English

Chair, Fall 2020: Gaurav Majumdar (on Sabbatical, Spring 2021)  
Chair, Spring 2021: Christopher Leise  
Sharon Alker, Chair, Division II  
Theresa M. DiPasquale (on Sabbatical, Spring 2021)  
Scott Elliott  
Adam Gordon  
Mary Raschko  
Katrina Roberts  
Kisha Lewellyn Schlegel  
Adjunct Faculty:  
Johanna Stoberock  
Jenna Terry  
Affiliated Faculty:  
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 Goals – 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.

- **Quantitative Skills**
  - They will understand the principles of poetic meter and be capable of scanning metrical verse.

- **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: 246, 247, 376, and other courses as specified below.
Fine Arts: 150, 250, 251, 252, 320, 321, 322, and 389

**Total credit requirements for a 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, 246, 247, 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 359
  - One course in American literature, chosen from 347, 348, or 349
  - One course in underrepresented literatures, chosen from 246, 247, 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 in global literatures numbered 300 or higher or a course in literature offered by the department of foreign languages and literatures numbered above 306

- Other notes
  - No course may satisfy more than one requirement.
  - No more than two Creative Writing courses may be counted toward the major.
  - 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.
  - Courses used to satisfy requirements in other majors or minors cannot also be used to satisfy requirements in the English major or minor.
  - Strongly recommends two years of foreign language, especially for those considering graduate school
  - No courses may be taken PDF

- Senior Requirements
  - English 491
  - One hour oral exam
  - Revised seminar paper; Graded by two to three faculty

- Honors
  - Students do not apply for admission to candidacy for honors
  - 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
  - Accumulated at least 87 credits
  - Completed two semesters of residency at Whitman.
  - Cumulative GPA of at least 3.300 on all credits earned at Whitman College
  - Major GPA of at least 3.500
  - Complete a written thesis or research project prepared exclusively for the satisfaction of this program
  - Earn a grade of at least A- on the honors thesis or project and the honors thesis course
  - Pass the senior assessment with distinction
  - Chair of the department will notify the Registrar of students attaining Honors no later than the beginning of week 12 of the semester.
  - 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, 246, 247, 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 359
    - One course in American literature, chosen from 347, 348, or 349
• One course in underrepresented literatures, chosen from 246, 247, 376, or another course identified as counting in this category
  o One elective at the 300-400 level
• Other notes
  o No course can satisfy more than one requirement
  o No PDF courses for minor

The Creative Writing minor:
• 20 Credits
• Required Courses
  o English 150
  o One literature course in English
  o Two courses in one of the following genres
    ▪ English 250 and 320 (Fiction)
    ▪ English 251 and 321 (Poetry)
    ▪ English 252 and 322 (Creative Non-Fiction)
  o One creative writing elective at the 200 or 300 level
• Other notes
  o If majoring in English and minoring in Creative Writing, one creative writing and one literature course may count toward both
  o 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
Not offered 2020-21 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 Fall: Roberts; Spring: A. Gordon 4 credits
A study of the forms, strategies, voices, and visions 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
Spring Elliot 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
Fall DiPasquale 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: Reading the Anthropocene
Fall K. Schlegel 4 credits
For twenty years, the word “Anthropocene” has emerged as both a catalyzing term and a signifier for an urgent reality. As Robert Macfarlane writes, “[this] new epoch of geological time in which human activity is considered such a powerful influence on the environment, climate, and ecology of the planet…will leave a long-term signature in the strata record. And what a signature it will be.” In this course, we’ll read literature that contends with the signature of human impact on the earth. As we consider how literature shapes our understanding of the Anthropocene, we’ll also consider how the Anthropocene might shape our understanding of literature and literary studies. How does the Anthropocene require—or allow—us to read differently? We’ll read across genres and regularly connect with nature in ways that are accessible to all students. Inspired by the ecology itself and Jedediah Purdy’s idea that, “the Anthropocene future is, unavoidably, a collective human project,” the course will culminate in a collaborative project devised by the students. May be taken for credit toward the electives area of the Environmental Humanities major. Distribution area: humanities.

200 VT: Infrastructure, the Individual, and Community
Spring Leise 4 credits
This course will investigate how the built environment influences individuals and communities. It will work to define what an “individual” is and explore the changing role of “infrastructure” in society. Texts may include Ralph Waldo Emerson’s essays, Nathaniel Hawthorne’s short stories, Walter Benjamin’s philosophy, Elizabeth Woody’s poetry, HBO’s The Wire, the Whitman campus, downtown Walla Walla, and the Columbia River; and we'll also explore our own feelings about infrastructure, community, and others. Distribution area: humanities.

230 Introduction to Shakespeare: Love, Sex, and Gender
Not offered 2020-21 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 2020-21 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 and Ethnic Studies major or minor.

**232 Introduction to Shakespeare: Work, Wealth, and Status**
Not offered 2020-21 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**
Spring Raschko 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.

**246 Native American Literatures**
Fall Leise 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 major’s “Underrepresented Literatures” requirement. May be taken for credit toward the Race and Ethnic Studies major.

**247 African American Literature**
Not offered 2020-21 4 credits
A survey of autobiography, poetry, and fiction by black authors from the 1800s to the present. In this reading-heavy course, topics will include the way writers of African descent in the British American colonies and subsequent United States forged spaces for expression in the public sphere, debates about what “Negro literature” during the Jim Crow era was and how it should be done, and representations of history and identity pertaining to African Americans after the Civil Rights Act became law. Aside from reading, assignments will include exams and formal essays. May be taken for credit toward the major’s “Underrepresented Literatures” requirement. May be taken for credit toward the Race and Ethnic Studies major or minor.

**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: A. Gordon  4 credits
A course in practical criticism designed to introduce students to some of the approaches that can be used in literary analysis.

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:

336 VT: Medieval Literature: Old Stories, New Problems  
Spring  Raschko  4 credits
This course explores medieval English literature and culture by examining how authors reshaped old stories to respond in diverse ways to contemporary trends, controversies, and power structures. Rather than prize the innovative and new, medieval writers and readers placed highest value on the telling of well-known stories: nearly all writers claimed their texts came from some other source, whether the Bible, Roman histories, a French text, or a mysteriously lost, yet ancient book. The production of so many retellings, sequels, and works of fan-fiction opens up complex questions about what’s lost and gained in translation, as well as how people craft images of the past to promote particular visions of the future. Course readings will include Old and Middle English renditions of popular biblical stories (including in medieval drama), classical myths, fables, folk tales, and romances (especially those pertaining to King Arthur). Distribution area: humanities.

337 VT: Love, Sex, and Power in the English Renaissance  
Fall  DiPasquale  4 credits
Desire, love, sexuality, and gender are major themes in English Renaissance texts. Many stories, plays, poems, and treatises of the period focus on amorous desire, the joys and woes of marriage, and complex questions about sex and gender. Writers of the period also tap into the figurative potential of amorous desire, marriage, adultery, same-sex love, heterosexual love, and both binary and nonbinary notions of gender; they apply sexual and gendered language to texts on religious, political, social, literary, philosophical, and economic subjects. We will study texts in a variety of genres—from Petrarchan sonnet and raunchy novella to polemical treatise, satirical comedy, and devotional lyric. Seeking to appreciate how the aesthetic and formal qualities of the works we read shape the ideas they convey, we will savor the mixture of teaching and delight, imitation and invention, that characterizes the literary culture of the English Renaissance. May be taken for credit toward the Gender Studies major or minor. Distribution area: humanities.

339 VT: Romantic Literature: Making Meaning through Poetry  
Spring  Alker  4 credits
Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world,” Percy Bysshe Shelley passionately declared at the end of his essay on poetry. His sentiments reflect a larger insistence during the Romantic era that poetry was profoundly meaningful, and could change the world. This class will explore the many ways poets imagined their craft as transformative. We will look at the way the major Romantic poets (Wordsworth, Blake, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, and Byron) reconfigured the poetic forms they inherited to make them more responsive to a host of literary, cultural, and political revolutions. We will contrast their work with the poetry of other late 18th- and early 19th-century writers, including emerging working-class poets, regional poets, women poets, abolitionist poets, and antiquarian and gothic poetry. We will pay particular
attention to the relationship between nature and transformation in these poems, viewing poetic production of the period through an eco-critical lens. May be taken for credit toward the electives area of the Environmental Humanities major. Distribution area: humanities.

**341 VT: Figures of Newness: British and Irish Modernism**  
**Fall Majumdar 4 credits**  
This course will study literature from the “High Modernist” period (1910–1930) and the decades immediately preceding and following it. Modernist works frequently make the claim of departure (from tradition to modernity, from old literary forms to the new, and from old social models to new ones). While we will examine these departures, we will read texts mainly for their use of figural language—for how they employ metaphor and for expression that departs from the accepted literal sense, or conventional order of words. With this focus on linguistic departure, we will also consider questions about departure and arrival of various kinds: How do various figures in these texts fashion their present identities and their pasts? How are peculiarly modernist forms constructed? What is the role of metaphor in this construction of moves from the old to the new? The discussion of this transfer will involve such issues as the importance of the city in modernist literature, the public and private relations of the individual, and links between modernity and ideology. Distribution area: humanities.

**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: Good Scientists Doing Bad Things**  
**Fall Leise 4 credits**  
This course considers contemporary American novels focused on stories of how science, when practiced skillfully and even for the right reasons, can go awry. Some questions may gravitate toward the appropriateness of scientific inquiry and practice, others may revolve around whether or not certain thinkers should be held culpable for results they did not anticipate. While all the novels will involve science, the class should not be understood as one on science fiction. Rather, these texts offer artistic approaches to the problems and promises presented by modern scientific study. Authors may include Paul Beatty, Hernán Díaz, Louisa Hall, Lily King, Jonathan Lethem, Ruth Ozeki, Richard Powers, and Hanya Yanagihara. Some content will be upsetting and offensive; students should be prepared to read a fairly heavy load while developing a sophisticated, largely independent research program that leads to a fifteen- to twenty-page essay. 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.
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.

350 Chaucer
Not offered 2020-21 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.

353 Studies In Shakespeare
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 2020-21 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: Contemporary Literary Theory
Spring Zalloua 4 credits
This course will expose students to the major contemporary theoretical approaches to literary studies. We will examine a broad array of critical schools and perspectives, including reader-response theory, feminism, poststructuralism, and postcolonial studies. We will pay special attention to the recent “Ethical Turn” in literary studies influenced by the works of French philosophers Emmanuel Levinas and Jacques Derrida. May be elected as Global Literatures 395. Distribution area: humanities.

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: Solidarity, Success, and Failure in Anti-Colonial Literature
Fall    Majumdar    4 credits
This course will study how anti-colonial literature links, and reflects upon, solidarity and “failed” constructions (of architecture, the self, language, transnational friendships, and international communities). We will investigate works by Jawaharlal Nehru, E. M. Forster, Louise Bennett, Claude McKay, Kamau Brathwaite, J. M. Coetzee, Anita Desai, Salman Rushdie, and Yasmine El Rashidi—alongside theoretical claims by Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, Paul Gilroy, Édouard Glissant, and Leela Gandhi, among others—to trace how the mimetic failures depicted in these texts theorize fluctuating notions of postcolonial success, as well as tensions among cosmopolitanism, solidarity, and colonialism. May be taken for credit toward the Race and Ethics Studies major or minor. Applies to the “Underrepresented Literatures” major requirement. Distribution area: cultural pluralism or humanities.

377 Rhetorical Bodies
Not offered 2020-2021    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 and Ethnic Studies major or minor. May be elected as Rhetoric, Writing and 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: History of the Book
Fall    Raschko    4 credits
This interdisciplinary course explores the relationship between text and technology, studying how material media shape texts' contents and audiences’ interpretations. Coursework will explore the composition of medieval manuscripts, the advent of the printing press, and the form of early printed books, the interplay of text and illustration, the economics of book production, and censorship. Although the course will primarily focus on book production before 1800, contemporary book arts and the transition from print to electronic media will be explored as well. Open to interested students in any major. Distribution area: humanities.

387 VT: Highbrow/Poe-brow: Edgar Allan Poe and Popular Culture
Spring    A. Gordon    4 credits
Scholars hail Edgar Allan Poe as a pioneer of the detective story, an influential practitioner of the science fiction and horror genres, and a key voice in the development of the short story as an art form. Though he earned fame as a poet with works like “The Raven,” in his career as a critic he did as much as any other early American writer to shape the direction of American literature. All the while, his romance-laden biography has proven as enduring a source of intrigue as any of his Gothic plots. Over the course of the semester, we’ll approach Poe’s corpus as an occasion to ask a variety of questions central to the study of literature: What constitutes literary value? How do we navigate distinctions between highbrow and lowbrow taste, popular fiction and academic syllabi, genre fiction and so-called “literary” fiction? How have various critical and theoretical schools, from formalism and New Historicism to Marxism and cultural
studies, drawn upon and refashioned Poe’s legacy? And how might we use Poe’s oeuvre to engage questions of race, gender, and class? Readings will include extensive selections from Poe’s short stories, poetry, and critical reviews; longer works like The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym and Eureka; and works by a range of authors in conversation with Poe such as Arthur Conan Doyle, H. P. Lovecraft, and Mat Johnson. Finally, we’ll examine Poe’s legacy beyond the classroom in fan fiction, cultures of literary tourism, illustrated editions, as well as film adaptations such as Fellini’s Spirits of the Dead and the truly horrifying 2012 Matthew Broderick film The Raven as we explore twentieth- and twenty-first century re-appropriations of Poe’s works across a range of media. Distribution area: humanities.

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 VT: Protest Literature and the American Renaissance
4 credits
This course focuses on the ten-year span of 1850-1860 during the so-called American Renaissance to ask a series of questions about the relation of literature to social reform. How should we protest injustice? Should resistance begin with the individual or the group? What difficulties arise when we advocate on behalf of genders, races, or classes other than our own? How do different authors conceive of literature’s capacity to effect meaningful change? Indeed, is it naïve to think that literature makes a real difference? By juxtaposing literary works from a deliberately short span of time, we’ll privilege depth over breadth, comparing and contrasting competing strategies of literary protest during one of American history’s most turbulent decades as the nation hurtled toward secession and civil war. Readings may include Henry David Thoreau’s Walden; Harriet Beecher Stowe’s Uncle Tom’s Cabin; Frederick Douglass’s My Bondage and My Freedom; Nathaniel Hawthorne’s The Blithedale Romance; essays by Ralph Waldo Emerson and Margaret Fuller; short stories by Herman Melville; poetry by Walt Whitman and John Greenleaf Whittier; and Fanny Fern’s novel Ruth Hall. In treating these texts, we’ll take up a wide range of topics, from slavery and abolition to utopianism; ecocriticism to women’s rights; imperialism and American exceptionalism to the nationalist formation of the American literary canon itself. In the process, we’ll interrogate our own implicit political agendas and disciplinary frames of inquiry for reading literature as we re-engage the protest literature of the past while asking how these texts speak to our own present moment. Prerequisite: English 290. Distribution area: humanities.

COURSES IN CREATIVE WRITING

150 Introductory Creative Writing
Fall, Spring Fall: Roberts, K. Schlegel; Spring: Elliott, Roberts, K. Schlegel
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**  
**Spring**  
Roberts  
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: Writing the Flash
Fall Elliott 4 credits
With no room for missteps or digression, short stories of fewer than a thousand words hit the ground running, careen into meaty middles, and spill into surprising turns at their ends. Much of the power of stories in this mode comes from compression, well-wrought implication, unexpected insights: the flash. Even absent the room for development enabled by longer prose fiction, shorter short stories can offer the reader the experience of a life-changing event, a searing glimpse into character, a slowing down or acceleration of time, a fresh vision of the universe. In this course, students will have the opportunity to read a wide variety of notable shorter short fiction, some of it dazzling in its accomplishment, with an eye to writing excellent examples of their own. Prerequisite: English 250 or 251, or 252 or consent of instructor. Distribution area: fine arts.

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.