Courses of Instruction

English

Elizabeth Muther, Department Chair, fall semester
Peter Coviello*, Department Chair, spring semester
Barbara Olmstead, Department Coordinator

Professors: David Collings, Celeste Goodridge, Marilyn Reizbaum, William C. Watterson**
Associate Professors: Aviva Briefel, Peter Coviello*, Ann Louise Kibbie, Aaron Kitch, Elizabeth Muther
Assistant Professors: Tess Chakkalakal (Africana Studies), Mary Agnes Edsall, Guy Mark Foster†, Belinda Kong (Asian Studies)
Writer in Residence: Anthony E. Walton
Visiting Faculty: Jane Brox, P. Gabrielle Foreman, Terri Nickel, Hilary Thompson

Requirements for the Major in English and American Literature
The major requires a minimum of ten courses. Each student must take one first-year seminar (English 10–29) or introductory course (English 104–110), either of which will serve as a prerequisite to further study in the major. At least three of the ten courses must be chosen from offerings in British and Irish literature before 1800. These are courses in Old English and Medieval literature, Renaissance literature, and the literature of the Restoration and the Eighteenth Century. The individual courses that satisfy this requirement are identified by a note in the course description. Only one of these three courses may be a Shakespeare drama course, and only one may be a Chaucer course. Only one transfer course may count toward this requirement. At least one of the ten courses must be chosen from offerings in literature of the Americas. The individual courses that satisfy this requirement are identified by a note in the course description. Also, each student must take at least one advanced seminar in the department (any 300-level English course). Students may, when appropriate, also count the advanced seminar toward one of the requirements listed above. Transfer credits will not count for the advanced seminar requirement. The remaining courses may be selected from the foregoing and/or first-year seminars; Introductory or Advanced Creative Writing; 200 and/or 300 Literary Analysis; Independent Study; and 401–402 (Advanced Independent Study/Honors). No more than three courses may come from the department’s roster of first-year seminars and 100-level courses; no more than one creative writing course will count toward the major. As one of two courses outside the department, one upper-level course in film studies may be counted toward the major; courses in expository writing, journalism, and communication are not eligible for major credit. Credit toward the major for advanced literature courses in another language, provided that the works are read in that language, must be arranged with the chair.
Majors who are candidates for honors must write an honors essay and take an oral examination in the spring of their senior year.

Interdisciplinary Major
The department participates in an interdisciplinary major in English and Theater. See page 210.
Requirements for the Minor in English and American Literature
The minor requires five courses in the department, including one first-year seminar (English 10–29) or introductory course (English 104–110). At least three of the remaining four courses must be numbered 200 or higher. No more than one creative writing course may count toward the minor, and no courses in expository writing, film, communication, or journalism will count. Students may not apply transfer credits to the minor.

First-Year Seminars in English Composition and Literature
These courses are open to first-year students. The first-year English seminars are numbered 10–19 in the fall; 20–29 in the spring. Usually there are not enough openings in the fall for all first-year students who want an English seminar. First-year students who cannot get into a seminar in the fall are given priority in the spring. The main purpose of the first-year seminars (no matter what the topic or reading list) is to give first-year students extensive practice in reading and writing analytically. Each seminar is normally limited to sixteen students and includes discussion, outside reading, frequent papers, and individual conferences on writing problems. For a full description of first-year seminars, see pages 149–60.

10c. Modern American Poets. Fall 2009. CELESTE GOORIDGE.
11c. Slavery and the Literary Imagination. Fall 2009. TESS CHAKKALAKAL.
   (Same as Africana Studies 11.)
12c. Stoic Heroes and Disenchanted Knights. Fall 2009. MARY AGNES EDSALL.
13c. Hawthorne. Fall 2009. WILLIAM WATTERSON.
14c. Shanghai Imagined. Fall 2009. BELINDA KONG.
   (Same as Asian Studies 17.)
15c. Utopian Aesthetics. Fall 2009. AARON KITCH.
16c. Alternative Intelligences. Fall 2009. HILARY THOMPSON.
20c. Ghosts. Spring 2010. AVIVA BRIEFEL.
21c. Trolls, Frogs, and Princesses: Fairy Tales and Retellings. Spring 2010. ELIZABETH MUTH.
22c. Literature of the Southern United States. Spring 2010. CELESTE GOORIDGE.
23c. Addictions, Obsessions, Manias. Spring 2010. TERRI NICKEL.

Introductory Courses in Literature
104–110. Primarily intended for first- and second-year students, and for juniors and seniors with no prior experience in college literature courses. (Specific content and focus of each course will vary with the instructor.)

104c. From Page to Screen: Film Adaptation and Narrative. Fall 2009. AVIVA BRIEFEL.
   Explores the topic of “adaptation,” specifically, the ways in which cinematic texts transform literary narratives into visual forms. Begins with the premise that every adaptation is an interpretation, a rewriting/rethinking of an original text that offers an analysis of that text. Central to class discussions is close attention to the differences and similarities in the ways in which written and visual texts approach narratives, the means through which each medium constructs and positions its audience, and the types of critical discourses that emerge...
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around literature and film. May include works by Philip K. Dick, Charles Dickens, Howard Hawks, Alfred Hitchcock, Stanley Kubrick, David Lean, Anita Loos, Vladimir Nabokov, and Ridley Scott.

    Aims to understand poetry’s varied workings, considering, most extensively, the basic materials—words, lines, metaphors, sentences—from which poems have traditionally been assembled. By studying closely the components of meter, diction, syntax and line, rhyme, and figure—in essence, how poems work—aims to see more clearly into the ends poems work for: meaning, rhapsody, transport, etc.

    Traces the development of dramatic form, character, and style from classical Greece through the Renaissance and Enlightenment to contemporary America and Africa. Explores the evolution of plot design, with special attention to the politics of playing, the shifting strategies of representing human agency, and contemporary relationships between the theater and a variety of forms of mass media. Authors may include Sophocles, Aristophanes, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Dryden, Ibsen, Wilde, Beckett, Mamet, and Churchill. (Same as Theater 106.)

[108c. Introduction to Black Women’s Literature. (Same as Africana Studies 108 and Gender and Women’s Studies 104.)]

    Considers whether works of literature encode modes of social power, articulate styles of cultural entitlement, revise norms of behavior from the perspective of leisure, create satisfying narrative solutions to urban conflict, and absorb the difficulties of social life into the workings of individual consciousness. Do literary works reinforce fiction of social power, contest them, or both? Examines the relationship between ideology and literary form, placing both in the context of transformations in English culture from the early eighteenth through the early twentieth centuries. Discusses writings by Defoe, Pope, Wordsworth, Austen, Dickens, and Woolf alongside critical and interpretive essays.

Courses in Composition

    Practice in developing the skills needed to write and revise college-level expository essays. Explores the close relationship between critical reading and writing. Assignment sequences and different modes of analysis and response enable students to write fully developed expository essays. Does not count toward the major or minor in English.

Introductory Courses in Creative Writing

    Intensive study of the writing of poetry through the workshop method. Students are expected to write in free verse and in form, and to read deeply from an assigned list of poets.
    Prerequisite: Permission of the instructor.

[127c. Nonfiction Literary Narrative. Formerly English 68.]

    Explores fiction and creative nonfiction with an emphasis on the elements of structure, voice, and style. Students read and discuss published fiction and nonfiction and write their own narratives. Students expected to participate fully in workshop discussions and critiques.
    Prerequisite: Permission of the instructor.
Advanced Courses in Creative Writing


Intended for students with a demonstrated interest in environmental studies, as an introduction to several modes of storytelling, which communicate ideas, historical narratives, personal experiences, and scientific and social issues in this increasingly important area of study and concern. Explores various techniques, challenges, and pleasures of storytelling, and examines some of the demands and responsibilities involved in the conveyance of different types of information with clarity and accuracy in nonfiction narrative. Engages student writing through the workshop method, and includes study of several texts, including The Control of Nature, Cadillac Desert, Living Downstream, and Field Notes from a Catastrophe. (Same as Environmental Studies 216.)

Prerequisite: Permission of the instructor.


An examination of sense of place through reading and creative writing. Students will read authors who write personally about place and also bring historical, scientific, or sociological perspectives to their work, such as Aldo Leopold, Rachel Carson, James Baldwin, Yi-Fu Tuan, and Elizabeth Bishop. Students will write both personal essays and essays centered on direct observation and reflection on the history and ecology of a particular place. Workshop discussion, critiques, and revision are an integral part. (Same as Environmental Studies 217.)

Prerequisite: Permission of the instructor.

Intermediate Courses in English and American Literature

These seminars are open to both majors and non-majors—and are normally limited to sixteen students. They provide opportunities for students to focus intensively on critical reading and writing skills and to learn advanced research methods. Each seminar explores a unique topic while introducing students to literary theory and other critical paradigms and tools of literary studies.


Examines the development of literary Realism in English letters. Considers the wider movement in the arts, in particular the visual arts, taking into account, in photography, for example, the scientific propositions that underlie certain theories of the “real” or “objective reality.” Touches on theoretical debates surrounding the genre. Authors may include Ruskin, Dickens, Hardy, Peter Brooks, Virginia Woolf, Sherwood Anderson, Susan Sontag, Erich Auerbach, Lorrie Moore, and Frederick Wiseman.

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English.


Introduces students to the controversial history of reader responses to Harriet Beecher Stowe’s 1852 antislavery novel, Uncle Tom’s Cabin. Students engage with various theoretical approaches—reader response theory, feminist, African Americanist, and historicist—to the novel, then turn to the novel itself and produce their own literary interpretation. In order to do so, students examine the conditions of the novel’s original production. By visiting various historic locations, the Stowe House on Federal Street, the First Parish Church on Maine Street, Special Collections of the Hawthorne-Longfellow Library, students compare the
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novel’s original historical context to the history that the novel produced. Aside from reading Stowe’s antislavery fiction, students also read works produced with and against *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. (Same as *Africana Studies 284*.)

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English or Africana studies.

Advanced Courses in English and American Literature

**201c. Chaucer: The Canterbury Tales.** Every other year. Spring 2010. **Mary Agnes Edsall.**

Learn Middle English and enjoy and analyze a wide selection of the stories told on Chaucer’s great literary road trip. Includes a focus on medieval history, material culture, literary backgrounds, social codes, and social conflicts. Attention given to trends in Chaucer studies.

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English.

*Note:* This course fulfills the pre-1800 literature requirement for English majors.

**203c. Topics in Medieval Literature: Trilingual England.** Every other year. Spring 2011. **Mary Agnes Edsall.**

An introduction to the literature written in medieval England, with a focus on orality and literacy, and on the multilingualism of English culture in the Middle Ages. The world of medieval Europe was, at the least, bilingual, for Latin was the language of the Church and of the educated; moreover, in post-Norman England, French became the language of social and political power. Examines how different languages, discourses, and codes functioned in medieval English culture and considers works that depict exchanges between different cultures. Readings may include Bede, *The Wanderer*, *The Dream of the Rood*, *The Song of Roland*, *The Play of Adam*, Chrétien de Troyes, Marie de France, medieval lyrics and fabliaux, Chaucer, *Mankind*.

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English.

*Note:* This course fulfills the pre-1800 literature requirement for English majors.

**204c. Tolkien’s Middle Ages.** Every other year. Fall 2009. **Mary Agnes Edsall.**

A study of the philological, historical, and literary backgrounds of J. R. R. Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings*. While some attention is given to major and minor works by Tolkien, as well as to Peter Jackson’s films, the main focus of the course is on the nineteenth-century theories of philology and mythology that influenced Tolkien; on Anglo-Saxon and Middle English language, literature, and culture; as well as on Tolkien’s essays, especially those on *Beowulf* and on *Faire*. Presumes that students have a real familiarity with the text (as opposed to the film version) of LOTR. Medieval texts may include Snorri Sturluson’s *Gylfaginning*, *The Kalevala*, *The Battle of Maldon*, *Beowulf*, *Lanval*, *Sir Orfeo*, and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English.

*Note:* This course fulfills the pre-1800 literature requirement for English majors.

**210c. Shakespeare’s Comedies and Romances.** Every other year. Fall 2009. **William Watterson.**

Examines *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Twelfth Night*, *As You Like It*, *The Winter’s Tale*, and *The Tempest* in light of Renaissance genre theory. (Same as Theater 210.)

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English.

*Note:* This course fulfills the pre-1800 literature requirement for English majors.

**[211c. Shakespeare’s Tragedies and Roman Plays.](#)** (Same as Theater 211.)

**[212c. Shakespeare’s History Plays.](#)** (Same as Theater 212.)
214c - VPA. Playwriting. Spring 2011. ROGER BECHTEL.

A writing workshop for contemporary performance that includes introductory exercises in writing dialogue, scenes, and solo performance texts, then moves to the writing (and rewriting) of a short play. Students read plays and performance scripts, considering how writers use image, action, speech, and silence; how they structure plays and performance pieces; and how they approach character and plot. (Same as Theater 260.)

Prerequisite: One 100-level course in theater or dance or permission of the instructor.

[223c - VPA. English Renaissance Drama. (Same as Theater 223.)]


Reconsiders the notoriously “white” English Renaissance in light of recent literary and cultural scholarship on race and cultural difference. Explores key strategies of authors from Philip Sidney to Aphra Behn in representing ethnic, religious, and cultural otherness, as well as an emergent discourse of racial identity. Topics include England’s role in the nascent African slave trade, the poetic fetishization of the exotic, and transnational discourses of “discovery” that raised new questions about modes of English writing. Authors include Sidney, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Aphra Behn, Kim Hall, Gary Taylor, and bell hooks. (Same as Africana Studies 225.)

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English or Africana studies.

Note: This course fulfills the pre-1800 literature requirement for English majors.

229c. Milton. Every other year. Fall 2009. ANN KIBBIE.

A critical study of Milton’s major works in poetry and prose, with special emphasis on Paradise Lost.

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English.

Note: This course fulfills the pre-1800 literature requirement for English majors.

230c. Theater and Theatricality in the Restoration and the Eighteenth Century. Every other year. Spring 2011. ANN KIBBIE.

An overview of the development of the theater from the reopening of the playhouses in 1660 to the end of the eighteenth century, with special emphasis on the emergence of new dramatic modes such as Restoration comedy, heroic tragedy, “she-tragedy,” sentimental comedy, and opera. Other topics include the legacy of Puritan anxieties about theatricality; the introduction of actresses on the professional stage; adaptations of Shakespeare on the Restoration and eighteenth-century stage; other sites of public performance, such as the masquerade and the scaffold; and the representation of theatricality in the eighteenth-century novel. (Same as Theater 230.)

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English.

Note: This course fulfills the pre-1800 literature requirement for English majors.


Explores the representation of private life in the poetry and non-fiction prose of the period (including diaries, private journals, public and private letters, and biographical sketches), with an emphasis on the emergence of the modern author. Works include selections from the diary of Samuel Pepys, the autobiographical poetry of Alexander Pope, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu’s travel letters, Lord Chesterfield’s letters of advice to his illegitimate son, the autobiography of Olaudah Equiano, selections from Samuel Johnson’s Lives of the English Poets, and James Boswell’s London Journal.

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English.

Note: This course fulfills the pre-1800 literature requirement for English majors.
232c. **Topics in the Eighteenth-Century Novel.** Every other year. Fall 2010. **ANN KIBBIE.**

An introduction to English prose fiction of the eighteenth century through the examination of a specific topic shared by a variety of canonical and non-canonical texts.

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English.

*Note:* This course fulfills the pre-1800 literature requirement for English majors.

235c. **Radical Sensibility.** Fall 2009. **DAVID COLLINGS.**

Examines the rise of and reactions to the literature of radical sensibility in the wake of the French Revolution. Focuses upon such topics as apocalyptic lyricism, anarchism, non-violent revolution, and the critique of marriage, family, male privilege, and patriarchal religious belief, as well as the defense of tradition, attacks on radical thinking, and the depiction of revolution as monstrosity. Discusses poetic experimentation, innovations in the English novel, and the intersections between political writing and the Gothic. Authors may include Burke, Paine, Blake, Wollstonecraft, Godwin, Opie, Percy Shelley, and Mary Shelley. (Same as Gender and Women's Studies 240.)

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English or gender and women's studies.

243c. **Victorian Genders.** Every other year. Spring 2010. **AVIVA BRIEDEL.**

Investigates the literary and cultural construction of gender in Victorian England. Of central concern are fantasies of “ideal” femininity and masculinity, representations of unconventional gender roles and sexualities, and the dynamic relationship between literary genres and gender ideologies of the period. Authors may include Charlotte Brontë, Freud, Gissing, Hardy, Rider Haggard, Christina Rossetti, Ruskin, Schreiner, Tennyson, and Wilde. (Same as Gay and Lesbian Studies 243 and Gender and Women’s Studies 239.)

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English or gender and women’s studies.

245c. **Modernism/Modernity.** Every other year. Fall 2010. **MARILYN REIZBAUM.**

Examines the cruxes of the “modern,” and the term’s shift into a conceptual category rather than a temporal designation. Although not confined to a particular national or generic rubric, takes British works as a focus. Organized by movements or critical formations of the modern, i.e., modernisms, psychoanalysis, postmodernism, cultural critique. Readings of critical literature in conjunction with primary texts. Authors/directors/works may include T. S. Eliot, Joyce’s *Dubliners*, Lawrence’s *Sons and Lovers*, Sontag’s *On Photography*, W. G. Sebald’s *The Natural History of Destruction*, Ian McEwen’s *Enduring Love*, Stevie Smith, Kureishi’s *My Son the Fanatic*, and Coetzee’s *Disgrace*. (Same as Gay and Lesbian Studies 245 and Gender and Women’s Studies 247.)

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English or gender and women’s studies.

246c. **Drama and Performance in the Twentieth Century and Beyond.** Fall 2009. **MARILYN REIZBAUM.**

Examines dramatic trends of the century, ranging from the social realism of Ibsen to the performance art of Laurie Anderson. Traverses national and literary traditions and demonstrates that work in translation like that of Ibsen or Brecht has a place in the body of dramatic literature in English. Discusses such topics as dramatic translation (Liz Lochhead’s translation of Molière’s *Tartuffe*); epic theater and its millennial counterpart (Bertold Brecht, Tony Kushner, Caryl Churchill); political drama (Frank McGuinness, Athol Fugard); the “nihilism” of absurdist drama (Samuel Beckett); the “low” form of the musical (as presented,
for example, by Woody Allen); and the relationship of dance to theater (Henrik Ibsen, Ntozake Shange, *Stomp*, Enda Walsh). Readings staged. Formerly English 262 (same as Gender and Women’s Studies 262 and Theater 262). (Same as Gender and Women’s Studies 262 and Theater 246.)

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English or gender and women’s studies.

[247c. The Irish Story. Formerly English 264.]  

248c. The Modern Novel. Every other year. Spring 2011. MARILYN REIZBAUM.  
A study of the modern impulse in the novel genre in English. Considers origins of the modern novel and developments such as modernism, postmodernism, realism, formalism, impressionism, the rise of short fiction. Focuses on individual or groups of authors and takes into account theories of the novel, narrative theory, critical contexts. Topics shift and may include Philip Roth, Henry Roth, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, Rebecca West, Dorothy Richardson, Lorrie Moore, Ford Madox Ford, J. M. Coetzee, W. G. Sebald, F. Scott Fitzgerald, John Banville, Ian Watt, Peter Brook, and Franco Moretti. Formerly English 269.  
Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English.

[250c. Early American Literature. Every other year. Fall 2010. PETER COVIELLO.  
A study of the writing produced in colonial, revolutionary, and post-revolutionary America. Prominent concerns are the Puritan covenant, nationalism, democracy and consensus, revolutionary rupture, and the evolving social meanings of gender and of race. Readings may include Bradstreet, Edwards, Franklin, Wheatley, Brockden Brown, Irving, and Cooper.  
Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English.  
Note: This course fulfills the literature of the Americas requirement for English majors.

251c. The American Renaissance. Every other year. Spring 2011. PETER COVIELLO.  
Considers the extraordinary quickening of American writing in the years before the Civil War. Of central concern are the different visions of “America” these texts propose. Authors may include Emerson, Poe, Douglass, Hawthorne, Jacobs, Melville, Stowe, Dickinson, and Whitman.  
Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English.  
Note: This course fulfills the literature of the Americas requirement for English majors.

Homosexuality and its conceptual twin, heterosexuality, are surprisingly late coinages. So what was sex like before such concepts organized the sphere of intimate life in America? Was it a set of bodily practices? An aspect of a person’s identity? Was sexuality something an individual could be said to possess? What forms of contact, invest attachment, or imagination could even be counted as sex, and why? Authors may include Whitman, Thoreau, Jewett, Melville, Hawthorne, James, Douglas, Dickinson, and Joseph Smith. (Same as Gay and Lesbian Studies 252 and Gender and Women’s Studies 252.)  
Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English.  
Note: This course fulfills the literature of the Americas requirement for English majors.

Authors may include Wharton, Cather, Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Nella Larsen, and Faulkner. Considers how these authors both reflect and subvert the dominant ideologies of the period. Formerly English 272.  
Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English.  
Note: This course fulfills the literature of the Americas requirement for English majors.

Readings of mid-century American poets followed by late century ones. Considers the validity of the term “confessional” to describe some of this poetry and examine performativity, autobiography, biography, and the mixing of high and low culture in this work. Authors may include Lowell, Bishop, Plath, Gluck, Doty, and Clampil.

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English.

Note: This course fulfills the literature of the Americas requirement for English majors.

255c. Contemporary Literature and Culture in English: Cold War Literature and Culture. Every other year. Spring 2010. CELESTE GOODRIDGE.

Explores different topics across genres in contemporary, post-1945 literature and culture in English. Focuses on how the literature and culture of this period both reflects and subverts the dominant ideologies of the period. Authors may include Capote, Salinger, Plath, Highsmith, Baldwin, Richard Yates, McCarthy, Albee, and Williams. Research projects required. (Same as Gay and Lesbian Studies 255.)

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English.

Note: This course fulfills the literature of the Americas requirement for English majors.

[257c. Classic Twentieth-Century LGBT Cultural Texts. (Same as Gay and Lesbian Studies 257 and Gender and Women’s Studies 257.)]

258c - ESD. Reconstructing the Nation. Every other year. Spring 2010. TESS CHAKKALAKAL.

Introduces students to American literature written between 1865 and 1910. Exploring a period marked by the end of the Civil War, Reconstruction, the “New” South, and Jim Crow, students engage with these historical developments through a reading of a wide range of novels, short stories, poems, and plays that take up political tensions between the North and South as well as questions of regional, racial, and national identity. Works by George Washington Cable, Charles Chesnutt, Lydia Maria Child, Sarah Orne Jewett, Mark Twain, Sutton E. Griggs, Emily Dickinson, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Henry James, Theodore Dreiser, and Frank Norris constitute the “major” literary voices of the period, but also examines a number of “minor” works that are similarly, but perhaps more narrowly, concerned with questions of race and nation. (Same as Africana Studies 258.)

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English or Africana studies.

Note: This course fulfills the literature of the Americas requirement for English majors.

[260c. African American Fiction: (Re)Writing Black Masculinities. (Same as Africana Studies 260 and Gender and Women’s Studies 260.)]

261c. African American Poetry. Every other year. Fall 2009. ELIZABETH MUTHER.

African American poetry as counter-memory—from Wheatley to the present—with a focus on oral traditions, activist literary discourses, trauma and healing, and productive communities. Special emphasis on the past century: dialect and masking; the Harlem Renaissance; Brown, Brooks, and Hayden at mid-century; the Black Arts Movement; black feminism; and contemporary voices. (Same as Africana Studies 261.)

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English or Africana studies.

Note: This course fulfills the literature of the Americas requirement for English majors.

[263c. Staging Blackness. (Same as Africana Studies 263.)]

[266c. Topics in African American Literature: The Harlem Renaissance. (Same as Africana Studies 266.)]
270c. **African American Fiction: Childhood and Adolescence.** Spring 2010. **Elizabeth Muther.**

A century of short stories, novels, and graphic narratives by African American writers that engage the lives of children and adolescents, as well as narratives written explicitly for young readers. Theorizes historical constructions of African American childhood from the Harlem Renaissance era to the present. Examines the strong tradition of child-narrated fiction for teens and adults from the 1960s and 1970s by such writers as Ernest Gaines, Toni Morrison, Toni Cade Bambara, Louise Meriwether, and Ann Petry. Considers the emergence of a conscious Black Arts aesthetic in children’s literature and its relationship to the flowering of multicultural children’s literature in recent decades. Formerly **English 275** (same as Africana Studies 275). (Same as Africana Studies 270.)

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English or Africana studies.

*Note:* This course fulfills the literature of the Americas requirement for English majors.

271c - **ESD. Introduction to Asian American Literature.** Fall 2009. **Belinda Kong.**

An introduction not only to the writings of Asian America, but also to the historical development of Asian American literature as a field of discussion, study, and debate. Begins by focusing on a seminal moment in the formation of this field: the critical controversy sparked by the publication of Maxine Hong Kingston’s *The Woman Warrior* (1976). Then turns to earlier classics as well as more recent fiction and questions of how to reconceive Asian American literature in light of these works. In addition to Kingston, authors may include Amy Tan, David Henry Hwang, Frank Chin, John Okada, Jade Snow Wong, Carlos Bulosan, Chang-rae Lee, and Jhumpa Lahiri, Susan Choi, Lan Cao, and Lê thê diem thúy. Formerly **English 284.** (Same as Asian Studies 213.)

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English or one course in Asian studies.

*Note:* This course fulfills the literature of the Americas requirement for English majors.

273c - **ESD. IP. Writing China from Afar.** Spring 2010. **Belinda Kong.**

The telling of a nation’s history is often the concern not only of historical writings but also literary ones. Examines three shaping moments of twentieth-century China: the Sino-Japanese War (1937–45), the Cultural Revolution (1966–76), and the 1989 Tiananmen democracy movement and massacre. Focuses specifically on contemporary literature by authors born and raised in China but since dispersed into a western diaspora. Critical issues include language choice and the role of translation; the truth claims of fiction vs. memoir; the relationship between history, literature, and the cultural politics of diasporic representations of origin; and the figure of the contemporary intellectual-writer vis-à-vis totalitarian violence. Authors may include Eileen Chang (Zhang Ailing), Shan Sa, Dai Sijie, Hong Ying, Yan Geling, Zheng Yi, Yiyun Li, Gao Xingjian, Ha Jin, Annie Wang, and Ma Jian. Formerly **English 283.** (Same as Asian Studies 212.)

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English or one course in Asian studies.

[274c - **ESD. IP. Asian Diaspora Literature of World War II.** (Same as Asian Studies 216.)]

[278c - **VPA. Of Comics and Culture.**]

279c - **ESD. IP. Asian America’s Aging.** Every other year. Spring 2010. **Belinda Kong.**

Asian American literature is dominated by voices of youth: the child narrator and the *bildungsroman* genre have long been used by writers to tell not only personal coming-of-age stories but also that of Asian America itself, as a relative newcomer into the American nation-
state and its cultural landscape. Focuses instead on the latecoming figure of the aged narrator in recent Asian American fiction, who constellates themes of dislocation and reclamation, memory, and the body rather than those of maturation and heritage. Explores old age as a vehicle for engaging contemporary issues of globalization and diaspora: historical trauma and cultural memory; life and biopolitics. Examines these works within the paradigm of transnational Asian America, which goes beyond the United States as geographical frame to shed light on the new diasporic identities and cultural politics emerging from twentieth-century global transits. (Same as Asian Studies 224.)

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English or Asian studies.

Note: This course fulfills the literature of the Americas requirement for English majors.

280c - ESD, IP. The Animal and the Human. Spring 2010. HILARY THOMPSON.

Considers the changing philosophical and political significance of representations of the animal and of human/animal interactions in modern and contemporary literature. Focuses on global fiction and investigates the role of the animal in the theories and philosophies of psychoanalysis, biopolitics, shamanism, and animism.

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English.

282c. Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory. Spring 2010. AARON KITCH.

Explores a range of critical methodologies that enhance our understanding of literature and allow us to question some presumptions about literary authorship, textual production, and the reading experience. Examines fundamental relations between subject and object, the sensuous and the conceptual, and the universal and particular. Without privileging any particular critical paradigm, engages modes of interpretation associated with Marxism, feminism, psychoanalysis, poststructuralism, and cultural studies. Representative literary works read, less to label them as responsive to one or another theoretical paradigm than to consider how they “speak theory” in their own right. Authors include Aristotle, Shakespeare, Marx, Freud, Derrida, Foucault, Woolf, and Agamben.

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English, Africana studies, or gender and women’s studies; or Gay and Lesbian Studies 201.

291c–294c. Intermediate Independent Study in English. The Department.


English 300-level courses are advanced seminars; students who take them are normally English majors. Their content and perspective varies—the emphasis may be thematic, historical, generic, biographical, etc. All require extensive reading in primary and collateral materials.

314c. Talking about Yourself in the Middle Ages. Spring 2010. MARY EDSALL.

Examines a variety of autobiographical, biographical, and literary texts from Late Antiquity to the late Middle Ages. Considers how narrative genres and social constructions shaped how people wrote about life experience. Themes structuring discussion and research will include the impacts of orality and literacy on character depiction, self-fashioning through reading and memory practices, medieval principles of psychology, and the question of the discovery of the individual. Texts may include Augustine’s Confessions, The Memoirs of Guibert of Nogent, The Tristan Legend, the life of Saint Francis of Assisi, Christine de Pizan’s Vision, Richard Rolle’s Fire of Love, Chaucer’s House of Fame, the Showings of Julian of Norwich, and The Book of Margery Kempe.

Prerequisite: One 200-level course in English or permission of the instructor.

Note: This course fulfills the pre-1800 literature requirement for English majors.

[316c. Shakespeare’s Sonnets. (Same as Gay and Lesbian Studies 316.)]

An in-depth study of Wilde’s fiction, poetry, drama, and critical essays within the context of fin-de-siècle British culture. Topics include decadence, aestheticism, dandyism, queer performance, and the Wilde trials. Also examines Wilde’s position within current literary criticism. (Same as Gay and Lesbian Studies 318.)

Prerequisite: One 200-level course in English or gay and lesbian studies, or permission of the instructor.

[321c. Medieval Drama. (Same as Religion 321.)]


Explores the semiotics of racial representation in African American literature and culture over the past century, focusing in particular on comics and graphic narratives. Considers the problems of minstrelsy, masking, and caricature—as well as instruments of militant image-making, in both literary and visual forms. Of special interest will be modernist resistance languages of the Harlem Renaissance; collage as a mid-century metaphor for invisibility and black subjectivity; and contemporary images—comics, narratives, and illustrations—that introduce alternative socio-political allegories. (Same as Africana Studies 322.)

Prerequisite: One 200-level course in English or Africana studies, or permission of the instructor.

Note: This course fulfills the literature of the Americas requirement for English majors.


An examination of James Joyce’s signal contributions to modern writing and critical theories. Reading includes the major works (Dubliners, Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Ulysses), essays by Joyce, and writings by others who testify to the Joyce mystique: e.g., Oliver St. John Gogarty, T. S. Eliot, Virginia Woolf, Jacques Derrida, Seamus Heaney, Maud Ellmann.

Prerequisite: One 200-level course in English or permission of the instructor.


From their very beginnings, Black American newspapers have concerned themselves not only with resistance movements within the United States but also with revolts and revolutions throughout the Black Diaspora. Examines a short story, a novella, and a novel all published in important and popular Black papers. Interdisciplinary focus allows easy search of newspaper databases for African American coverage of the British and French Caribbean, Cuba and Latin America, West and East Africa, and the Italian invasion of the last remaining independent nation, Ethiopia, during its war against colonization—all while examining fiction serialized in the Black press. One-half credit. (Same as Africana Studies 330.)

Note: This course will not count for credit toward the major.


We tend to focus on the people who populate literary texts, but literature is also filled with significant things: money; tools; weapons; clothing; furniture; toys; portraits; jewels; body parts that, once detached from their “owners,” have become mere objects, such as hair and amputated limbs; and those beings that are sentient but non-human, and therefore resist easy classification, animals. Explores the role of things, and the aesthetic, legal, and philosophical questions they raise, in a variety of literary texts, including Daniel Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe, Jonathan Swift’s Gulliver’s Travels, Alexander Pope’s The Rape of the Lock, and Charles Dickens’ Our Mutual Friend.

Prerequisite: One 200-level course in English or permission of the instructor.

Note: This course fulfills the pre-1800 literature requirement for English majors.
335c. Living in the Ruins. Spring 2010. DAVID COLLINGS.
Examines literature, primarily written after 1945, that depicts life in a world that is enduring, or has endured, a military, cultural, moral, or environmental disaster (such as global climate change). Discusses what transpires when time continues to pass but the future does not arrive, when the world renews itself only in marginal or unsuspected ways. Considers themes such as generalized and muted trauma; the possibilities of accepting or resisting global disarray; the estrangement of home or familiar histories; the radical disorientation of the self; and the adequacy of established literary genres to capture key themes. Discusses literary texts by such authors as Beckett, Levi, Abe, Dick, Ballard, Robinson, Coetzee, Sebald, Butler, and Boyle; movies such as Children of Men; and theoretical and critical writings on course themes. (Same as Environmental Studies 335.)
Prerequisite: One 200-level course in English or permission of the instructor.

338c. Sex and the Word: Freud, Psychoanalysis, American Literature. Spring 2010. PETER COVIELLO.
An examination of one of the great theorists of intimacy and its vexations, and of the provision his works make—or might make—for the study of literature. Aims not to produce successfully “Freudian” readings of given texts, or to assign one or another of Freud’s categories of pathology to fictional characters, but to test what sort of purchase Freud’s varied investigations—of language and desire, of loss and transformation, and especially of the intricate relations of gender and sexuality to one another, and to the very experience of selfhood—might afford us in our encounter with the pleasures and problems of modern fiction. Authors will include Freud and many of his critics, as well as Henry James, Nella Larsen, Willa Cather, James Baldwin, and others. (Same as Gay and Lesbian Studies 338.)
Prerequisite: One 200-level course in English or permission of the instructor.
Note: This course fulfills the literature of the Americas requirement for English majors.

401c–404c. Advanced Independent Study and Honors in English. THE DEPARTMENT.