ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
GRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
Fall 2022

ENGL 500-01 (10340)
Aims and Methods
MW 4:25-5:40
Wright
This course will introduce students to important aspects of graduate study in English. Topics to be covered will include research strategies and methodologies, current trends in literary studies, advanced writing for academic and other audiences, and an exploration of issues related to the state of the field of English studies and the value of studying the humanities to the world at large. Over the course of the semester, students will bring in materials and written work for other classes for discussion and workshopping, as we learn about research methodologies and the expectations of graduate study through the work of designing, developing, and carrying out research projects.

ENGL 519-61 (13255)
Spst: Shakespeare and Milton Coming of Age
R 6:00 - 8:40
St. Hilaire
From the standpoint of the 21st century, we look back and know that Shakespeare and Milton were literary giants. But how did they get to be that way? In this course, we will be examining the careers of two of the most influential writers in English literary history, following them from their earliest works to their final texts. As we consider how Shakespeare and Milton came of age as writers, we will be asking what questions remained persistent for these writers and how their answers to those questions changed over time. By doing so, we will also consider how writing plays, prose, and poetry formed a way of thinking for them, and how each grew as a thinker and a writer over the course of his career. Fulfills pre-1700 requirement for majors.

ENGL 539-61 (13257)
Spst: 19th C. Black Writers and Nature
M 6:00 - 8:40
Barret
This course will consider how African American writers and readers represent and respond to images of the non-human natural world between 1820 and 1850. Focusing on both canonical texts like The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass and non-canonical materials like the friendship album kept by a young Black woman living in Philadelphia, we will consider the range of political arguments that Black writers advance by means of images of natural
landscapes and environments. In our discussions, we will focus in particular on how these images of nature get inflected by the writer’s performance of gender roles and by expectations about gender roles for African Americans in the mid-nineteenth century.

When Douglass represents the natural environment of the South as a wasteland full of latent menace, he is also emphasizing the masculine strength that enabled him to escape that setting. By contrast, when Harriet Jacobs represents the swampland she retreats to at one point after her escape as filled with venomous snakes, she suggests to her readers that no genteel woman should have to cope with such potentially deadly hazards. A widely-circulated poem copied into the friendship album of Amy Matilda Cassey uses the image of self-enclosed snail to urge young Black women to be punctual in their habits, orderly and restrained in their dress and quiet in public spaces. This image of a constrained and genteel Black femininity contrasts, however, with the other images the albums offer of Black women’s bodies moving freely through space. Writing in New Orleans in the 1840’s, the Black French-speaking poets who call themselves ‘Les Cenelles” rely on images of romantic natural settings and blooming floral bowers to present men like themselves as genteel, yet gallant heroes, seeking to protect mixed race Black women from predatory white men. Writers will we read for the class will include Frederick Douglass, Harriet Jacobs, anonymous and named contributors to the friendship album of Amy Cassey, anonymous writers and editorialists in the Colored American, the French-language poets “Les Cenelles” and the enslaved poet George Moses Horton, among others.

ENGL 558-61 (13259)
Spst: Post War American Fiction Coming of Age

Barnhisel

As the United States became the dominant economic, military, and cultural power after World War II, it experienced a golden age of fiction. This course will begin by looking at the most important and influential novels and short stories of the period 1945-70, those that documented and at times criticized the Cold War paranoia and middle-class domesticity of the period. The second half of the class, then, will show how writers from other, marginalized communities and genres were starting to demand a voice (and changes) in America’s white, male, heteronormative literary world.

Readings may include John Updike’s *Rabbit, Run*; James Baldwin’s *Giovanni’s Room*; Ursula K. Le Guin’s *The Left Hand of Darkness*; Richard Yates’ * Revolutionary Road*; Gwendolyn Brooks’ *Maud Martha*; John Okada’s *No-No Boy*; Kurt Vonnegut’s *Slaughterhouse-Five*; N. Scott Momaday’s *House Made of Dawn*; Mary McCarthy’s *The Groves of Academe*; Thomas Pynchon’s *The Crying of Lot 49*; Ishmael Reed’s *Yellow Back Radio Broke-Down*; Ira Levin’s *The Stepford Wives*; and stories by John Cheever, J.D. Salinger, Philip Roth, Flannery O’Connor, Ralph Ellison, and Eudora Welty. Students will produce a researched term paper, several shorter response papers, and a researched presentation on an aspect of 1950s or 1960s American culture and history.
ENGL 561-62 (11278)
History and Structure of the English Language
Wright
How does *The horse raced past the barn fell* function as a grammatically correct sentence? Where do the nine pronunciations of the combination *ough* come from? Why do we spell the word *receipt* with a *p*? In this course, we will answer such questions through an exploration of grammar, linguistics, and the history of English. We will begin by reviewing modern English grammar, which will help us develop a shared vocabulary that we can apply to our diachronic study of the English language. We will then examine how culture, political power, and geography affected spelling, grammar, and pronunciation from the Anglo-Saxon period to today. In so doing, we will debate what constitutes “standard” English, consider the impact of language guides (such as grammars and dictionaries), discuss the influence of recent technologies on the way we communicate, and explore how language defines our selves and our world.

This course fulfills a writing course requirement for the M.A. track in Literature and Writing but is open to students on any track.

ENGL 567-01 (13261)
Theories of Composition
Purdy
This course will explore theories of composition that work to answer these questions. We will discuss theories that seek to account for the complex and recursive nature of writing, new textual genres, and changing writing technologies. Together, we will consider the historical contexts in which these theories arose, how they respond to one another, and their educational and social implications. The course will be organized around roughly chronological units, from process theory to genre theory, that focus on particular theoretical perspectives and practical applications of them. Through discussion of course readings and writing projects, you will get a fuller picture of English studies by learning about one of its subfields, writing studies; learn—and enact—strategies for teaching yourself and others to write effectively; and become acquainted with the prevailing theoretical approaches that shape writing policies and pedagogies.

This course fulfills a writing course requirement for the M.A. track in Literature and Writing but is open to students on any track.

ENGL 700-01 (11543)
Thesis-English

ENGL 701-01 (11539)
Dissertation-FT

ENGL 703-01 (11544)
Expanded Research Paper
ENGL 710-01 (11542)
Readings

ENGL 712-01 (11946)
Internship