

## SPRING 2020: CAPSTONE THEMED COURSES

*Considering a Political Science or History major / minor? Try:*

**“Please, Sir, I Want Some More”: Researching and Writing about Politics in Literature**, by Daniel Adler; ENGL 102.C05 (MWF 10:50-11:40 in WRDLAW 114; CRN: 41828)

This course will trace the sociopolitical function of the novel. We will also focus on how entertainment and psychological complexity coalesce to create literature, as our texts move from the early nineteenth century to the late twentieth. We will see how political themes are treated differently across time and space, and finally talk about how reading literature should function in the twenty-first century.

Texts include: Jane Austen’s *Sense and Sensibility*; Charles Dickens’s *Oliver Twist*; Henry James’s *Daisy Miller*; John Dos Passos’s *Manhattan Transfer*; James Baldwin’s *Giovanni’s Room*; and Nadine Gordimer’s *July’s Children*. Research topics may include: industrialization/globalization; role of government/social institutions in individuals’ lives; when/how to change/update social programs; role of censorship in art; and emigration, expatriation, and refugeeism.

*Considering a Sociology or Gender Studies major / minor? Try:*

**Beyond the Binary: Researching and Writing about Transgender Identity**, by Archie Crowley; ENGL 102.C03 (MWF 9:40-10:30 in GAMBRL 003; CRN: 41811)

While the visibility and representation of transgender voices has increased in mainstream consciousness in the past five years, the narratives told about the lives of trans people are often still curated by cisgender writers and producers and designed for cisgender audiences. This course is designed to center transgender writers, poets, artists, and creators telling and taking agency over their own narratives. Every author on this syllabus identifies as trans, transgender, or some identity that is included under the transgender umbrella. This course aims to expose students to the wide variety of literature and media created by transgender artists that explore a range of themes including gender, identity, power, politics, personhood, childhood, family and community, among others.

*Considering an Education or Global Studies major / minor? Try:*

**Researching and Writing about Fantastic Beasts and Wizards in JK Rowling’s Pottermore, Part 2**, by Nicole Fisk; ENGL 102.C01 & C02 (TR 1:15-2:30 and 2:50-4:05 in HUMCB 416; CRNs: 41789 and 41806)

In this English 102 course, we will use select texts and spin-offs from JK Rowling’s *Harry Potter* series as a lens through which to read and respond to global issues. Thus, this course requires a rigorous examination, through discussion and in writing, of Rowling’s work as both instructional and inspirational texts (i.e., texts that — to the socially conscious readers/students — not only reveal our many problems but also offer hope that we’re brave enough to solve them). Additionally, as a **service learning class**, we will pursue our course goals at Global Education Day and the Columbia International Festival (April 3-5, State Fairgrounds), where we’ll represent The Harry Potter Alliance, a service organization committed to “using the power of story to make activism accessible and sustainable.”

While priority is granted to Capstone students enrolled in the ENGL 101 version of this course, we will have additional seats available for a select few who are well-versed in the series. If interested, contact Dr. Fisk ([fisknp@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:fisknp@mailbox.sc.edu)) for enrollment permission and details.

## SPRING 2020: CAPSTONE THEMED COURSES

*Considering a Biological Science or Environmental Studies major / minor? Try:*

**Our House on Fire: Researching and Writing about Nature and Power**, by Joseph Hall; ENGL 102.C04 (MWF 12:00-12:50 in SJMC 310; CRN: 41823)

How exactly does humanity fit in on this place we call Earth? Are we its rulers, or have we deluded ourselves into thinking we are? We have found ourselves in an age some have billed as the Anthropocene. In this era, humans have made a significant impact on the environment, permanently affecting climate, the fates of plant and animal species, and even the sustainability of continuing to live on the Earth. In response, environmentalism and “green” ideals have appeared in many sectors of media and have even become a marketing phenomenon. Will we be our planet’s destroyers or its saviors, and what gives us the idea that we can accomplish either?

In this course, we will turn a critical, informed eye to the poets and writers of our history who romanticized and deified Nature, and then try to understand how humanity reached its current state of influence.

*Considering a Media Studies or Visual Communications major / minor? Try:*

**“Stupid like a Fox”: Researching and Writing about Rhetorical Antics in *The Simpsons***, by Susan Osteen; ENGL 102.C08 (TR 10:05-11:20 in MCMSTR 314; CRN: 41792)

Since its inception in 1989, *The Simpsons* television comedy has reflected American culture by drawing from and responding to current events. As *The New York Times* noted on the eve of the show’s 30th anniversary:

*The first family of Springfield has witnessed five American presidents, the dawn of the internet age, the end of the Cold War, at least two prolonged conflicts in the Middle East, terrorist attacks, natural disasters and more. And while Homer, Marge, Bart, Lisa and Maggie have stayed the same age, what the world finds funny has changed — in no small part because of the characters’ influence.*

This course uses the popular situational comedy as a lens to study rhetorical situations, learn rhetorical terms, and evaluate argumentation. Often it is Homer’s lack of rhetorical sensibilities that underscore the importance of effective discourse. Be prepared to watch an episode of *The Simpsons* for every class. Be prepared to read and to write in every class.

*Considering a History or Linguistics major / minor? Try:*

**Medieval Times: Researching and Writing about the Ancient in the Modern**, by Price Lassahn-Worrell; ENGL 102.C06 (MW 3:55-5:10 in HUMCB 302; CRN: 41830)

A hoard of knowledge and entertainment exists in Old English, Middle English, and Old Welsh literature. In these texts, we find the origins of King Arthur, dirty jokes written by Christian monks, romance and longing, and profound moral wisdom. These timeless themes are relevant to the modern day and we can trace direct connections from these old texts to modern-day entertainment, such as tv programs like *Good Omens* and *Game of Thrones*, literature such as *The Handmaid’s Tale* and *The Lord of the Rings*, video games, and music. The ancient exists today, if we desire to look.

In this class, we will use texts from early in the English language’s history in both their original language and translation to explore history, humor, romance, and virtue. Beginning with these challenging and interesting texts, we will learn the elements of effective arguments and how popular entertainment and literature continues to serve to inform us about the world and issues around us. Then, by drawing on both primary texts and modern academic, multimodal, and popular sources, we will write well-reasoned argumentative papers using critical thinking, rhetorical, and compositional strategies. By the end of the term, we will not only be confident about our ability to research and write academically, we will also know more about the historical and linguistic influences on the English language and how those influences shape our modern worldviews.