Course Information: Spring 2013

English 100-199, Literature

ENG 0107-01
Chaucer
Fyler, John

This course explores the works of one of the three or four greatest poets in English. We'll read Chaucer in Middle English, but he is in almost every respect easier to understand than Shakespeare, who lived two centuries later. We will spend roughly half of the semester on the *Canterbury Tales*, the other half on Chaucer's most extraordinary poem, *Troilus and Criseyde*. Chaucer is primarily a narrative rather than a lyric poet: though the analogy is an imperfect one, the *Canterbury Tales* are like a collection of short stories, and *Troilus* like a novel in verse. We will talk about Chaucer's literary sources and contexts, the interpretation of his poetry, and his treatment of a number of issues, especially gender issues, that are of perennial interest. This course fulfills the pre-1860 requirement.

ENG 0112-01
Topics in Shakespeare: Late Shakespeare
Dunn, K

A detailed look at the particular moment – political, historical and literary – of Shakespearean tragicomedy (c.1608-11). In addition to the Shakespeare plays themselves (*Pericles, Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*) we will read other examples of tragicomedy and theoretical texts. This course fulfills the pre-1860 requirement.

Course prerequisite: English 50 or 51 (or other college-level course in Shakespeare)

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 towards 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 that tear apart Ben Jonson's more conservative comedies, culminating in the carnivalesque *Bartholmew Fair*. 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 0160-01
Environmental Justice and World Literature
Ammons, E

Who is most hurt by environmental degradation and abuse and who benefits? This course examines what contemporary world literature has to say about environmental racism, toxic colonialism, ecofeminism, homophobia and the social construction of nature, globalization, and urban ecological issues. We will ask: What analyses and insights can we gain? What is the role of art in the struggle for social change? Reading includes authors from diverse racial and national locations—Zambia, South Africa, multicultural U.S., India, Malawi, Nigeria, China, Guatemala; and primary texts include films, essays, poems, and the following novels and stories: Helena Maria Viramontes, *Under the
Feet of Jesus; Zakes Mda, *Ways of Dying*; Awiakta, *Selu*; Mo Yan, "Iron Child"; Rigoberta Menchú, "Death of Her Little Brother in the Finca"; Louise Erdrich, *Tracks*; and Mahasweta Devi, "Paddy Seeds." The goal of this course is empowerment for social change. How can each of us participate as a change agent in the struggle for environmental justice, locally and globally? How can our understanding of literature contribute? Group work, a field trip, one research paper, and active class discussion will be important parts of the course. Nonmajors as well as majors are very welcome. This class counts toward the Women's Studies major, the Environmental Studies major, the Peace and Justice major, and the post-1860 requirement for the English major.

ENG 0163-01
Speak Memory: Contemporary Memoir
Freedman-Bellow, J

We will look at a number of contemporary memoirs, paying particular attention to how each author sifts, sculpts and sets down his or her memories. Why tell the tale at all, and why tell it in just this way? What is exposed and what is masked, what retrieved and what invented? We grudgingly allow our novelists to forage in reality for their material, but would we grant our memoirists reciprocal rights in the realm of the imagination? We'll ask these and many more questions of Kovaly, Nabokov, Roth, Amis, Aly, Orwell and others. This course fulfills the post-1860 requirement.

ENG 0168-01
Home is Where the Hatred Is
Sharpe, C

This seminar draws its title from Gil Scott-Heron's song of the same name (sampled by Kanye West in "My Way Home") and its focus is on productions by and "about" the North American African diaspora. We will think about the relations/tensions/dimensions of "home" and "hatred" as we think about ways that people and places are produced, made and unmade and ways that violent histories are re-imagined, redeployed, made anew. Readings, viewings and listenings may include: Gil-Scott Heron, Toni Morrison, Dionne Brand, Steve Erickson, Ralph Ellison, Andrea Lee, Fred Moten, James Baldwin, Lorraine Hansberry, Gwendolyn Brooks, and others. This course is a seminar and your engaged participation is required. This course fulfills the post-1860 requirement.

ENG 0170-01
Modern European Novel
Cantor, J

Something happened around 1900 to 1939. C.S. Lewis wrote, "I do not think any previous age produced work which was, in its own time as shatteringly and bewilderingly new as the Cubists, the Dadaists, the Surrealists and Picasso have been in ours. And modern poetry is not only a greater novelty than any other 'new poetry' but new in a new way, almost in a new dimension." And what of the novel, what Lawrence called "the bright book of life"? Did it, too, become new in a new way? We will look at works by Joseph Conrad, Thomas Mann, Franz Kafka, and James Joyce. We may take a sidelong glance at Sigmund Freud, and at modern art and philosophy. Is the work really as new as Lewis describes? And why? What changed in the world so much that the novel in order to do its jobs—to educate, entertain, enlighten and terrify—had to become so damn different from the works of the past? Students are advised (but not required) to have taken a good background in the novels preceding our period. This course fulfills the post-1860 requirement.

ENG 0171-01
Women and Fiction
Bamber, L

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. This course fulfills the post-1860 requirement.

ENG 0172-01
War and American Values
Takayoshi, I
War is unique, in that it provokes Americans to ask fundamental questions about their nation's core values: what are Americans defending?; what are they defending them against?; in what respects are they vulnerable? This seminar will explore how major American authors in the twentieth and early twenty-first century worked out their answers to these questions. Our emphasis will be on some representative literary texts; we will explore to what extent war as the subject-matter compelled these authors to bend and renovate familiar rules governing the literary genres within which they worked. But, we will also freely range over other genres such as political speeches, moral philosophy, IR theory, cultural criticism, and strategic documents, in an effort to situate war literature in the total context of the nation's cultural response to the external enemy, national emergency, and extreme violence. Readings will include the novels by Trumbo and Heller, a variety of war poetry, the memoirs by Whitaker Chambers, speeches by Wilson, FDR, Eisenhower, LBJ, G. W. Bush, essays by Kennan, Niebuhr, Walzer, Mumford, Parsons, journalism, and excerpts from standard historiography. This course fulfills the post-1860 requirement.

ENG 0192-02
Seminar in English: Asian Diasporas: Migration, Memory
Lowe, L

"Diaspora" is a suggestive framework for considering the displacements and connections of peoples within modern global processes of dislocation through war, colonialism, or immigration; it contains the impulse toward cultural unity, on the one hand, and the ruptures of separation and dislocation, on the other. "Diaspora" conveys the paradox of both the maintenance or reinvention of ties to homelands, and critiques of racial, ethnic or national essentialisms. This course considers the literature of Asian diasporas in English-speaking contexts of the U.S., Canada, and the U.K., by Jessica Hagedorn, Chang-rae Lee, Susan Choi, Louis Chu, Jhumpa Lahiri, Shyam Selvadurai, Wayson Choy, Lê Thị Diễm Thúy, Andrew Pham, Michael Ondaatje, Kazuo Ishiguro, Hanif Kureishi, and Monica Ali. This course fulfills the post 1860 requirement.

ENG 0192-03
Seminar in English: 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 overwhelming 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.

ENG 0192-04
Seminar in English: Reading Contemporary Poetry
Peterson, K

This class seeks to introduce interested students to the reading and writing of lyric poetry, a traditionally solitary form usually associated with the single speaker. The focus of the class will be on understanding the structures of poetry, reading for comprehension, and learning how to enjoy and remember poems. Lyric poetry also reminds us how closely and intimately we live with others, and much that is most vivid in contemporary writing has as much to do with the relationship between the self and others as it does with an idea of individual identity. Using vivid examples of American, Anglophone, and international verse, we will explore how poems make accessible both the terrain of the self and those vivid points of contact between us and other people, showing both to be familiar and unfamiliar. Writing responses will include a journal, exercises in poetry, short papers, and collaborations. Classroom activities will include seminar discussion, workshop, and memorization of selected poems.