

Fall 2017 Graduate English Courses

**ENGL 600 Seminar in Verse Composition Amadon M 5:30 – 8:00pm
HUMCB 412**

In this course, students will write and revise new poems. Our goal in workshop discussions will be to discuss each poem in terms of the poet's particular aesthetic, while also encouraging each other to push our work in new directions. Toward that aim, students will write some poems in traditional verse forms and some poems that result from constraint-based and experimental prompts, and we will read and discuss essays and books of contemporary poetry from poets with a variety of aesthetic leanings. The final portion of the semester will be devoted to workshopping portfolios, and our discussion will turn to larger issues in each poet's work. Prerequisites: admission to the MFA program in poetry, or admission to another graduate English program with permission of the instructor.

**ENGL 602 Fiction Workshop: Short Story Bajo W 5:30 – 8:00 pm
GAMBRL 103A**

English 602 is an intensive workshop in the art and craft of the literary short story and the novel chapter. Writers will spend the majority of their time composing original stories or chapters and analyzing the fiction submitted by other workshop members. Our discussion will focus on each writer's aesthetic decisions and the elements of fiction, including language and motif as well as plot, character, and temporal structure. We will also consider some recently published fiction and give some general consideration to the story form—its definitions, limits, variations, and possible futures. Interspersed will be discussions concerning professionalization. Prerequisites: admission to the MFA program in fiction.

**ENGL 691 Teaching of Lit. in College Levine MW 3:55 – 5:10 pm
GAMBRL 124**

Introduction to the methods of teaching literature, with emphasis on current pedagogical practice and theory and applications of electronic media. *This course meets during the first seven weeks of term and provides supervision of graduate students teaching ENGL 101.

**ENGL 706 Special Topics in 16th & 17th Shifflett TR 2:50 – 4:05 pm
Century British Lit. & Culture HUMCB 308**

English and Continental Renaissance Literature

Study of several major Renaissance authors, some ancient authors whom they admired, and scholarship about them (using English translations whenever necessary). Texts are likely to include Cicero, *For Archias the Poet* and *Dream of Scipio*; Seneca, *Moral Letters* and *On Leisure*; Petrarch, *Coronation Oration* and *Ascent of Mt. Ventoux*; Castiglione, *Book of the Courtier*; More, *Utopia*; Erasmus, *Colloquies* and *Praise of Folly*; Tasso, *Jerusalem Delivered*; Sidney, *Apology for Poetry*; Montaigne, *Essays*; Nashe, *Unfortunate Traveller*; Shakespeare, *Hamlet*; Calderón, *Life Is a Dream*; and Milton, *Paradise Lost*. Requirements are likely to include an annotated bibliography and the choice of either a comprehensive final exam or a scholarly essay.

Please note that electronic devices (phones, laptops, e-readers) must not be operated in class (exceptions made for students with disabilities). Students will be expected to have physical copies of assigned books.

Likely Texts by Pynchon--

V.

The Crying of Lot 49

Vineland

Gravity's Rainbow

--and by DeLillo:

End Zone or Zero K

White Noise

Libra

Mao II

SEMESTER GRADE:

10% Daily Writing

20% Oral Presentation

50% Two ten-page papers

20% Final exam

**ENGL 733 Classics of Western Lit. Theory Dal Molin T 4:25 – 7:10 pm
HUMCB 315**

Cross-listed with CPLT 701

In his essay “The Archetypes of Literature” Northrop Frye argues that it is not really possible either to teach or to learn “literature.” What teachers teach, and what students learn, in “literature” courses, Frye concludes, is really the criticism of literature, because literature itself cannot be grasped except through some sort of criticism. Therefore much of the texts that will be studied in this class is comparable to that which is studied in literature courses, the difference is that the students will approach the material with a higher degree of self-consciousness.

This course underscores the complex questions at the foundation of all literature such as “what is reading?” and “what is literature?”

DURING THIS COURSE, STUDENTS:

- Will engage in intelligent discussions about the writers, works, and issues covered from the classical period through the beginning of the Enlightenment;
- Will write well-informed essays and response papers about the readings in order to apply the theories to literature and topics that coincide with the students’ personal scholarly interests.
- Will come to understand aspects of their own critical practices in light of the subject matter of the course
- Will acquire the tools to writing a successful paper abstract as well as to delivering a thought-provoking conference paper.

**ENGL 741 Special Topics in Af. Am.
Literature & Culture**

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**W 5:30 – 8:00 pm
HUMCB 308**

***Invisible Man* and American Culture**

Ralph Ellison's 1952 novel, *Invisible Man*, provides an interdisciplinary playground for scholars interested in exploring African-American literature and culture during the twentieth century. In this seminar we will use *Invisible Man* as a lens through which to view elements of folk storytelling traditions, the influence of jazz and blues, socio-economic politics and labor, and World War II-era cultural movements. Students will have the opportunity to grapple with the text's dilemma of "invisibility" and the discourse of racial and national identity from different critical perspectives including psychoanalytic, post-structuralist, feminist, and bio-critical approaches. We will also incorporate other literary works by Nella Larsen, James Weldon Johnson, and Percival Everett that feature strong intertextual relationships with Ellison's eclectic language, themes, and narrative strategies. Please note that our investigation will be reading and writing intensive. Multiple readings of Ellison's novel are essential for successful participation in this course. Students are required to read *Invisible Man* before the start of class in order to facilitate rigorous intellectual study during the semester. Assignments include an oral presentation and two drafts of a research paper (min. 15 pages).

**ENGL 748 Special Topics in Postcolonial
Literature & Culture**

**Jelly-Schapiro TR 4:25 – 5:40 pm
HUMCB 308**

Colonial Modernity

This course will examine how works of fiction and theory represent and critique the extant history of colonial power. Tracing the development of colonial forms from the advent of the New World through to the present—from Haiti to India to South Africa—our inquiry will accent the ways in which modernity has been constituted from and by the "periphery" of the capitalist world system. In our engagement with the contemporary moment, we will reflect upon the continuing resonance of colonial rationality in the time of its supposed negation—the structural contiguities between the colonial past and (post)colonial present, and the cultures of memory that evince the enduring presence of colonial histories. Proceeding in a dialectical spirit, we will remain attentive throughout to formations of cultural, intellectual, and political resistance to colonial power.

ENGL 790 Survey of Composition Studies

Hawk

**T 6:00 – 8:30 pm
HAMLTN 232**

This course will examine some historical and theoretical grounds for composition as a field and work to develop connections among historical contexts, theories or concepts, and pedagogical practices. The seminar will examine various historical perspectives and key issue areas in the field, look at a sample historical conversation in the field, and close with the development of students' own "brief histories" of a conversation centered on an issue, practice, or sub-field of composition studies. Students will write responses to the readings, three short papers, and a final project that lays out a conversation in an area of interest.

ENGL 793 Rhetorical Theory & Practice Ercolini R 6:00 – 8:30 pm
Medieval to Modern HUMCB 314

In the history of rhetoric, the “excluded middle,” so to speak, between ancient and contemporary rhetorical theory has become the site of recent scholarly revisitation and rediscovery. Works, practices, and figures in this span serve as critical nodes through which we can examine, complexify, and multiply relations between elements often presently considered distinct: rhetoric, literature, poetry, philosophy, history, and criticism. We will explore several definitions, pedagogies, practices, orientations, and developments in the history of rhetoric via a selection of important figures: St. Augustine, Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius, Geoffrey of Vinsauf, Christine de Pizan, Desiderius Erasmus, Baldessare Castiglione, Petrus Ramus, Thomas Wilson, Francis Bacon, Madeline de Scudéry, Giambattista Vico, Henry Home Lord Kames, George Campbell, Hugh Blair, Immanuel Kant, and Gilbert Austin. These thinkers’ writings provide compelling, influential, and productive perspectives on topics pertinent to rhetoric, composition, and communication, such as speech, writing, style, argumentation, eloquence, comportment, and enlightenment. Likewise, these writings mobilize ancient rhetorics in diverse ways to respond to contemporaneous exigencies, just as scholars of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have and continue to revisit thinkers from these periods to expand the repertoire of resources for current concerns. We will focus on primary texts (in standard translation, where applicable), excerpts, and secondary scholarship from eminent historians and theorists of rhetoric and the periods in question.

ENGL 803 Special Topics: Seminar in Coriale TR 10:05 – 11:20 am
Sec. 001 Literary & Cultural Studies HUMCB 308

Historicism and its Discontents

“Always historicize!” More than thirty years have passed since Frederic Jameson used this slogan in *The Political Unconscious* to describe the “moral” of his book and the shared imperative of all dialectical thinking. But the phrase continues to provoke contentious disagreements in Victorian studies, a field that is as deeply indebted to historicist thought as it is discontented by it.

This course will examine foundational works of historicist inquiry by Walter Benjamin, Frederic Jameson, and Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt before shifting to consider the writings of critics and theorists who have offered alternatives to the historical analysis of literature and culture from the nineteenth century to the present, including Friedrich Nietzsche, Hayden White, Eve Sedgwick, Rita Felski, Heather Love, and Caroline Levine. To ground our considerations of these methodological debates we will explore the varying ways that historicist and post-historicist scholars have interpreted works by Charles Dickens, Emily Brontë, John Ruskin, Joseph Conrad, and others.

ENGL 803 Special Topics: Seminar in Crocker T 6:00 – 8:30 pm
Sec. 002 Literary & Cultural Studies HUMCB 308

The Late 14th Century: Chaucer, Langland, the Pearl-poet, and their Contemporaries

This course will study the poetic florescence that emerged in Middle English during the second half of the fourteenth century. Historically, this era was one of devastation, from the spread of plague, to the tumultuous reign of Richard II, to the Hundred Years' War. We will think through how these

catastrophic historical conditions produced some of the greatest literature of the Middle Ages, including works by Chaucer, Langland, Gower, Julian of Norwich, and the Pearl-poet, among others. In so doing, we will think about what it means to read these texts in what has been described as a “post-historicist” moment in medieval studies. How might newer methodologies, including affect-, gender- and queer-theory, along with new materialisms as well as anti-imperialist and anti-racist methodologies, account for the literary achievements of this era?

**ENGL 804 Special Topics: Seminar in
Theory & Critical Methods**

**Muckelbauer M 5:30 – 8:00 pm
HUMCB 308**

The work of English Departments has changed significantly over the last few decades, due in no small part to the intervention of what is sometimes called Literary Theory, Cultural Theory, or Critical Theory. As a result, theory is also one of the most polarizing focal points in today’s academy. But whether you love it, hate it, fear it, or just have no concrete idea what “it” is, it’s nearly impossible today to become a humanities scholar without becoming steeped in some version of theory. This course is designed as a survey of the various strains of theory that have circulated through English Departments in the last 30 years. I have organized the course around theoretical questions (What is “Literature”? What is “subjectivity” and why does it matter? What does “meaning” mean?); this approach will allow us to examine the many different “-isms” through which scholars have responded to such questions (new criticism, postmodernism, reader-response theory, feminism, queer theory, Marxism, post-structuralism, deconstruction, postcolonialism, etc.). We will conclude the course by focusing on some contemporary theoretical directions, including new materialisms, the concept of affect, and the turn to ethics.