at its most magical—a mode that takes many forms—draws its power from the occulted wishes, dreams, hopes, and fears in the heart and soul of humanity. From messages to the beyond and apocalyptic visions, from alchemical formulas to shamanic rituals, this course will explore the rich history of the relationship between poetry and the occult: the desire to reveal universal laws and alter personal fates, to accrue unearthly powers and command demons, to save the soul from death, and we will look closely at the magical cosmos from which even the most seemingly earthly poetry derives its power.

Readings might include poets such as Christopher Marlowe, William Shakespeare, John Donne, and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe along with short writings on alchemy (eg. Paracelsus, John Dee, Nostradamus, and Hermes Trismegistus), William Blake, Walt Whitman, Edgar Allan Poe, Ralph Waldo Emerson, William Butler Yeats, and H.D. (Hilda Doolittle) along with short readings in spiritualism (eg. Emanuel Swedenborg, Emma Hardinge Britten, Arthur Conan Doyle, Frederic William Henry Myers, and Madame Blavatsky), the occult (eg. Aleister Crowley), and the transit between realms (eg. the Tibetan Book of the Dead and the Egyptian Book of the Dead), and Maria Sabina, Antonin Artaud, John Yau, and Nathaniel Mackey along with readings in magic and shamanism (eg. Carl Jung, Mircea Eliade, and Ruth-Inge Heinze). This class will also explore the relations between poetry and the visual arts, such as the paintings of Hilma af Klimt, Leonora Carrington, and Remedios Varo.



ENG 101S.01 ART OF READING: LITERATURE AND FREEDOM

Rob Mitchell



In this course, we consider the ways in which literature—primarily novels—helps us to understand the nature of freedom in our lives. We will consider what freedom (and its contrary, bondage) mean in a variety of texts, focusing especially on those that emphasize some sort of inescapable constraint, such as divine fate, original sin, or heredity, though we will also consider social forms of bondage. We will begin with Sophocles’s classic drama *Oedipus the King*, and then consider a number of novels, including Jane Austen’s *Emma*, Émile Zola’s *Germinal*, Virginia Woolf’s *To the Lighthouse* and Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go*. Alongside these literary texts, we will read short selections from literary critics and philosophers who have reflected on the nature of freedom and, equally important, on the ways in which perspectives on freedom and constraint bear on literary genre and form. Our primary goal is to consider how literature, in both its content and form, is able to reflect on the question of what “freedom” is and how freedom can (and cannot) be instantiated in a human life. To this end, we will take up a number of key literary terms, such as character, chorus, genre, plot, realism, naturalism, tragedy, etc.

Student work for the course consists of homework assignments for, attendance at, and participation in, each class meeting; an essay element exercise; two 5-8 page (double-spaced) literary critical papers; and two stylistic imitation assignments.

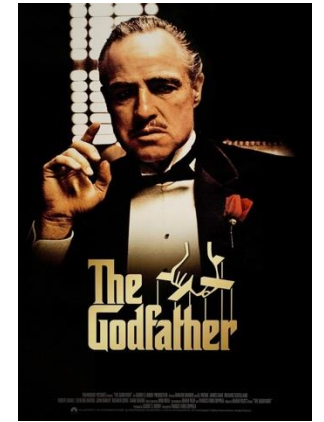
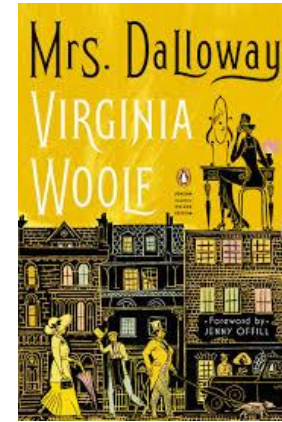
ENG 101S.02 ART OF READING: INTRODUCTION TO NARRATIVE

Richard So

The art of narrative and storytelling represents a core part of the human experience. We tell stories in order to make sense of our experiences; to communicate; to express ourselves and to explain why things happen in the world. That's why narratives are ubiquitous in culture, and why we spend so much time making and consuming them. This course offers an introduction to the critical analysis of narrative or "narratology." This field helps to answer questions like: what are the essential elements of narrative? What are different types of narrative? Why are some kinds of narratives popular (or go "viral") and how do readers respond to different kinds of narratives? Also, how do narratives vary across different kinds of media, like novels and film? In this course, we'll read important theories of narrative and storytelling, as well as outstanding examples of narrative from across a range of media, to explore how narratology can help us better understand how these various narratives operate – how they succeed, fail, delight, and puzzle.

For readings in narratology, we'll cover literary theoretical writings from Roland Barthes, Gerard Genette, Seymour Chatman, Marie-Laure Ryan, James Phelan, and Catherine Gallagher, which are very interested in the textual dynamics of how narrative works. We'll also look at writings from social scientists on narrative (from fields like sociology, communications, and economics), such as Francesca Polletta, Elinor Ochs, and Robert Schiller, to explore the social impact of stories and narratives on readers and how people behave. In terms of our examples of narrative, we'll look at several important and interesting novels, films and TV shows that exemplify the power of narrative, such as Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, *The Godfather* (film) and *Beef* (TV show). We'll also look at examples of narrative and storytelling on popular Internet platforms, like Facebook and Reddit, to see how the practice of narrative has changed in the digital age. Evaluation consists of two short papers and an oral presentation. As this class is discussion focused, student participation represents an important part of the final grade.

Overall, students will develop a rich theoretical and practical understanding of how narratives and stories work in culture and society, and why they exert such a great influence on us – particularly in the age of social media and the Internet, where storytelling is widespread. Many of these concepts and ideas are applicable to other areas of study, from law to climate science, where people need to tell stories in order to communicate and persuade others.

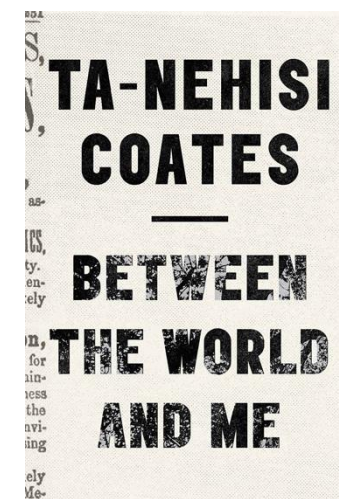
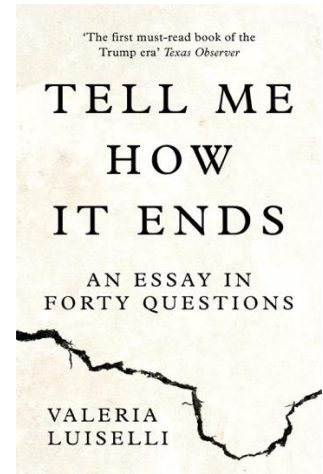
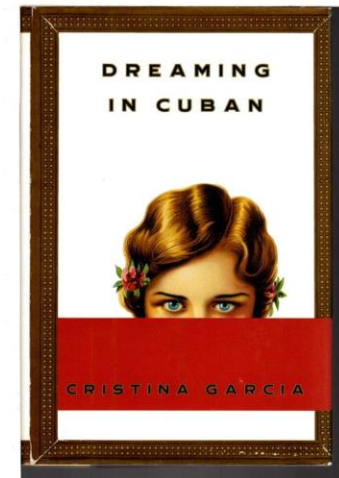


ENG 101S.03 ART OF READING: IMAGINING AMERICA IN CONTEMPORARY US LITERATURE

Marguerite Nguyen

This course will explore the varied, sometimes conflicting ideas about America portrayed in contemporary works of US literature. Our investigations of graphic narratives, coming-of-age novels, memoirs, and essays will identify shared concerns among the writers we study, with particular attention paid to how their notions of America involve hybrid identities and weave local with global experiences and memories. For example, Ta-Nehisi Coates's *Between the World and Me* and Adrian Tomine's *Shortcomings* wrestle with the power of dominant perceptions of communities of color. Cristina García's *Dreaming in Cuban* dramatizes the intergenerational impacts of war and migration. Valeria Luiselli's *Tell Me How It Ends: An Essay in Forty Questions* brings a journalistic and humanistic eye to the struggles of forcibly displaced children. We will also study models of literary interpretation that facilitate close engagement with the thematic and formal layers of these stories, including Namwali Serpell's critique of empathy, Cathy Park Hong's concept of minor feelings, and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's thoughts on the dangers of the single story. Students will also spend time investigating how American writers highlight the need to find moments of joy, beauty, and fun in times of cultural and social uncertainty.

Assignments such as brief responses, guided group work, analytical essays (4-6 pages), and revisions are designed to foster critical thinking and reading, strengthen analytical writing skills, and cultivate learning through dialogue. Throughout the semester, students will be encouraged to think about what American literature means to them and how literature can be a way to work through the contradictions and simultaneous truths of US culture.



ENG 110S.01 INTRODUCTION TO CREATIVE WRITING

Cathy Shuman

The word, the line, the sentence; the image, the thought, the story – these will be our building blocks as students explore and experiment, write, workshop, revise, and polish substantive work in three genres: poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction. Along the way, we will analyze published examples of each genre for inspiration and ideas.



ENG 110S.02 INTRODUCTION TO CREATIVE WRITING

Camille Bordas



In her essay “Peonies,” Zadie Smith states the following: “Writing is routinely described as creative—this has never struck me as the correct word. Writing is control. Writing is all resistance.”

Open to students with little or no previous experience in creative writing (let’s keep calling it that for ease of reference), this class will help participants gain control over their sentences and paragraphs, with the objective of producing more thoroughly surprising/heartbreaking/hilarious/original/undeniable pieces of writing.

The class will focus on two genres: fiction and nonfiction, more specifically the short story and the personal essay. It will be mostly devoted to workshop (discussing the students’ own pieces), but also to the close reading of published stories and essays. By discussing strategies that published authors have adopted when it comes to point of view, pacing, description, action, omission, etc., students will start developing a sense of their aesthetic preferences. By submitting writing of their own to workshop, they will in turn develop a sense of their strengths as writers, and get the ultimate reward: to write the piece that only they could’ve written.

Each student will turn in two pieces of writing in the course of the semester. Participation in discussion is mandatory. In-class exercises will likely occur.

ENG 110S.03 INTRODUCTION TO CREATIVE WRITING

Adam Levin

By seriously examining and critiquing prose written by others (i.e. measuring and helping advance the success of a work according to its author's intentions), writers not only develop a greater capacity to strengthen their own prose, but a clearer understanding of their own literary values. In this workshop, students will hand in two pieces for critique, and will closely read and critique work by their classmates. Our class will be entirely discussion-based. Focusing primarily on style and structure, we'll each make it our goal to help others improve their writing through line-edits and in-class conversation, in accordance with the authors' perceived intentions. Additionally, we will read some work by published authors, and reverse-engineer it to determine the ways in which it functions. In-class generative exercises may occasionally be assigned.



ENG 190FS-2.01 FOCUS PROG SEM LIT: MONDO WEIRDO

Taylor Black

Taking its inspiration from the lurid and provocative mondo films popular during the 1960s, Mondo Weirdo surveys works by and about some of the most fabulously eccentric American artists and stylists from the 20th century. It examines how “the weird” has been represented and commodified across mediums.

From iconic figures such as Miles Davis, Zora Neale Hurston, Flannery O’Connor, and Andy Warhol to more obscure cult personalities such as Quentin Crisp, Dorothy Dean, Valerie Solanas, and A.J. Weberman, this course seeks out iconoclastic figures with extreme personalities and unforgettable works of art and almost-art. Through fiction, feature films (David Lynch, John Waters), documentaries (A Portrait of Jason, Grey Gardens), essays, memoirs, visual art, and popular music, while also considering historical context to understand the political, social, and economic conditions in which these works emerged.

Through two short writing assignments (2-4 Pages) and one longer essay (7-8 pages) or creative project at the end of the term, students will expand their powers of perception and description while being encouraged to uncover the eccentric within themselves. In doing so, students will be exposed to a whole cosmos of American artists and cult figures while also learning how to perceive and describe these eccentric geniuses in ways that are anything but average.

This is a FOCUS course affiliated with the “American Experiences” cluster. No prerequisites.



ENG 190S-1.01 SP TOP IN LANG & LIT: GREED, VANITY, AND LAUGHTER: RENAISSANCE THEATER AND THE URBAN VICES

Astrid Giugni

Renaissance London was crowded, expensive, and in the middle of a commercial and social revolution, where gallants, rising merchants, refugees from continental wars, and greedy criminals uneasily shared the same urban landscape. This course uses traditional literary methodologies alongside some computational tools to study how Tudor and Stuart playwrights, such as William Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, and Thomas Middleton, used satire, comedy, and even tragedy to criticize city-life.

The computational approach will teach you—from the ground up—how to explore and track how these innovative writers reshaped and redeployed classical rhetorical texts (from Aristotle to Horace to Quintilian) to better understand their times. We will study how elements and characters common to these plays—the perpetual busybody, the “city-vices,” and the focus on the urban landscape itself—were used by different authors to construct moral vocabularies to criticize real-life problems. We will pair this computational approach with interpretive techniques central to literary studies, learning about the history of Tudor and Stuart England, the development of commercial English theaters, and the bewildering, but fascinating landscape of Renaissance London and its literature.

No mathematical prerequisites and no prior familiarity with Renaissance literature necessary.

Required Books:

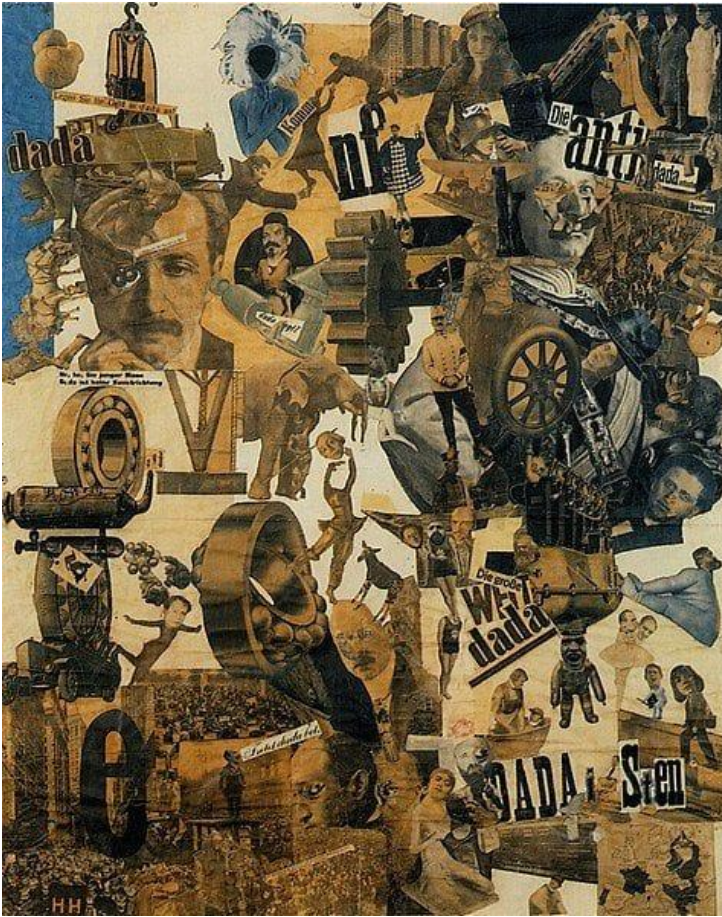
Note: Used (and inexpensive) versions of these texts should be easy to find online or through the bookstore. **You are required to use these editions in physical form.**

- Ben Jonson, *The Alchemist and Other Plays* (Oxford Classics), ISBN: 978-0199537310
- *The Roaring Girl and Other City Comedies* (Oxford Classics), ISBN: 978-0199540105.
- Reference text for linear algebra: <https://services.math.duke.edu/~jdr/ila/index.html>



ENG 220S.01 INTRO TO THE WRITING OF POETRY

Joseph Donahue



This class is a poetry writing workshop with a significant reading component. We will read some of the defining works of modern poetry, and look at the history of various avant garde movements such as Dadaism, Surrealism, Imagism, Futurism and Expressionism. But our main focus will be on writing poetry. We will explore various styles and techniques, collage, random procedures, simulated madness, trance writing, hyperrational nonsense, dream narratives, incantation, spells, arbitrary rules, confessions, and much else as we deepen our own understanding of the sources of human creativity in language, and write our own ever more astonishing poems.

ENG 220S.02 INTRO TO THE WRITING OF POETRY

Frances Leviston

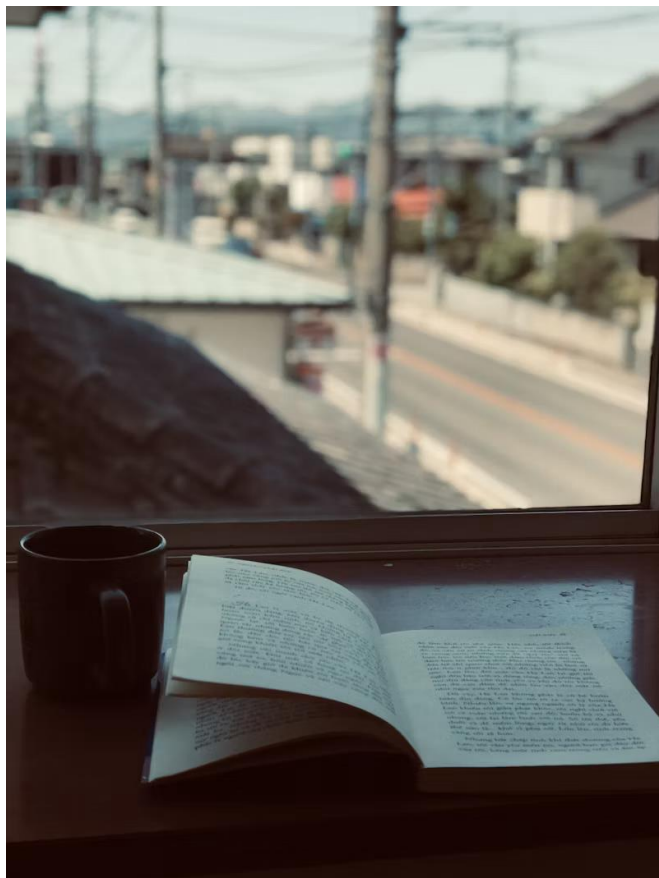


Poetry sharpens our engagement with language, makes us rethink, rewire our relationship with words” (Ishion Hutchinson).

This course invites you to explore and rewire your own relationship with words as a poet, approaching language not as a tool to be used, but as a living intelligence to be collaborated with. With playfulness and pleasure, we will explore the possibilities of language: its sounds and rhythms, its tones of voice, its metaphors and images, and its intimate relation to the body. You will read a diverse range of work by modern and contemporary poets including Ocean Vuong, Dunya Mikhail, Seamus Heaney and Kayo Chingonyi, and undertake writing prompts and challenges as you work towards your own portfolio of original poems — with plenty of workshop support and feedback along the way.

ENG 221S.01 INTRO TO THE WRITING OF FICTION

Camille Bordas



Recommended for students who have taken English 110, this class is open to fiction lovers who wish to deepen their practice and knowledge of the form.

It will be conducted in traditional workshop fashion: each week, we will discuss two short stories (or novel excerpts), by two different students. Every student will turn in two pieces of fiction over the course of the semester.

Readings of published work (one short story per week) will also be assigned, and we'll discuss them at the end of each class. The focus of these discussions will be on how the stories operate on the reader. In other words, we'll try to dissect and reverse-engineer published works to see what made them move us, surprise us, and challenge us.

Participation in discussion is mandatory. Expect short in-class exercises.

ENG 221S.02 INTRO TO THE WRITING OF FICTION

Amin Ahmad



How to Tell a Story

Writing a story can be overwhelming: Where does inspiration come from? How do we harness our own experiences? How do we begin and end a story? How do we create a world on the page? How do we get through writer's block?

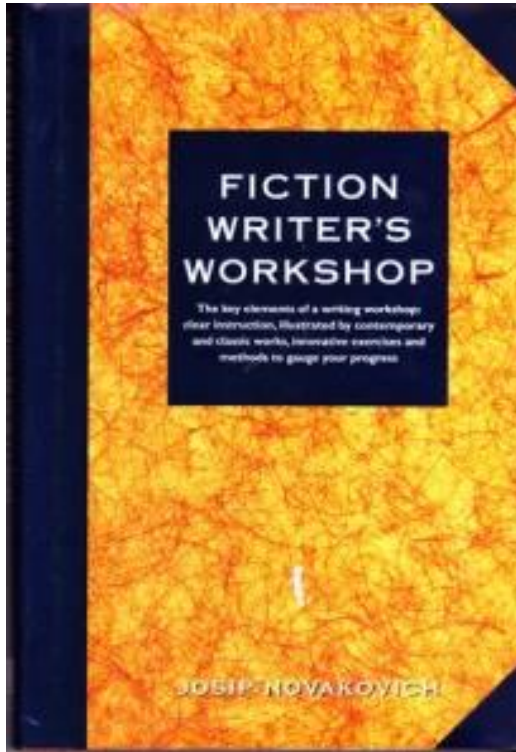
To answer these questions, we will examine craft techniques underlying different kinds of genres: We will read and analyze realistic stories, fairy tales, detective stories, magical realism, fantasy and science fiction. We'll also learn to create different points-of-view, create a plot and build complex characters.

All along, we will discuss how to develop a writing practice that works for you. Each class will involve a writing exercise that will prepare you for writing longer stories, and homework assignments will allow you to harness your creativity.

This is an intensive class—come prepared to read a lot, write a lot, and to experiment with your writing. Since this is a workshop-based class, attending class sessions is required.

ENG 221S.03 INTRO TO THE WRITING OF FICTION

Mesha Maren



This is an introductory level fiction writing workshop. No previous experience is required. A workshop differs from other courses in the fact that in a workshop, we are able to look at works in progress. Therefore we will focus on process and productive feedback. Keep in mind that the word “workshop,” in its most traditional sense, refers to a place (such as a cobbler’s workshop) where things are built or repaired, not torn down and destroyed. However, also keep in mind that the repairing may necessitate taking something apart and reassembling it.

In this course, we will study, discuss, and practice all of the fundamentals of fiction: setting, tone, character, dialogue, point of view, scene, symbols, and plot. Throughout the semester, you will build a repertoire of fundamentals, a sort of toolbox that you can carry with you for the rest of your writing life.

Reading is just as important to this course as writing. There is no better way to learn to write than to read deeply and broadly. We will read, dissect and discuss short prose pieces during each class period.

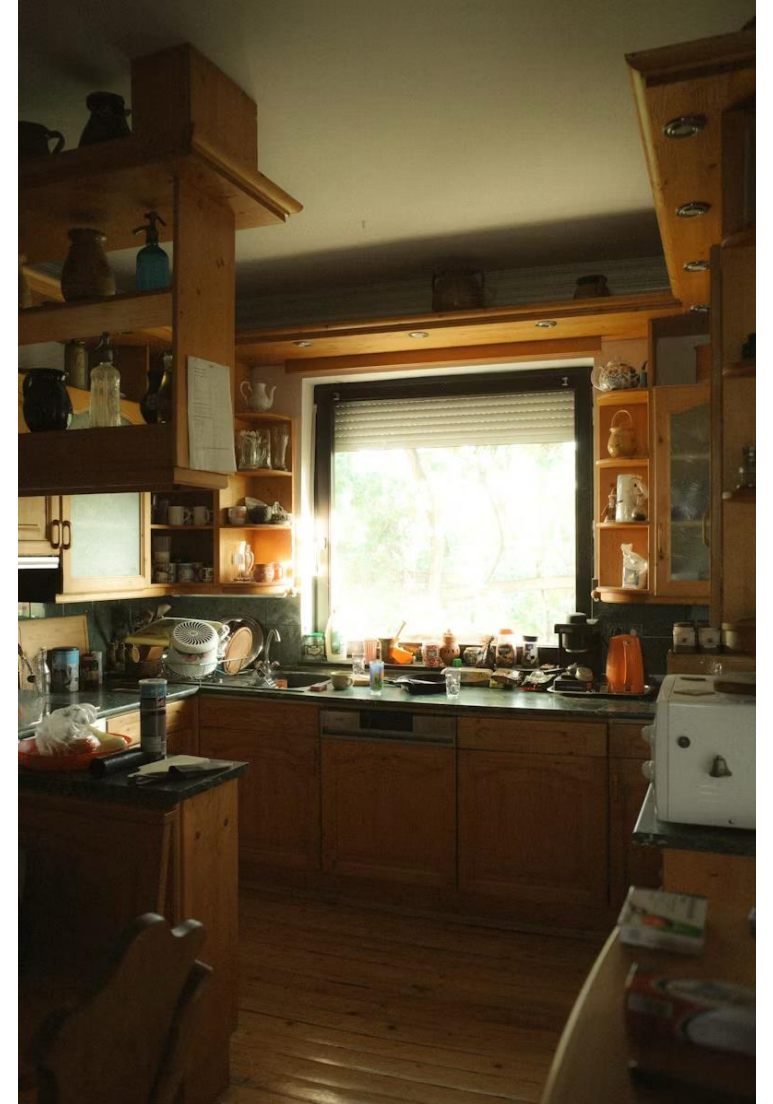
We will use Josip Novakovich's Fiction Writer's Workshop as well as a series of selected short stories that I will upload to Canvas.

ENG 222S.01 INTRO TO THE WRITING OF CREATIVE NONFICTION

Cathy Shuman

Creating Reality

Our focus will be on the essay as you explore and experiment with techniques, structures, and themes for describing the places, stories, and things you care about. Over the course of the semester, students will work on creative exercises leading through workshops and revision to the production of three longer essays. Along the way, we will read and discuss selected examples of published creative nonfiction to help us develop techniques for creating our own. No previous creative writing experience is required for this course.



ENG 235.01 SHAKESPEARE ON LOVE

Sarah Beckwith (with guest Jonathan Cullen)

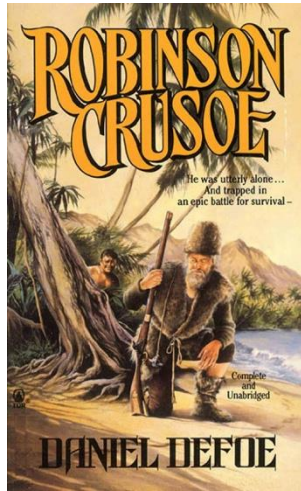
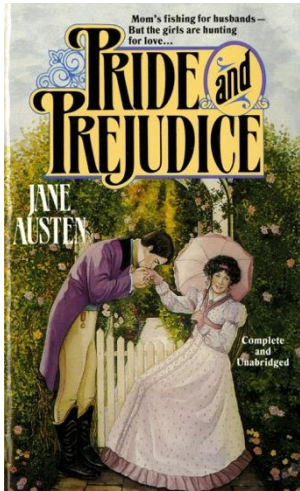
Shakespeare wrote three plays which featured lovers in their titles: *Romeo and Juliet*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Anthony of Cleopatra*. Other plays, such as *Much Ado About Nothing* are dominated by the witty, disdainful lovers, Beatrice and Benedick, and *A Midsummer's Night's Dream* features a long night of wild partner-swapping before the four lovers sort themselves out in the comic ending—all in time for a nuptial feast. Shakespeare's work as a whole shows a consistent preoccupation with love (between women and men, men and men, women and women, fathers and children, mothers and sons, clowns and dogs) and with what, after Martha Nussbaum, I call love's knowledge. Love licenses and motivates his astonishing trouser role heroines (Viola in *Twelfth Night*, Rosalynde in *As You Like It*) who talk their way to husbands, but the inability to speak love motivates the plot of arguably Shakespeare's greatest tragedy, *King Lear*, and virtually defines the pre-occupations of the Roman plays with their stifled women and heroic, emotionally constipated warriors. Taking shape as forgiveness, it informs the transformed emotional and verbal landscape of the "late plays." In other words Shakespeare is deeply interested in the expressive resources of love, how they are stopped up, interrupted, how made available to those who are gripped by love in myriad but highly specific forms. His plays explore the way in which love leads to transformed perceptions of the world and the lover all at once. Love carries an extraordinary philosophical burden in Shakespeare's plays: the renewal of the world depends on it. We will look at some of the versions of love in his culture, and some of the ways, from Plato to Hegel that love and self-consciousness have been talked about, and we will see how Shakespeare's plays constitute a sustained *dramatic investigation* of the nature of love.

We will read and think hard about a range of highly experimental plays in the Shakespeare canon and we will ask why love is such a central preoccupation in them. By the end of the class we will put together a selection of Shake-scenes that explore Shakespearean love.



ENG 248.01 BRITISH LITERATURE 1660-1790: DEFOE TO AUSTEN

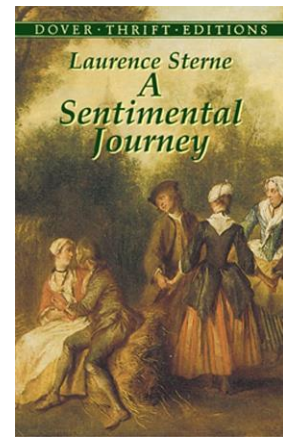
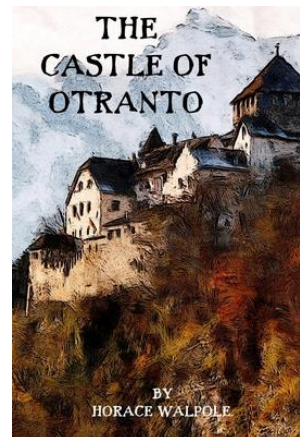
Timothy Heimlich



The long eighteenth century was the crucible of modernity, a period that witnessed revolutionary reconceptions of categories of subjectivity including race, gender, sexuality, and class, along with the rise of new structural relationships to capital, empire, and the environment. Our survey will focus on the way these new categories and structures warped, broke, and reconstituted literary form. Our investigation will focus on excavating the prehistory of two of modernity's most prestigious literary genres: the greater romantic lyric and the high realist novel. We will also trace contemporary reactions to this period, including cinematic adaptations of the novels of Jane Austen.

The syllabus features several landmark eighteenth-century novels in their entirety (Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*; Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*; Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy*; Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*), excerpts from the work of other major novelists (including Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding, Tobias Smollett, and Frances Burney), and works written by the period's most famous poets, including Jonathan Swift, Anne Finch, Alexander Pope, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, James Thomson, Samuel Johnson, Edward Young, William Collins, Thomas Gray, Phillis Wheatley Peters, Anna Laetitia Barbauld, Charlotte Smith, Robert Burns, William Cowper, and William Blake.

Except in cases where demonstrable medical need exists, screens are not allowed in the classroom. Course requirements include one short and one long essay, along with regular participation in written and spoken class discussion.



ENG 267S.01 AMERICAN HAUNTINGS: FROM POE TO POP CULTURE

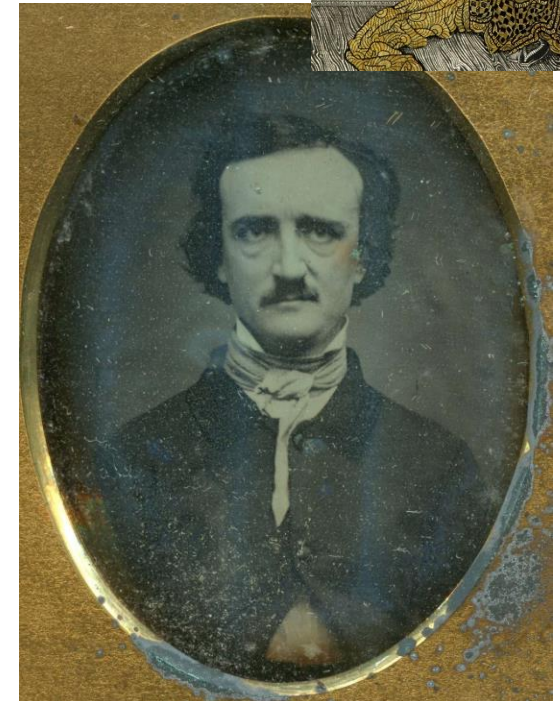
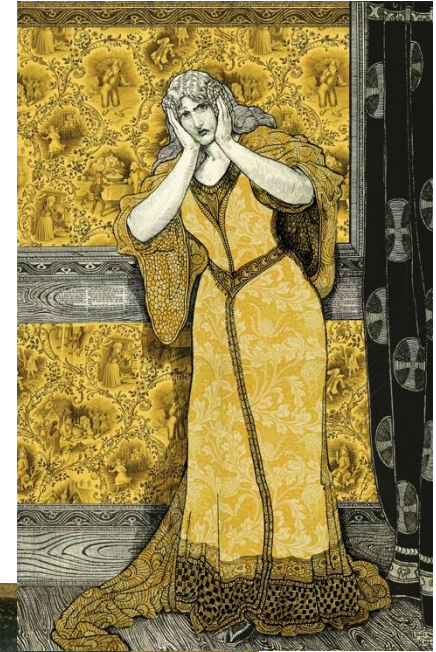
Michael D'Alessandro

Although America has often projected the image of a shimmering New World, there has always been a shadow realm beneath the surface. This course concentrates on various tales of the supernatural (including the occult, mesmerism, mad science, ESP, body invasion, witchcraft) as well as the darkly psychological (suppressed memories, traumatic dreamscapes) that run throughout American literary and cinematic history. While these narratives reveal the spectral truths beyond everyday perception, they also unveil humans' hidden natures, our persistent attraction to the mysterious and forbidden. Based in the 19th century but stretching into the 20th and 21st, this course furthermore examines the historical conditions that produced these tales. Including supplementary readings about early American witchcraft, spiritualism, and psychology, the course grounds primary texts in a record of unsettling real-life occurrences. Similarly, we explore how the American landscape offers distinctly fertile ground for such stories. Its history steeped in blood and sin, the United States remains forever haunted by the ghosts of its past and the uncertainties of its future.

The syllabus features fiction by Edgar Allan Poe (“The Fall of the House of Usher,” “William Wilson”), Nathaniel Hawthorne (“Young Goodman Brown,” “The Birthmark”), Charlotte Perkins Gilman (“The Yellow Wallpaper”), and Ira Levin (*Rosemary’s Baby*)—as well as several films (*The Shining*, *The Village*, *Get Out*).

No tech (laptops, tablets, phones, etc.) allowed in class.

As this class is a small discussion seminar, most of our time—and 25% of the final grade—will focus on class participation. The other 75% will consist of weekly response posts, two medium-length papers (6-8 pages), and a short presentation.



ENG 271.01 CLASSICS OF AM LIT: 1915-1960

Victor Strandberg

This course in modern American literature will begin with major figures of the WWI period and will move through the decades up to the 1960s. Most of the course will be devoted to novels, but we shall also look at such major poets as T. S. Eliot, Robert Frost, Edna St Vincent Millay, and William Carlos Williams. Although our primary interest will be to understand and appreciate the specific works we study, we shall also consider the larger cultural and intellectual context relevant to each writer. In addition to the poets already mentioned, this course will study prose works by Fitzgerald, Faulkner, Hemingway, Carson McCullers, Saul Bellow, Richard Wright and/or Toni Morrison, and John Updike.

Exams: Three hour-long exams and a terminal quiz. There will be NO 3-hour final.

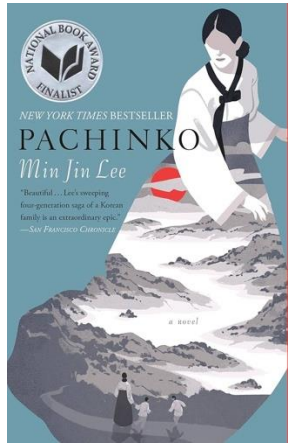
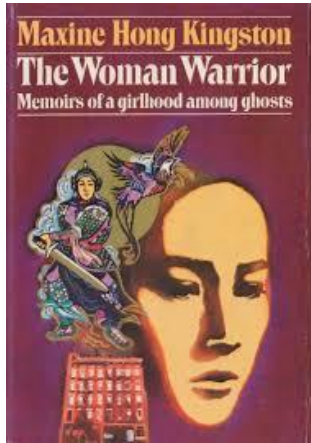
Term papers: One term paper, about 5-7 pages.

Grade to be based on: exams 75%, term paper 25 %.

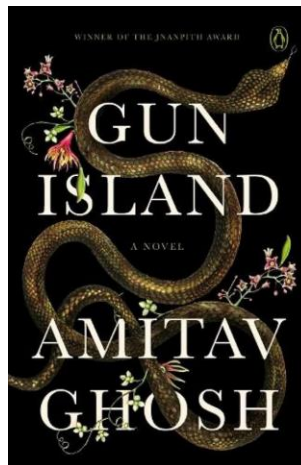
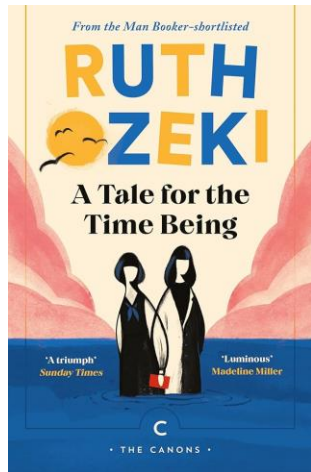


ENG 274S.01 INTRO TO ASIAN AMERICAN LIT

Marguerite Nguyen



This course introduces students to Asian American literature and literary criticism by surveying how meanings of America have long depended on Asian America. Our investigations of novels, poetry, films, and art will familiarize students with key concerns in Asian American studies, including histories of war and empire, genealogies of violence, intergenerational memory and migration, and how the category of “Asian American” has evolved over time. We will also focus on newer literary and critical trajectories, such as Asian Americans in the US South, climate narratives, refugee aesthetics, and recent trends in Asian American popular culture, such as coming-of-age stories and the rom-com. By examining a range of genres and the critical apparatuses that these works have generated, students will explore how representations of Asian America have played a significant role in the making of American culture and history.



Texts we will study include photographs of Japanese American internment, Amitav Ghosh’s *Gun Island*, Maxine Hong Kingston’s *The Woman Warrior*, Min Jin Lee’s and HBO’s *Pachinko*, Ruth Ozeki’s *A Tale for the Time Being*, selected poems by Ocean Vuong, and art related to St. Malo, Louisiana, one of the earliest Filipino and Asian American communities in the US.

Assignments such as brief responses, guided group work, podcast and other creative-critical options, and analytical essays (5-7 pages) are designed to acquaint students with key texts and issues in Asian American literature while encouraging critical reflection on them.

ENG 290S.01 SP TOP IN LANG & LIT: WOMEN, WITCHCRAFT, & MEDICINE IN EARLY AMERICAN LITERATURE

Elizabeth Apple

Unruly women have haunted the pages of American literature since the colonial period. Often charged with upsetting the religious, social, or natural orders, no small number of these figures were prosecuted for witchcraft. Today, we think of the women history accused of witchcraft as critics of an outmoded culture that sought to control them. But witches were not always—or were not only—cultural critics. By contrast, witches were often midwives or healers: women with medical expertise. This course looks to the unruly women of early American literature to examine the changing landscape of medical philosophy and practice in the colonial period and beyond. Together, we'll examine the cultural legacies of women such as Anne Hutchinson, Margaret Jones, and Bridget Bishop: figures who “have,” as Nathaniel Hawthorne once wrote, “come down to us in history, hand in hand.”

Alongside early modern poetry, religious writings, medical and scientific treatises, and plays, we'll also analyze some of the many contemporary novels, television series, and films that respond to the traditions of medicine and witchcraft in colonial America. Together, we'll read works such as Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Cotton Mather's *Wonders of the Invisible World*, Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, and Kathleen Kent's *The Heretic's Daughter*. We'll compare these readings to contemporary productions such as *Hocus Pocus*, *Outlander*, and *A Discovery of Witches*.

As we encounter these works, we'll ask: In what ways did shifting medical and religious paradigms contribute to the growing persecution of witches in the early modern period? What roles did gender, sexuality, social class, and the advent of racial slavery play in these conflicts? How and why did women's medical authority come to represent such a profound threat in a historical moment known for undergoing a scientific revolution? And why, after all this time, are we still so fascinated by witches?

Students will use their own writing to reflect on course themes and questions. No exams or prerequisites. Counts for Area 1 for English majors.



ENG 290S.02 SP TOP IN LANG & LIT: WRITING LIKE A GIRL: WOMEN'S LITERATURE & FEMINIST LITERARY CRITICISM

Savannah Marciezyk



Once upon a time, there were no women taught in literature classes. This began to change in the 1970s, when social movements around women's liberation and civil rights began to influence—and were influenced by—academic scholarship. Literary critics began to ask questions about who ended up on syllabi and why; how we evaluated the work written by women; and what it meant for women to write at all.

The goal of this course will be to introduce students to writing by women, and the history of feminist literary criticism. We'll explore various poets, novelist, and memoirists in an effort to understand how women writers have engaged with these genres over time, and how (and if) they are different from their male contemporaries. We'll also consider how "Women's Literature" became its own field, whether it still should be one, and its relationship to the field of Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies.

Assignments for this course will include two argument outlines, to be presented in class; two short papers (3-5 pages); and one longer paper (10-12 pages). Students will be expected to participate actively in class discussion on a regular basis.

This course fulfills the Criticism, Theory, and Methodology, or the Area III requirements for the English Major; and the Arts, Literature, and Performance, and Writing curriculum requirements.

ENG 290S.03 SP TOP IN LANG & LIT: LITERATURE BEYOND THE BOOK

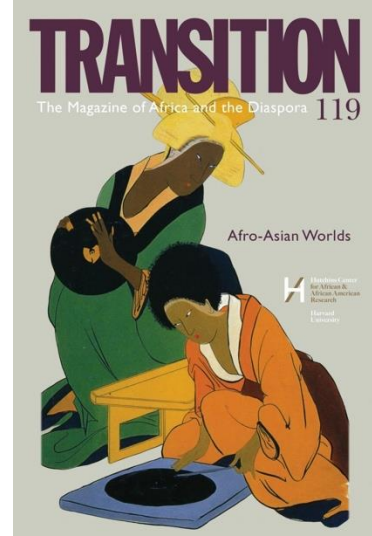
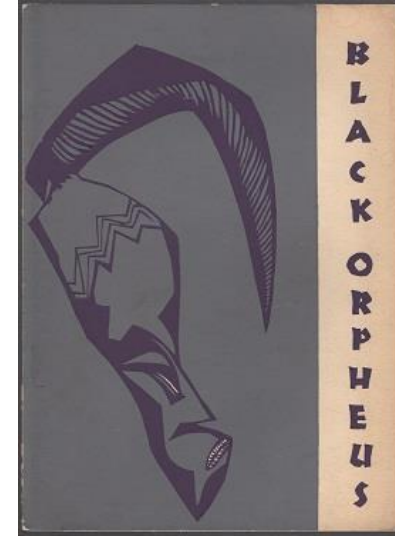
Chris Ouma

Small magazines in Africa and the Diaspora

“Some famous writers were discovered in some ill produced shabby little magazine.” These words, by South African novelist and critic Lewis Nkosi speak volumes about small magazines. Often our focus on the book – the novel, anthologies of short stories or poetry – loses sight of the small magazine, a form that enables very rich ways/arts of reading. Another critic, Eric Bulson reminds us that small magazines “faithfully transported writers from the island of the unknowns to the continent of giants”. Small magazines are indeed the ‘literary underdogs’, punching above their weight most of the time. Their smallness is their strength as a literary form: small budgets and small print run.. BUT...wild and wide circulation in directions that are unanticipated while creating networks and connections across countries and continents.

This course seeks to examine the small magazine as a form that left its own literary signature in the long twentieth century, within Africa and the Black World. It is a form that not only connected Africans and their diasporic kin, but also fostered literary cultures, debates and created conditions for the rise of African and Black Diasporic literary canons. The course will sweep across the long twentieth century after the ‘color line’: the interwar through the NAACP’s *The Crisis* and UNIA’s *Negro World*; decolonization in Africa with *Transition*, *Black Orpheus*, *Lotus* and *Drum* and the new Millennium of ‘digilittle’ magazines like *Kwani?* *Jalada* and the new iteration of *Transition* at Harvard and *Chimurenga*. The course will move from engaging with the ways in which *The Crisis* created conditions for the Harlem renaissance to how *Jalada* in East Africa has an online short story with over 100 translations – one of the most translated in the world and certainly the most in African languages.

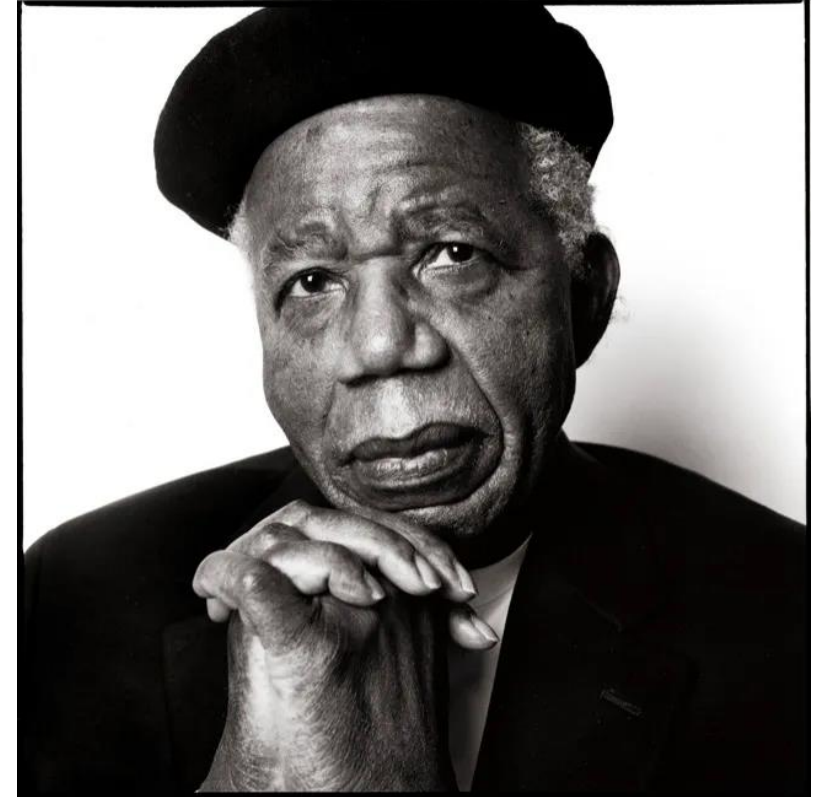
Assessments will include occasional short pieces, a mid-term paper (4-6 pages) and a) a final term paper (6-9 pages) or b) a creative piece inspired by the form of the small magazine in print or digital format.



ENG 290S.04 SP TOP IN LANG & LIT: READING CHINUA ACHEBE

Chris Ouma

“If you do not like someone’s story, write your own”. These are the words of the famous African novelist Chinua Achebe, a key figure in the founding of modern African literature. Often referred to as the ‘father of modern of African literature,’ Achebe’s fictional world was often both inspired and in contestation with key modernist figures such as Joseph Conrad, WB Yeats and Joyce Cary amongst others. The title of his most famous novel *Things Fall Apart* is inspired by WB Yeats’ poem ‘The Second Coming’. In response to Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, Achebe wrote that his fiction was meant to “teach my readers, that their past – with all its imperfections – was not one long night of savagery from which the first Europeans acting on God’s behalf delivered them”. Achebe therefore set forth writing his own story and in the process was central to not only setting up the field of modern African literature, but also founding the Heinemann African Writers Series which acquired a global status as syllabus and reference point for African literature.



This course will focus on Achebe’s five novels: *Things fall Apart*, *No Longer at Ease*, *Arrow of God*, *A man of the People*, *Anthills of the Savannah* and an anthology titled *Girls at War and other Stories*. Through this corpus, the course’s objective is to give students a substantial grounding on this globally inspirational literary figure – Africa’s most famous author. We will read for the ways in which Achebe’s novels imagined and ‘invented’ an African world which was in transition, and at the intersection between a ‘traditional’ and largely ‘oral-based’ society and a modern ‘literate’ one emerging at the end of colonization. How for instance could you read and indeed *listen* to the difference between the first three paragraphs in *Things fall Apart* introducing Okonkwo to us as readers, and the last paragraph in which with the district commissioner is *writing* about Okonkwo?

The course will emphasize immersive reading of the novels and will rely on classroom engagements with Achebe’s prose and style, while placing him in the socio-political context of his time. Assessments will include occasional short pieces, a mid-term paper (4-6 pages) and a final term paper (6-9 pages).

ENG 290S.05 SP TOP IN LANG & LIT : GREAT POEMS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Victor Strandberg

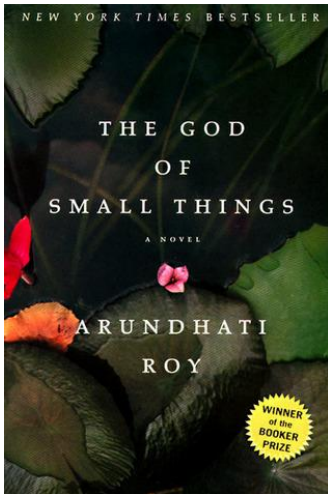


Beginning with some medieval ballads, this course will sample the shorter works (no epics!) of such classic writers as John Donne, Alexander Pope, William Wordsworth, John Keats, Lord Tennyson, the Brownings, A. E. Housman, William Butler Yeats, Dylan Thomas, and Philip Larkin. From the American side of the ledger, we will, as time permits, draw upon such writers as Anne Bradstreet, Phillis Wheatley, Edgar Allan Poe, Walt Whitman, Robert Frost, T. S. Eliot, Edna St Vincent Millay, Langston Hughes, Gwendolyn Brooks, Sylvia Plath, and Allen Ginsberg. The course also figures to rescue some non-classic but very fine poems from undeserved oblivion.

Three hour exams (no 3-hour final exam) and a couple of papers.

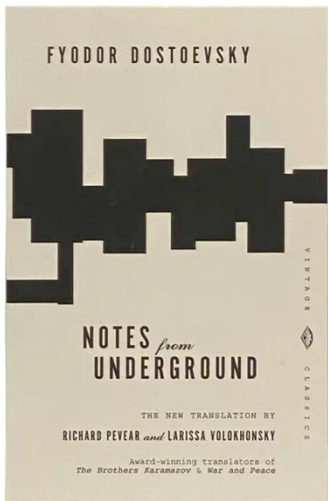
ENG 290S-3.01 SP TOP ENG LIT MOD & CONTEMP: HUMAN NATURE IN GLOBAL CRISIS: A LITERARY INVESTIGATION

Ejuerleigh Jones



What does it mean to be human? What are the features of human experience? Is there a universal understanding of the essential nature of humans? What sorts of philosophical questions emerge when reading stories—both literal and imagined? How does reading literature aid our metaphysical inquiries? Exploring these profound yet common questions through literature engenders an awareness of our respective worldviews. As we read and discuss literature, collectively, we aid one another in responding to the ways in which our worldviews might be reinforced or challenged. By investigating human nature through a range of cultures, we develop our understanding of ourselves and other human beings, which benefits our relationships with one another and the communities we inhabit.

Our investigation of human nature in literature includes such novels and short stories as *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy, *The Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver, *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe, Dostoevsky's *Notes from the Underground*, "The Birthmark" by Nathaniel Hawthorne, and "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place" by Ernest Hemingway. I have also included an assortment of autobiographical texts, poems, and paintings including Emily Dickinson's "Because I could not stop for death," Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*, and Vincent Van Gogh's *Olive Trees*.



Reader's Memoir (3-4 pages double-spaced): 10%

Midterm Essay (5-6 pages double-spaced): 20%

Final Project (essay 7-8 pages double-spaced or creative project): 30%

Weekly Reading Responses (1 page double-spaced): 20%

Participation (attendance and in-class activities): 20%

*There are no exams and no prerequisites required for this course.

ENG 290S-4.01 SP TOP IN CREATIVE WRITING: MEMOIR WRITING

Akhil Sharma

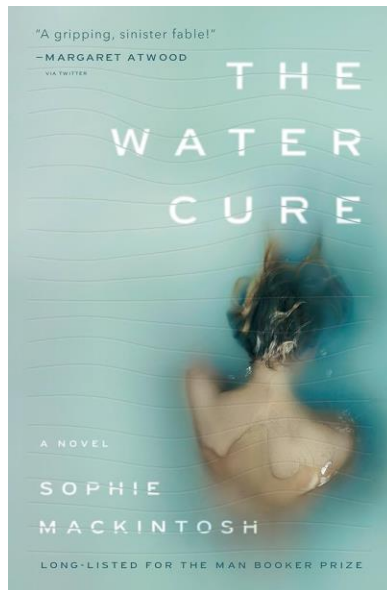
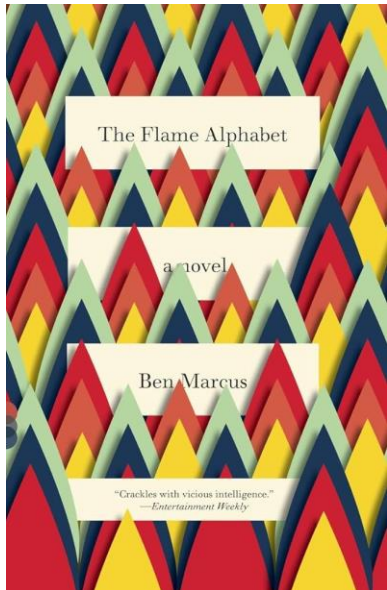


Discovering the Stories We Want to Tell

All writers draw from their pasts. Learning how to relate to our histories, what matters and what does not, is a way of discovering our “voice”. This course is focused around writing non-fiction/memoir as a stepping stone to writing fiction.

ENG 290S-4.02 SP TOP IN CREATIVE WRITING: WORLD BUILDING

Mesha Maren



In this course we will explore methods for creating fictional worlds. These ‘worlds’ will include utopian and dystopian communities as well as elements of speculative and historical fiction. We will explore examples of world building ranging from Genesis to Thomas More's *Utopia* to Lil Nas X's *Montero*. Possible texts may also include *The Water Cure*, *McGlue*, *The People of Paper*, *The Flame Alphabet*, and *Autobiography of Red*. Students will read and discuss these works from a craft perspective as well as writing and revising a series fictional pieces set in their own alternative worlds.

ENG 290S-4.03 SP TOP IN CREATIVE WRITING: FRAMING THE WORLD: POETRY AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Frances Leviston

Framing the World: Poetry and Photography is a creative interdisciplinary course that will ask you to consider how innovations in the field of photography have influenced and complemented the writing of poems. Studying a range of poetic, photographic and theoretical texts, you will find new perspectives on poetry and its relationship to visual language, and develop your ability to think and write critically across artistic disciplines. You will also experiment extensively with taking photographs and writing poems of your own. The course is assessed by an essay and a creative portfolio of poems and photographs. No special equipment or technical knowledge is required for this course: we will establish the basic principles of taking photographs in the first seminars, and students can take suitable pictures using a smartphone.



ENG 290S-4.04 SP TOP IN CREATIVE WRITING: ANTI-VILLAINS, OR HOW TO WRITE A GOOD, BAD CHARACTER

JP Gritton

This course seeks to understand what makes a good, “bad” character—a character who, though her behavior might be unmoral, immoral, or amoral, is nevertheless compelling on the page, stage, or screen. In addition to Shakespeare’s Iago, we’ll explore representations of evil in the work of novelists like Margaret Atwood (*The Robber Bride*), Gillian Flynn (*Gone Girl*), and Oyinkan Braithwaite (*My Sister, the Serial Killer*) as well as in the poetry of Pablo Neruda (“Luminous Mind, Bright Devil”) and the short fiction of William Faulkner (“Barn Burning”). Though we may never understand literature’s best, worst characters, we can study how the likes of Shakespeare and others brought them vividly, enigmatically to life. The text that will guide our study is Robert Boswell’s essay on character and plot, “The Half-Known World.” Assignments will include weekly writing exercises based on class readings, a mid-term character study (4-6 pages), and a final scene/sketch (6-8-pages), due at semester’s end.



ENG 320S.01 INTERMEDIATE WORKSHOP IN THE WRITING OF POETRY

Tsitsi Jaji

This course welcomes poets who have already begun to develop familiarity with the vast span across geographies and long histories of expression in verse. There is no writing without reading, and no serious writing without serious reading. Plan on poetry becoming a daily practice: all members will reflectively read one poem, and draft another each day of the week. It is assumed that you will have significant practice at writing poetry. A key goal of our work together will be to abandon the pursuit of a singular, signature “voice,” and rather to embrace writing “in the presence of all the languages of the world,” as Édouard Glissant puts it. Our readings will gather lessons and provocations from varied sources. Many of our readings will be from the global South, particularly Latin America and Africa and from the treasures of non-dominant writing in the U.S. These readings will facilitate considerations of the impact translation and artificial intelligence have on how we conceive of language.

Most importantly, we will engage with each other’s work with a commitment to supporting each poet’s creative goals with honesty, rigor, and respect. As the course advances, we will discuss avenues for sharing poetry in readings, chapbooks, online and in other formats.

Students who have not taken a creative writing course at Duke should contact the instructor for permission to enroll.



ENG 321S.01 INTERMEDIATE WORKSHOP IN THE WRITING OF FICTION

Akhil Sharma



This course will include discussion of basic techniques such as writing effective dialogue and developing complicated characters inside of a plot. The focus, however, will be on developing a voice and then trying to use that voice as the engine of a narrative. Voice is often what distinguishes a work.

Each week will have a writing assignment and each week will require a close reading of a short story.

ENG 360S.01 THE ENVIRONMENT IN LITERATURE, LAW, AND SCIENCE

Priscilla Wald

Climate change, resource exhaustion, an increase in natural disasters, from tornados, hurricanes, floods to droughts, heat domes, earthquakes, and, of course, pandemics: these, we are told, are problems with “the environment.” We are living, it seems, in the Age of the Anthropocene, when humanity has become a geological and environmental force.

Racism, unprecedented poverty, inadequate health care, and urban blight in the midst of rising affluence: these, too, are problems with “the environment.” The world population has exceeded eight billion; we are putting increasing pressure on the planet, with dangerous consequences, as the Covid-19 pandemic made so starkly clear. Social hierarchies and inequities, as we have seen over time, take their toll on every aspect of the planet; the natural and social worlds are fully integrated entities.

So, what is this “environment,” and why does this question matter, now more than ever? How might a better understanding of how that term is circulating and being used help us move beyond our impasses and think productively about how to live more justly, compassionately, and responsibly in our world? What can we learn from the stories we tell about the environment not only in fiction, film, and the mainstream media/journalism, but also in scientific, legal, and political documents? How might we change that story, and with what consequences?

This class will address these questions by considering the global and the local, with special attention to the very ground on which Duke is standing: the Southern Piedmont, the city of Durham, the Duke campus, and the Duke Campus Farm. Beginning with early human settlement, when the earth began to get a human-natural history of its own, we will consider three historical moments — settlement; plantation culture, enslavement, and evolution, and the ongoing struggles for Civil Rights from the late 1960s into the Environmental Justice and Environmental Health Movements in the present—to show how science, law, and cultural forms (literary and cinematic as well as scientific works, legal cases, policy documents, and the news media) contribute to the changing idea of “the environment.” The class will include site visits to Duke Forest and the Duke Campus Farm and a walking tour of downtown Durham.

We will trace the idea of the environment not only across time, but also across geographical space, as we consider how ideas take root locally, and also circulate through social, cultural, economic, legal, political, agricultural, academic, and other networks, reshaping the ever-changing relationship between the local and the global.



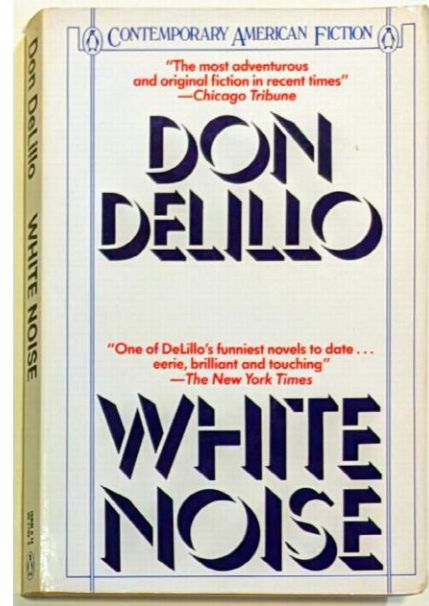
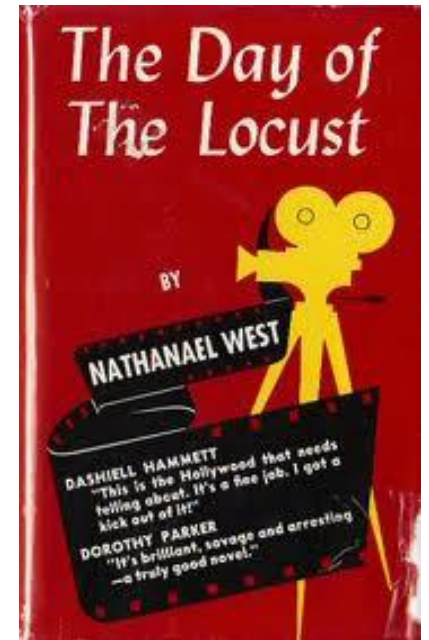
ENG 371S.01 STUDIES IN AMERICAN LIT, WWI-WWII: FUTURE SHOCK, THEN

Thomas Ferraro

“Time keeps on slippin’, slippin’, slippin’ into the future.” - The Steve Miller Band (1976)

The conceit of this course is to go back in time in order to go forward in thought and, perhaps, social action. The works of fiction I have gathered—stories, novellas, novels—may not be the most profound America has produced, but they are the most prophetic, and they do so in curious, and curiously related, ways: not as science fiction, not even as speculative fiction, but by investigating, each in its own era, what we might call, in jargon, “proto-post-modernity,” or simply “the here-already”: the future-shock of historical moments that we have in the interim left behind in some ways but that in other ways, in key and fascinating and illuminating ways, we are still somehow catching up with—still trying to recognize, to process, to disarm or transform or otherwise deal with.

What books, of what moments, calling for what processes? In “Bartleby, The Scrivener,” Herman Melville gives us Wall Street in the 1850s, as finance and service capitalism are just emerging, staging the frustrations of “pink collar work” well before there is a name for it and he does so in eerily iconic imagery (the cubicle!) and resonant (counter-)language (“I’m occupied”). Not a half-decade later, Henry James’s *In the Cage* takes us behind a telegraph operator’s partition, not only examining what, in retrospect, was our original text-message service but also the compromised privacy of its users and the vicarious projections of its seemingly faceless facilitators—including the glories and messes of crossing the mediated love-line. Then again, in 1926, in *The Professor’s House*, Willa Cather portrays the human costs of entrepreneurial marriage, conspicuous consumption, and the rise of the academic-industrial complex (read: STEM vocationalism)—with cowboy interludes and intergen homoeros emerging, quite literally, as their escape hatches! In 1939, Nathanael West’s *Day of the Locust* pictorializes the addictive fantasies of spectacle and self-costuming that L.A. employs (especially the resultant pathologizing of romantic intimacy) to nasty, riotous, ultimately apocalyptic effect. Then again, by the infamously dystopian year of 1984, Don DeLillo’s *White Noise* foregrounds the techno-consumerist, multi-divorce, celebrity-besotted all-American family—while implicating along the way the pop-trivialization of academic inquiry, the terror of the ignored industrial environment, and the boomeranging of upscale psycho-pharmaceuticals. A decade later, in *Native Speaker*, Chang-Rae Lee picks up where DeLillo leaves off, at the “office” especially, outing the espionage logic and social brutality of the consultant business, including the bidirectional damage of otherwise ingenious ethnic (in this case, Korean-American) manipulations, which ought—if anything in this course does!—give you pause. All of the above, may I remind you, and no Internet—yet.



ENG 371S.01 STUDIES IN AMERICAN LIT, WWI-WWII: FUTURE SHOCK, THEN

Thomas Ferraro

(cont.)

Yes, the topics we cover are uncannily current, sobering in their canniness, useful for waking-up and pondering redress, with the requisite earnestness of our difficult moment. But neither the texts nor the class proceedings will be just somber, not by a long shot. We will encounter resplendent small victories, admirable even instructive compromises, and much good humor—including the sardonicness of Jewish black comedy, the humaneness of Anglo- and African-American self-knowing, and the extravagantly Mediterranean orchestrations (love and irony, fear and reverence) of our seminar table itself. Each of you is very much welcome, whatever your non-English training or pursuits, indeed because of them. For our duration, I ask only curiosity, effort, and esprit.

Other texts under consideration: Willa Cather, “Coming, Aphrodite!” (1920); George Schuyler, *Black No More* (1931); John Frankenheimer, dir., *Manchurian Candidate* (1962); Marge Piercy, *Woman on the Edge of Time* (1976); Patricia Lockwood, *No One is Talking About This* (2021).

ENG 390S-1.01 SINGLE AMERICAN AUTHOR: EMILY DICKINSON

Joseph Donahue



This seminar on the life and times of one of the foremost lyric poets in world literature, Emily Dickinson. We read the entirety of her published work in the order of, to the degree scholars can determine, its composition, which is between roughly the late eighties to her death in 1886. For all the mastery of syllables, phrase, cadence, and visionary psychology, Dickinson's work cries out for a cultural context, which as a member of an elite and ambitious family was richly available to the poet. Dickinson, in short, as recent scholarship has amply demonstrated, was deeply attuned to the intellectual concerns of her day, especially in the realms of art, politics, and theology, and such sciences as geology and botany. However much her lyrics give the fullest voice in the English language to states of ecstasy and despair, they also draw on the world around her, and our reading of her letters and poems sets her poems deeply in the culture from which they arose, a culture that given its deep roots in American Protestantism and in the Civil War, remains of vital interest to the contemporary moment, as two recent full length films exploring the life and legend of Emily Dickinson attest.

ENG 390S-6.01 SPEC TOPICS IN FILM: FILM COMEDY

Xinyu Dong



It has often been said that a joke dies when analyzed. In this class, we will see how it reincarnates and sparks new insights through thoughtful analysis. We will begin by examining the medium of humorous expression, which in this case is the temporal and spatial organization of cinematic image and sound. Tracing the development of the comic genre in film history, we will explore its beginnings in the silent era, its refinement during the classical period, its reinvention with the arrival of sound, and its transformation in postwar and international cinemas. We will also explore how comedy expands into numerous subgenres, blends with other genres, and pushes the boundaries of the genre while playing with audience expectations. Special attention will be given to historical formal analysis to identify how genre conventions are established, adjusted, and reshaped by innovative filmmakers. This foundation will enable us to discuss productively the social and cultural functions of film comedy and its unique capacity to entertain, critique, and provoke thought.



Weekly screenings will feature representative films by major filmmakers, including Mack Sennett, Charlie Chaplin, Ernst Lubitsch, René Clair, Frank Capra, Frank Tashlin, Jacques Tati, Quentin Tarantino, and Stephen Chow. Students are expected to post online screening and reading responses, participate actively in class discussions, and write take-home midterm and final sequence-analysis essays (6–8 pages each). No prerequisites are required. This course integrates readings and in-class sequence-analysis exercises to help students from all backgrounds develop the vocabulary and skills needed to analyze various aspects of cinematic expression, including cinematography, mise-en-scène, editing, and sound.

ENG 395.01 LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY

Dominika Baran

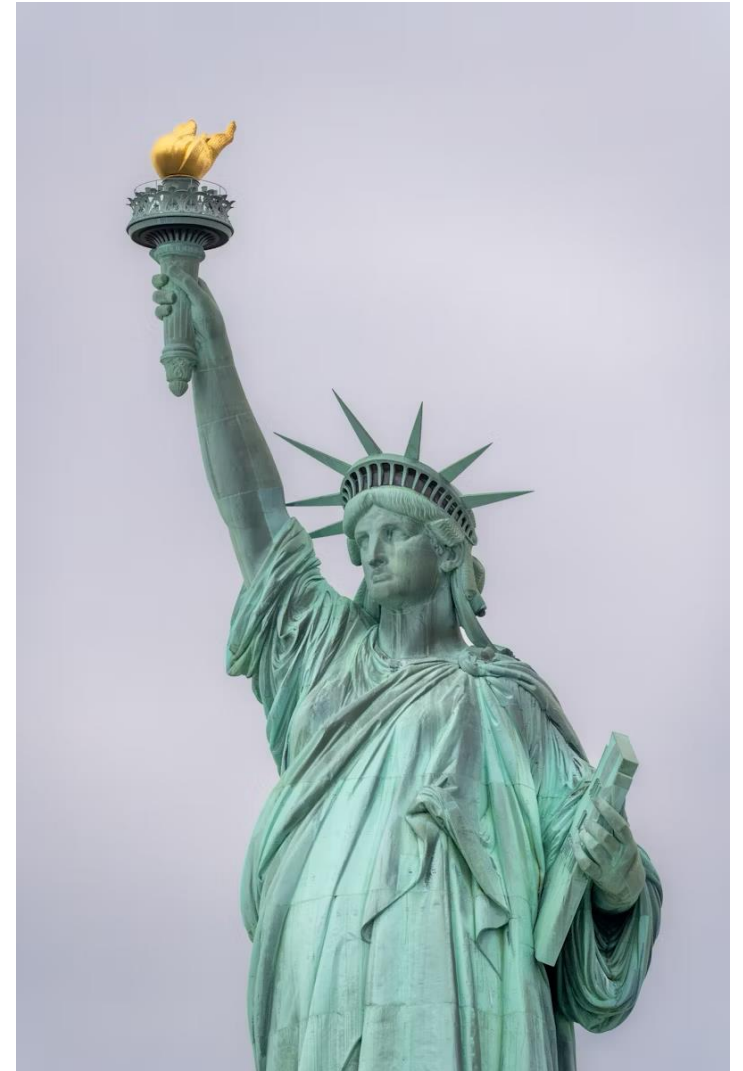


This course examines language as a social practice, focusing on different aspects of its role in social life. Topics addressed in the course include: language and dialect; multilingualism and language contact; language and culture; discourse analysis; language and social identity, such as ethnicity, social class, age, and gender; variation in language; language and ideology; language in education and in the media; and language and social justice. Through the discussion of these topics and homework including reading and small research projects, students are introduced to key concepts, theories, and methods in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology.

ENG 396S.01 LANGUAGE IN IMMIGRANT AMERICA

Dominika Baran

This course examines the crucial role of language in the story of the immigrant experience in America – a story marked by searching for a path between assimilation and preserving one’s home culture. Learning English, speaking with a foreign accent, choosing which language to use at home, bridging cultures by creating new ways of speaking such as code-switching or ethnic varieties of English, responding to political challenges – the controversial bilingual education programs, the US English movement – have all shaped the making and remaking of immigrant identities. In this course, we will explore these issues by drawing on case studies in linguistic anthropology, on personal stories such as autobiographies and memoirs, and on public debates surrounding language and immigration. We will also consider the discursive construction of ‘the immigrant’ in the media, in literature, and in ethnographic interviews to see how these discourses produce racial, ethnic, and linguistic hierarchies. *Please note that this is a **Service-Learning Course**, involving work with local immigrant communities, the purpose of which is to connect our discussions with real-life issues and learn through service.



ENG 420S.01 ADVANCED WORKSHOP IN THE WRITING OF POETRY

Nathaniel Mackey



Advanced Writing Workshops build on the work done at the intermediate level, and are intended for the most well-prepared and gifted creative writing students. Pre-requisite: English 320S or consent of the instructor if prior work merits admission to the class (as judged by the instructor).

ENG 590S-3.01 SP TOP SEMINAR III: WAR-HOLE

Taylor Black

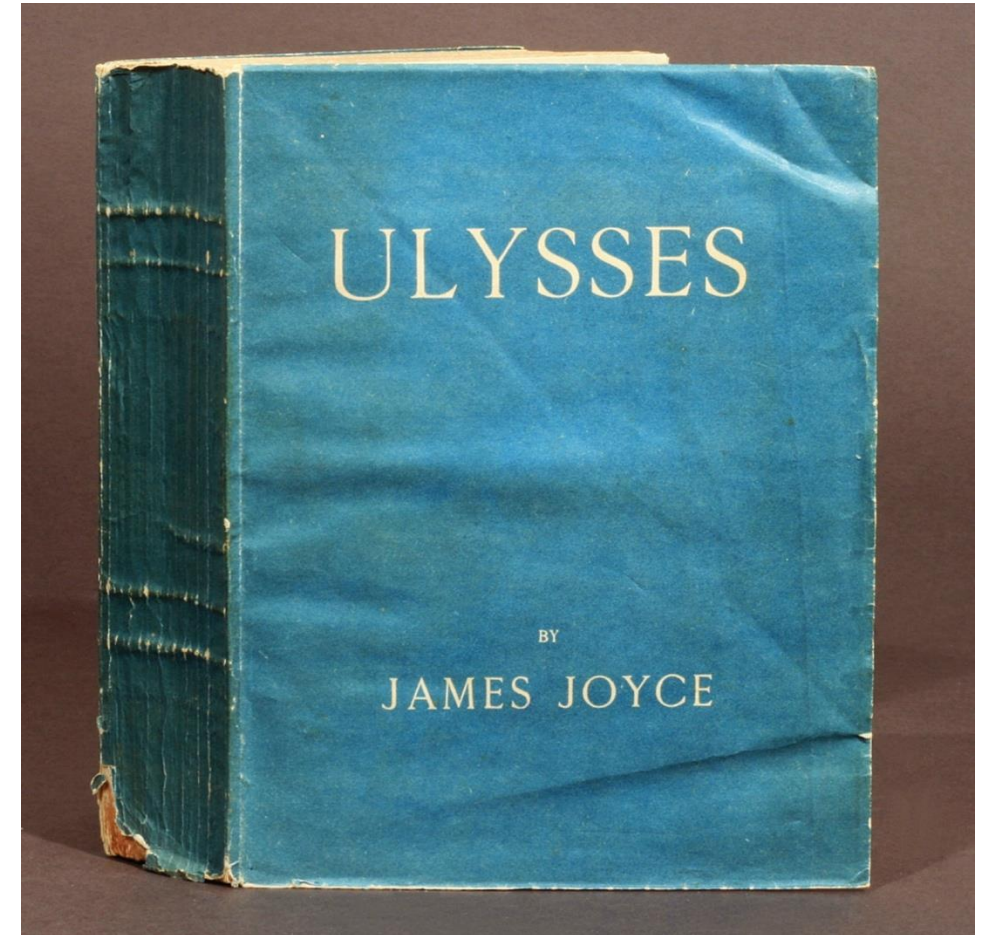


A deep dive into the life and work of Andy Warhol and key figures of the so-called Warhol Factory, both notable and obscure. We will study the films, artworks, novels, albums, and ephemera Andy and other Factory members created. In doing so, we will consider how Andy and his Factory imagined a popular cultural universe for their time and the future. To guide our work with primary sources, we will turn to key texts in American Studies, Queer Theory, Literary Studies, and Cinema Studies. Undergraduate students will be expected to write two short essays and either a creative final project or a third essay. Graduate students will submit a traditional seminar paper or two shorter essays.

ENG 590S-3.02 SP TOP SEMINAR III: *ULYSSES* IN THEORY

Aarthi Vadde

James Joyce's *Ulysses* turned 100 years old in 2022. The novel to end all novels, the influence of *Ulysses* on twentieth century literature and theory is unparalleled. In this seminar, we will dedicate ourselves to reading *Ulysses* in its entirety alongside *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (necessary priming for *Ulysses*) and canonical works of literary theory and criticism that were inspired by *Ulysses* or responded directly to it. Possible theorists and critics include T.S. Eliot, Jacques Derrida, Hélène Cixous, Karen Lawrence, Leo Bersani, and Vincent Cheng. Reading Joyce in this way will ground students in the aesthetic innovations of modernism, its central philosophical and political questions, and the history of its reception among influential critics and theorists in the academy. Additionally, we will read some current scholarship tied to the “new modernist studies” and “global modernism,” schools of thought that have brought new methodologies to bear on the study of literary modernism. No prior exposure to Joyce is required to take this course or do well in it. What is required is a willingness to read slowly, to reread, and to take the plunge of discussing a writer who said this about *Ulysses*: “I've put in so many enigmas and puzzles that it will keep the professors busy for centuries arguing over what I meant, and that's the only way of insuring one's immortality.” Graduate paper options will include one long seminar paper (20 pages) or two shorter conference-style papers (10 pages). Shorter papers for undergraduates interested in graduate-level courses are an option.



ENG 590S-5.01 SP TOP DIVERSITY: FREDERICK DOUGLASS AND AMERICAN POLITICAL CULTURE

Douglas Jones

This course reads deeply in the political philosophy of Frederick Douglass and that of contemporaries in the long nineteenth century. We will use Douglass' interventions to explore several key concepts in political theory, especially democratic theory. These include: the people; legitimacy; slavery and freedom; violence; freedom of speech; duty; and personhood. At the core of our study will be an exploration of the centrality of literature, performance, and print culture to the making of democratic culture and thought. Nineteenth-century literary writers we will read include Walt Whitman, Harriet E. Wilson, Frances Harper, Fanny Fern, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Ida B. Wells, and Henry James, among others. Contemporary political theorists we will read include Melvin Rogers, Danielle Allen, Robert Gooding-Williams, Lawrie Balfour, Kedrick Roy, Jason Frank, and Jeanine DeLombard, among others.



ENG 890S.01 SPECIAL TOPICS SEMINAR: PLANETARY EXPERIMENTS

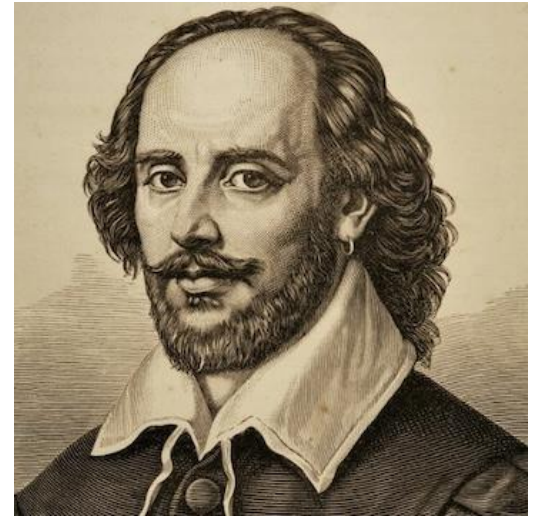
Rob Mitchell

This course focuses on the history and theory, as well as literary and artistic representations, of “planetary experimentation.” Interest in the Anthropocene has brought the concept of planetary experimentation to the fore, insofar as the Anthropocene has been described as the result of “a large-scale geophysical experiment of a kind that could not have happened in the past nor be reproduced in the future,” or as an “unintended experiment of humankind on its own life support system.” While alternative terms such as the Capitalocene or Plantationocene stress that it is not “humankind,” but rather a small subset of humans, who are responsible for this experiment, advocates of these alternative terms still tend to understand phenomena such as global warming, the spread of microplastics to essentially every site on the earth, and rapid species extinction in terms of irresponsible planetary experimentation. The goal of this course is to explore different theories and the history of planetary experiments. This involves considering different recent theories of “planetary” (e.g., those of Latour, Spivak, Chakrabarty, and Hui, as well as work in the “planetary humanities”), and considering how concepts of experimentation link up with these theories of planetary. For our understanding of experimentation, we will draw heavily on work in science and technology studies (STS), while at the same time keeping in mind that planetary experiments tend not to fit easily into the usual understanding of experimentation as lab-based, replicable, etc. We will also consider theories of experimentation that do not emerge from within the natural sciences, and ways in which different literary genres and artistic projects have sought to understand or stage planetary experimentation. We will consider, for example, fictions about explicit planetary experiments (e.g., geoengineering or the intentional global spread of nanotechnologies or artificial intelligence), as well as fictions about responses to *unintentional* planetary experiments, such as the accidental release and global spread of a technology or virus, or the aftereffects of industrial processes that alter earth systems. We will focus especially on how literature and art projects imagine or instantiate *agency* and *responsibility*, and consider how these accounts compare to science and technology studies accounts of planetary experiments. The guiding premise of the course is that the history and language of planetary experimentation can open up contemporary discussions of engineering and technical solutionism to a critical history of politics, truth, and aesthetics.



ENG 890S.02 SPECIAL TOPICS SEMINAR: SHAKESPEARE, TRAGEDY, PHILOSOPHY

Sarah Beckwith



A first aim of this class will be to explore Shakespearean tragedy as a "lethal attempt to deny the existence of another as essential to one's own." So tragedy in Shakespeare's handling turns out to explore acknowledgment as the home of our knowledge of others and of ourselves. This class explores Shakespeare's tragedies as a set of meditations on the costs of denying that we share language. Why does this idea become compelling and attractive right then? How is such a denial so much as possible? We will focus on Shakespeare's late tragedies (*King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Coriolanus*, *Timon of Athens*, *Anthony and Cleopatra*), as well as *Hamlet*, and *Othello*. We will also ponder the tragic matrix of comedy in plays such as *Much Ado About Nothing*, as well as those plays that begin as tragedies but turn aside from that form: *The Winter's Tale*, and possibly *The Tempest* if we have time.

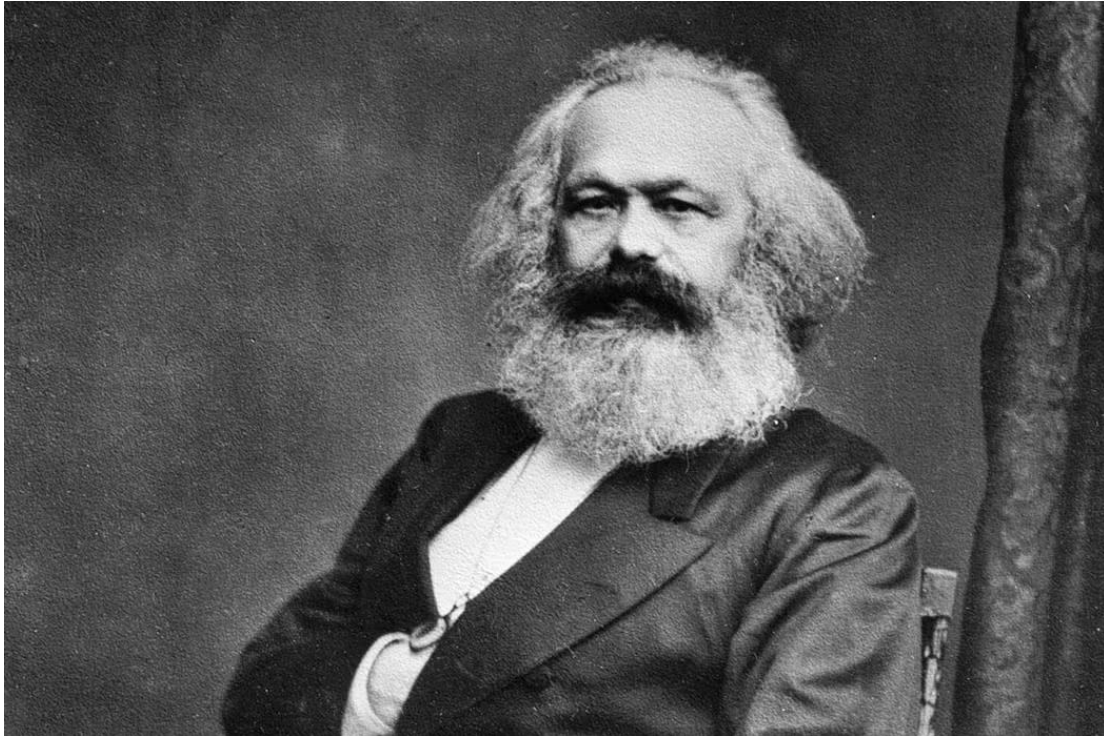
A second aim of the class, and closely connected with the first, is an exploration of ordinary language philosophy (Wittgenstein, Austin, and Cavell) in relation to theatre. I see a natural affinity between the practices of theater and the practices of ordinary language philosophy because each practice is committed to examining particular words used by particular speakers in particular situations. Each practice understands language as situation, which is different from "context" because sometimes we only understand the context when we understand what it is that is being said. Ordinary language philosophy makes the very radical claim that we will fail to understand what something means until we understand what it does, until we understand the force of the words used on any particular occasion as, say, entreaty, command, order, suggestion, permission, request, prayer. Each practice understands language as act, as event in the world, and so asks us to extend our conception of the work of language beyond the work of representation, the chief focus of historicism old and new.

We will read some central essays of J.L. Austin, Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, and especially Part 4 of Stanley Cavell's work: *The Claim of Reason: Skepticism, Morality, Acknowledgment, Tragedy* where we will attempt an exploration of the intimacy of these four terms to each other. This will help us explore tragedy's work between "avoidance and acknowledgment."

This class should be of interest to anyone interested in exploring Shakespeare, tragedy as a genre, theatre, ordinary language philosophy and ethics, and performance studies. Undergraduates who would like to take this course are welcome to discuss this with me and can obtain permission to join the course.

ENG 890S.03 SPECIAL TOPICS SEMINAR: HISTORY OF CONTEMPORARY LITERARY CRITICISM

Richard So



This course provides students with a concise historical and theoretical overview of university-based literary criticism, with the goal of enabling graduate students to better understand – and hence, situate their own projects within – the history of their discipline. Our readings will cover the main theoretical paradigms that have defined the field of literary criticism since the mid-20th century: new criticism, deconstruction, postmodernism, new historicism, psychoanalysis, Marxism, sociology of literature, race and gender studies, and postcolonial theory. We will focus on the canonical theoretical foundations of the discipline, but by the end of the semester, we will also explore more recent and influential paradigms, such as environmental humanities, digital humanities, new media theory, post-humanism, and post-criticism. Evaluation will consist of a single final paper and regular class participation is required.

**ENG 890T.01 TUTORIAL IN SPEC TOP: DISSERTATION
WORKSHOP**

Kathy Psomiades

ENG 890T.02 TUTORIAL IN SPEC TOP: JOB MARKET WORKSHOP

Aarhi Vadde