English

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Lydia McDermott, Rhetoric, Writing and Public Discourse

The courses in English provide opportunity for the extensive and intensive study of literature for its aesthetic interest and value and for its historical and general cultural significance. English courses also provide instruction and practice in writing: some in scholarly and critical writing, others in creative writing.

Learning Outcomes – English Major

- **Major-Specific Areas of Knowledge**
  - Upon graduating, English majors will be able to perform sophisticated close readings of literary texts, applying genre-specific literary terminology in demonstrating their understanding of the relationship between form and content. They will be able to demonstrate their familiarity with various approaches to literary studies, to identify the effects of literary allusions, and to investigate the relationship between a text and the culture in which it was written.

- **Accessing Academic Community/Resources**
  - They will be able to make good use of library resources and to read and explore literary texts independently.

- **Critical Thinking**
  - They will have developed sensitivity to literary aesthetics and style and will be able to analyze texts and discourses in a variety of media—written, performed, visual, and oral; they will be able to synthesize a broad range of information bearing upon the interpretation of these discourses.

- **Communication**
  - They will be able to think, speak, and write intelligently about what texts do in their various functions. They will speak and write clearly, confidently, persuasively, and with nuance.

- **Research Experience**
  - They will be capable of writing an extended literary analysis paper supported by primary and secondary research. They will be capable of identifying literary questions, posing an hypothesis about how the question might be answered, and researching the question through the analysis of primary sources and synthesis of secondary sources.

**Distribution:** Courses completed in English apply to the humanities distribution area, with the following exceptions: Humanities or Cultural Pluralism: 245, 246, 270, 376, and other courses as specified below. Fine Arts: 150, 250, 251, 252, 320, 321, 322, and 389

**Total credit requirements for the English major:** 36

**The English major:**
- 36 Credits
- Required Courses
  - English 290 and 491
• One elective at the 100- or 200-level chosen from 176-179, 200, 230-233, 245, 246, 250-252, or 270
• At least three other 200- or 300-level courses meeting specific requirements
  ▪ One early period British literature course, chosen from English 335, 336, 337, 338, 350, or 357
  ▪ One course in American literature, chosen from 347, 348, or 349
  ▪ One course in underrepresented literatures, chosen from 245, 246, 270, 376, or another course identified as counting in this category
• Three electives at the 300- or 400-level
  ▪ One of the electives may, with the written approval of the English Department, be a literature course at the 300-level or higher offered by another department on campus

• Other notes
  o No course may satisfy more than one requirement
  o No more than two Creative Writing courses may be counted toward the major
  o No more than 12 credits earned in off-campus programs, transfer credits, credits from courses offered by other Whitman departments, or cross-listed courses may be used to satisfy major requirements
  o Courses used to satisfy requirements in other majors or minors cannot also be used to satisfy requirements in the English major or minor
  o Strongly recommends two years of foreign language, especially for those considering graduate school
  o No courses may be taken PDF

• Senior Requirements
  o English 491
  o One-hour oral exam
  o Revised seminar paper: graded by two to three faculty

• Honors
  o Students do not apply for admission to candidacy for honors
  o Students must submit a proposal for their thesis or project
    ▪ Must be submitted within the first six weeks of the two-semester period in which student is eligible
  o Accumulated at least 87 credits
  o Completed two semesters of residency at Whitman
  o Cumulative GPA of at least 3.300 on all credits earned at Whitman College
  o Major GPA of at least 3.500
  o Complete a written thesis or research project prepared exclusively for the satisfaction of this program
  o Earn a grade of at least A- on the honors thesis or project and the honors thesis course
  o Pass the senior assessment with distinction
  o Chair of the department will notify the Registrar of students attaining Honors no later than the beginning of week 12 of the semester
  o An acceptable digital copy of the Honors Thesis must be submitted to Penrose Library no later than Reading Day

The English minor:
  • 20 Credits
  • Required Courses
One elective from
- 176-179, 200, 230-233, 245, 246, 250-252, 270, or 290

At least three other 200-or-300-level courses meeting specific requirements
- One early period British literature course, chosen from English 335, 336, 337, 338, 350, or 357
- One course in American literature, chosen from 347, 348, or 349
- One course in underrepresented literatures, chosen from 245, 246, 270, 376, or another course identified as counting in this category

One elective at the 300-400 level

Other notes
- No course can satisfy more than one requirement
- No PDF courses for minor

The Creative Writing minor:
- 20 Credits
- Required Courses
  - English 150
  - One literature course in English
  - Two courses in one of the following genres
    - English 250 and 320 (Fiction)
    - English 251 and 321 (Poetry)
    - English 252 and 322 (Creative Nonfiction)
  - One creative writing elective at the 200 or 300 level
- Other notes
  - If majoring in English and minoring in Creative Writing, one creative writing and one literature course may count toward both
  - No courses may be taken PDF

For courses in expository writing: See Rhetoric, Writing and Public Discourse 170, 210, and 320.

COURSES IN LITERATURE AND THEORY

176 Introduction to Creative Nonfiction

Spring: K. Schlegel
Fall: 4 credits

A study of the forms, techniques, and traditions of a shape-shifting genre that can be understood as arising from the long tradition of the “essay.” Creative Nonfiction includes forms as diverse as the lyric essay, memoir, profile, critique, rant, and review; inspired and researched, it is a form that transforms lived experience into literary art. The course will explore the writings of literary essayists from antiquity to the present.

177 Introduction to Poetry

Fall, Spring: Roberts; Spring: A. Gordon
Fall: 4 credits

A study of the forms, strategies, and traditions of British and North American poetry across time. An ever-changing art form related to song, poetry predates literacy; today, through imagery, implication, indirection, and other means, poems continue to offer writers and readers ways to give voice to the ineffable. We will examine how poetic form and content interact, and consider the unique powers and possibilities of poetry’s metaphoric language to address all aspects of life.
178 Introduction to Fiction
Fall, Spring  Fall: A. Gordon; Spring: Elliott  4 credits
A study of the forms, techniques, and traditions of fiction across time. Fiction has been said to be a means of imaginative escape, a way to gain deeper understanding of the external world, “the lie through which we tell the truth,” and a way to acquire a deep empathy for others. This course will explore the complex power of fiction in a variety of manifestations, from the short story to the novella and the novel.

179 Introduction to Drama
Not offered 2021-22  4 credits
A study of plays as literary texts, examining the forms and techniques of drama across cultures and time periods. We will consider the dynamics of reading (as opposed to watching) plays and will discuss how dramatic texts are developed and interpreted through performance.

200 Introduction to Literature and the Humanities
4 credits
The study of selected texts in the humanities, with particular attention to literature written in English, offered at the introductory level and designed to fulfill the humanities distribution requirement. These courses are writing intensive (involving at least 18 pages of formal, graded writing assignments and including instruction in academic writing) and involve a substantial amount of reading. Subjects for the section change from semester to semester and year to year in order to provide students with a variety of choices for literary study at the 200-level. Any current offerings follow.

200 VT: American Horror
Fall  A. Gordon  4 credits
What draws us to horror? From haunted houses to slasher films, gothic novels to teen vampire fiction, mindless zombies to maniacal psychopaths, the passion for scary stories has remained an indelible part of American culture, reflecting our anxieties back to us. This course takes a closer look at the tradition of horror in American culture, from eighteenth-century accounts of the Salem Witch Trials to twenty-first century pandemic films broadcast entirely on Zoom; classic tales by Poe, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and Henry James to weird fiction by H.P. Lovecraft and T.E.D. Klein; mid-century horror by Shirley Jackson and Richard Matheson, to recent masters of the form like Clive Barker, Stephen King, and Carmen Maria Machado. We will also watch several films by directors such as John Carpenter and Jordan Peele, complementing these primary texts with theoretical readings on the nature of horror, from the romantic philosophy of the gothic to Freud’s uncanny, Todorov on the fantastic to Kristeva’s abjection. Finally, the course will interrogate canons of taste and art, highbrow and lowbrow, respectable “literary” fiction versus disparaged mass-market genre fiction. When you are done reading for the night, you might want to leave the light on. Distribution area: humanities.

230 Introduction to Shakespeare: Love, Sex, and Gender
Fall  DiPasquale  4 credits
From Hermia’s “The course of true love never did run smooth!” to Lady Macbeth’s “Come, you spirits / That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,” Shakespeare’s plays and poems grapple with erotic love, human sexuality, and the complex workings of gender in human experience. Writing for the English stage during a period when female roles were played by male actors, Shakespeare often explored the ways in which gender is constructed and performed, yet his writings also include archetypes of masculinity and femininity; and he fashions lovers whose passions and desires range from the sublime to the ridiculous. The course will introduce students to college-level study of Shakespeare’s poetry and plays, with particular attention to the themes of love, sex, and gender. May be taken for credit toward the Gender Studies major or minor.
231 Introduction to Shakespeare: Race, Nationality, and Power
Not offered 2021-22 4 credits
“What ish my nation? Who talks of my nation?” asks the enraged Irish captain MacMorris, speaking in dialect as he confronts the Welsh captain Fluellen in Shakespeare’s *Henry V*. Not only in his history plays, but in his comedies, tragedies, and romances, Shakespeare explores both how race, ethnicity, and nationality are constructed and how these concepts shape individual identities and social interactions. Shakespeare not only worked to define what it meant to be “English” in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, but helped to shape the English language itself—which only a tiny percentage of the world’s population spoke at the time he wrote his plays—into England’s most powerful global export. The course will introduce students to college-level study of Shakespeare’s poetry and plays, with particular attention to the themes of race, nationality, and power. May be taken for credit toward the Race & Ethnic Studies major or minor.

232 Introduction to Shakespeare: Work, Wealth, and Status
Not offered 2021-22 4 credits
“Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon ’em.” This mock proverb tempts *Twelfth Night*’s Malvolio to fantasize about social mobility—an ambition met with comic but humiliating ridicule. Across his works, Shakespeare interrogates the social, economic, and gendered structures that stratified early modern communities. He examines various modes of service, leadership, and artistry, including the craft of poetry. Mixing high art with realism and humor, he labors to engage diverse audiences, ranging from those who stand in the yard to those so wealthy that they can pay to sit on the stage. The course will introduce students to college-level study of Shakespeare’s poetry and plays, with particular attention to the themes of work, wealth, and status.

233 Introduction to Shakespeare: Faith, Fate, and Virtue
Not offered 2021-22 4 credits
“Who can control his fate?” Othello asks in his last moments upon the stage, after falling prey to Iago’s manipulations and punishing his wife for imagined sins. Throughout his plays, Shakespeare repeatedly grapples with questions related to belief and power. In tragedy, comedy, and romance, he explores the boundaries between the worldly and the supernatural, as well as the limits of free will. Interweaving politics and religion, ethics and philosophy, Shakespeare’s texts confront audiences with the existential and moral dilemmas that make us human. The course will introduce students to college-level study of Shakespeare’s poetry and plays, with particular attention to the themes of faith, fate, and virtue.

245 Native American Literatures
Not offered 2021-22 4 credits
A survey of writing by indigenous peoples of the present-day United States. This reading-heavy course will focus its attention on a small number of distinctive indigenous literary traditions, possibly (but not necessarily) including the Iroquois confederacy of the U.S. Northeast and southeastern Canada, the Creek nation of the U.S. Southeast, the Kiowa peoples of the Southwest, and the peoples of the Columbia Plateau. Aside from reading, assignments will include exams and formal essays. May be taken for credit toward the Race & Ethnic Studies major or minor.
Distribution area: humanities or cultural pluralism.

246 Introduction to African American Literature
Fall 2021 4 credits
A study of the forms, techniques, and traditions shared by Black writers in colonial America and the U.S. from the earliest known writing in the Eighteenth Century to the present. Topics will include the way Black writers (especially enslaved and formerly enslaved persons) forged spaces for expression in the American public sphere, debates about the appropriate qualities and purposes of “Negro Literature” in the early 20th century, the innovations and explorations of the Black Arts Movement, and representations of history and identity pertaining to African Americans in the wake of the Civil Rights Act. Aside from reading, assignments will include exams and formal
essays. May be taken for credit toward the Race & Ethnic Studies major or minor. Distribution area: humanities or cultural pluralism.

270 Special Topics in Underrepresented Literatures
4 credits
Courses will cover one area of underrepresented literatures in depth. Any current offerings follow.

290 Approaches to the Study of Literature
Fall, Spring
Fall: Leise; Spring: DiPasquale, Raschko
4 credits
A course in practical criticism designed to introduce students to some of the approaches that can be used in literary analysis. Distribution area: humanities.

335-341 Studies in British Literature
4 credits
Courses designed to introduce students to the literature and culture of England in each of six literary periods: the Middle Ages (English 336), the Renaissance (English 337), the Restoration and 18th Century (English 338), the Romantic Period (English 339), the Victorian Period (English 340), and 1900-Present (English 341). Also included in this category are courses covering in depth particular topics in pre-Romantic English literature (English 335). The specific focus of each course will vary from year to year. Topics in a particular literary period may be taken a total of two times, but the second will count as an elective. Any current offerings follow.

335 VT: Stinging Jests: Violence, Satire, and Humor in Medieval and Renaissance Literature
Fall
DiPasquale
4 credits
What roles do laughter and mockery play in satire? How, when, and why is humor violent? Is satire both a form of violence and a fitting response to violence? And can satirical humor withstand the test of time, bridging the gaps that separate the Middle Ages from the Renaissance and both of these periods from the 21st century? The course will explore these questions through the study of texts ranging from the heroic death quips of warriors in 13th-century Icelandic sagas to the bawdy practical jokes featured in a number of Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales, the rough abuse of foolish or morally questionable characters in Renaissance comedies, and the scathing irony that animates much of John Donne’s poetry and prose. Distribution area: humanities. Recommended prerequisite: 100- or 200-level literature course.

338 VT: Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature: Anxieties of Empire
Spring
Alker
4 credits
Eighteenth-century British literature reflected and exposed the anxieties of the emergent empire. In the same era that the poet James Thomson wrote the bombastic song “Rule Britannia,” celebrating the supremacy of Britain over global matters, writers such as Aphra Behn, Alexander Pope, and others were expressing concern about the consequences of this quest for power, foregrounding such issues as the ethics of slavery, extended wars, the effects of luxury, and the instability of British identity in an international age. This course will investigate the cacophony of voices surrounding the imperial desires of the nation. Writers may include Behn, Pope, Defoe, Centlivre, Haywood, Addison and Steele, Mary Wortley Montagu, and Olaudah Equiano. May be taken for credit toward the Global Studies concentration. Distribution area: humanities.

340 VT: Victorian Grotesques
Spring
Majumdar
4 credits
As Victorian England faced enormous (and, for some, threatening) changes, its literature responded to rapid urbanization, industrialization, colonial tensions, and challenges to gender-conventions by employing grotesquerie as means of cultural criticism. We will examine literary works for their deployment of the
grotesque to interrogate comic absurdity, aesthetic norms, gender-definitions, class-anxieties, propriety, and progress. Among the texts we study will be Charles Dickens’s *Our Mutual Friend*, Lewis Carroll’s *Through the Looking-Glass, Discords* by Mary Dunne (writing as “George Egerton”), Oscar Wilde’s play *Salomé*, and a wide range of poetry. Distribution area: humanities.

**341 VT: Postmodern “Pagemonsters”: Contemporary British and Irish Literature**  
**Spring**  
**Majumdar**  
**4 credits**

The novelist Lawrence Norfolk has praised the maximalist novel as a “pagemonster” that displays ethical generosity, complex considerations of difference or even contention, and room for experimentation through its sheer capaciousness. Linking such dynamics with theorizations of postmodernity by Jean-François Lyotard, Fredric Jameson, Linda Hutcheon, and Jean Baudrillard, this course will study four large, celebrated novels: Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children*, Martin Amis’s *London Fields*, Sarah Waters’s *The Night Watch*, and David Mitchell’s *Cloud Atlas*. Distribution area: humanities.

**346 African American Historiographic Fiction**  
**Not offered 2021-22**  
**4 credits**

Historiography involves examining how facts, people, and events get crafted into narratives, as well as how those stories are interpreted and perpetuated or revised over time. This class will focus on 20th- and 21st-century novels by African American writers that call attention to specific elements of America’s complex history; we will pay particular attention to the ways the selected books reintroduce overlooked figures and under-covered ideas and occurrences, recalling or re-imagining often surprising ways of being in community, of seeing the world, and of living expansively at various points of American history. While there are no prerequisites, some familiarity with African American writing or English 246 is suggested. May be taken for credit toward the Race & Ethnic Studies major or minor. Distribution area: humanities or cultural pluralism.

**347 Studies in American Literature**  
**4 credits**

This includes two period courses designed to introduce students to American literature and culture in two broad periods: early and middle American literature as well as modern and contemporary literature. One special topics course, 347, with a topic that will vary every year, will examine one area of American literature in depth. English 347 can be taken twice if a different topic is offered and both times can be counted toward the elective requirement. Any current offerings follow.

**347 VT: Early American Women Writers**  
**Spring**  
**A. Gordon**  
**4 credits**

This course offers an introduction to literature by American women from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century. Over the fourteen weeks of the course, we’ll ask a series of questions: How have female authors deployed literature to advocate for civil rights, combat sexism, and give artistic shape to their varied lived experiences? How have writers exploited the possibilities of their preferred literary genres to challenge artistic, social, and political conventions? At the same time, what constraints have women faced in their attempts to make their voices heard? How has literary history privileged and excluded certain kinds of writing by women and why? Finally, how have writers navigated intersectional identities of gender, race, and sexuality? Readings will cover a range of genres and styles, from poetry and short stories to essays and novels, sentimentiality to realism, gothic ghost stories to utopian fiction, as we explore the developing tradition of American women’s writing. The authors treated will change regularly though will likely include writers such as Hannah Webster Foster, Phillis Wheatley, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Louisa May Alcott, Fanny Fern, Margaret Fuller, Emily Dickinson, Harriet Jacobs, Kate Chopin, Pauline Hopkins, Emma Lazarus, Sui Sin Far, Marianne Moore, Zora Neale Hurston, and many others. Distribution area: humanities.
348 The American Literary Emergence, 1620 - 1920
Fall A. Gordon 4 credits
Beginning with the pre-Revolutionary texts by those newly arrived to the Atlantic Coast colonies, and including the writings of those already present on the continent, we will study how an “American” literature came into being. As the population boomed and expansion moved westward, the newly formed United States became a national entity and global presence. We will study the development of American individualism, the rise of genres such as the captivity narrative and the slave narrative, and major literary movements such as the shift to realism and naturalism. Authors may include Bradstreet, Emerson, Douglass, Hawthorne, Whitman, Twain, Wharton, James, Dunbar, and many more. Distribution area: humanities.

349 American Literature: Modern to Contemporary
Spring Leise 4 credits
A study of select American literary works across genres from the rise of Modernism into the present, with special emphasis on changes and continuities in literary form. Topics may include issues of race, class, and gender; reconsiderations of American “individualism”; and the role of capital, technology, and the corporation in contemporary American culture. Assignments include a carefully researched and well-written term paper. Prior college-level literature coursework is suggested but not required. Distribution area: humanities.

350 Chaucer
Spring Raschko 4 credits
A study of medieval England’s most famous, influential, and humorous poet. Course texts will include The Canterbury Tales, Troilus and Criseyde, and select shorter poems. Students will learn to read texts in the original Middle English. May be taken to count toward the major’s “Early Period British Literature” requirement. Distribution area: humanities.

353 Studies In Shakespeare
Not offered 2021-22 4 credits
A course on the dramatic and non-dramatic works of William Shakespeare, the course will focus on close reading of the primary texts, with attention to questions arising both from the Early Modern English culture in which they were written and to their cross-cultural significance in later literature, Theater, and film. The course will vary from year to year and will be organized by theme. Any current offerings follow:

357 Milton and the Idea of Freedom
Not offered 2021-22 4 credits
The writings of John Milton (1608-1674) played a crucial role in shaping what we now know as Modernity. We will study his poetry and prose, with particular attention to his ground-breaking political treatises and his enormously influential epic Paradise Lost.

367 Selected Works by One Author
4 credits
An intensive study of one influential English-language author, designed to include texts from the beginning to the end of that writer’s career. Any current offerings follow.

375 Literary Theory Variable Topics
4 credits
This course introduces students to arguments about the shaping, the effects, and the interpretation of literature. Themes for the course will vary, but among the questions we will consistently examine are the following: Through what kinds of assumptions do we read literature? How do characters in literary texts themselves read? How do these texts interpret what they represent? We will devote approximately equal time to the study of theoretical texts and to reading literary works through theoretical lenses. Any current offerings follow.
375 VT: Feminist Theory
Spring Majumdar 4 credits
Studying divergences and overlap in arguments that seem to take women’s rights as their common goal, this course will address the following questions: How do Third World and “Third Wave” feminisms challenge the assumptions of canonical feminism? How do some of these arguments resist a self-elevating morality? How does feminist literature theorize itself and feminist theory function as literature? We will study writings by Mary Wollstonecraft, Harriet Taylor, Virginia Woolf, Simone de Beauvoir, Hélène Cixous, Adriana Cavarero, Judith Butler, Chandra Mohanty, and Sianne Ngai, as well as episodes of the comic television series Fleabag. May be taken for credit toward the Gender Studies major or minor. Distribution area: humanities or cultural pluralism.

376 Studies in Colonial and Anti-Colonial Literature
4 credits
This course will examine texts from former colonies in South Asia, Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean, and Australia. We will study how these works negotiate the past and present, and how they explore multiple forms and conditions of colonialism and postcolonialism. The course will discuss works of literature, as well as theoretical and critical texts. Offered annually. May be taken for credit toward the major’s “Underrepresented Literatures” requirement. Any current offerings follow.

376 VT: Counterpoints: Edward Said’s Work and Anti-Colonial Literature
Fall Majumdar 4 credits
Edward Said’s practice of “contrapuntal” reading unveils various texts’ implicit participation in colonial or imperialist discourse and, simultaneously, considers resistance to such discourse. Such reading gives much ballast to anti-colonial literature and theory. This course will focus mainly on the following questions: What is “contrapuntal” reading? How does literature work against and as counterpoint to stated claims or unacknowledged assumptions? How might literary aesthetics also function as politics? How does anti-colonial literature resist and refine notions of solidarity and universalism? Alongside writings by Said that span his career, we will study works by Kipling, Macaulay, Haggard, Bird, Joyce, Brathwaite, Desai, Spivak, Rushdie, and Serpell. May be taken for credit toward the Race & Ethnic Studies major. Distribution area: humanities or cultural pluralism.

377 Rhetorical Bodies
Not offered 2021-22 4 credits
This course examines the rhetorical construction of bodies as well as the ways in which bodies are often used rhetorically. In order to carry out this examination, we will apply a variety of critical rhetorical lenses to written and visual texts. We will be particularly concerned with the intersections of social factors such as gender, race, class, sexuality, and disability and the ways in which these intersections are written on our bodies. We will read texts by classical and contemporary theorists and authors, such as Hippocrates, Quintilian, Judith Butler, Kenneth Burke, Patricia Hill Collins, Debra Hawhee, and Robert McCruer. This course will be writing intensive. May be taken for credit toward the Race & Ethnic Studies major or minor. May be elected as Rhetoric, Writing & Public Discourse 380.

387 Special Studies
4 credits
Studies of English or American literature and language generally not considered in other courses offered by the department. The specific material will vary from semester to semester. Any current offerings follow.

387 VT: Black Shakespeares
Spring DiPasquale 4 credits
Many writers since Shakespeare’s time have appropriated, rethought, and re-envisioned his plays in their own plays, poems, and works of prose fiction. This course will familiarize students with several Shakespeare plays and with their transformed afterlives in African and African diaspora writers of the 20th-21st centuries including Aimé Césaire, Robert Hayden, Amiri Baraka, Paule Marshall, and Toni Morrison. We will explore both Shakespeare’s impact on writers of African descent and those writers’ impact on Shakespeare studies. Students need no previous coursework in either Shakespeare or African diaspora literatures to take this course. We will study works of drama, poetry, and fiction as well as a number of essays and theoretical works dealing with intertextuality, hybridity, race, colonialism, translation, and cross-cultural reception of Shakespeare. Applies toward either the Underrepresented Literatures requirement or as a 300-level elective. May be taken for credit toward the Race & Ethnic Studies major or minor. Distribution area: humanities or cultural pluralism.

491 Seminars in English and American Literature
4 credits
Seminars require a substantial amount of writing, a major written project of at least 15 pages involving research in secondary sources, and oral presentations. Topics will vary from semester to semester. Open to junior and senior English majors only. Prerequisite: English 290. Any current offerings follow.

491 A: Ulysses, Modernism, and Modernity
Fall
Majumdar

This seminar will study James Joyce’s *Ulysses* as an important instance of modernity and modernism. Joyce’s extraordinary novel provokes a reconsideration of the uniqueness of national literary traditions and national languages, and calls for a combinative, comparatist reading, across linguistic, disciplinary, and geographical borders, all at once. We will examine Joyce’s writing as an insistently different form of expression and modernism’s foremost novelistic experiment. The class will require a rigorous reading of *Ulysses*, carried out against a backdrop of literary, political, historical, and theoretical considerations. Students will get a sophisticated entry into *Ulysses*, while simultaneously becoming acquainted with prominent issues of modernism. Joyce’s text is clearly aware of, and active in, the traditions that modernism transforms. Analyzing how this reconstitution takes place, the class will study how *Ulysses* addresses modernity itself. Further, it will interrogate the political strategies of the novel for Joyce’s claims as a postcolonial writer. Prerequisite: English 290.

491 B: Reinventing Chaucer
Fall
Raschko

This course focuses on *The Canterbury Tales*—a literary monument authored by the so-called “father of English poetry”—as a site of playful fluidity, openness, and adaptation. We will begin the semester reading widely across the tales, exploring their diverse genres and their complex relationships to each other, given that they appear in different orders across medieval manuscripts. We will then progress to considering some afterlives of *The Canterbury Tales*, first in early printed editions that integrated new pseudo-Chaucerian texts and then in much more modern settings. The latter include a 2009 colloquial prose retelling, a 2017 Young Adult adaptation, and the activist collection, *Refugee Tales*, that cites Chaucer’s work as inspiration for compiling stories of immigrants held in indefinite detention. In addition to these primary texts, we will read recent literary criticism that juxtaposes Chaucer’s celebrated place in English literature with the most problematic aspects of the *Tales* and their author, including misogyny, sexual violence, and antisemitism. Throughout the course, we will use this seminal medieval text as an occasion for asking big questions about the authorship, reception, and relevance of “classic” literature. Prerequisite: English 290. Distribution area: humanities.

COURSES IN CREATIVE WRITING
150 Introductory Creative Writing
Fall, Spring  Fall: Elliott, Roberts, K. Schlegel; Spring: Elliott  4 credits
The writing of poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction. Experience not necessary, but students should expect to complete weekly exercises, share work aloud, and write responses for peers. In addition, extensive reading and analysis of pieces by established writers in a variety of literary forms.

250 Intermediate Creative Writing – Fiction
Fall  Elliott  4 credits
An intermediate workshop in fiction writing offering students the opportunity to expand their knowledge of fundamental techniques and important works in the genre. Students will write original short stories and experiment with strategies and structures through exercises meant to increase their awareness of, and proficiency in, the elements of fiction. Extensive analysis of peer work and important established models in the genre. Weekly assignments in reading and writing to develop critical and creative faculties. Final portfolio of creative and critical work. Prerequisite: English 150 or consent of instructor.

251 Intermediate Creative Writing – Poetry
Fall  Roberts  4 credits
An intermediate workshop in poetry writing, intended to expand knowledge of fundamental techniques, and to familiarize students with many important writers in the genre. Students will have the opportunity to write and revise poems based on prompts as well as on their own. There will be weekly reading and journal exercises, and extensive analysis of peer work and established models to develop critical and creative faculties. Final portfolio of creative and critical work. Prerequisite: English 150 or consent of instructor.

252 Intermediate Creative Writing – Nonfiction
Fall  K. Schlegel  4 credits
An intermediate workshop in creative nonfiction writing, intended to expand knowledge of fundamental techniques, and to familiarize students with many important writers in the genre. Students will write original essays and experiment with strategies and structures through exercises meant to increase their awareness of, and proficiency in, the elements of nonfiction. Extensive analysis of peer work and important established models in the genre. Weekly assignments in reading and writing to develop critical and creative faculties. Final portfolio of creative and critical work. Prerequisite: English 150 or consent of instructor.

320 Advanced Creative Writing – Fiction
Spring  Elliott  4 credits
An intensive advanced workshop in fiction. Students will continue to develop their proficiency in fiction writing by reading deeply and analyzing established models, completing exercises, producing drafts of original stories and revisions, participating in discussions of peer work, and giving presentations based on close readings. Final portfolio of creative and critical work, which may include some consideration of where the student’s work fits into a fiction-writing tradition. Prerequisites: English 250 or equivalent and consent of instructor.

321 Advanced Creative Writing – Poetry
Not offered 2021-22  4 credits
An intensive advanced workshop in poetry. Students will have the opportunity to develop proficiency in poetry writing by completing exercises, producing drafts and revisions of poems for peer discussions, reading deeply and analyzing established models, and actively participating in rigorous and constructively critical discussions. Weekly poem assignments, as well as reading and journal exercises. Final portfolio of creative and critical work. Prerequisites: English 251 or equivalent and consent of instructor.
322 Advanced Creative Writing – Nonfiction
Spring K. Schlegel 4 credits
An intensive advanced workshop in “the fourth genre,” creative nonfiction. Students will have the opportunity to experiment with form, to address a range of subjects in weekly creative nonfiction pieces, and to read deeply and analyze established models as well as peer work to develop important critical faculties. Students will be expected to participate actively in rigorous, constructively critical discussions. Weekly exercises, as well as reading and journal assignments. Final portfolio of creative and critical work. Prerequisites: English 252, or equivalent, and consent of instructor.

389 Special Studies in Craft
4 credits
Studies of literary craft not considered in other courses offered by the department, intended for upper-level creative writing students. Active participation in rigorous discussions and intensive workshops expected. Final portfolios of creative and critical works. Specific material will vary from semester to semester. The distribution area is fine arts. Prerequisites: English 250, 251, or equivalent, and consent of instructor. Any current offerings follow.

389 VT: Out of Our Time: Creative Writing
Fall K. Schlegel 4 credits
In her 1997 essay “Arts of the Possible,” Adrienne Rich writes: “It is not ‘in spite of the times’ that I will write but I will try to write, in both senses, out of my time.” In this creative nonfiction writing class, we will attempt to use the constraints and conditions of our time in order to write a better future. You will have the opportunity to examine and respond creatively to various issues, including the global pandemic and racial justice movements. Together, we will explore how the essay can engage the difficult with artful results. Among other questions, we will ask: How do we confront contemporary and historical injustice through acts of the imagination? How might we embrace joy in service of justice? The course will feature guest speakers who will help us think through these questions. We will read Kiese Laymon, Valeria Luiselli, Svetlana Alexievich, and more, while working together to create a shared library. In this workshop-based course, you will generate new writing, share your work, and respond to the writing of others. Distribution area: fine arts. Prerequisite: English 250, 251, or 252 or consent of instructor.

INDEPENDENT STUDY and THESIS

401, 402 Independent Study
Fall, Spring Staff 1-4 credits
Directed reading and the preparation of written work on topics suggested by the student. The project must be approved by the staff of the department. Thus, the student is expected to submit a written proposal to the intended director of the project prior to registration for the study. The number of students accepted for the work will depend on the availability of the staff. Independent Study may not count as one of the electives fulfilling minimum requirements for the major or minor without prior written approval of the English department. Prerequisite: consent of instructor.

497 Thesis
Fall, Spring Staff 4 credits
Designed to further independent research projects leading to the preparation of an undergraduate thesis. The creative thesis, an option for a student of exceptional ability in creative writing, will be a substantial, accomplished collection of work in a particular genre. Limited to, but not required of, senior English majors. Prerequisite: approval of a proposal submitted to the English department prior to registration by a date designated by the department. For full details, see the English Department Handbook.
498 Honors Thesis
Fall, Spring Staff 4 credits

Designed to further independent critical and creative research projects leading to the preparation of an undergraduate thesis. The creative thesis, an option for a student of exceptional ability in creative writing, will be a substantial, accomplished collection of work in a particular genre. Required of and limited to senior honors candidates in English. The candidate will be assigned to an appropriate thesis advisor, depending upon his or her field of interest. *Prerequisite:* approval of a proposal submitted to the English department prior to registration by a date designated by the department. For full details, see the *English Department Handbook*. 