Department of English, Fall 2018 Undergraduate Course Offerings
Selected Course Descriptions

This is a selective list only, meant to help you navigate your enrollment through MyUNLV, as the full Fall 2018 schedule appears. Some instructors have also made more colorful, more visually informative flyers advertising their fall courses (not included in the descriptions below).

Please look around the open house and ask faculty who are present if they have made additional flyers. It’s a good opportunity to attach courses to faces.

English 205.1004 – Intro to Creative Writing: Fiction & Poetry
(M/W 1:00-2:15pm)
Caitlin Roach Oruña
This creative writing workshop course will cover two genres of writing: poetry and fiction. In it, students will read a diverse range of material from each genre and will develop their own creative process and writing craft. Students will learn literary devices and put them into practice in their own writing, which will be workshopped. Class time will be divided between discussion of genre, the week’s reading, and workshopping students’ creative pieces. In workshop, expect to explore and discuss writing techniques, perspective, prosody, the role of imagination, emotion, and more. By the end of the course, students will have read a wide range of poetry and fiction, reviewed and employed various structures and mechanics of poetry and fiction, and critically examined their own and others’ creative process and work.

English 231.1001, 231.1016, & 231.1017 – World Literature I
(M/W 8:30-9:45am), (Tu/Th 10:00-11:15am), (Tu/Th 11:30am-12:45pm)
Dr. Scott Hollifield

English 231.1004 & 231.1005 – World Literature I
(M/W 10:00-11:15am), (M/W 11:30am-12:45pm)
Dr. Jarret Keene

232.1021 & 232.1022 – World Literature II
(web-based)
Professor Caitlin Roach Orduña
This course is a Second-Year Seminar (SYS) that explores issues relevant to contemporary global society through the reading of original literature from the Enlightenment to the present. Students study these issues within their larger contexts, which include aspects of literature, history, politics, economics, philosophy, and scientific discovery. The course’s reading and writing assignments will address questions of rhetorical occasion and purpose, as well as larger questions involving the role of art and literature in engaging socio-political, racial, and economic struggle. We will explore the ways in which writers have confronted social, political, and racial conflict in their work and will focus on how these texts may be read in relation to their literary, historical, cultural, and political contexts.
(M/W 10:00-11:15am), (Tu/Th 10:00-11:15am), (Tu/Th 11:30am-12:45pm)
Dr. Eryn Green
This course’s particular theme focuses on the examination of power complexes and structures of authority in world literature since the 18th century. As such, we will be deeply interested in understanding revolutionary contexts, the art and literature that issued from and drove them, and the fallout of generations of global socio-political upheaval. We will look at colonial histories, consider the power of language and its management, discuss the influence and construction of the unconscious mind, critique the presentation of oppressive gender roles, examine the positionality of race, and immerse ourselves in questions of cosmological order. In all of our explorations, we will foreground the consideration of how human beings experience power, how such experiences relate to the production and reception of written texts, how we personally consider ourselves to be situated in an increasingly complex global social order, and how the great works of world literature can help us understand our own human conditions more deeply. In other words, this is a class about books—the people who write them, the people who read them, and the world inside of which they exist. The course is reading-heavy, discussion-oriented, and text-driven.

English 271.1001 – Intro to Shakespeare
(M/W 10:00-11:15am)
Dr. Scott Hollifield
This section of English 271 will expand students’ knowledge of William Shakespeare beyond his formidable reputation, cultivating a fluid understanding of early modern English drama and recontextualizing a sometimes-abstract literary celebrity into a working poet. Through intensive study and ongoing discussion of Shakespeare’s poetic achievement, we will attempt to sound the depths of one who, according to his contemporary Ben Jonson, "was not of an age but for all time!" Students will explore potential stylistic and thematic connections among the genres in which the poet-playwright worked and, to illuminate the vibrant diversity of Shakespearean afterlives, encounter notable cinematic interpretations of his plays. Syllabus texts include selected sonnets, the narrative poem Venus and Adonis, and a cross-section of dramas (Titus Andronicus, The Taming of the Shrew, Richard III, and The Merchant of Venice) composed prior to 1600.
English 402A.1002 - Advanced Creative Writing Up Close and Personal: Personal Essay and Autobiographical Short Story
(M/W 10:00-11:15am)
Professor José Roach Orduña
Most writers will agree that in order to be successful they need four basic things: time to create, a group of engaged reader/editors, a venue to share their work, and energy! While an in-class espresso machine can't be guaranteed, in this workshop course we can promise to increase our skills as writers, editors, and community members by exploring what it takes to write personal essays and short stories. Through two creatively inspired unit assignments (a personal essay and autobiographical short story), students will participate in workshops that will help generate new and inventive writing and participate in the sharing of work with an intelligent group of like-minded peers. The goal of this class is to develop the skills to tell our own stories in ways that engage and move readers.
Required work: weekly reading/writing assignments, two unit essays, a public class reading, and the creation of a final chapbook.

English 406A.1001 – Electronic Docs/Publish
(hybrid-class) (M 11:30am-12:45pm)
Dr. Edwin Nagelhout
This course provides an introduction to writing for and publishing in digital/online environments, with a specific focus on digital citizenship and digital identity. The course emphasizes the social and collaborative nature of digital writing by examining, analyzing, and producing electronic genres in social, academic, and workplace contexts.

English 411B.1001/611B.1001 – Principles Modern Grammar
(web-based)
Dr. Edwin Nagelhout
This course will introduce students to the patterns of English grammar and their influence on sentence structure, punctuation, and style. The course focuses on analytical methods for understanding more fully the structure of the English language and explore the relationship between grammar and writing, reading, and thinking.

English 415B.1001/615B.1001 – Old English I
(Tu/Th: 11:30am-12:45pm)
Dr. Philip Rusche
In this course we will learn how to read Old English (the form of English from about 450 – 1100). We will begin with grammar and simple prose texts. By the end of the semester we will read more complex prose works, runic texts, and selections from poems like Beowulf.
Note: This class will satisfy one semester of your language requirement.
**English 425A.1001/625A.1001 – Themes of Literature, Trauma and Transformation**  
(M/W 4:00-5:15pm)  
**Dr. Stephen Brown**  
This course examines the relationship between trauma and narrative. The course readings will serve as our spring-board into a term-long inquiry into the causes and effects of trauma, into the forms it assumes and the diverse defensive responses to it. We will also examine the extent to which the creative urge is informed by traumatic experience; and the extent to which these narratives may be usefully informed by modern trauma theory (arising in the late 1980s out of the Yale school of critical theory (Derrida, Lyotard, DeMan, Carruth et al). The course seeks to approach the subject of trauma and narrative from the diverse perspectives of gender and ethnicity, from diverse contexts and settings (domestic, war, and institutional); and from diverse non-fiction genres: memoir, autobiography, and biography. Regular discussion of the readings will be a central feature of the class, supplemented with multi-media and guest speakers.

**English 426B.1003—Mythology: Myth, Mysticism, and Theory of the Sacred Desert**  
(M/W 11:30am-12:45pm)  
**Dr. Eryn Green**  
This course examines the roots of classical mythology from around the world, assessing its common attributes and regional variations, while expanding its purview to include contemporary cultural, mystical, and theoretical dimensions of the tradition. It will also focus on the mythology and narrative history associated with a particular geography we all know intimately here in Las Vegas: The Sacred Desert. In order to understand and explore the social, psychological, gender-based, and political implications of such mythologies, we will focus on establishing what elements are generally expected to constitute a mythological narrative, from whence these narratives and standards originate, and how the deconstruction of our shared global mythos can yield a greater understanding of why human beings are so tied to the act of mythmaking.

In other words: this is a class about stories—where they come from, what they might mean, how/where they were built, and much more. We will engage with classical and modern texts, beginning with an introduction to ancient forms, followed by an in-depth anthropological/poetic consideration of spiritual and mystic rituals and traditions centering on sacred/profane spaces, and then move toward an ecocritical exploration of place. We will also consider the psychoanalytic dimensions of hero narratives—a major through-line existing between ancient and contemporary mythologies. We will pivot mid-semester to focus on contemporary derivations of classical mythological traditions as they apply to the familiar mythic landscape of the desert. We will entertain theological, poetic, cinematic and popular texts in order to situate the great desert mythos in our society and our lives, while asking what quests we are compelled to take as students of this land and inhabitants of such an iconic locale.
English 434A.1001/624B.1001 – Shakespeare-Tragedies
(Th 4:00-6:45pm)
Dr. Evelyn Gajowski
How does Shakespeare speak to us in the 21st century? Why is he more popular today than ever before? Why do many consider him to be the greatest playwright, or writer, in the world? What characterizes his tragedies as a genre? Which problems does he dramatize? Which strategies does he deploy in dramatizing them? How do contemporary categories of analysis (e.g., race, class, gender, sexual orientation) inform the meanings we construct in his texts today? We’ll approach Shakespeare’s tragedies from a variety of perspectives & through various activities: doing close readings, performing scenes, giving oral reports, viewing & evaluating cinematic texts, reading selected historical documents & contemporary criticism. We’ll interrogate the reasons why his texts resonate for us today, as well as the relationships between his texts & his society. Because as a practicing playwright he wrote for the stage, not the page, we’ll consider his dramatic texts as scripts for performance, as well as literary artifacts worthy of analysis. The course employs critical literacy, a student-centered, interactive pedagogical strategy that aims to create a community of interpreters who participate in the construction of meaning together with the professor. Class meetings are structured around student projects such as performance groups, oral reports, Q&A, guided discussions of reading & viewing assignments, therefore, in addition to lectures on the part of the professor.
Required texts: Romeo & Juliet, Othello, Antony & Cleopatra, Hamlet, Titus Andronicus, King Lear, Macbeth

English 449A.1001 – British Literature I
(M/W 1:00-2:15pm)
Dr. John Bowers
This class provides a survey of English literature from the Old English period through the 18th century. The goal of this course is to familiarize students with “what every English major needs to know” starting with Beowulf, continuing through the medieval period with Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales, spending much time in the Renaissance with plays by Marlowe and Shakespeare, lyric poems of Spenser and Donne, and Milton’s Paradise Lost. In the 18th century we will read Swift’s Gulliver’s Travels, Boswell’s Life of Dr. Johnson, and we end with Jane Austen’s Pride and Prejudice. There will be six quizzes (60%, a term paper with revision required (20%)), and a final examination (20%).
English 451A.1001 – American Literature I
(M/W 10:00-11:15am)
**Dr. Jessica Teague**
This course surveys American literature from its origins up to the Civil War and investigates the role literature has played in the creation of America. We will read selections from a wide variety of texts in many different genres. Authors may include (but are not limited to) Anne Bradstreet, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Edgar Allan Poe, Frederick Douglass, Walt Whitman, and Emily Dickinson. Over the course of the semester, we will track chains of intellectual and artistic influence across generations in order to inquire about the general characteristics of a distinctly “American” literature. We will also consider which texts from America’s past are more relevant to our contemporary social, intellectual, and historical moment. Required Texts: *The Norton Anthology of American Literature* (9th ed.), vols. A & B

English 453B.1001/653B.1001 – American Literature, 1918-Pres
(Tu/Th 2:30-3:45pm)
**Dr. Emily Setina**
This course surveys American literature from the Civil War to the present and introduces students to major authors and literary movements in their historical contexts, from realism and naturalism to modernism and multiculturalism. Authors will include Walt Whitman, Henry James, Gertrude Stein, Ernest Hemingway, T. S. Eliot, Nella Larsen, Tennessee Williams, Allen Ginsberg, Sylvia Plath, James Baldwin, John Ashbery, Louise Erdrich, and Tracy K. Smith.

English 453B/653B (American Literature, 1918-present): Poetry since 2000
(TR 2:30-3:45)
**Dr. Emily Setina**
Poetry has often been associated with timelessness and individual expression, but poets live in a culture that demands response. How do the developments of this century—from 9/11 to social media to global politics—affect the lyric voice? The course centers on poetry written post-2000 by American poets including John Ashbery, Louise Gluck, Anne Carson, Claudia Rankine, Terrance Hayes, Tracy K. Smith, A.E. Stallings, Kaveh Akbar, Layli Long Soldier, and others. Themes include race, gender, sexuality, and the lyric self; poetry and protest; personal and historical memory; the post-9/11 elegy; ecopoetics; poetry and new media; poetry and popular culture; and the politics of language, including translation and bilingualism. Attention will be given, too, to work by poets visiting campus during the semester through the Black Mountain Institute and the Breakout Writers Series.
English 460A.1001/660A.1001 – Heroic Epic: Tolkien, Scholar and Storyteller
(M/W 10:00-11:15am)
Dr. John Bowers
This class surveys the English tradition of the “heroic epic” from the perspective of J. R. R. Tolkien by beginning with the work that he edited, translated, and taught at Oxford – *Beowulf* – and then spend most of the term studying Tolkien’s 20th-century epics in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. We will also read Tolkien’s *Silmarillion* as his background to his mythology of Middle-earth. Term grade is based on six quizzes (60%), a term paper with revision required (20%), and a final examination (20%).

English 467B.1001/667B.1001 – Modern American Drama: Theatre & Performance 1920-Present
(M/W 4:00-5:15pm)
Dr. Jessica Teague
This course explores plays by American playwrights from the 1920s to the present. From the brutal critique of industrial labor in Eugene O’Neill’s *The Hairy Ape* (1922) to Josefina Lopez’s satirical look at contemporary anti-immigration laws in *Detained in the Desert* (2011), we will examine the critical role theatre has played in shaping and performing American identity. We will also consider how modern theatre responds to developments in media technology such as radio, film, and tv, including the rock & roll musical *Hair* (1967) and Orson Welles’s sci-fi radio play *War of the Worlds* (1938). In addition to reading plays, students will attend performances and have the chance to meet actors and directors in order to help us think about the relationship between text and performance. Other playwrights may include Sophie Treadwell, August Wilson, David Henry Hwang, Tony Kushner, Lin-Manuel Miranda, and others.

English 477A.1001 / 677A.1001 – Film and Literature East/West
(Th 4:00-6:45pm)
Dr. Felicia Campbell
In this course, we examine films and literature that examine some of the vast cross-cultural colonial and post-colonial interactions between Asia and the West. We begin with James Hilton’s *Lost Horizon*, which, as Lopez writes, has contributed to making the West “Prisoners of Shangri-La.” We will examine how stereotypes about Tibet emerged out of the “Great Game” and discuss such figures as Alexandra David-Neel who became a Tibetan lama and contributed greatly to information about Tibet. *Passage to India, Indochine* and *The Quiet American* explore the last days of colonialism in India and what is now Viet Nam while *The Year of Living Dangerously* takes us to Sukarno’s Indonesia. Other films will be announced. No holds barred discussion is encouraged. In addition to the assigned readings, students will write a four to five-page critical essay and create a final project.
English 481B.1001 – Modern Comparative Literature  
(web-based)  
Dr. Christopher Decker

English 494A.1001/694A.1001 – Native American Literature  
(M/W 2:30-3:45pm)  
Dr. Steven Sexton
Louis Owens says that stories make the world knowable and inhabitable. While they help us understand the world, they also help us understand the people who tell them. An important way of how we understand the world and imagine who we are as individuals, as communities, and as a people is through the stories we tell. Through their novels, poetry, and short fiction, we will examine how Indigenous people express self-imagination, the act of imagining oneself, through their literatures. We will also look at how Indigenous people confront issues brought by settler colonialism that include identity, history, and politics.

English 495B.1001 / 695B.1001 – Modern African American Literature: An Existential Journey to Wakanda  
(M/W 8:30-9:45am)  
Dr. Briana Whiteside
This course examines the pathway to Wakanda. Marvel’s 2018 film *Black Panther* provided a sense of hope for African Americans across the world. While the movie offered room to contemplate the power of heritage and cultural awareness for black people, the route to Wakandaland looks distinctively different in literature and popular culture. Using the music of artists like OutKast, Janelle Monàe, Kanye West, Jay-Z, and Erykah Badu, the literature of Octavia Butler, Nnendi Okafor, George Schuyler, Pauline Hopkins, and W.E.B Du Bois, and the films *Black Panther* and *The Black Power Mixtape*, to name a few, we will explore how African Americans have thought about race, identity, power, gender, and social justice leading to the present Black Panther moment. How did we get here? For instance, we will consider how being snatched back into the antebellum South to learn about ancestral lineage impacts African Americans in the present/future while on their way to Wakanda, as is the case in Octavia Butler’s *Kindred*. We will also consider how Kanye West’s sampling, Janelle Monàe’s archandroids, Erykah Badu’s aesthetic, and Jay-Z’s *4:44* equips black people with the tools to understand the power of vibranium—a healing mineral only found within the confines of blackness. These ideas and more will be explored in this class as we center African Americans and their experiences while on their way to Wakanda.