

Fall 2018 Course Descriptions

ENG 700- Bibliography and Methods

John Hay

Mon. 1:00pm-3:45pm

This course will serve as an introduction to graduate work in English. We will survey different fields in the profession along with prevalent methodologies. We will also cover various genres of graduate student writing, such as the annotated bibliography, the book review, the conference paper, the journal article, and the scholarly monograph. Students should develop a deeper familiarity with the range of available scholarly techniques and professional approaches to literary criticism. This course fulfills a requirement for MA students and can serve as an elective for MFA and PhD students.

ENG 705- Graduate Poetry Workshop

Claudia Keelan

Thu. 4:00pm-6:45pm

From the Bhagavad Gita, Keats's letters, Thoreau's seminal essay *Walking*, to Charles Olson's *Projective Verse* and *Proprioception* and countless other devotional and literary texts, authors have been looking for forms of obedience rooted in what I like to call the metaphysics of the physical. When Krishna advises Arjuna to surrender his desires and detach from the fruit of his action by fulfilling his role as warrior, he chides him for believing he has the power to kill anyone when "we have all been for all time; I, and thou, and those kings of men..." The human body itself, moving through the stages of infancy, youth, and old age, gives us a physical demonstration of such obedience, while what we call our spirit likewise "wanders on to a new body..."

The practice of yoga and the poetics of negative capability both involve giving up a predetermined idea, a priori idea of Self. This semester in English 705 we'll practice yoga both through meditation and active poses in addition to reading texts to better enable students to write with their attention focused on the reality of their own, lived present.

ENG 720- Medieval Literature: Saints Lives and Gender Studies

Phillip Rusche

Tue. 4:00pm-6:45pm

In this course we will study the most popular genre of literature from late antiquity and the middle ages, the saint's life. We will read a variety of lives—virgin martyr, desert ascetic, warrior, and harlot—to examine how they formulate a theory of sanctity centered on the body of the saint. In the first part of the course we will read the foundational texts of the genre before moving to Irish and Anglo-Saxon adaptations. Towards the end we will move into the later medieval period and look at several Middle English lives. Alongside these we will read works by theorists and historians like Plato, Augustine, Jerome, Butler, Burrus, Rousselle, Foucault, and others.

ENG 729- Forms of Fiction

Douglas Unger

Wed. 4:00pm-6:45pm

This course is designed primarily for creative writers but will be open to all graduate students. Our major focus will be on two very different source language literatures, how they developed, what they were influenced by, how to place them in their source culture and world cultures, and their emergence as artistic influences on new writing in English. The first half of the semester puts focus on modern and contemporary Chinese literature in translation, reading examples by Nobel laureate Mo Yan, Shanghai new women's movement writer Wang Anyi, fiction as social critique by Yu Hua, and a new Chinese-

American writer, Yiyun Li, influenced by this tradition and now writing in English. The second half of the semester examines postmodern European and South American influences on contemporary Latin American fiction, using a work by Austrian author Thomas Bernhard as an example that (along with others) transformed the aesthetics and styles of a generation of Latin American writers, with a focus on exemplary works by Roberto Bolaño and Horacio Castellanos Moya, followed by the newest emerging young writer on the Mexican literary scene, Aura Xilonen, whose prize-winning first novel is about crossing borders. The semester will close with the reading of a Turkish masterpiece by Orhan Pamuk just because, and to try on something new, as among the learning objectives of this class is to examine writing techniques that emerge from fictions in translation, and cross-cultural influences. Language issues raised by the craft of translation will be examined closely. Required writing for the course will be “imitations” of techniques, voices, innovations discovered in the readings; or annotations analyzing techniques; or for literary scholars, two short research papers. Other than the required reading, a wide-ranging recommended reading list will be encouraged, as one of our learning objectives is to use these literary spaces to launch further studies leading to an opening up to influences that help to make new art.

ENG 729- Forms of Literary Nonfiction

José Roach Orduña

Wed. 1:00-3:45

“The Literary Essay and Claims for Justice: Literary Criticism, Contemplation, Immersion, and Memoir.” In attempting to elucidate something about a political aesthetic in art, literary critic and Marxist political theorist, Fredric Jameson, explains that “realism presupposes a form of aesthetic experience which yet lays claim to a binding relationship to the real itself, that is to say, to those realms of knowledge and praxis which had traditionally been differentiated from the realm of the aesthetic.” The literary essay exists in this binding—yet unruly—relation to our unfolding realities. It moves, as Aldous Huxley suggests, between three realms of knowledge: “There is the pole of the personal and the autobiographical; there is the pole of the objective, the factual, the concrete-particular; and there is the pole of the abstract-universal.” This framework gives the literary essay a particularly potent movement that yields texts that are at once exuberant in their prose and biting in their critique. Under the larger umbrella of the literary essay we will read and examine texts that can be further categorized as: Literary Criticism, Contemplative Essay, Immersion Journalism/Dispatch, and Memoir. We will read Audre Lorde, Hunter S. Thompson, C.L.R. James, Maggie Nelson, James Baldwin, Robin Wall Kimmerer, John Berger, Teju Cole, Atef Abu Saif, Julio Cortázar, Li-Young Lee, David Wojnarowicz, and others.

ENG 725- Shakespeare

Evelyn Gajowski

Tue.1:00-3:45

How does Shakespeare speak to us in the 21st century? Why is he more popular today -- in a global context -- than ever before? Why do so many people consider him to be the greatest playwright (or writer) in the world? How do contemporary categories of analysis (e.g., race, class, gender, sexual orientation) inform our interrogation of his texts & his culture?

We'll emphasize Shakespeare's dramatic representations of problematic issues: subjectivity & objectification; love tragedy; crossdressing, gender ambiguity, & homoeroticism; abdication & usurpation of monarchical power; false accusation & slander. In tandem with his dramatic texts, we'll study criticism that exemplifies some of the dominant theoretical approaches in the discipline of Shakespeare studies today: cultural materialist, ecocritical, ecofeminist, feminist, film, new historicist, performance, postcolonial, posthumanist, presentist, psychoanalytic, queer, race. We'll evaluate cinematic texts that are based on his dramatic texts. We'll interrogate the complex

relationships among Shakespeare's texts, his society, & our society, considering the ways in which all three are mutually constitutive, shaped by, & shaping, each other.

The seminar employs critical literacy, an interactive pedagogical strategy that aims to create a community of interpreters who actively participate in the construction of meaning together with the professor. Seminar meetings are structured around student-centered pedagogical projects, therefore, such as oral reports & discussions of weekly assignments & position papers, in addition to lectures on the part of the professor. A final project developed throughout the semester on a subject of the student's choosing, progress reports on the final project, & position papers on weekly assignments comprise the student written work for the seminar.

ENG 735- Victorian Poetry

Christopher Decker

Mon.4:00-6:45

ENG 760- Studies in Literary Genres: Dystopian Worlds

Felicia Campbell

Wed.4:00-6:45

From E.M. Forester's *The Machine Stops* and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* to Ursula K. LeGuin's *Lathe of Heaven* and Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, from post-apocalyptic America in Walter Miller Jr's *Canticle for Leibowitz* to Ahmed Saadawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad* this course examines the many faces of dystopia reflected in fiction. Creativity, independent thinking and no holds barred discussion are encouraged.

English 760- Studies in Literary Genres: African American Travel Writing

Gary Totten

This course examines representations of African American mobility (both physical and cultural) in texts ranging from transatlantic travel writing in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to later twentieth and twentieth-century fiction, film, and travel texts. We will explore how Reconstruction, racial uplift, Jim Crow laws, lynching, the New Negro renaissance, and the Civil Rights Movement influence issues of mobility in the work of African American writers. Course texts will include the travel writing of Ida B. Wells, Jessie Redmon Fauset, Matthew Henson, Zora Neale Hurston, Carl Rowan, and Richard Wright. We will also examine themes of mobility in the fiction of Toni Morrison and Paule Marshall, and Julie Dash's film *Daughters of the Dust*.

English 760- Women's Nonfiction: From Virginia Woolf to the Present

Beth Rosenberg

Thu.4:00-6:45

This course will survey nonfiction prose written by women in the 20th- and 21st-centuries, including memoir, the personal essay, and hybrid forms. We will begin, interestingly enough, with Montaigne's essays and trace his influence on the modernist writer Virginia Woolf, specifically her "Moments of Being" and *A Room of One's Own*. From there, we will move through the century and discuss the role and function of women's nonfiction writing in contemporary culture and end the term with a focus on works from the late 20th-century to the present moment. We will consider the essays and full-length works of Gertrude Stein, Adrienne Rich, Julia Kristeva, Hélène Cixous, Susan Sontag, Joan Didion, Sara Manguso, Maggie Nelson, Eula Biss, Roxane Gay, Christina Sharp, and Ariel Levy, among others.

English 791- College Teaching Language and Literature

Kaitlin Clinnin

Fri.11:30-2:15

English 791 is an introduction to the theory and practice of teaching college-level writing. The purpose of this class is two-fold: 1. To develop disciplinary content and pedagogical knowledge needed to be an effective writing instructor and 2. To support and assist instructors teaching composition courses at UNLV. In accordance with the Conference on College Composition & Communication (CCCC) "Statement on Preparing Teachers of College Writing," English 791 enables new instructors to develop the rhetorical, linguistic, instructional, methodological, and technical knowledge needed to effectively teach college-level writing. This knowledge base will help instructors teach a range of courses including writing, literature, and creative writing. English 791 is structured as a collaborative, active learning environment to model pedagogical approaches that instructors can adopt and adapt to their own classrooms. Students will read scholarship from writing studies to understand current theories of writing and to implement these theories in classroom practice through class discussions and activities including teaching mentor groups and collaborative lesson planning. Typical course assignments include weekly reading journals, reflections, professional development events, teaching portfolio materials, and a final teaching presentation.