Course Information: Fall 2012

English 100-199, Literature

ENG 0109-01
Ovid and the Ovidian Tradition
Fyler, J

Ovid is the most powerfully influential Roman poet in European literature from the twelfth century on. His erotic poems—the Amores, Ars Amatoria, and Remedia Amoris—fully explore the pathos and comedy of love, and make Ovid the Freud of the Middle Ages: he provides the most elaborate and memorable terminology for describing the uncertain stability of the lover’s mind. The Metamorphoses, an epic or anti-epic, serves as a bible of pagan mythology for later poets. We will look in detail at these works and at some of the most memorable examples of their later influence. We’ll read two French works in translation, the Roman de la Rose and Les Liaisons Dangereuses, as well as a number of shorter works in English. Authors to be studied may include Chaucer, Marlowe, Shakespeare, and Spenser. This course fulfills the pre-1860 requirement.

ENG 0118-01
Reason and Revolt: The Radical 1790's
Hofkosh, S

“Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,” wrote the poet William Wordsworth about the exciting agitation for freedom and human rights that reverberated from both the American and French Revolutions towards the end of the 18th Century. Wordsworth would later change his mind about the radical principles of liberté, égalité, fraternité that sparked social transformation in England, but many writers took up the challenge to tradition and authority in reference to contested issues during the 1790’s, including the abolition of the slave trade, the condition of the common man and also of women, and the status of Ireland and Scotland under English rule. In various forms of fiction, autobiography, political writings, and poetry, writers such as William Blake, Edmund Burke, Robert Burns, Olaudah Equiano, William Godwin, Wolfe Tone, Mary Wollstonecraft, and others address the possibilities, dangers, and costs of reimagining the claims of citizenship in a changing world. With some attention to visual and graphic representation, including Blake’s illuminated works and early political cartooning, we will consider the role of literature at the end of the 18th C in the development of contemporary thinking about individual rights and cultural change.

ENG 0119-01
18th Century English Novel
Haslanger, A

This course offers an introduction to the eighteenth-century English novel from Aphra Behn to Jane Austen. It will focus primarily on the texts themselves and the kinds of stories they tell. It will also consider the cultural conditions that gave rise to the novel in Britain (trade, urbanization, a growing reading public) as well as the questions that preoccupied authors and readers of the period, including whether novels could teach readers how to live the right kinds of lives. We will read novels by Defoe, Richardson, Fielding, Burney, and others alongside short selections of criticism. 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.
**ENG0134-01**  
James Joyce’s Ulysses  
Lurz, J

This course will consist of a prolonged and meditative reading of James Joyce’s *Ulysses*, considered by many to be the masterwork of 20th century literature. We will spend 10 weeks on the novel, reading a chapter or two each week in a way that approximates the book’s original monthly serial publication in the avant-garde journal *The Little Review*. At the same time, we will be accessing and comparing the novel’s serialization in the Modernist Journals Project in order to consider how this serial reading practice allows the novel, a paean to the everyday detail, to intersect with our own everyday experience. As we steep ourselves in the world of *Ulysses*, we will enrich our reading with judicious selections of classic and contemporary Joyce criticism as well as Richard Ellman’s magisterial biography. In the last two weeks of the course, we will take an initiatory probe into *Finnegans Wake*, a "book of the night" that Joyce saw as a complement to his attempt to capture the happenings of an entire day. The reading throughout will be challenging but exciting; previous knowledge of Joyce is not required. This course fulfills the post-1860 requirement.

**ENG 0149-01**  
American Literature 1620-1815  
Rosenmeier, J

"For we must consider that we shall be as a City upon a hill." Governor John Winthrop, 1630. "Today the eyes of all people are truly upon us—and our governments, on every level, national, state, and local, must be as a city upon a hill—constructed and inhabited by men aware of their grave, trust and their great responsibility." President-elect John F. Kennedy, 1960.

Let us resolve that we did act worthy of ourselves, that we did protect and pass on lovingly that shining city on a hill." President-elect Ronald Reagan, 1980.

"We will save America; we will save the world." President-elect Barack Obama, 2008.


We will place these texts in the context of early American culture, including the displacement of native peoples, the puritans as immigrants, the beginnings of slavery, the longing for and yet never-to-be-realized American dream of a glorious future, gender relations, the growth of democracy, and the ever-present tension between individualism and community.

Participants will be invited (but not required) to go on two field trips, one to the Founders Trail in Boston, the other to Plymouth Plantation.

A journal will be required. No exams.

Graduate students will be invited to participate in a separate section which will include additional readings.

**ENG0158-01**  
Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Faulkner  
Takayoshi, I.

A seminar on the works and lives of three influential story-tellers: William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, and F. Scott Fitzgerald. The works to be discussed include *Absalom, Absalom!, Light in August, Go Down, Moses*, and representative short stories by Faulkner, *This Side of Paradise*, *The Beautiful and Damned*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Tender Is the Night*, and representative short stories by Fitzgerald, and *The Sun Also Rises*, *A Farewell to Arms*, and major short stories by Hemingway. We will also read standard biographies of these authors. Our basic concern is threefold: aesthetic, biographical, and ethical. Aesthetic: what new techniques did these authors invent for
effective story-telling? Biographical: how did these authors' lives and arts interrelate? Ethical: what questions of values did they seek to answer through their stories? Requirements: two presentations, two close-reading papers, a final paper.

ENG 0159-01
Contemporary Jewish Fiction
Freedman-Bellow, J.

A look at novels and stories by authors whose work has reflected, challenged, shaped and altered contemporary Jewish consciousness. We'll read fiction by Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud, Philip Roth, Nathan Englander, Cynthia Ozick, Anne Michaels, Art Spiegelman, and others.

ENG 0165-01
Perspectives on American Poetry
Bamber, L

Is Buddhism as American as apple pie? Is the U.S., not Asia, where it's currently most alive? Many Buddhist teachers, both Asian and American, have said as much, and certainly there are powerful resonances between Buddhist thought and American poetry. Dozens of contemporary American poets find inspiration in Buddhist ideas of impermanence, non-dualism, goallessness, etc.; and the major poets of the American tradition, including Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson and Wallace Stevens, take on new interest when read in the light of Buddhist thought. Even poets who are unfamiliar with Buddhism seem to be playing with Buddhist concepts of "the end of mind" (as Stevens put it); and the end of language, self and even Being as well. In this class we will learn about Buddhist practice from Zen Master Shunryu Suzuki and then see how and where it applies to the poetry of such quintessentially American poets as Allen Ginsberg, Gary Snyder, Whitman, Dickinson, Stevens and many others.

ENG 0183-01
American Culture During the Great Depression
Takayoshi, I

A seminar. This course will examine American literature and cinema during the Great Depression for what they reveal about the driving spirit of the age. How did the exceptionally complex, and enduring works of art explore important ideas and feelings that informed the ways in which Americans experienced the Great Depression? The seminar aims to answer this question through close analysis of literary works (Raymond Chandler, Big Sleep, Dashiell Hammett, The Maltese Falcon, Nathanael West, The Day of the Locust, Richard Wright, Uncle Tom's Children, Zora Neale Hurston, Their Eyes Were Watching God, James Agee and Walker Evans, Let Us Now Praise Famous Men, Ernest Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls) and three cinematic genres (gangster movies, screwball comedies, and musicals). Requirements: two presentations, two close-reading papers, a final paper.

ENG 0191-01
Seminar in English: Other Londons/ London's Other
Roy, M

When the SS Empire Windrush with 492 passengers from the West Indies landed at the Tilbury docks in 1948, it brought the first wave of post-war immigrants into labour scarce Britain. In the decades that followed, students, professionals, political refugees, and above all thousands of workers from India, Pakistan, Nigeria, Ghana, Bangladesh, South Africa and the Caribbean Islands settled in London in what the Jamaican poet Louise Bennett called, "colonizin' in reverse." London today is one of the most diverse cities in the world. The presence of immigrant communities from the so-called "New Commonwealth" has changed the sights, sounds and flavours of this famous city making it a place of immense cultural complexity.

The course will focus on this "other" London—the London of bhangra, calypso, and curry, and of differently accented Englishs—to chart the disparate ways in which the "others" in London have expressed their presence and thereby fundamentally redefined "Englishness" and "Britishness." We will focus on texts such as Sam Selvon's The Lonely Londoners, Andrea Levy's Small Island, Caryl Phillips' The Final Passage, and Salman Rushdie's The Satanic Verses, among others. Films may include Dirty, Pretty Things, My Beautiful Laundrette, Bend It like Beckham. We will also read/listen to the dub poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson, Benjamin Zephaniah and others.
ENG 0191-02
Seminar in English: Four Early Modern Poets; Robert Frost, William Carlos Williams, Wallace Stevens, T.S. Eliot
Ullman, M

Considering the aesthetic and philosophic choices they made, and the worlds they came out of, we will read the poems and some of the critical prose of four very different major American poets of the first half of the 20th century: Robert Frost; William Carlos Williams; Wallace Stevens; and T.S. Eliot. Students will be asked to participate in class, and will write four papers, one on each poet.

ENG 0191-03
Seminar in English: Black Feminist Theories
Sharpe, C

Black Feminist Theories will trace black feminisms and proto feminisms from the mid-nineteenth-century to the present—with the focus largely on the last 40 years. We will attend to the links between race, place, history, blackness, sexuality, and gender. Focusing on black women's political struggles in the Americas (largely the US, but also perhaps the Caribbean and Canada), we will consider: The significance of (transatlantic) slavery to contemporary black experiences. The ways that black women have been subject to and resisted racism, sexism, homophobia, and economic oppression. The transnational and "intersectional" dimensions of black feminism. And the ways that black expressive cultures—visual art, literature, poetry, film, etc.—challenge dominant constructions of black femininity and black masculinity. Readings, viewings, and listenings may include: Anna Julia Cooper, Harriet Jacobs, Barbara Smith, Audre Lorde, Angela Davis, Nina Simone, P. Gabrielle Foreman, Abby Lincoln, Michelle Cliff, Chisholm '72: Unbought & Unbossed, and Dionne Brand among other writers, artists, and theorists. This course fulfills the post-1860 requirement.

ENG 0191-04
Seminar in English: Touring the Empire
Clytus, R

This course is a survey of American travel literature from the Revolutionary era thru 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 phrase 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 0191-05
Seminar in English: The Caribbean, the Underside of Paradise
Leger, N

All too often when we think of the Caribbean we think of paradise, isles of hedonistic pleasure and of uncomplicated tropical bliss. But for writers of the Caribbean, the region's warmth and beauty overwhelmingly conceals for non-Caribbean peoples the very violence of the Caribbean's modern origin. In this course, we will closely examine how Caribbean writers have dealt with the history of violence that was the conquest, slavery and colonialism. We will closely consider how Caribbean writers of the twentieth and twenty-first century explore the residual effects of this history, specifically, its effects on social, political and interpersonal relations among races, classes, cultures and persons struggling to love themselves and others. In reading various Caribbean novels, poems and plays, we will ultimately explore how the weight of the past shapes for Caribbean writers the possibilities of the present; we will explore how these writers have sought to reinterpret a history of violence in ways that both demand and call attention to the pressing need for an improved regional future, one free from the racial, cultural and gender divisions of the past. This course fulfills the post-1860 requirement.