

English Graduate Course Schedules

Fall 2015 Course Descriptions

ENGL 600-010: Introduction to Graduate Studies in English

Instructor: Tim Spaulding

Course Time: F, 12:20-1:10pm

The goals of this colloquium are to (1) teach new graduate students to negotiate the modes of reading and modes of authority they will encounter in their academic work; (2) introduce them to the library and other resources for graduate study in English; and (3) help them acquire a better understanding of the genres of our profession—especially the academic article and monograph. The colloquium will exemplify the reading practices that are essential to scholarship in the discipline of English. The class will focus on a single text and move from a basic reading to a close reading, turning finally to a critical reading that prepares them for producing scholarship on the text.

ENGL 684-010 and -011: Introduction to Literary Theory and Criticism

Instructor: Tim Spaulding

Course Time: 2 sections, M 12:20-3:20pm (1st yr students); W 12:20-3:20pm (2nd yr students)

In this course, we will read and discuss some of the major theoretical texts that have shaped literary and cultural studies in the 20th and 21st centuries. On one level, our goals for the course should be straightforward: we will examine some of the major “schools” of thought regarding the analysis and interpretation of cultural texts ranging from “New Criticism/Formalism” to “Postcolonial Theory” with a mind towards understanding the key terms and concepts in these theories. We will discuss these theories in terms of way they affect our approach to particular texts. On another level, our goals this semester should be a bit open-ended. At bottom, literary and cultural theory forces us to contemplate the basic questions of why and how we go about the task of analyzing and interpreting cultural texts. As such, part of the goals for this course should be to address these questions in our work. What is at stake in the study of literature and culture? How do texts “work”? Why do texts “work”? What “work” do texts perform on us? How do we “work” as writers or readers? Our challenge this semester will be striking a balance between analyzing in detail the specific theoretical texts we will read and discussing the implications these texts have on our own goals as scholars and teachers. In addition to the Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism, we will be reading theory through several cultural texts (*A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Passing*, *Bladerunner*).

ENGL 625-010: Shakespeare’s Tetralogies and the Contours of Time

Instructor: Kristen Poole

Course Time: Th, 9:30am-12:15pm

This course will explore Shakespeare’s two tetralogies of English history plays. These two groups of four plays dramatize the long Wars of the Roses. The second tetralogy (they were written in inverse chronological order) charts the sequence from the deposition of King Richard II to the legendary English military victory of King Henry V; the first tetralogy follows the story

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of King Henry VI through Richard III, ending with the marriage that will lead to King Henry VIII.

The goals of this 600-level course are twofold. First, it is a chance for students to delve deep into some of Shakespeare's plays and the historical context in which they were written. Second, it is an opportunity for us to think critically about the shapes of historical time – how do we construct / reconstruct / deconstruct / divide / inhabit / resist / ignore / deploy the past? Shakespeare's plays are deeply connected to the phenomenon of sixteenth century historiography, and both the habits of thought and the plays written in that period have had a long influence on how subsequent generations processed history. Thus, we will be considering both how history was written in the sixteenth century, and how the legacy of this historiography continues to shape our own understanding of historical time.

The primary assignment of the seminar will be an article-length paper, with shorter tasks to help pace the project along the way.

This course satisfies the requirement for literature pre-1700

ENGL 667-010: Writing for Publication

Instructor: Julian Yates

Course Time: Th, 3:30-6:15pm

In the "The Discourse on Language," his inaugural address to the Collège de France in 1970, Michel Foucault described truth as a space of discourse rather than as an ontologically stable thing or category. Publication, academic publication especially, regardless of the intrinsic value of the writing or its concept, is described as a process of accreditation or truth making. When we write, have ideas, posit readings, etc, and attempt to alienate that writing in the form of journal essay, book chapter, or book, our efforts will be judged to fall "within" of "without" the "true." Such is the process of entering into a discourse, of being judged a competent or incompetent user. And, as Foucault was only too aware, such judgments have the power to bestow the social hieroglyphs of acceptance on certain users; to deprive others of access to the "truth"; and to accord others the ambiguous status of the outsider, the marginal, the idiotic, the radical or the avant garde.

The aim of this course, developed as a collaboration between graduate students and faculty, is to aid you in negotiating the passage from writing essays for seminars to "writing for publication," both in the mechanical or rhetorical sense of what to do and when to do it, and also in the larger sense of how you hope to take up your relation to this mode or "order of discourse." Topics to be covered include: how to choose a journal appropriate to your essay; differences between a seminar paper, a dissertation chapter, and a journal essay; how to frame an essay for an audience; navigating readers' reports; and the genres of academic writing. The format of the course will be in the style of a workshop. All members of the seminar will work on translating an essay-in-progress into an essay they will submit to a journal / other venue. Along the way, we will discuss shared readings and hear about the kinds of choices made by our peers and colleagues as they have navigated and continue to navigate the orders of discourse.

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Please note that this course will run pass / fail. You should also consult with your advisers and past seminar leaders on which of your essays / projects / chapters, past and present, would be best for you to work on for the semester. If you have questions or queries I am happy to try to address them: jyates@udel.edu.

ENGL 685-010: Beyond Words: The Rhetoric of Visual Communication

Instructor: Candice Welhausen

Course Time: T/R, 12:30-1:45pm

We've all heard the saying 'a picture is worth a thousand words,' but what is it exactly about a picture (as Jay Lemke puts it) that not even a thousand words can explain? In this course, we'll investigate visual rhetoric from several theoretical perspectives: semiotics, visual culture, document design, rhetorical theory, and displaying quantitative information (statistical graphics). Students will write short response papers, complete several short design exercises, and a final project. The final project will include creating a poster presentation that students will display in an end-of-the-semester exhibit.

This course satisfies the requirement for literary and cultural theory.

ENGL 830-010: Dickens, Martineau, and the Victorian Press

Instructor: Iain Crawford

Course Time: T/R, 2:00-3:15pm

How did a national press emerge in the first decades of the Victorian period? How was its emergence related to the rise of professional women authors? In what ways was the emergence of the press a transatlantic phenomenon? Using the work of Charles Dickens and Harriet Martineau as its lens, this course will address these questions and consider the role of the press in the formation of the Victorian public sphere.

Beginning with readings of Dickens's American Notes and Martin Chuzzlewit and extracts from Martineau's Society in America, we will explore the two authors' responses to the journalism they encountered when they visited the United States and its impact upon their contributions to the development of the press on both sides of the Atlantic. We will then examine Dickens and Martineau's wide-ranging engagement with the press of the 1850s, focusing on *Hard Times* and its serialization in Dickens's mass-market weekly *Household Words* together with both Martineau's contributions to Dickens's magazine as well as her work for a wide range of other publications. Through reading what has become canonical fiction in the wider cultural context of journalism targeted at issues and audiences of the moment we will explore the interactions between the two. Students will produce a 5000-6000 word seminar paper built from shorter writing assignments and a bibliography developed during the course of the semester.

Research Track: Print/Material Culture

This course satisfies the requirement for literature 1700-1900

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ENGL 844-010: Literary Representation: Theories and Texts of American Realism

Instructor: Jeannie Pfaelzer

Course Time: T, 9:30am-12:15pm

"Realistic fiction serves nineteenth-century society by providing it with strategies for containing (and repressing) its disorder." Leo Bersani

How does American literature contain the disorders of history? This course considers how 19th c literature articulated the visible, and how the visible was re-defined over and over again in the nineteenth century. We will build on Raymond Williams's terms "knowable" and "unknowable" to ponder representations of the diverse feelings and transformations of daily life. By mid-century representations of domesticity, slavery, industry, labor, the city and the working, sexual, and maternal body depended on a series of fictions that assumed that they could unproblematically represent history. By what signs did the new American fictions assert that they could represent material, corporeal and emotional registers? Turning to realist American short stories and novels, and then to their progeny in regionalism and naturalism, we will consider how fiction represented the 19th c, and how we might theorize these representations.

We will consider: How has the realist tradition been associated with the bourgeois and humanistic biases of the "great tradition" on the one hand and the resistant gestures of naturalism and socialist realism on the other? How and why has class disappeared as a discursive and political category, and is that disappearance connected to cultural critiques of realism? Do realist texts preclude counter-readings and pluralities of readings? Is there an identifiable tradition of African American realism? What happens when realist discourses seek to represent the body? How did the slave narrative, the tall tale, and sentimental novel launch American realism? We will turn to theories from the Frankfurt School, American Studies, feminist and queer theory, Critical Race Studies, and studies of photography to consider the relationship between 19th c history and literary forms. This course will include theorists Georg Lukacs, Hayden White, June Howard, Fredric Jameson, Daphne Brooks, Jocelyn Moody, Richard Brodhead, Eric Sundquist, Laura Wexler, Philip Fisher, & texts likely to include Frederick Douglass, Mark Twain, William Dean Howells, Rebecca Harding Davis, Harriet Wilson, Louisa May Alcott, Mary Wilkins Freeman, Jack London, Stephen Crane and Charles Chesnutt. This course will debate Leo Bersani's proposition about the relationship between history and fiction.

WRITING AND COURSE WORK: Depending somewhat on the size of the class: two response papers on readings of your choice, one critical presentation, one textual presentation, one research prospectus and annotated bibliography due five weeks before the end of terms, and one final research paper.

This course satisfies the requirement for literature 1700-1900

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ENGL 875-010: Refiguring Human Rights

Instructor: Emily Davis

Course Time: MW, 8:40-9:55am

In this course we will explore the ways in which literary studies usefully challenges the limits of human rights discourse as it is currently understood in Western legal and activist circles. As prominent scholars of human rights have pointed out, there are a number of problems with current human rights discourse. One of the major limitations from a legal point of view is that it depends on the citizen as the model for who is guaranteed rights and on whose behalf interventions are carried out. However, many people are vulnerable to human rights abuses precisely because they are not citizens of the nation-state in which they live: they are immigrants, refugees, or exiles who lack the protections guaranteed to citizens by the state. If the category of the citizen is a problem for human rights discourse, the state is also a problem as the body responsible for enforcing human rights norms. What happens if the state itself is the perpetrator of human rights abuses, which has been the case with alarming frequency? Yet, since organizations like the International Criminal Court have a limited ability to force states to obey international human rights norms like those laid out in the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights, there has not been a viable alternative to the nation-state.

How can literary studies help with this situation? For one thing, literary representations of human rights have helped us imagine new forms of solidarity and shared humanity that take us beyond the mostly Western-centric ideas about the citizen and the state in human rights discourse. Writers working from a variety of locations around the globe have reflected on their connections across national borders, offering new models of what the "human" in human rights means. Texts like Phaswane Mpe's *Welcome to Our Hillbrow*, for example, reimagine shared humanity based on the universal aspiration to physical and mental health and our shared vulnerability to disease, especially in an era of global contagion. If human rights discourse has often focused on political rights at the expense of cultural and economic rights, Shyam Selvadurai's *Funny Boy* demonstrates how taking into account the power of individual and community perceptions of who one is and what one stands for (a strength of literary studies) provides necessary correctives to purely political or economic approaches to intervention and aid.

We will read a variety of key texts in the interdisciplinary field of human rights, from the literary to the historical to the legal, as well as several novels. Assignments will likely include two presentations, an annotated bibliography of a key term from the field, and a final research paper of approximately 20 pages.

Research Track: Race/Ethnicity; Transnational/Transatlantic
This course satisfies the requirement for 1900-present

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Spring 2016 Course Descriptions

ENGL 688-010: Introduction to Composition Theory & Pedagogy (required for 1st year students)

Instructor: Joseph Harris

Course Time: Thursdays, 3:30-6:00pm

Writing has been a teaching subject in American colleges and universities since their beginnings. Well before English literature was established as an academic discipline, American colleges had appointed Professors of Rhetoric and Oratory, and in recent decades, as literature courses and majors have declined, the demand for the teaching of writing has steadily increased. And yet the status of writing as a subject of study has remained curiously low—with writing commonly viewed as a basic skill that everyone should already know, and composition as a remedial course that almost anyone should be able to teach.

But it turns out that writing about texts and ideas is a complex craft—and one that can prove both hard and exciting to teach. We will begin this seminar by comparing several leading approaches to teaching writing. We will then look at how these pedagogies have been put into practice in particular writing programs and courses. And we will try to account for their differences by analyzing the theories of writing and discourse that inform them. I hope that through this work you will develop a sense of how you want to teach writing yourself.

In place of a final seminar paper, I will ask you to take on several projects over the course of the semester. Most important among them will be the materials for the section of English 110 you will be assigned to teach in Fall 2016. But I will also ask you to complete several brief responses to readings, an analysis of a writing program at another university, a brief survey of research on an issue or figure in writing studies, and a proposal for a talk at a conference on teaching writing.

The materials for the last time I taught this seminar are posted at <https://english688fall2014.wordpress.com/>. I look forward to working with you.

ENGL 641-010: Black Activism and Print Culture in the 19th Century and the Digital Age

Instructor: Gabrielle Foreman

Course Time: Wednesdays, 5:30-8:30pm

Black activists of the nineteenth century are called abolitionists so routinely that the appellation goes unmarked and unnoticed. Yet the anti-slavery movement disintegrated as the Civil War ended, while many reformers—Henry Highland Garnet, Frances E.W. Harper, Frederick Douglass, Mary Ann Shadd Cary, for example—remained active into the 1880s and 1890s. This class will re-center Black activism in relation to the Colored Conventions Movement, which shared its genesis with the antebellum abolitionist movement, but continued, indeed grew, in scope and force after the Civil War. We will sometimes pair literature published in African American newspapers with conventions. *David Walker's Appeal* will appear on our syllabus next to both inaugural 1830s conventions and gatherings in the 1840s with which the *Appeal's* print history is connected. We will consider Harper's *Minnie's Sacrifice* alongside the 1873 Delaware

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Colored Convention for which Harper was the keynote speaker and complement this with the just-released *Black Print Unbound*, the first study on an important and long-running Black newspaper, the *Christian Recorder*, in which three of Harper's serialized novels appeared. We'll read another serialized novel, Martin Delany's sweeping Diasporic *Blake* (with its Cuban-American enslaved protagonist), alongside the 1872 anti-Cuban slavery convention led by Henry Highland Garnet.

By engaging issues of digital and public histories, the class looks forward in its consideration of the past. We will examine databases that bring maps and visualization to the study of African American history. In addition to reading articles about how the digital humanities encounters historical recovery efforts, we will discuss projects such as [The Race and Slavery Petitions Project](#), the [Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database](#), and [Visualizing Emancipation](#). UD's [The Colored Conventions Project](#) will provide an important hub. Indeed, instead of final papers, students will be invited to curate exhibits or will have the opportunity to co-curate exhibits with professors who presented at the CCP's April 2015 symposium. This class is designed so that (novice and digitally experienced) students will leave it with analytical and hands-on experience with cutting-edge research methods demanded on the job market today. Note: one class will be held in Dover and will be taught with congregants at the church where the DE convention was held.

Research Tracks: Race/Ethnicity; Print/Material Culture
This course satisfies the requirement for 1700-1900

ENGL 667-010: Introduction to Environmental Humanities

Instructor: McKay Jenkins

Course Time: Mondays, 12:20-3:20pm

The American environmental movement has been underway, in one way or another, for at least 150 years. There have been many great achievements in both conservation and science: vast national parks and wilderness areas; a reduction in industrial pollutants in our water and air; a better understanding of ecological principals.

Yet despite a century and a half of hearty debate over man's place in the world; we (and the natural world) still suffer enormous insults to the very foundation of our world: climate change receives the greatest attention these days, but other troubles are legion: mass species extinctions; vast chemical pollution of our food and bodies; habitat destruction through suburban sprawl; the destruction of our mountains for coal power; the list goes on and on

This class will provide a broad introduction to the rich and growing fields of environmental literature and the environmental humanities. We will take an especially close look at a variety of forms of literary nonfiction, from traditional narratives to essays to highly personal writing to outright advocacy journalism. Texts will include the canonical and the contemporary, and are (more or less) arranged chronologically. We will also spend considerable time discussing the parallel fields of history, geography, ecology, and environmental justice. In addition to our reading, the course will offer intensive writing instruction in a variety of forms; students will be

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asked to compose a couple of shorter pieces, including a review essay and a piece of personal writing; and a longer 15-page critical essay.

This course satisfies the requirement for 1900-present.

EAMC 667/ENGL 667/ARTH 667/MCST-012: Introduction to Theories in Material Culture Studies

Instructor: Martin Brueckner

Course Time: Tuesdays, 3:30-6:30pm

This seminar introduces graduate students to the theories and practices of “material culture studies.” As the investigation of anything that is made or modified by humans, material culture works on the assumption that every object can reveal complex stories about past and present societies. Thus, we study household goods, machinery, built forms, art, landscapes and living bodies, as well as processes of production and consumption. At the same time, we examine things as material expressions of values, social relationships, political ideologies, economic conditions and cultural change over time. This seminar explores the principles that inform our investigation; they include (but are not limited to) material concepts; social life of things; modes of object analysis; methodologies and their application; objects as word and image; gendered objects; technology and manufactured things. Through lectures, assignments, and fieldtrips we will apply major and lesser known theories in unique learning and research opportunities. This is a cross-listed, interdisciplinary graduate course. Spaces may be limited.

Research Track: Print/Material Culture

This course satisfies the requirement for literary and cultural theory.

ENGL 846-010: Renaissance Sexualities

Instructor: Miranda Wilson

Course Time: MWF, 11:15am-12:05pm

This course explores the complex and often contradictory constructions of sexuality during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Even while early moderns relied upon binary systems of gender and sexuality as a basic means for ordering society, they also entertained the possibility of much more fluid configurations of bodies, desires, sensations, and social/political positions. This tension produced such things as plays in which women changed into men, poetry where humans might propagate like plants, innumerable references to humans transfiguring into beasts through sexual failure, and fantasies of violation, conquest, and dissolution. In order to explore the uses of gender and sexuality for English writers and their publics, we will read a variety of primary texts including poetry, drama, prose, speeches, and political works, as well as Renaissance translations of Ovid, Aristotle, and other influential classical writers. Alongside early modern texts, we will also explore the work of foundational theorists such as Michel Foucault, Teresa de Lauretis, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Judith Butler, and Gayatri Spivak.

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Finally, we will turn to more recent work arising out of gender studies, queer theory, and hybridity theory.

This course satisfies the requirements for literary and cultural theory and literature pre-1700.

ENGL 874-010: Print, Politics and the Imagination in Early America

Instructor: Edward Larkin

Course Time: Tuesdays, 9:30am-12:15pm

Over the past two decades scholarship in early American literature and culture has dedicated a great deal of attention to the development of the print and political cultures of the eighteenth century. Studies of the development of local print markets, systems of distribution, and reading cultures have become almost as prevalent as examinations of the analogies between the unfolding political narrative and the plots of early American novels. But what about the imagination? How do we account for the imaginative and aesthetic dimensions of the literature of late eighteenth-century America? The aim of this course is to begin to think about how we might situate an understanding of the imagination in relation to the print and political contexts of this period. How might we understand the relationship between the structural and ideological contexts of print and political culture alongside ideas about the creativity, beauty, and the imagination? If in an earlier moment of literary studies aesthetics stood in opposition to historical, political and social contextualization, how might we rethink that relationship in more complementary terms? To gain an understanding of these issues and formulate some possible answers we will read novels, poems and plays from the early US alongside political writings and documents. At the same time, we will become acquainted with key scholarship on early American print culture and recent thinking about aesthetics and the imagination. Students will give presentations and write a research paper (20-25 pp).

Research Tracks: Print/Material Culture

This course satisfies the requirements for literature 1700-1900.

ENGL 884-010: Narrating Race, Narrating Nation

Instructor: Peter Feng

Course Time: Wednesdays, 12:20-3:20pm

“Race is a social construction.” This statement is one of those ideas that was once radical, then quotably, then apparently commonplace (at least in the academy); and as such, it is an idea worth tracing back and interrogating. (In the Summer of 2015, the media’s coverage of Rachel Dolezal revealed that the notion of the scope and limitations of the concept of race as a construct.) In this seminar, we will examine the idea that race is produced through narration. We’ll also look at another term -- nation -- closely related to race. We’ll examine how nations are constructed through discourse and myth-making (through narrative) and the role that racial discourses play in those constructions.

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Both Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* and Edward Said's *Orientalism* contend that print media and the academy are central to the discursive construction of racial and national identities. We'll look at key intertexts for these works (like Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin White Masks*) and of course at critics (such as Dennis Porter and Aijaz Ahmad). We'll examine Trinh T. Minh-ha's critique of anthropology in *Woman/Native/Other*. And of course we'll read Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha, and many others.

Written work to be negotiated individually (totaling 25 pages): one article-length essay is the norm, but multiple short essays are a possibility.

Graduate Seminar, undergraduates excluded.

Research Tracks: Transatlantic/Transnational; Race/Ethnicity

This course satisfies the requirement for literary and cultural theory.