

Graduate Course Descriptions  
Department of English  
Fall 2019

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**ENGL 600: Intro to Grad Studies**

Siobhan Carroll

Wednesdays, 12:20-1:20 p.m.

This introductory seminar aims to familiarize students with some of the resources and faculty associated with our program. It also introduces and reviews important genres of academic writing, including the journal article and proposal. The colloquium will exemplify to examine and discuss the reading and writing practices that are essential to scholarship in the discipline of English.

\*Required for first-year graduate students

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**ENGL/ARTH/HIST 667: Environmental Humanities: Weather Matters**

Lowell Duckert

Thursdays, 9:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Reacting to the predominant discourses of “sustainability” and “resilience” in the environmental humanities at present, Astrida Neimanis and Jennifer Mae Hamilton have proposed the trope of “weathering” instead: “weathering,” they argue, “invites us to consider what we will lose along the way.” This course investigates weather’s material agency, its historical relation to “climate,” and its active role in the artistic process across various mediums. In doing so, moreover, the course pays close attention to weather’s unequal impacts on both human and nonhuman bodies. The ability to weather (or not) catastrophe, we will discover, speaks to the interests of environmental justice and the efforts of feminist, postcolonial, and queer ecocritics (amongst others) who seek to redress the plights of those communities most at risk. In addition to reading interdisciplinary scholarship on the weather (huddled under the umbrella term “Anthropocene”), as well as studying medieval to modern works of art affected by it, we will examine a range of eco-materialist approaches – including actor-network theory, vital materialism, and object-oriented ontology – in order to imagine different ways onward: ontological, epistemological, and ethical paths to help us weather our world and its losses, but also its uncertain futures.

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**ENGL671 Studies in Fiction: History of the Anglo-American Novel**

Edward Larkin

Wednesdays, 9:05 a.m.-12:05 p.m.

This seminar will focus on introducing students to the origins of the genre of the novel with a focus on the Anglo-American tradition. We will read a series of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British and American novels alongside foundational critical works on the genre and more recent scholarship. The aim of the course is for students to become familiar with important threads in the theory of the novel and while also thinking about the long-term dialogue between the British and American approaches to the genre. Some of the topics we will cover will include narrative voice, the bildungsroman, character, the rise of the novel, domesticity, race, the gothic, gender, print culture, transatlantic circulation, captivity, seduction, spatiality, and temporality. Some of the authors whose novels we may read include Defoe, Radcliffe, Brockden, Brown, Rowson, Austen, and Melville. The major assignment structure for the seminar will consist of a paper proposal and an annotated bibliography leading up to a conference paper which they will present during an in-class conference, and then submit in revised form at the end of the term.

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### **ENGL675 Studies in Film and Media: Introduction to Digital Humanities**

David Kim

Mondays, 9:05 a.m.-12:05 p.m.

The digital humanities (DH) most broadly explores knowledge production with particular attention to the technologies of representation and communication. It offers new vocabularies and methods for understanding how texts, and our interpretations of them, are always mediated and networked. In doing so, DH not only continues the longstanding theories on form/content, but also broadens the scope of scholarly endeavors. For example, how does a database of poems or images function as more than a replica? Relatedly, how does one “make” a database? This introductory seminar will begin with an overview of the development of DH in recent decades. Amongst many possibilities, this seminar will frame DH’s genealogy at the intersection of new media studies and textual studies. Guided by the concept of “design,” the students will write a grant proposal for one’s own digital project, which will include a simple, yet meaningful, web-based prototype and a documentation of technical specifications.

\*Prior digital expertise is not required, but the students are expected to learn the basics of web content development in class and advance one’s skills in a self-taught manner.

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### **ENGL 684 Introduction to Literary Theory**

Julian Yates

Mondays, 2:30-5:30 p.m.

This course will serve as an introduction to the on-going conversations about form, history, rhetoric, and matter corralled under the name of “literary theory.” The aim is to build a sense of the “story so far” as well as to keep the focus on learning how to read these sometimes esoteric and challenging texts. We will begin by telling the story of the origins of English Studies in the UK and the US, tracing the formation of New Criticism and cultural studies, and then reckon with the translation exercise, import / export

business, that was the arrival of French and German philosophy in English Departments in the mid 1970s and 1980s: Structuralism, Post-Structuralism. We will reckon with the turn to historicism (1990s), the advent of science studies / eco-criticism / animal studies / the “post-human;” the return of rhetoric in “rhetoric and composition,” and the “new materialism.” Along the way we will adopt a series of literary texts to keep us company and, as a matter of course, keep asking what and how and if “literature” / literary studies contribute to projects / movements that aim to constitute a more just and inclusive common world: Marxism, Feminism, LGBTQ+ Studies, the politics of race / difference, and the environmental humanities. Course requirements will include frequent short writing exercises (close readings / keyword studies) and presentations geared to help in our story / narrative-building.

\*Required for first-year graduate students

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**ENGL 698 Studies in Rhetorical Composition: Rhetoric, Aesthetic...Eclectic? What IS English Studies?**

Melissa Ianetta

Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

How many disciplines does it take to make – or unmake -- a department?

In pursuit of this question, this class will look at a range of critical theories, contemporary pedagogies and current debates to consider what, if anything, is English Studies. To ground ourselves in the longstanding segmentation which founds our current situation, texts will include Plato’s Phaedrus, Gorgias, Ion and Menexenus; excerpts of Aristotle’s Rhetoric and Poetics, Foucault’s Order of Things and “Discourse on Knowledge;” and historical accountings of the formation of the discipline(s) of English by Gerald Graff, John Guilory, Sharon Crowley and James Berlin. We will draw, too, from recent issues of College English, whose field office is at UD and which I edit. Finally, we’ll include recent accountings of disciplinarity such as Composition, Rhetoric and Disciplinarity as well as those regular rants appearing in the pages of Inside Higher Ed and Vitae.

Students will have the opportunity to use these materials to explore in their immediate areas of scholarly interest in reading responses, a shorter paper, a presentation and a final paper. Together, this work will help us expand our means of inquiry even as we better understand how we each (re)create a version of English Studies in our own work. Finally, the seminar should help us augur our own futures more clearly as we try to better understand the current national trajectory of departments of English.

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