ENGLISH 89S.02
1ST-YR SEMINAR IN LIT:
GREAT POEMS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
TuTh 10:05AM - 11:20AM
Victor Strandberg

Beginning with some medieval ballads, this course will sample poems by major artists—and some not so major—covering a half millennium. The core of the syllabus will feature Shakespeare, Donne, and Milton from the English Renaissance; Pope, Swift, and Dr. Johnson from the Age of Reason; Keats, Wordsworth, and Coleridge from the Romantic period; Tennyson, Browning, and Housman from the Victorians; and Yeats, Eliot, and Dylan Thomas from the Modern period. The American contributors will include Whitman, Dickinson, Frost, Millay, and Pound. Two or three hour exams; two term papers (4-6 pages); and some contributions to class discussion. No three-hour final exam.

ENGLISH 89S.03
1ST-YR SEM IN LIT: THE ENLIGHTENMENT
MW 3:05PM - 4:20PM
Thomas Pfau

This seminar is an introduction to the period commonly referred to as the European Enlightenment. Spanning roughly the century between 1690 and 1790, the Enlightenment laid the foundations for the modern world that, for better or worse, we now inhabit and seemingly take for granted. Defining of the Enlightenment are major shifts in understanding human
consciousness, religious culture, secular society and moral theory, and (perhaps underlying it all) a concept of political economy driven by self-interest, public credit, and a consumer culture. – Our seminar readings will be divided into four thematic clusters: 1) The Emergence of Political Economy & the Modern Social Imaginary. – 2) The Modern Individual: Consciousness, Passions, Freedom and other Enigmas. – 3) Understanding Value in a World of Facts: Religion & Moral Philosophy. – 4) Critiquing the Enlightenment. – Readings will include works by John Locke, Adam Smith, David Hume, Voltaire, G. E. Lessing, Moses Mendelssohn, and Immanuel Kant. Alongside these readings, we will also consider salient paintings and artworks, including Mozart’s *Marriage of Figaro*, which, perhaps more than any other work of 18th century art, embodies the spirit of the Enlightenment while also offering an ironic commentary on it.

**ENGLISH 90S.01**  
SPECIAL TOPICS IN LITERATURE: THE SPY NOVEL  
WF 8:30AM - 9:45AM  
Joshua Striker

The spy novel holds an assured if unenviable place in English literature. It tends to be dismissed as mere genre fiction, but a few spy novels so perfect the genre as to transcend its limitations and stand on their own literary merits. In this course we will read five such books, all of them written by Brits: John Le Carré’s *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* (1974), one of the finest novels of the Cold War; Erskine Childers’ *Riddle of the Sands* (1903), which has been called the classic Secret Service novel; Agatha Christie’s *N or M?* (1941), a charming but chilling book set during the Second World War; Graham Greene’s *Our Man in Havana* (1958), the rare comic spy novel, set in 1950s Cuba; and *The Secret Agent* (1907), by Joseph Conrad—whom you may know as the author of *Heart of Darkness*.

Without good reading there can be no good writing; but good reading is not enough to guarantee the quality of your written work. And so, besides reading and talking about the books and movies on the syllabus—we will watch several movies featuring James Bond, England’s most telegenic spy—we will write about them. In addition to a certain number of short response papers, you will be asked to compose four essays, the longest of which will be 13 pp., double-spaced. All of your essays will be revised at least once, in consultation with me and your classmates. When this course ends you will be a better reader and a better writer—and that is its own reward.

**ENGLISH 90S.02**  
SPECIAL TOPICS IN LITERATURE: SUPERNATURAL LITERATURE  
MW 4:40PM - 5:55PM  
Devin Buckley

From ghosts to monsters to magical elixirs, readers love the supernatural. It abounds within our entertainment novels like *Frankenstein*, written 200 years ago, to today’s popularity of *Stranger Things* on Netflix. Why do we seek out such chilling experiences? While the excitement of a good scare certainly explains part of the appeal of a ghost story, supernatural tales often prove long lasting for their ability to deeply unsettle our
sense of being at home in the world. When we confront the supernatural in Gothic fiction or even in the midst of what appears to be a realistic account of the everyday, it’s clear that supernatural entities carry psychological and philosophical meanings that reveal our relationship to reality precisely by rendering reality uncanny. They invite an exploration of the human mind, our social being, our moral being, and our relationship to the natural world. They also render our inevitable encounter with death, the ultimate unknown, fiercely visible and express a desire for transcendence.

In this class we will explore how the supernatural engages with the psychological, philosophical, aesthetic, and mystical. We will examine literature from different centuries and cultures. Longer fiction includes Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein (1818), Emily Brontë’s Wuthering Heights (1847), Henry James’s Turn of the Screw (1898), and Shirley Jackson’s The Haunting of Hill House (1959). Shorter fiction will include Novalis’s fairy tale novella Heinrich von Ofterdingen (1800), Melville’s chapter “The Whiteness of the Whale” from Moby-Dick (1851), and other short stories as well as poems. We will also look at the presence of the supernatural on the screen, including Hitchcock’s Vertigo (1958) and some episodes of Stranger Things (2017).

Assignments: Two argumentative essays 5-7 pages each worth 25% of your grade, one of which will be expanded into the final paper 10-12 pages worth 40% of your grade. The second paper will be expanded through draft revision. Engaged class participation and bi-weekly short writing will count for 10% of your grade. No exams.
schooling – what happens to us when there’s no outside to our education? Is it empowering? Dangerous? Both?

Supplemental readings: film, poetry, creative non-fiction, essays and journalism. Critical essays on the nature and formation of culture as well as theory of education will provide an intellectual framework for approaching the questions posed by the class. Grading: online blog posts based on the readings (~200 words), 2 short papers (3-4 pages), 1 long paper (6-8 pages), and participation. In-class time will be devoted to discussion as well as writing workshops and revision throughout the semester.

---

ENGLISH 110S.01
INTRO CREATIVE WRITING
Tu 3:05PM - 5:35PM
Faulkner Fox

This course is designed to give students an opportunity to practice and explore three genres of creative writing fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction. Part of the class will be devoted to peer critique of student work (“workshopping”), and part to discussions of craft and close reading of published essays, stories, and poems. There will be weekly writing assignments—both creative and critical—and students will also submit a final portfolio of finished work.

---

ENGLISH 110S.02
INTRO CREATIVE WRITING
Th 3:05PM - 5:35PM
Cathy Shuman

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

---

ENGLISH 110S.03
INTRO CREATIVE WRITING
M 4:40PM – 7:10PM
Departmental Staff

A multi-genre course designed for students who have little or no previous experience producing imaginative literary texts. This course does not count toward the English major, but would count toward the minor in creative writing.

---

ENGLISH 184S.01
READINGS IN GENRE: POLITICAL THEATER
TuTh 10:05AM - 11:20AM
Corina Stan

"Don't discuss state affairs," warn official notices in Lao She's Teahouse; and yet, since the time of Sophocles and
Aristophanes to the contemporary age, playwrights have capitalized on enduring affinities between politics and the theater. Are such plays gestures of defiance or expressions of political commitment? This course offers both an introduction to the dramatic genre, and a deeper familiarization with some of the major political events that shaped the course of the past century. Our interest in the historical context of the rise of Nazism, the cultural revolution in China, apartheid in South Africa, dictatorship in Chile and Romania, the legacies of slavery, experiences like incarceration and trauma, or the psychological intricacies of powerful obsessions, will be on equal footing with an examination of the plays in their generic specificity. We will trace influences among various playwrights and map out some of the genre’s forms, such as Greek tragedy, Old Comedy, epic theater, the theater of the absurd, the theater of cruelty, “post-dramatic” theater.

The first part of the course is dedicated to some of the founders of the genre: our list will include Sophocles, Antigone (442 BC), the famous Greek tragedy about rebellion, honor, and fidelity that inspired so many writers in later centuries; Aristophanes, The Wasps (422 BC), the most representative of the Old Comedy genre, widely believed to remain one of the greatest comedies of all times; for good measure, the unavoidable Julius Caesar (1599) by William Shakespeare.

Shifting our attention to the past century, we will read a gangster play by Bertolt Brecht, The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui (1941), an allegory of the rise of Nazism that also sheds light on the Chicago gangster wars during the Prohibition era (1920-1933); Lao She’s masterful Teahouse (1956), chronicling major shifts in Chinese history (1898, 1917, 1945); Jean Genet’s masterpiece The Balcony (1957), set in a brothel, possibly about the French revolution; Athol Fugard, The Island (1973), an apartheid-period play set in an unnamed prison in South Africa, where two cellmates rehearse a performance of Sophocles’s Antigone, in which play they see parallels to the situation of black political prisoners; Ariel Dorfman, Death and the Maiden (1990), about national reconciliation following Chile’s military dictatorship; Caryl Churchill, Mad Forest (1990), based on improvisations around the Romanian 1989 revolution. We’ll conclude with analyses of two American plays: George Wolfe’s The Colored Museum (1988), a highly humorous satire about Afro-American history, which invites us to buckle up our shackles on the Celebrity Slaveship, and refrain from drumming and singing; finally, Ayad Akhtar’s Pulitzer-winning play Disgraced (2013), a combustible exploration of race and religion, freedom of speech and political correctness, questions about art, Islam, Judaism, and the state of humanity today.

ENGLISH 184S.02
READINGS IN GENRE: SEX, DEATH AND MONEY
MW 3:05PM - 4:20PM
Melissa Malouf

In this course we will read and discuss literature that in various and difficult and fascinating ways take up these topics, all or in part. We’ll read John Donne, Shakespeare, Henry James, Tennessee Williams—to name a few. And you will write responses to the readings along the way. But I am more interested in your being prepared to discuss whatever we read.
than in covering too wide a range of texts: that is, I will give you time to think and to talk about what I ask you to read before moving on to the next piece of literature. In addition to short written responses, I’ll require one longer (4-5pp) piece of creative non-fiction. Class participation is a must. Required texts: Shakespeare, *Othello*, Henry James, *Portrait of a Lady*, Williams, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, and Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*.

I will give you a syllabus when we meet, but it would be a good idea to read the Henry James novel over the summer, if at all possible.

---

**ENGLISH 186S.01**  
**READING THEMATICALLY: LIVING WITH OTHERS**  
TuTh 1:25PM - 2:40PM  
Corina Stan

Living with others: literature, intimacy and (dis)closure

“*How do you live? Are you happy?”*  
(Jean Rouch, Edgar Morin, *Chronicle of a summer*)

“*Hell is other people.*” (Jean-Paul Sartre, *No Exit*)

What does living with others involve? Do they set limits to our freedom, become uncomfortable when impinge upon our privacy? Do we perhaps need them, so that our solitude does not become exile? How far, or how close, do we want other people to be, and how would we imagine, in this sense, a science, or maybe an art, of distances? What would the fantasy of an ideal living-together look like? In this course we will read some great contemporary novels, a few influential plays and a couple of poems, and dwell on territories of the intimate, of the private, of reading other people’s minds; of possessions (and self-possession) behind closed doors; on spaces that are inside-out, or at the same time inside and outside, on ways of living, hence ways of being (un)happy; on matters of trying to understand, know, or identify with someone else: to what extent are these even possible, what do we, after all, share with other human beings, especially when they come from afar, and in what ways can we be held responsible for them?

This course will also be an opportunity to reflect on whether literature, although often a solitary experience, affords openings towards other people, or ways of imagining how to live – better – together. Differently put, does coping with otherness in a literary text translate into ethical behavior in real life? Or is literature, as a philosopher would have it, the only successful ‘living-together’?

Elfriede Jelinek, *Charges* (2017). Along with these (generally short) literary texts, there will be available, for the philosophically-minded, a selection of optional readings in phenomenology, existentialism, and ordinary language philosophy.

ENGLISH 208S-01  
CRITICISM AND THE ARTS  
TuTh 11:45AM - 1:00PM  
Thomas Ferraro

Leslie A. Fiedler once wrote that “American literature is distinguished by the number of dangerous and disturbing books in its canon--and American scholarship by its ability to conceal this fact.” Lordie, Fiedler’s claim from 1960 remains true enough, if it is strictly academic criticism one has in mind. But it is not true, perhaps not even remotely true, of America’s greatest scholar-critics, including Fiedler himself--who are themselves artists of the word and who in their critical appreciations unleash the dangers and disturbances of the works they treat.

In deft hands, then, Pandora’s boxes galore. Which means even the critic herself better duck!

But, say what? What could possibly be so dangerous--in our era of racial genocides, apocalyptic weather, viral plagues, “invincible” nuclear missiles, slaughters at schools or in sanctuaries, #MeToo histories, and government-by-twitter--about a story or a song or a movie? Nine pages of Hawthorne, or a 12-line Dickinson poem? David Lynch’s *Blue Velvet*, well at least that’s a horror flick; but Elle King’s latest, or Billie Holiday’s earliest? And yet, from works such as these, “all that we reckoned settled shakes and rattles,” says Emerson, “cities, climates, religions, leave their foundations and dance before our eyes.” So I ask you: what idea, what way of reading and thinking, what way of saying or showing, what construction of the relation of self to nature, self to other, self to society--self to art, art to planet!--could be that powerful, that upsetting?

Let’s find out. In this trial run of English 209, we are going to study the major books of several of American’s formidable guerilla critics, no more than five and possibly three; we will test their claims in turn against the literature and art most capable of “talking back”; and we will move, separately and together, from meta-theory to close analysis and back again--as we pursue that long-dreamed yet still-wondrous thing: each to his own, critical voice.

You want a hint or two? (After all you are course shopping, ours is the society of transparency, and film trailers prescreen all the good stuff.) If we start flat-footedly, as I always recommend, and take the idea of danger first in its literal sense, then ponder these: Why is aesthetic beauty, which we think of as a graceful accompaniment to a full life, so often a function of violence? When is sexual intimacy not also an expression of violence, no matter how sweet and no matter what we tell ourselves? And where does the Abrahamic God get off, like the Pagan deities before Him, demanding the sacrifice of the young, beginning (Isaac, anyone?) in His own house? These remain big questions,
so I am grateful that have both theories and stories, our American holy texts, to help.

This is by design an introductory course. All are welcome. There are no prerequisites of any kind beyond curiosity, and we will benefit from varied interests and expertise.

But beware, no comfort zone here. And that’s by definition, beyond professorial intent: For “every benevolent remark by an artist is a fog to cover his tracks,” Camille Paglia insists, “the bloody trail of his assault against reality and others.” Or, as Dorothy and her guys once put it, “Lions and tigers and bears, oh my!”

Major critical works to be drawn from: Ralph Waldo Emerson, Selected Essays; D.H. Lawrence, Studies in Classic American Literature; William Carlos Williams, In the American Grain; Leslie A. Fiedler, Love & Death in the American Novel; Albert Murray, The Hero and the Blues; Camille Paglia, Sexual Personae; Toni Morrison, Playing in the Dark.

Likely counter-texts include: Stories by Hawthorne, Melville, and Poe; poetry by Whitman and Dickinson; novels such as Willa Cather’s The Professor’s House, Zora Neale Hurston’s Their Eyes Were Watching God, Mario Puzo’s The Godfather, and Ron Hansen’s Mariette in Ecstasy; films such as The Wizard of Oz, Pal Joey, Blue Velvet, and Pulp Fiction; blues music, Madonna videos; and a mess of song-and-dance break-outs from musicals.

ENGLISH 220S.01
INTRO TO THE WRITING OF POETRY
W 3:05PM - 5:35PM
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.

ENGLISH 221S.01
INTRO TO THE WRITING OF FICTION
W 3:20PM - 5:50PM
Lucy Corin

This course introduces students to conventional wisdom about the craft of fiction—both its uses and abuses. What does it really mean to "show" or to "tell"? What does it really mean to "write what you know"? How do you know when you’ve really recorded "le mot juste"? We operate within several assumptions: that we are trying to make art; that reading challenging fiction will help us find our own sensibilities as writers; that the workshop process (in which we exchange and
discuss work-in-progress) is meant to help us understand the complexities of narrative craft and to open each writer’s eyes to the possibilities of the page. Students are expected to have some experience and a lot of enthusiasm for reading contemporary short fiction.

Be prepared for a good deal of reading, writing and revision. You'll compose several shorter pieces of fiction (1-5 pages in response to 3-5 assignments); one longer story (10-20 pages); keep a structured Writer’s Notebook of reading responses and other ongoing writerly tasks; revise 2-3 pieces and introduce them with a short reflective essay for your final portfolio.

ENGLISH 222S.01
INTRO TO THE WRITING OF CREATIVE NONFICTION:
WRITING WORK
Tu 3:05PM - 5:35PM
Cathy Shuman

Academic, paid, volunteer, domestic, emotional, intellectual, physical, joyous, soul-destroying, exciting, challenging, boring .... Working on your writing through a series of workshops and revisions, students will produce three 7-9 page pieces that explore the potential of creative nonfiction to express experiences of and ideas about work in all its varieties. We will also read and discuss published examples of writing work in memoir, personal essay, travel writing, and other creative nonfiction genres to serve as background and inspiration. No previous creative writing experience is required for this course.

ENGLISH 222S.02
INTRO TO THE WRITING OF CREATIVE NONFICTION:
THE BOOKS THAT MADE ME
W 4:40PM - 7:10PM
Joanna Murdoch

We turn their pages, but in a sense, books read us. They teach, transport, inspire. These literary encounters make us who we are. What are the texts that have profoundly shaped your mind, your politics, your choice of major? How does reading affect your life in the world, and vice versa?

This creative nonfiction workshop will approach such questions through bold, experimental writing. Students will compose and revise two major projects (8–10 pages each) to collect in a final portfolio: one personal essay on formative reading experiences, and another on the way these encounters affect your reading of a new literary work. Each week, we will discuss two students’ work-in-progress, providing feedback for the writers to draw on in revision.

We will also examine published essays and memoirs about the reading life. These selections will come from journalistic media, such as The Guardian's weekly column "The Books That Made Me," as well as longer memoirs about literary experience, like Jeannette Winterson's Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal? (2011), Azar Nafisi's Reading Lolita in Tehran (2003), and Augustine of Hippo's fourth-century Confessions. Students will give two brief presentations: one on the book-length work they choose to write about for their second project and one on a literary memoir.
How will this workshop benefit you? For one thing, your writing in all contexts will improve as you become a more thoughtful, perceptive, courageous writer and reviser. Plus, some of your essays might go on to find a larger reading audience; we’ll talk about places to send your work for possible publication. Finally, this course is designed to support you as you discern and articulate the shape of your convictions during the whirlwind years of college. So bring your whole, in-process person—and welcome!—to this intensive and enriching workshop seminar.

---

ENGLISH 246.01

JANE AUSTEN

TuTh 3:05PM - 4:20PM

Rachel Gevlin

“Anyone who has the temerity to write about Jane Austen is aware of [two] facts: first, that of all great writers she is the most difficult to catch in the act of greatness; second, that there are twenty-five elderly gentlemen living in the neighbourhood of London who resent any slight upon her genius as if it were an insult to the chastity of their aunts.”

– Virginia Woolf, A Room of One’s Own

“The person, be it gentleman or lady, who has not pleasure in a good novel, must be intolerably stupid.”

– Jane Austen, Northanger Abbey

The novels of Jane Austen have long been regarded in popular culture as epitomes of the marriage plot and, as such, “girls’ fiction.” And yet, an elite group of men used the term “Janeite” to boast of their fandom for her in the early twentieth century. Why this gendered divide in readership, and how is Austen received today? How do contemporary adaptations of Austen address issues of gender—and how might this have changed over the years? Indeed, how does Austen herself construct masculinity and femininity throughout her novels, and what sort of literary history is she drawing from?

In this class, we will consider the above questions as we examine Austen’s oeuvre in its own right, as well as the cultural phenomenon it has inspired today. Using questions of gender as a critical entry point, we will also reflect on the crucial concerns that Austen raises for her readers: the connection between economic success and personal happiness; the education of women and their role in the family; and Austen’s innovative and enormously influential writing style. We will read all six of Austen’s novels, as well as a play (Congreve’s The Way of the World) and the first volume of Austen’s own favorite novel, Samuel Richardson’s Sir Charles Grandison.

Students will write two essays (5-7 pages), as well as a final essay (6-8 pages) in lieu of a final exam. Both majors and non-majors welcome. No prerequisites.
ENGLISH 247.01
VICTORIAN LIT
MW 4:40PM - 5:55PM
Ben Richardson

In 1829 John Wilson famously described Britain as the Empire on which the sun never sets. From India to the West Indies, British colonial rule influenced the lives of people in every corner of the globe, and in doing so helped produce the globalised society which we inhabit today. This Empire was built not only upon guns and trade, however, but also those novels and poems which taught subjects to believe in the ideal of colonial governance, even when this involved overt violence and subjugation. In this course, we will consider how Victorian literary forms produced—yet at times also protested—the social conditions which made Empire possible. Through studying the writing of authors from Charles Dickens to Joseph Conrad, we will seek to understand how this particular structure of social relations first developed and then persisted over time.

In reading Victorian literature through the lens of colonialism, we will thus consider how the idea of Empire came to pervade almost every aspect of British society. These are some of the questions which we will consider: What did imperial trade have to do with the structure of domestic fiction and realist novels? How were Victorian conceptions of gender and class related to debates about the political status of colonised people? How did different literary forms seek to oppose or contest the underlying project of Empire? In confronting these problems, we will attempt to understand why, in a historical moment which witnessed the development of liberal democracy, colonial forms of coercion continued to spread across the globe. When this course is done, we should have a better sense of how Victorian literature both produced yet also undermined the concept of Empire.

Readings for this course may include selections from: Charlotte Bronte, Elizabeth Gaskell, Alfred Tennyson, Robert Browning, Charles Dickens, Wilkie Collins, Arthur Clough, Matthew Arnold, Rider Haggard, Joseph Conrad, William Henley, and Rudyard Kipling.

Grading will be based on class participation and two short argumentative papers. There will be no final examination.

ENGLISH 269S.01
CLASSICS OF AMERICAN LITERATURE, 1820-1860
MW 1:25PM - 2:40PM
Michael D'Alessandro

What makes a “classic” of American literature? Why do a handful of texts endure while others have fallen by the wayside? How have filmmakers and graphic novelists adapted “old-timey” texts for future generations? By reading a variety of well-known texts from the U.S.’s arguably most prolific period of early literature, we pose—and attempt to answer—these questions. While the syllabus contains many texts that have long remained in the canon, our course also includes works that have reappeared through recent historical recovery. Collectively, these texts illuminate pivotal political debates,
social movements, gender struggles, and ethnic clashes from 1820 to 1860.

Though each class focuses on a distinct subject or author, we also ask questions about the progression (and often regression) of American culture. For instance, how did early America’s women writers carve out spaces as authors and activists? How did authors of color circumvent or undermine a dominant white culture through their writings? How did American writers engage gothic and occult trends gaining popularity in the U.S.?

Texts include Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter*, Walt Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass*, and Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, as well as works by Dickinson, Melville, Douglass, and Poe. Cinematic adaptations will be central to the class; films will include *Easy A* (2010), *The Last of the Mohicans* (1992), *Sleepy Hollow* (1999), and *12 Years a Slave* (2013). Evaluation will be based on online response posts, two formal essays, one oral presentation, and class participation.

No prerequisites necessary.

---

ENGLISH 290-7.01
SP TOP IN LANG & LIT: ASIAN AMERICAN LITERATURE
TuTh 4:40PM - 5:55PM
VISITING FELLOW TBD

This interdisciplinary course is a critical introduction to the multiple, heterogeneous histories, cultural productions, and experiences that shape the lives of Asians in the U.S. Course introduces students to a range of historical, legal, theoretical, and cultural texts including literature and visual cultures, to explore issues and methodologies central to the field of Asian American Studies. What are the formative experiences and histories that define Asian America? What is the relationship of Asian Americans to the U.S. nation-state and to other ethnic/racial group experiences? Who is included in the category “Asian American” and how have these conceptions shifted over time? Select topics covered may include formations of identity and community, im/migration, globalization, citizenship, gender, sexuality, labor, global wars, imperialism, and (post)colonialisms in Asian America.

---

ENGLISH 290S-1.01
SP TOP MEDIEVAL/EARLY MODERN LIT: ENGLISH LOVE POETRY
WF 10:05AM - 11:20AM
Julianne Werlin

This course offers an introduction to English love poetry, focusing on the English Renaissance and its influence. For centuries, love was the most important subject for secular poetry, while poetry was the genre in which the language of passionate love was most elaborately developed and exquisitely refined. The conjunction of erotic passion and verse produced literary masterpieces, as well as conspicuous literary failures. Today, the vital connection between love and poetry is broken; only in pop songs, with their obsessive focus on true love and heartbreak, can we find an equivalent to the Renaissance tradition of love lyric. Why did so many poets write
love poems in the Renaissance? And why don’t they any longer?

This class will consider both love and poetry in order to think about this question. Looking closely at the history, culture, and society of Renaissance England and Europe, we will read about evolving approaches to sexuality, the relationship between men and women, marriage and adultery as legal and ethical categories, and religious attitudes toward eroticism. At the same time, the course will serve as an introduction to English poetry both within this extraordinary period and beyond. We will ask fundamental questions about the nature of poetry, such as why it is generally written in lines, why it often uses a special vocabulary and conventions, and how we can understand the relationship between sound and meaning in poetry. In order to do so, we will look at phenomena such as rhythm, rhyme, and verse form. We will also think about prominent features of literary history, such as poetic fame, the connection — and divisions — between popular and elite lyric, and the making of a literary canon.

Most importantly of all, we will read some of the most brilliant writers in the English language. Major authors will include Shakespeare, Spenser, Marlowe, Donne, and Marvell, as well as some of their lesser known — but delightful — contemporaries. We will also look briefly at some important echoes of the Renaissance lyric in nineteenth and twentieth century culture, including Romantic poetry and contemporary music.

ENGLISH 320S.01
INTERMEDIATE WORKSHOP IN WRITING OF POETRY
Th 3:05PM - 5:35PM
Joseph Donahue

Intermediate workshops present a higher creative standard than introductory workshops and increased expectations in both quantity and quality of revised, finished work. Pre-requisite: English 110S OR English 220S, or consent of the instructor if prior work merits admission to the class (as judged by the instructor).

ENGLISH 331S.01
LATE MDVL LIT/CULTURE: LANGLAND & THE PEARL POET
TuTh 10:05AM - 11:20AM
David Aers

This course brings together the greatest Christian poet (who happens to be a medieval one) with an extraordinarily inventive writer of very wide scope, the anonymous poet known as the Pearl-poet (so-called after one of his poems). Langland’s Piers Plowman is a complex, demanding poem in which the poet interweaves politics, satire, ethics, theology, visions, prayer and intense argument over a wide range of issues. We will spend the first half of the semester on a careful reading of this work. Because it is a long poem I want students to have read the whole poem in translation before the first class: Piers Plowman: The C Version, translated by G. Economou (University of Pennsylvania Press, paperback). The best introduction I know to the relevant form of Christian tradition in which these
writers participate is by Thomas Joseph White, The Light of Christ: An Introduction to Catholicism (Catholic University of America Press, 2017, paperback). I also want students to know something about medieval Christianity and for meeting this expectation please read the first part of Eamon Duffy, The Stripping of the Altars (second edition, Yale University Press, paperback). The Pearl-poet’s work ranges from romance, to elegy to Biblical narratives. The set text here includes a very accurate translation in a CD-ROM included with the print edition of the medieval English: The Pearl Poet, edited by Malcolm Andrew and Ron Waldron (Exeter University Press). For this text, make sure you get the copy with the modern translation. Anyone wishing to move from the translation to the Middle English of Piers Plowman should get hold of the edition by Derek Pearsall: Piers Plowman: A New Annotated Edition of the C-Text (Exeter University Press; rpt. Liverpool Univ. Press). Pearsall’s edition includes a fine introduction and copious annotations.

Note on grades, class format, and expectations
This is a seminar and attendance/participation is mandatory. Unwarranted absences will result in failing the course. The grade comes from two essays (8-10 pages) which must be submitted by the given deadline to count. There will be no exams.

Please also note well: laptops and other electronic devices are not to be used in class. A seminar is a dialogic form of learning, very different to a lecture class. In my experience, laptops act as an impediment to the kinds of attention and communication I consider essential to a flourishing seminar. Also, since we will have more than enough to chew on already, please refrain from eating during class.

ENGLISH 337.01
SHAKESPEARE AFTER 1600
MW 11:45AM - 1:00PM
Astrid Giugni

This course focuses on Shakespeare’s major plays from the seventeenth century. We will read the most important tragedies from this period, starting with Hamlet and working our way through Macbeth, Othello, King Lear, and Antony and Cleopatra. These tragedies are some of the most moving plays in the English language and they still haunt the theater, movie studios, and the TV screen today. While the focus will firmly be on Shakespeare, we will see how Hamlet influenced modern film through The Lion King and Sons of Anarchy and how Akira Kurosawa re-imagined King Lear by adapting it to medieval Japan in his spectacular 1985 film Ran. Alongside the tragedies, we will read at least one of the problematic late comedies, Measure for Measure, and two “romances,” The Winter’s Tale and The Tempest.

No prior knowledge of these plays is expected, but students will be required to read each work carefully and write short reading responses for each play. In addition to the reading responses, your grade will come from two papers and an informal staging exercise (acting not required, but encouraged).
The poet John Milton lived through a bloody civil war that concluded with the execution of England’s king – an action he enthusiastically endorsed – and the establishment of a radical government. He watched with excitement as new theories of science reshaped European perceptions of everything from the cosmos to grains of dust. And he participated in the passionate and often violent religious debates that raged across early modern Europe. This course will consider Milton’s poetry and prose within the context of political, philosophical and religious revolutions. Placing particular emphasis on his great epic *Paradise Lost* and his tragedy *Samson Agonistes*, we will examine the evolution of his poetic style in relation to his historical experience. Throughout the semester we will also consider whether truth claims – religious, scientific, or political – can license violent actions, as well as the role of literature in investigating and disseminating truth. In order to do so, we will draw on contemporary philosophy of religion, politics, and aesthetics, as well as Milton’s own descriptions of his beliefs.

This course takes up American Literature from the recent past. While the Cold War (1945-1991) will mark a periodic or temporal container for the work we will study, the themes and characteristics emerging out of the Cold War will, however, precede that official historical marker and will linger through the decades into our present. The U.S. cultural sensibilities from this time period can be marked by a wide and paradoxical range of descriptors: bold, paranoid, triumphal, satiric, extreme, utopic, isolated, and displaced. We will add to this list as we analyze our objects and invent new ways to read into these not quite old and never quite retired or obsolete subjects and texts. In that same spirit, we will conceive of this historical event as still in process, as not yet resolved, at every turn, stopping to consider the ways our texts figure into present conceptualizations of the nation and world.

Each of the authors of novels, poems, songs and memoirs included in the course have produced very particular, even iconoclastic pieces of American literature that, at the same time, seem to be representative of the times and places from which they emerge as well as strange in and of themselves. We will place these texts next to cultural paraphernalia (television commercials, political manifestos, game shows, stand up comedy etc.) in order to reckon with what we see on the page.
Expect to read authors such as: Saul Bellow, Octavia Butler, Joan Didion, Jack Kerouac, Ursula Le Guin, Toni Morrison, Flannery O’Connor and Gore Vidal. Participation will matter a great deal in the course and, in addition to that, students will be expected to complete three short (5-8 page) essays.

ENGLISH 386.01
SCIENCE FICTION FILM
TuTh 6:15PM - 7:30PM
Claire Ravenscroft

Science fiction has long been central to American pop culture, helping us think about everything from nuclear weapons to iPhones to what it means to be “human.” Sci-fi captures us at our most ambitious and heroic, but also our most paranoid and misguided. Today, the glittering techno-utopias of sci-fi’s golden age have yielded to horror plots, zombie thrillers and eco-apocalypses. The worlds of Get Out, 28 Days Later and Children of Men transport us to worlds that are alien, unfamiliar and yet more recognizable than we might like. Who do these stories teach us to be? How do they teach us to think? What do they make possible, or keep out of reach? Approaching climate change, free trade, state power, population, genetics, computers, aliens, blobs, fifty-foot tall women and creatures from black lagoons as simultaneously technological, political and literary objects, we will follow the history of postwar American science fiction film to the emergence of today’s “climate fiction” and grapple with the difficult questions these genres pose.

Our course texts will include such films as 2001: A Space Odyssey, RoboCop, Godzilla, Night of the Living Dead, Her and Invasion of the Body-Snatchers; episodes of Black Mirror and The Twilight Zone; and short fiction by major sci-fi authors like Ursula Le Guin, H.P. Lovecraft, Kim Stanley Robinson and Octavia Butler. Assessment for the course will be based on participation in classroom discussions, a film or book review, and two analytic essays. This course counts toward the ALP and W codes. No prerequisites; students of any year and from any major are welcome! Please email questions to the instructor at claire.ravenscroft@duke.edu.

ENGLISH 390-1.01
SINGLE AMERICAN AUTHOR: WILLIAM FAULKNER
TuTh 1:25PM - 2:40PM
Victor Strandberg

When literary pundits occasionally post a list of the ten greatest novels in world literature, no writer is more likely to be cited than William Faulkner, Nobel Prize winner in 1950. The main question is which of his masterworks will be cited (if not both)—The Sound and the Fury or Absalom, Absalom! If the list were extended to the top twenty, two other novels could be in play—As I Lay Dying and Light in August.

As Hemingway conceded, Faulkner “has more talent than all of us [contemporaries]. I would be happy just to be his manager.” This course will begin with several of Faulkner’s best short stories—for example, “A Rose for Emily” and “Red Leaves”—and then follow the divided stream of his creativity, taking up
his more conventional novels first (*Sanctuary, Light in August, The Hamlet*) and reserving until last his greatest and most challenging experimental novels such as *Absalom, Absalom!* Three hour exams, one optional term paper (5-7 pages), no three-hour final exam.

---

**ENGLISH 390S-1-01**  
**SINGLE AMERICAN AUTHOR: WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS**  
TuTh 1:25PM - 2:40PM  
Nathaniel Mackey

A study of the major works of poetry and prose by William Carlos Williams, from *Kora in Hell* (1920) to *Paterson* (1963), with particular attention to formal innovation, linguistic change and cultural diagnosis.

---

**ENGLISH 390S-2.02**  
**SINGLE AMERICAN AUTHOR: ZORA NEALE HURSTON**  
TuTh 11:45AM - 1:00PM  
Jarvis McInnis

Zora Neale Hurston: Race, Gender, Region, Diaspora

In this course, we will examine the life and work of Zora Neale Hurston. Though best known as a novelist of the Harlem Renaissance, Hurston was also a trained anthropologist, who wrote and experimented across a range of literary genres and cultural media, including: novels, short stories, plays, anthropological essays, political essays, autobiography, sound recordings and documentary film footage. In addition to Harlem, Hurston spent a considerable part of her career traveling throughout the US South and the Caribbean collecting and theorizing black vernacular culture, including folklore, music, dance, and religious expression. Bringing together literature, music, gender and sexuality studies, and performance studies, this course will explore the vast range of Hurston’s impressive oeuvre. Some questions we might take up include: What is the relationship between literature and anthropology in Hurston’s oeuvre? How does her work converge with and depart from that of her male contemporaries (e.g. Richard Wright, Sterling Brown, Langston Hughes, etc.) who also wrote about black culture in the US South? How does she represent gender, and particularly black women’s experiences, in her work, and what is her significance for contemporary black feminism? How do Hurston’s depictions of “the folk” defy conventional understandings of black modernity? How does the emphasis on the US South and the Caribbean in her work offer an alternative geographic framework for exploring questions of diaspora? Can we trace linkages between her literary, sonic and visual projects, and if so, how might this function as a model for practicing and understanding interdisciplinarity and, more specifically, the project of Black Studies?
While the playwright names—Eugene O’Neill, Tennessee Williams, Lillian Hellman, Anna Deavere-Smith, Edward Albee—may be familiar, do American playgoers know how strange these artists’ works can be? Williams’s *A Streetcar Named Desire* follows a delusional heroine haunted by the sounds of Polish folk music and a gunshots. O’Neill’s *The Hairy Ape* features one scene in which a primate-inspired antihero encounters a street full of mute mannequins—and it gets weirder from there. The “classic” American theatre is not safe, nor has it ever been.

This survey course tracks some of twentieth- and twenty-first century most recognizable dramas, focusing on the medium’s formal features as well as its potential for social commentary. Whether dramatizing women’s alienation in post-WWII America or the fallout of real-life race riots, the U.S. stage highlights some of our nation’s most visceral self-indictments. Besides Williams’s and O’Neill’s works, plays include Tony Kushner’s *Angels in America*, Anna Deavere-Smith’s *Twilight Los Angeles, 1992*, Sam Shepard’s *True West*, and Arthur Miller’s *Death of a Salesman*. Evaluation will be based on online response posts, two formal essays, one oral presentation, and class participation.

This course examines language as a social practice, focusing on different aspects of its role in social life. The topics we will address include: language and social identity, such as ethnicity, social class, age, and gender; variation in language, including dialects, accents, and registers; multilingualism and language contact; new languages such as pidgins and creoles; language, culture, and intercultural communication; language and ideology; language in education and in the media. 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.
perspective of sociocultural linguistics and discourse analysis, but we will refer to other scholarly traditions as well. This is a Service-Learning course: students will engage in a mentoring relationship with an immigrant student in a Durham high school.

---

ENGLISH 421S-01
ADV WORKSHOP WTG. FICTION
Th 3:20PM - 5:50PM
Lucy Corin

The goal of this course is to gather together a group of students equally dedicated to learning about fiction writing, students who want to develop a writing practice they can carry into their lives beyond class, who read challenging fiction because they like it. My approach focuses on a writer’s relationship with what she consumes (books, art, culture, everyday life), and detailed attention to language on the sentence level. We look at each piece of writing (that we create, that we consume) as a discrete entity, with a particular way of relating to its generic form. Students can expect to write 30-40 pages of original fiction in some combination of micro or flash fictions, full length short stories, experimental pieces and, in some cases, novella drafts. Everyone will engage in intense revisions in response to the workshop experience. We’ll also read model works of great fiction meant to intensify our understanding of the elasticity of the form. Each student will lead a discussion of one of the assigned readings using methods designed to teach us about the craft of writing.

---

ENGLISH 482S-01
STUDIES IN CONTEMPORARY THEORY
TuTh 11:45AM - 1:00PM
Ranjana Khanna

Topics included: psychoanalysis, Marxism, Structuralism, Post-Structuralism, theory of film and the image; theory of race, gender, sexuality, with a concentration on materials since 1950. Satisfies the criticism, theory, methodology (CTM) for English majors.