

# Graduate Courses in English

2015-16

Course	Title	Fall	Winter	Spring
Eng 410	<b>Introduction to Graduate Study</b> <i>READING [:] THEORIES [∅] PRACTICES [.]</i>	<b>West, Will</b> Monday 2:00-5:00		
Eng 411 (CLS 410)	<b>Studies in Poetry</b> <i>The Logic of Poetry</i>	<b>Gottlieb, Susannah</b> Thursday 2:00-5:00		
Eng 422	<b>Studies in Medieval Literature</b> <i>Canterbury Tales</i>		<b>Phillips, Susie</b> Monday 2:00-5:00	
Eng 434	<b>Studies in Shakespeare &amp; the Early Drama</b> <i>Hamlet: That is the Question</i>		<b>Masten, Jeff</b> Wednesday 2:00-5:00	
Eng 441	<b>Studies in 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Literature</b> <i>Hamlet and Don Quixote in the 18<sup>th</sup>-Century</i>	<b>Soni, Viv</b> Wednesday 2:00-5:00		
Eng 455	<b>Studies in Victorian Literature</b> <i>Victorian Religious Experience</i>			<b>Hebert, Chris</b> Wednesday 2:00-5:00
Eng 461	<b>Studies in Contemporary Literature</b> <i>Digital Media Theory: Time, Technology, and the Subject</i>			<b>Hodge, Jim</b> Monday 2:00-5:00
Eng 471, sec 20	<b>Studies in American Literature</b> Fall - <i>Founding Terrors</i> Winter - <i>Marxism and American Literature</i> Spring - <i>Fade to Black: Cultural Production &amp; Poetics of Dissolution</i>	<b>Erkkilä, Betsy</b> Tuesday 2:00-5:00	<b>Cutler, John</b> Thursday 2:00-5:00	<b>Wilson, Ivy</b> Tuesday 2:00-5:00
Eng 471, sec 21	<b>Studies in American Literature</b> <i>Native American and Indigenous Cultures of Print</i>			<b>Wisecup, Kelly</b> Thursday 2:00-5:00
Eng 481 (CLS 486)	<b>Studies in Literary Theory &amp; Criticism</b> <i>Globe, Planet, Hemisphere, Ocean</i>		<b>Brian, Edwards</b> Tuesday 2:00-5:00	

The following pages list graduate courses on offer in English and related university programs. With permission of the Director of Graduate Studies, graduate students may enroll in 300-level courses which have been approved for graduate credit

Revised 02/12/2016

# Fall Quarter

## English 410

### Introduction to Graduate Study

READING [.] THEORIES [.] PRACTICES [.]

Will West

Monday 2:00-5:00

Pragmatist philosopher and literary theorist Richard Rorty arrestingly and infuriatingly defined his adopted discipline of literary studies as “the way we do things around here.” But what are those ways? What do we do around here, as professors and graduate students in a department of English? This introduction to the graduate study of literature as a discipline and a craft will attempt to exemplify and practice, if not determine, some of what we do around here. Its aim is to introduce students to some practices and ways of doing things that are typical of the profession of literature in the academy, and to some of the important theories—of literature, of language—that underlie them.

Our main focus will be on what is arguably a shared core of what we do, a practice that are generally grouped together as reading. The doubtful legibility of the course’s titles is meant to signal some of the unexpected challenges that reading may present. We will discuss what reading has meant to some of its principal theorists in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, from psychoanalysts to New Critics to mythographers to deconstructionists to New Historicists and cultural critics. We will also examine and produce some of the forms of reading and writing that advanced students of literature, such as the conference paper, the seminar paper, and the article

## English 411 (CLS 410)

### Studies in Poetry

*The Logic of Poetry*

Susannah Gottlieb

Thursday 2:00-5:00

“Poetry does not impose; it exposes.” So writes Paul Celan, as he seeks to capture the peculiar character of poetry among the arts -- as an art that is somehow different from all others because of its own internal, highly concentrated, and constantly changing logic. This seminar will provide a systematic introduction to the formal elements of poetry including diction, syntax, image, trope, rhythm, and a variety of verse forms. Each week we will concentrate on a particular element of the poetic process, identifying major poems from the English and American literary traditions, with particular attention to the twentieth century. At the

same time, we will read a number of major poetological reflections, beginning with Aristotle, but again concentrating on twentieth-century thinkers and critics. In the course of the seminar students will be expected to build up a reservoir of poetological knowledge, as they work through the particular poems under consideration and analyze in detail theoretical writings directed toward elucidating those elements that enter into the logic of poetry. Along with weekly exercises that aim to develop the skill required to undertake formal analysis, students will write a final seminar paper working out the poetic logic of a small set of poems.

Poetological writings may include selections from Aristotle, Nietzsche, Jakobson, de Man, Brathwaite, and Sedgwick. Poetry will be drawn from the English and American literary traditions.

## English 441

### Studies 18th-Century Literature

*Hamlet and Don Quixote in the 18<sup>th</sup>-Century*

Viv Soni

Wednesday 2:00-5:00

As the modern novel begins to take shape over the eighteenth century, the literary figures of Hamlet and Don Quixote haunt the form’s protagonists in myriad ways. This class will ask why it is that Hamlet and Don Quixote acquire such cultural salience in the eighteenth century, and in modernity more broadly. Why are Hamlet and Don Quixote taken to be so emblematic of a modern subjectivity, and what can these figures tell us about the contours of that subjectivity? What are the different cultural uses to which these figures are put? What crises are they responding to, and what kinds of symbolic resolution do they afford for these crises? What formal features do these figures share, and how does their very different literary provenance (drama and romance) change the ways in which they are received? Why might it be a mistake to read them as figures of alienation and disorientation?

We will be especially interested in the ways that Hamlet and Don Quixote seem to encode or respond to a “crisis of judgment” as it emerges in the early modern period. Each figure seems to represent a particular aberration or failure of judgment: hesitation or suspension of judgment in the case of Hamlet, an excessive reliance on fictions to ground judgment in the case of Don Quixote. What insights do we gain into the “crisis of judgment” by studying these figures, and might they offer solutions to the particular aberrations of judgment they diagnose.

The class will begin by reading Hamlet and excerpts from

Quixote, as well as Descartes' Meditations, and then proceed to an examination of a number of eighteenth century texts written under the sign of each.

Possible texts include Henry Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* or Tom Jones, Sarah Fielding's *History of Ophelia*, Lennox's *Female Quixote*, Smollett's *Adventures of Roderick Random*, Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, Hume's *Standard of Taste*, Shaftesbury's *Soliloquy*, Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, Jane Austen's *Emma*. We will also read theoretical writing concerning the rise of the novel, the critique of subjectivity, theories of modernity and the reception of Hamlet and Quixote. Texts will likely include Lukac's *Theory of the Novel*, Benjamin's *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, Heidegger's "Age of the World Picture," Jameson's *Singular Modernity*, Dror Wahrmann's *The Making of the Modern Self*, Charles Taylor's *Sources of the Self* and Margareta De Grazia's *Hamlet without Hamlet*.

## English 471

### Studies in American Literature

*Founding Terrors*

Betsy Erkkilä

Tuesday 2:00-5:00

This course will read against the accepted tradition of the American Revolution as an essentially rational, Lockean, and non-terroristic Revolution. We will examine American Revolutionary writing as a rhetorical battlefield in which a multiplicity of voices and a plurality of forms—history, letters, notes, autobiography, novel, epic, lyric, play, pamphlet, and journalistic piece—struggled over the cultural and political formation of America and the American.

We shall pay particular attention to the rhetorics of Revolution—the language, images, myths, and forms through which the American Revolution and the American republic were constituted in and through writing. We shall focus in particular on sites of contest, contradiction, resistance, and taboo in Revolutionary writing: the representation of "citizens" and "others"; conflicts between reason and passion, liberty and slavery, civilization and savage, progress and blood; anxieties about nature, the body, gender, human psychology, race, and madness; the terrors of democracy, mob violence, slave insurrection, and political faction; and debates about the excesses of language, print, and representation. We shall read relevant political and cultural theory—from Locke and Kant to Nancy Fraser, Gilroy, and the Frankfurt school—and consider various past and recent contests about the meaning of the American Revolution.

**Evaluation:** Book review/oral presentation on a major

critical, historical, or theoretical work (3-4 pages); critical essay on a subject of the student's choosing (10-12 pages); Black board postings; class participation.

### Texts Include:

Thomas Paine: *Common Sense*

Thomas Jefferson: *Declaration of Independence* and selections from *Notes on the State of Virginia*

Abigail and John Adams: selected letters

Benjamin Franklin: *Autobiography*

Phillis Wheatley: poems

Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur: *Letters from an American Farmer*

Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, John Jay: *The Federalist Papers*

Charles Brockden Brown: *Edgar Huntly*; or, *Memoirs of a Sleep-Walker*

Royall Tyler: *The Algerine Captive*

selected critical and theoretical essays.

# Winter Quarter

## English 422

### Studies in Medieval Literature

*Canterbury Tales*

Susie Phillips

Monday 2:00-5:00

From the fifteenth-century glossators to twenty-first century critics, readers of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* have sought to interpret and contain this constantly shifting text. The poem poses numerous interpretative puzzles—the “correct” order of the tales, the identity of their tellers, the objects of the poem's irony, the politics of its author, and the demographics of its intended audience, to name a few—puzzles that have been “solved” in strikingly different ways at different historical moments.

This course takes as its subject the *Canterbury Tales* and its reception history, exploring in detail both the poem and its multiple interpretative contexts. As we read the *Tales*, we will consider the narratives (and narrative conventions) that Chaucer transforms and the contemporary voices with whom he is in dialogue. We will investigate the ways in which the tales circulated both individually and as a collection (which tales were the most popular? how and by whom were they published? with which other texts did they travel?) and analyze the various paratexts that accompanied them (glosses, prologues, illustrations, and “spurious” links and tales).

Along with these early publication contexts, we will explore recent Chaucer criticism and the scholarly history to which it responds (old and new historicist approaches, Marxist and exegetical analysis, psychoanalytic, feminist and queer theory readings, etc.) By the end of the course, students will be proficient in both Chaucer criticism and Chaucer's Middle English.

**N.B.** Please read the General Prologue as preparation for the first class.

**Teaching Method:** Seminar, primarily discussion combined with student presentations and occasional lectures.

**Evaluation Method:** Discussion; short projects; an oral presentation; a final paper; and a “conference” presentation.

**Reading:** *The Riverside Chaucer* or *The Canterbury Tales: Complete* (available at Beck's Bookstore) and a course reader

## English 434

### Studies in Shakespeare & Early Drama

*Hamlet: That is the Question*

Jeff Masten

Wednesday 2:00-5:00

The course will be devoted entirely to reading *Hamlet* – or, as we will come to see, the proliferation of *Hamlets* that have emerged since its/their first performances and publication around 1600. We will read the three early, distinct printed versions of the play (1603-1623), and we will read intensively in the editorial and critical approaches that have sought to address what is/what has become the mystery of the play, its text(s), its central character(s?), and its function(s) in criticism, the canon, and culture more generally: psychoanalytic *Hamlet*, post-structuralist *Hamlet*, Marxist *Hamlet*, new historicist *Hamlet*, feminist and queer *Hamlets*, New Bibliographical and new textualist *Hamlets*, alongside the critical perspectives of some film versions and Stoppard's revision. “To be or not to be,” as we will see, is not the only question.

## English 471

### Studies in American Literature

*Marxism and American Literature*

John Cutler

Thursday 2:00-5:00

This seminar considers Marxism both as a historical force in American culture and as a paradigm for reading American literature. The course will center on three problems in particular: (1) the historical development of American Marxism during the early twentieth century; (2) the conflicts between nationalism and Marxism during the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s; and (3) the development of post-Marxist sociological approaches to literature since the 1980s. Primary texts may include works by such writers as John Dos Passos, Muriel Rukeyser, Tomás Rivera, Sonia Sanchez, Leslie Marmon Silko, and Sesshu Foster, alongside theoretical and critical works by Michael Denning, Fredric Jameson, James Edward Smethurst, Mary Pat Brady, Pierre Bourdieu, Mark McGurl, and others.

## English 481 (CLS 486)

### Studies in Literary Theory & Criticism

*Globe, Planet, Hemisphere, Ocean*

Brian Edwards

Tuesday 2:00-5:00

This course brings together two sets of critical debates that have responded to the so-called transnational turn: the vibrant discussion in US literary studies about the appropriate frame of reference for thinking beyond the

nation when reading critical literary marked “American.” And in comparative literature, postcolonial, and diaspora studies that have responded to what is called the transnational turn. Thus key terms such as the hemisphere, the planet, the oceanic, the transnational, the global, are investigated both for the debate within the field and, more importantly, how it might orient students’ own critical projects in US and transnational literary studies. Subtopics include reading in the digital age and the impact of new methods of digitally driven research paradigms, distant reading, etc. Selected 20th/21st century literary texts will be incorporated and read through competing paradigms. Primary texts may include works by Henry James, Joseph Conrad, Claude McKay, William Faulkner, Jane Bowles, Thomas Pynchon, Leslie Marmon Silko, Amitav Ghosh, Abdellah Taïa. Substitutions will be satisfying.

## Spring Quarter

### English 455

#### Studies in Victorian Literature

*Victorian Religious Experience*

Christopher Herbert      Wednesday 2:00-5:00

In this seminar, we will explore literary manifestations of a few aspects of the religious mentality of Victorian and pre-Victorian Britain, focusing on the paradoxical historical destiny of a country that was notable both for its tremendously strong current of Christian devotion and for the seemingly irreversible collapse of Christian devotion that it underwent. The constraints of the quarter system in relation to the multifariousness of religious experience in nineteenth-century Britain make drastic selectivity necessary in constructing a seminar syllabus on this topic. Bowing to this necessity, we will take as the central theme of the seminar the influence of the Evangelical Revival (c. 1739-1830) on Victorian sensibility; to gain insight into the deep structures of Evangelicalism, we will devote substantial time to some of the eighteenth-century founding texts of this culturally transformative movement. We will stress also, as the negative counterpart (or perhaps as the perverse fulfillment) of Evangelicalism, various iterations of the distinctively Victorian crisis of the loss of faith.

**Teaching Methods:** Discussion, with weekly class presentations by students

### English 461

#### Studies in Contemporary Literature

*Digital Media Theory: Time, Technology, and the Subject*

Jim Hodge

Monday 2:00-5:00

This seminar examines the field of theoretical writing occasioned by the proliferation of digital computational technologies in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. It focuses on a series of topics and writings organized by the confluence of time, technology, and the subject. If temporal experience lies at the basis of subjectivity (Kant) and time is essentially technical (Stiegler), it may follow that the historical development and dissemination of digital media brokers new forms of subjectivity. What are these new forms of subjectivity and what aesthetic forms instantiate and express their social and political efficacy? Topics may include: the temporal object, electronic literature, the event, media archaeology, the predictive powers of datamining, the emergence of networked aesthetic genres such as animated .gifs, the time of affect, precarity, debt, and "always on" computing. Aesthetic works for analysis may include works by Frances Stark, John Cayley, Ken Jacobs, William Poundstone, Thomson & Craighead, and others. We will read works by prominent scholars in the field of digital media studies (Hayles, Hansen, Kirschenbaum) and pay close attention to the ways in which their writings draw upon more established figures (Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze). While not a survey per se, the course will function as an introduction to digital media studies and presumes no prior technical training or familiarity with the field.

### English 471, sec 20

#### Studies in American Literature

*Fade to Black: Cultural Production & the Poetics of Dissolution*

Ivy Wilson

Tuesday 2:00-5:00

Frantz Fanon has famously written that the conditions of modernity have rendered blackness increasingly illegible, fraught with contradictions that push it outside the realm of facile comprehension and explicability. Taking Fanon’s polemic as a cue, this graduate seminar will look at a number of late twentieth-century textual and performance sites with radical instances of experimentation where articulations of blackness move into the interstitial space between meaning and non-meaning, coming into being precisely at the moment when the compositional logic of their anticipated forms are ruptured.

The course will focus on three primary sites where black artists engage what might be called the poetics of dissolution to examine and critique the processes of racial formation:

poetry (where the form of the line or stanza dissolves); music (where sonic interpolations puts additional, if not different, claims on the lyrical content); and visual culture (where the moves toward graphic mimesis are refused delineation).

The material under consideration will include work by the poets Nathaniel Mackey and Harriet Mullen; turntablists DJ Spooky, Jazzy Jeff, and Premier; songs by musicians from Ella Fitzgerald to Rahzel; and pieces by visual artists Kara Walker and Glenn Ligon. Theoretical texts may include work by Barthes, Baudrillard, Freud, Fred Moten, and Saussure, as well as ethnomusicologists and linguistic anthropologists.

**English 471, sec 21**  
**Studies in American Literature**

*Native American and Indigenous Cultures of Print*

Kelly Wisecup

Thursday 2:00-5:00

It was a truism in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century America that writing was a western invention, a technology that Native American peoples lacked, as allegedly indicated by their inability to tell their own ancient histories. It was on this basis, among others, that Euro-Americans claimed the right to “civilize,” remove, and exterminate Native peoples. But a closer look shows that such claims were far from true: Native American and Indigenous peoples in the Americas and throughout the globe not only possessed their own textual systems but also, after colonialism, engaged with and adapted alphabetic writing and print to claim sovereignty over their communications, land, and histories.

This seminar will explore the textualities and practices that compose Native American and Indigenous Cultures of Print. Native and Indigenous peoples’ engagement with print began as early as colonial encounters and was a capacious, creative practice that writers employed to argue for and articulate various forms of sovereignty. While their encounters with print often occurred in coercive contexts such as treaty negotiations, religious education, and literacy instruction, Native and Indigenous people seized the tools of print, turning them to their own purposes. We will explore the non-alphabetic textual practices that provided a foundation for adaptations to alphabetic writing and to print, before examining the cultures of print that flourished in Native and Indigenous communities, with a particular focus on the circulation of tribal histories and on political activism. Finally, we will put this literary history into conversation with recent scholarship in the field of Native American and Indigenous studies, in order to consider and

complicate key terms such as sovereignty, recognition, and settler colonialism, among others. Course readings will consist of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Native and Indigenous literatures from throughout the Americas and the world as well as recent scholarship in the history of the book and Native American and Indigenous Studies.

Possible texts include works by Samson Occom, William Apess, Elias Boudinot, George Copway, Sarah Winnemucca, Lili’uokalani, Black Hawk, Simon Pokagon, and others. Theoretical texts may include works by historians of the book such as D.F. McKenzie, Leah Price, and Robert Darnton, as well as Native studies scholars such as Phillip Round, Robert Warrior, and Glen Sean Coulthard, among others.

**Evaluation Method:** Discussion, presentations, an archival and digital project in collaboration with the Newberry Library, and short papers.