Course Information: Fall 2011

English 100-199, Literature

ENG 0101-01
Old English
Fyler, J
An introduction to the Old English language and literature, and to Anglo-Saxon culture. Like any course in a foreign language, this one requires a certain amount of memorization—of vocabulary and grammatical paradigms. But Old English is not that difficult to learn, and our emphasis will be literary. We will read a selection of prose works and lots of poetry, including "The Seafarer," "The Battle of Maldon," and Beowulf.

ENG 0113-01
Renaissance Drama: Over-the-Top Performance and Radical Play
Haber, J
The Renaissance is generally thought of as the greatest age of the drama in England: Shakespeare's plays are only the most well-known examples of the outpouring of theatrical activity that occurred during this period. In this course, we will read the always fascinating (and sometimes gruesome) plays of Shakespeare's contemporaries and successors, many of whom adopted more radical stances toward the major issues of their time. As we examine their presentations of various forms of power, their constructions of gender and sexuality, and their attitudes toward language and the theater, we will discover why many of these plays have been termed "oppositional drama" and "radical tragedy." We will begin by examining Christopher Marlowe's frontal assaults on contemporary orthodoxies, and we will consider the construction of sodomy in his plays. We will go on to explore the development of the drama of blood and revenge, which was introduced in *The Spanish Tragedy*, and which exploded in what has been called the "parody and black camp" of *The Revenger's Tragedy*. We will then explore the tensions which tear apart Ben Jonson's more conservative comedies. Finally, we will look at a selection of 17-century plays about women—*The White Devil, The Duchess of Malfi, The Roaring Girl, The Changeling, Tis Pity She's a Whore, and The Convent of Pleasure*; we will discuss their varying attitudes toward female autonomy and desire, and consider why women became such central figures in the drama at this time. Throughout the course, we will think about these plays' investment in their own (sometimes quite extreme) theatricality, and we will attempt to do justice to their pervasive sense of play. This course fulfills the pre-1860 requirement.

ENG 0123-01
Frankenstein's Sisters: Austen & Shelley
Hofkosh, S
Between 1811 and 1818 Jane Austen published six books known as domestic fiction or novels of courtship, each of which focuses on the interior life of a young woman falling in love in the proper, limited, provincial world of the English gentry. Starting with *Frankenstein* in 1818, Mary Shelley wrote books about misshapen monsters, forbidden passions, war, betrayal, suicide, and plague. What do these two apparently so different writers share? With some attention to context and recent critical approaches to the early 19th Century novel, and especially to women's writing during that period, we will explore the issues and interests that link Austen and Shelley as creators of "subjectivity" or what could be called "the human," from the nightmare fantasies of Austen's *Northanger Abbey* to Shelley's representation of the end of the world in *The Last Man.*

ENG 0136-01
Major Figures of the Irish Literature Renaissance
Ullman, M
In this course, we will consider, and perhaps stretch, the idea of the Irish Literary Renaissance that is generally thought of as occurring in the late 19th century and early 20th century. We shall be looking at major writers: the reading list will include Yeats, Synge, Joyce (Dubliners and Portrait). Others may be Oscar Wilde, Lady Gregory, Shaw, Elizabeth Bowen, and George Moore. I am particularly interested in the interplay of specifically "Irish" culture and politics and literary traditions, and the internationalist leanings of some of these figures.

ENG 0154-01
American Indian Writers
Ammons, E
Many people can name only one or two American Indian writers - or none. Some are even surprised to find they exist. What does this erasure mean? What dominant culture systems create and maintain it today? How do indigenous writers in the United States refuse and resist this erasure? We will begin with two late nineteenth-early twentieth-
century authors, Sarah Winnemucca and Zitkala Ša, and then concentrate on seven contemporary texts: N. Scott Momaday, House Made of Dawn; Louise Erdrich, The Bingo Palace; Leslie Marmon Silko, Almanac of the Dead; Leonard Peltier, Prison Writings; Sherman Alexie, Flight; Simon Ortiz, from Sand Creek; and Wendy Rose, Bone Dance. Throughout the course we will view and discuss films that focus on important issues for Native people today. Also we will study historical and political contexts. Major topics include: the politics of representation/self-representation; Native resistance to white colonialism, exploitation, and theft; indigenous people's self-definitions and demand for sovereignty; the relationship between art and political struggle; and our own subject positions and responsibilities in relation to the material in the course. The issue of activism will be an overt part of our work together. The course is a seminar, so active student participation will be an important element. Majors and nonmajors are welcome.

ENG 0155-01
American Women Writers
Sharpe, C

What is American Women's writing? Who is an American Woman writer? The texts in this course will emphasize the heterogeneity of American women's writing by reading a variety of texts that trace and retrace the contours and concerns of race, nation, belonging, and representation from the end of the nineteenth-century to the present. Texts may include but are not limited to: Gertrude Stein's Three Lives; Kate Chopin's The Awakening; Nella Larsen's Quicksand and Passing; Toni Morrison's Beloved; Helena Maria Viramontes's Under the Feet of Jesus; excerpts from Anna Julia Cooper's A Voice From the South; Dorothy Allison's Bastard Out of Carolina; Fae Myenne Ng's Bone; Alison Bechdel's graphic novel/comixFun Home; among others. This is a seminar. Class will be run on a discussion basis and active student participation is required. In addition to reading novels we may also view film and other visual arts as we think through "American women writing" and the practice, poetics, and politics of representation.

ENG 0162-01
Philip Roth & Company
Freedman-Bellow, J

We will take a tour through Philip Roth's fiction reading his work alongside that of a number of writers whom he has either influenced, parodied, refracted, obsessed about or appropriated. Texts may include: Portnoy's Complaint, The Ghost Writer, American Pastoral, The Human Stain, The Dying Animal (all by Roth), Gogol's "The Nose," Kafka's "Metamorphosis", Henry James's "The Lesson of the Master" and Saul Bellow's Henderson the Rain King.

ENG 0171-01
Women and Fiction
L. Bamber

The course will begin with Pride and Prejudice, a novel whose business is to get its heroine(s) married. The texts we will read after that all tend to subvert the marriage plot in one way or another. At the same time as they challenge traditional ideas of women's destiny, they also subvert the conventions of narrative and representation. This is a course for readers who are interested in matters of form and language as well as gender and identity.

ENG 0173-01
Literary Theory
L. Edelman

This course is intended as a small seminar for advanced students interested in contemporary literary theory. It will focus on exploring some of the major texts of deconstructive, psychoanalytic, queer, and "ethical" theory from the middle of the twentieth century to the beginning of the twenty-first. We will examine how various theorists conceptualize the relation between form and meaning, with particular focus on their attention to language as the non-transparent material basis of literary "representation." In doing so, we will trace the process by which the insistence on linguistic and rhetorical structures in structuralist and deconstructive analysis set the stage, paradoxically, for contemporary theory's engagement with questions of sexuality, terrorism, radical evil, and political ideology. We will move from Barthes' utopian hope of liberating language from the tyranny of the signified to more recent, and far more traumatic, encounters with the negativity of the death drive. Students should be prepared not merely to accept, but also, and more importantly, to revel in, the difficulties of the texts we'll be studying and to engage them with all the passion and energy they might elsewhere bring to novels, poems, or films. They should also be prepared to work closely with the other members of the seminar in the protracted, intense, and intensely rewarding project of thinking together. Authors whose works we'll be engaging will include Barthes, Saussure, Derrida, de Man, Lacan, Johnson, Zizek, Butler, Bersani, Sedgwick, and Badiou. This course fulfills the post-1860 requirement.
ENG 0191-01
Touring the Empire: Travel Literature and the Idea of America
Clytus, R
This course surveys travel literature about America from the Revolutionary era to the post-bellum period. Our primary concern will be to understand how the writings of (transatlantic) tourists and emigrants both contributed to and subverted the nineteenth century's myth of American exceptionalism (a phraseology first employed by Alexis de Tocqueville in his Democracy in America). To this end, we will consider a variety of journals and travelogues, along with the autobiographies of former slaves, visual arts from the New York School of painters, and northern journalism pertaining to the American south. Students should expect to gain a comprehensive understanding of the discursive rhetoric surrounding those uniquely American locales and institutions (e.g., Niagara Falls, the western prairie, democracy, slavery, etc.) and the particular social formations they beget.

ENG 0191-02
Seminar in English: Poetry in the Age of Milton
Elsky, S
What role can poets play in the shadow of civil strife? Can they make love and war? In this course, we will examine poetry written during one of the most tumultuous periods in England's history. The seventeenth century began with the accession of a Scottish king, James, to England's throne. By mid-century, radical political and religious attacks on the Crown, the Church, and the aristocracy led to a brutal civil war, the execution of a king, and the first democratic revolution in Europe. During these same years, the Scientific Revolution was beginning to fundamentally alter the way the universe was understood, setting "all in doubt," as one poet put it. This course will explore how seventeenth-century poets, Milton foremost among them, chronicled, interpreted, and even shaped these events. At the same time, the century's upheavals offered poets new ways to frame and represent their own interior life and desires, and to define and challenge gender roles. Throughout the course, then, we will be concerned with how political, religious, and social history interacts with not only grand poem of state but also the lyrical expression of love.

Authors will include John Donne, George Herbert, Robert Herrick, Katherine Phillips, Margaret Cavendish, Andrew Marvell, and, of course, Milton. Their poetry will be supplemented with short readings on politics, science, and religion from the period. While this course will be taught as an upper level seminar, no prior experience with seventeenth-century poetry is required. This course fulfills the pre-1860 requirement.