

# Graduate Courses in English

2016-17

Course	Title	Fall	Winter	Spring
Eng 410	<b>Introduction to Graduate Study</b> <i>READING [:] THEORIES [e] PRACTICES [.]</i>	<b>West, Will</b> Wednesday 2:00-5:00		
Eng 411	<b>Studies in Poetry</b> <i>Ovidian Poetics</i>			<b>West, Will</b> Friday 2:00-5:00
Eng 422	<b>Studies in Medieval Literature</b> <i>Medieval Autobiography</i>		<b>Newman, Barbara</b> Monday 2:00-5:00	
Eng 435	<b>Studies in 17<sup>th</sup>-Century Literature</b> <i>Milton in an Age of Controversy</i>	<b>Schwartz, Regina</b> Thursday 2:00-5:00		
Eng 441	<b>Studies in 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Literature</b> <i>Constructions of Gender &amp; Race in the Long Eighteenth Century</i>		<b>Thompson, Helen</b> Thursday 2:00-5:00	
Eng 455	<b>Studies in Victorian Literature</b> <i>Emergence of Liberalism</i>	<b>Davis, Tracy</b> Monday 2:00-5:00		
Eng 461	<b>Studies in Contemporary Literature</b> Fall - <i>Modernist Poetics, Transnational Cultures</i> Winter - <i>Translation Theory</i> Spring - <i>Empire, War, Worldliness</i>	<b>Feinsod, Harris</b> Tuesday 2:00-5:00	<b>Johnson, Rebecca</b> Tuesday 2:00-5:00	<b>Froula, Christine</b> Tuesday 2:00-5:00
Eng 471	<b>Studies in American Literature</b> Winter - <i>American Literature in Theory</i> Spring - <i>Black Women's Print Circuits</i>		<b>Erkkilä, Betsy</b> Wednesday 2:00-5:00	<b>Myers, Shaun</b> Monday 2:00-5:00
Eng 481	<b>Studies in Literary Theory &amp; Criticism</b> <i>Theories of Play</i>			<b>Soni, Viv</b> Thursday 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 03/16/2017

# Fall Quarter

## English 410

Introduction to Graduate Study

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

Will West

Wednesday 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 435

Studies in 17th-Century Literature

*Milton in an Age of Controversy*

Regina Schwartz

Thursday 2:00-5:00

We will study John Milton’s poetry and prose in context, with sustained attention to the crisis of his times, the subtlety of his thought, the complexities of his art, and the extent of his influence. Milton’s defenses of political, personal, and religious liberty, his self-presentation, and his grappling with key ethical questions – involving free will, gender definitions, crime, authority, rebellion and redemption – will be among the many concerns that arise as we explore his work in the context of the raging political and theological controversies of his time.

## English 455

Studies in Victorian Literature

*Emergence of Liberalism*

Tracy Davis

Monday 2:00-5:00

This course focuses on core values of Victorian liberalism, including the dignity of work, universal suffrage, responsible colonial administration, removal of bars against religious minorities, free trade, abolition of slavery, and other human rights issues. The objective is to better understand not only the arguments of classic texts but also the networks of people who brought the arguments forward and the various means by which Victorian culture gave rise to and fostered the ideas (in political, social, and aesthetic milieus), not as a *fait accompli* but a set of contested propositions. In addition to reading texts that express these principles, we will investigate modes and circumstances in which the values of Victorian liberalism circulated, for example parliamentary debates, sermons, trade fairs, lectures, meetings, and the press. The emphasis will be mid-century (Arnold, Lewes, Mill, Spencer, Gaskell, Kingsley, Martineau, Dilke) but we will also read outside these boundaries (Bright, Cobden, Shaw, and Wilde).

## English 461/CLS 414

Studies in Contemporary Literature

*Modernist Poetics, Transnational Cultures*

Harris Feinsod

Tuesday 2:00-5:00

Much recent scholarship on poetry and poetics in the modernist and avant-garde traditions reconsiders modern poetry’s cosmopolitan origins, global imagination, international networks, and transcultural diffractions. This scholarship has taken place under headings including “transnational poetics,” “global modernism,” and “comparative modernisms.” This course has several objectives: 1) to read representative works from the significant phases of poetic modernism in English in dialogue with romance language traditions; 2) to survey recent critical approaches to a “transnational poetics” of modernism, including hemispheric American studies, diaspora studies, sociology of literature, cultural front internationalism and the post-WWII emergence of postcolonial aesthetics; 3), and most broadly, to assemble an account of how to read the elements of modern poetic form against literary history’s cosmopolitan horizons, rather than within the discrete boundaries of national literatures and natural language formations.

We will not manage a comprehensive survey of any particular national modernism, nor an intensive historical dilation of

any one moment in modernist literary production (e.g. an *annus mirabilis* such as 1913 or 1922). Rather, our focus will be intentionally expansive in both spatial and temporal terms, highlighting comparative problematics with representative texts. Poetry in English may include books, essays and manifesti by William Carlos Williams, Langston Hughes, Mary Austin, Ezra Pound, Wallace Stevens, Hart Crane, Mina Loy, Melvin Tolson, Muriel Rukeyser, and W.H. Auden.

Comparative interlocutors may include Vicente Huidobro, Nicolás Guillén, Oswald de Andrade, Oliverio Girondo, César Vallejo, Pablo Neruda, Guillaume Apollinaire, Valéry Larbaud, and Ernesto Cardenal. We may read criticism by Paz, de Campos, Saussy, Glissant, Jameson, Edwards, Ramazani, Perloff and others. Importantly, I will also leave room on the syllabus for particular student interests.

## Winter Quarter

### English 422/CLS 414

Studies in Medieval Literature

*Medieval Autobiography*

Barbara Newman Monday 2:00-5:00

The art of life-writing is perennially popular, yet its conventions have changed much over time. Medieval authors did not write “autobiography” in the modern sense, assuming that their personal lives were inherently interesting. But several wrote *confessiones*, with the double meaning Augustine gave to that term: a confession of sin coupled with a confession of faith and praise to God. Converts used the genre to announce their conversion, prophets to validate their prophetic call, and mystics to share divine revelations and edify their readers. More overtly literary forms of autobiography emerged in the high Middle Ages. The poets Ulrich von Liechtenstein and Dante crafted prose narratives to frame their love lyrics, inventing the genre of erotic autobiography—comically in Ulrich’s case, seriously in Dante’s. Finally, such fourteenth- and fifteenth-century writers as Chaucer, Langland, Christine de Pizan, and Thomas Hoccleve skillfully developed literary personas that drew on the confessional genre to situate themselves within their own fictive creations.

#### Readings will include:

Augustine of Hippo, *Confessions*;

Guibert of Nogent, *Monodiae* (Songs for a Solo Voice), Book 1;

Judah/Hermann of Scheda, *A Short Work on His Conversion*;

Peter Abelard, *Story of My Calamities*;

Heloise and Abelard, *Letters* 2-5;

Hildegard of Bingen and Gottfried of St. Disibod, *The Life of St. Hildegard*, Books 1 and 2;

Ulrich von Liechtenstein, *Frauendienst* (The Service of Ladies);

Dante Alighieri, *Vita Nuova*;

Julian of Norwich, *A Vision Showed to a Devout Woman* (Short Text);

Margery Kempe and Robert Spryngolde, *The Book of Margery Kempe*;

Geoffrey Chaucer, prologue to *The Legend of Good Women*;

William Langland, “Apology for his life,” from *Piers Plowman*, C-text;

Christine de Pizan, prologue to *The Book of the City of Ladies*; and

Thomas Hoccleve, “My Complainte.”

We will also read criticism by Evelyn Birge Vitz, John Fleming, A. C. Spearing, and others. Middle English texts will be read in the original and others in translation, but those who can read Latin, German, French, or Italian are encouraged to use those languages.

**Requirements:** class participation; one 10-minute oral presentation; a short paper; and a term paper of 12-15 pages.

### English 441

Studies in 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Literature

*Constructions of Gender and Race in the Long Eighteenth Century*

Helen Thompson Thursday 2:00-5:00

This seminar will read travel narratives, natural philosophy, and fiction spanning the late seventeenth through the early nineteenth century. Our primary interest will be these texts’ intersecting constructions of gendered and ethno-geographical (hereafter “racial”) difference. To establish our methodological and historical coordinates, we’ll read excerpts from Judith Butler’s *Gender Trouble and Bodies that Matter* alongside seventeenth-century natural history to think about the critical stakes of “race” and gender at a time when neither category was essentially fixed. Due to the rise of empirical philosophy and science, which strongly rejected neo-Aristotelian notions of essence, “race” and, to some extent, gender were derived from relations involving performance, sensory perception, environment, and power. However, the relational production of “race” and gender do not divest these attributes of materiality. We will be attentive to how body, rather than a static bearer of qualitative difference, may be implicated in the relational

apparition of “race” and gender all the way down. This seminar also functions as an introduction to the rise of the novel, with critical attention to the interplay between novel and travel narrative.

**Tentative list of primary texts includes:**

Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko*;  
Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*;  
Penelope Aubin, *The Noble Slaves*;  
Hans Sloane, *History of Jamaica*;  
Samuel Richardson, *Pamela*;  
anonymous, *The Woman of Colour*;  
Leonora Sansay, *Secret History*; or, *The Horrors of Saint Domingo*;  
Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*.

**Critical texts may include:**

Srinivas Aravamudan, *Eighteenth-Century Orientalism*;  
Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*;  
Ian Baucom, *Specters of the Atlantic*;  
Linda Colley, *Captives*;  
James Delbourgo, “Slavery in the Cabinet of Curiosities:  
Hans Sloane’s *Atlantic World*”;  
Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* and/ or ‘*Society*’ *Must Be Defended*;  
Michael Kwass, *Contraband*;  
Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*;  
Stephanie Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery*;  
Roxann Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race*.

The syllabus will also include shorter readings by Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Mary Astell, and others.

**English 461/MENA 411**

Studies in Contemporary Literature

*Translation Theory*

Rebecca Johnson      Tuesday 2:00-5:00

This course will give students grounding in contemporary topics in translation studies by focusing on some of the problems embedded in its history and practice: translation’s employment in the contexts of war, displacement, and empire; its role in national canon formation and transnational literary circulation amid the hegemonic force of Anglicization; and the importance of translation problems—mistranslation, “bad translation,” and untranslatability—to current discussions of translation’s politics and ethics. Alongside a theoretical corpus that includes authors like Friedrich Schleiermacher, Walter Benjamin, Jacques Derrida, Gayatri Spivak, Emily Apter, and Abdelfattah Kilito, we will look at several examples of “translation problems”: problematic case studies of literary

transmission from non-Western languages to English. Students are encouraged to bring their own language competencies to bear on seminar discussions, but fluency in a second language is not required. Students will give oral presentations, write one short essay, and contribute to a final symposium on the topic of literary transmissions to English.

**English 471**

Studies in American Literature

*American Literature in Theory*

Betsy Erkkilä      Wednesday 2:00-5:00

The period between 1830 and 1860 was a time of massive social transformation, reformist zeal, and political crisis—a time when the fiction of the American union was breaking up as the linked issues of race, class, gender, capital, technology, imperial expansion, and war exposed major contradictions in the ideology of the American republic. Not coincidentally, these years corresponded with the period of immense literary creativity that F. O. Matthiessen called the “American Renaissance” in *American Renaissance: Art and Expression in the Age of Emerson and Whitman* (1941). This book not only defined a period and a canon (Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Melville, Whitman); it also set the critical and evaluative terms within which future readings and interpretations of American literature would occur. This course will focus on selection of antebellum writings and past and recent criticism and theory as a means of engaging critically with the transformations in the field imaginary of American literature that have taken place against the critical methodology, evaluative terms, canonical writers, readings, texts, contexts, and “boundaries” set in place by F. O. Matthiessen’s now classic study.

**NOTE:** For the first meeting students should read the introduction to Matthiessen’s *American Renaissance* and C. L. R. James, *Mariners, Renegades and Castaways: Herman Melville and the World We Live In* (1953), ed. Donald E. Pease, including Pease’s “C.L.R. James’s *Mariners, Renegades and Castaways* and the World We Live In,” vii-xxxiii.

**Evaluation methods:** Book report/oral presentation on a major critical or theoretical text (3-4 pages); critical essay (12-15 pages); some exercises in critical reading and interpretation; Canvas postings; class participation.

**Texts:**

*The Autobiography of Black Hawk*;  
Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Essays and Poems*;  
Margaret Fuller, *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* and selected

dispatches on the Revolutions of 1848;  
Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*;  
Frederick Douglass, *Narrative*;  
Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*;  
Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*;  
Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*;  
Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*, or, *The Whale*;  
Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*;  
Emily Dickinson, *Poems*; and  
a variety of critical and theoretical readings that highlight  
field transformations over the past few decades. These  
may include Pease, Lauter, Brooks, Coulthard, Lott, Gilroy,  
Spillers, Butler, Berlant, Hartman, Luciano, Marrs, McGill,  
and Jackson.

## Spring Quarter

### English 411/CLS 412

Studies in Poetry

*Ovidian* Poetics

Will West

Friday 2:00-5:00

*Metamorphoses*, Ovid's book of changes, continues to be one of the most widely productive texts in the history of world literature. In this class we will consider this poem as a kind of paradigm for poesis, in which transformation is more prominent than creation, and development overshadows origin. We will look at some of the stories *Metamorphoses* tell, how they tell them, and why; we will look at how those stories have been read and changed in turn, by readers and rewriters, into natural science, ethical prescription, political lessons, psychoanalysis. We will also consider how *Metamorphoses* have splintered across genres and modes, like the epic, the novel, the lyric, the dramatic—and the visual, the operatic, the cinematic, the digital. We will not attempt anything like a history of reception; the subject is too vast and the description too orderly. Instead, we will try to account in part for the promiscuity and fecundity of the idea of becoming-Ovidian, or of being metamorphic across a range of periods and texts. We will look to *Metamorphoses* not as the point of origin of a history, but as a kind of core from which other kinds of production have drawn matter and energy. Insofar as is possible we will draw on the particular areas of expertise of the seminar participants.

### English 461

Studies in Contemporary Literature

*Empire, War, Worldliness*

Christine Froula

Tuesday 2:00-5:00

In this seminar we'll pose three broad questions across the long twentieth century: How do signal aesthetic writings imagine, approach, frame, and think about their mutually implicated and evolving conditions of empire and war? In what specifically literary ways do they engage key discourses—of imperialism, colonialism, “semi-colonialism,” postcolonialism, orientalism, “enlightenment orientalism,” “postcolonial enlightenment”—in themselves and through their ongoing receptions? How do critical and creative responses, from initial publication to our own moment, think with, through, and against them?

In the spirit of what Edward Said calls “worldly,” or multicentric, criticism, and with some flexibility depending

on seminar members' intellectual goals, we'll study such works as: Kipling's *Kim*; Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*; Joyce's *Dubliners* and *Ulysses* (selections); Yeats's war poems; Forster's *A Passage to India*; Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*; Pound's *Homage to Sextus Propertius*; Eliot's *The Waste Land*; Narayan's *The English Teacher*; Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*; Salih's *Season of Migration to the North*; Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (film/screenplay); Hirsi Ali's *Infidel*; Tricycle Theatre's *The Great Game: Afghanistan*; alongside relevant intellectual texts to be chosen from Hobsbawm, Kant, Arendt, Said, Pratt, Achebe, Hochschild, Pearse, Orwell, Rushdie, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, Spivak, Franco, Scott, Fischer, Boehmer, Nasta, Chakrabarty, Aravamudan, others.

**Evaluation Methods:** weekly comments, questions, and concerns based on the readings for each class, offered for discussion; class presentation on a work's relevant reception history; choice of two shorter essays or one longer essay or project.

**N.B.:**

We'll begin with some assigned readings to make the most of our first class, so if you plan to register late, please email me for the assignment.

**English 471**

Studies in American Literature

*Black Women's Print Circuits*

Shaundra Myers                      Monday 2:00-5:00

Whether described as a flourishing, an explosion, or a blossoming, the renaissance of African American women's writing that began in the 1970s is now commonly accepted as the starting point, if not the signature feature, of what we might consider the long era of contemporary African American literature. Engaging in bibliographic, archival, and critical work situated at the intersection of textual scholarship and African Americanist criticism, we will examine the gendered dimensions of late-twentieth-century African American print culture by studying the conditions of publication and distribution of black women's novels, short stories, poetry, drama, manifestos, periodical work, anthologies, and essays. We will complicate our understanding of what was produced during this literary awakening by investigating its processes of production. We

will study the informal social networks as well as the formal venues, including Random House, Kitchen Table Press, the Feminist Press, and the digital Schomburg collection of 19th-century women writers, that facilitated black women's literary production, reproduction, and distribution. Over the course of our study, we will ask, Why did the publishing industry suddenly open up to black women's literature in unprecedented ways? How did the institutionalization of black literary studies and the attendant demand for accessible texts by black women writers shape the commodification, canonization, and aesthetics of the African American literary tradition? How do certain patterns or modes of textual circulation help constitute particular kinds of reading publics and counterpublics? Ultimately, as we explore black women's discursive manipulations of what Madhu Dubey terms their "double ideological absence," we will also address other absences—embedded in the material history of their printed and reprinted texts.

**Evaluation methods:** Discussion, presentation and short paper on archival project, Canvas postings, conference presentation, and a final critical essay.

**Texts:** Primary texts may include works by Zora Neale Hurston, Nella Larsen, Gwendolyn Brooks, Toni Morrison, Toni Cade Bambara, Alice Walker, Gayl Jones, Andrea Lee, Ntozake Shange, and Audre Lorde. Critical and theoretical readings in black feminist theory, textual scholarship, and African Americanist criticism may include Barbara Smith, Deborah McDowell, Hazel Carby, Barbara Christian, Hortense Spillers, Mae Henderson, Madhu Dubey, Jerome McGann, Diana Taylor, Paul Bryant, Michael Warner, Joycelyn Moody, Howard Rambsy, George Hutchinson, and John Young, among others.

**English 481**

Studies in Literary Theory & Criticism

*Theories of Play*

Viv Soni    Thursday 2:00-5:00

At least since Kant's *Critique of Judgment* and its notion of the "free play of the faculties," play has become crucial to understanding aesthetic appreciation and the strange structure of interpretive work in the humanities (the play of meaning, etc.). Our task in this class will be twofold. First, we will ask why the importance of play is only recognized so late in the history of aesthetic thought. Is it because of a new attention to childhood in the eighteenth century (Locke, Rousseau, Romanticism)? Is it because of the emergence of a new commercial economy and the rise of a leisure class? Are there specific political ideals embedded

in the model of aesthetic play proposed by Kant? In fact, from Schiller to William Morris and Herbert Marcuse, the notion of play has become a paradigm for unalienated labor and free activity, but there are significant problems with the way that freedom is envisioned in these texts (as pure potentiality, not oriented towards any ends). Are there alternatives to this notion of “free play” that would preserve the freedom of play without losing the orientation towards ends. (I have been working on how “games” might serve as an alternative to this notion of play, rather than being encompassed within it.) Second, we will examine how the concept of play developed by Kant has been seminal in a number of academic disciplines in the twentieth century. We will encounter play from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, including history (Huizinga), sociology (Caillois), anthropology (Turner), philosophy (Gadamer, Wittgenstein on language games), literary criticism (Derrida), cybernetics/economics (game theory) and contemporary psychology (Stuart Brown), so you can be exposed to a multiplicity of different approaches to the concept and its value for thinking about literature and the origin of culture. Indeed, many of the theories we will consider locate the development of culture in the capacity for play, though recent work on the play of animals raises questions about this too-easy account of the nature-culture split.

In a final turn, we will also look at some of the contemporary literature on the culture of gaming, primarily video games but also sports, board games and other contemporary cultural expressions. There is a growing *doxa* within this literature that games have displaced literature and the other arts as the primary form of “culture” within contemporary society. We will interrogate this claim skeptically. Is it true that the preponderance of cultural production occurs in the realm of games? Is it simply a quantitative question, or is there a fundamental shift in orientation? If there is some truth in this claim, then it will be important to ask what the consequences are of the shift from activities like reading and museum going to activities like gaming. Are the latter more active, participatory, democratic, or the converse? What happens to the possibilities for reflection under such conditions? Does the notion of “free play” still have any purchase in this context?

#### **Possible Primary Texts:**

Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*;  
Friedrich Schiller, *Letters on Aesthetic Education*;  
William Morris, *News from Nowhere*;  
Jan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*;  
Roger Caillois, *Man, Play and Games*;  
Walter Benjamin, *Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical  
Reproduction* (first and second editions);

Hans Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (selections on play);  
Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*;  
Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theater: The Human Seriousness  
of Play*;  
Jacques Derrida, “Structure, Sign and Play in the Human  
Sciences” and *Dissemination*;  
Stuart Brown, *Play: How it Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination  
and Invigorates the Soul*;  
Vivasvan Soni, “Playing at Judgment: Aporias of Liberal  
Freedom in Kant’s *Critique of Judgment*”;  
Elias, Garfield and Gutschera, *Characteristics of Games*;  
Miguel Sicart, *Play Matters*;  
Alex Galloway, *Gaming: Essays on Algorithmic Culture*

#### **Additional texts:**

John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*;  
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile*;  
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship*;  
Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization*;  
Brian Sutton-Smith, *Ambiguity of Play*;  
Brian Upton, *Aesthetics of Play*;  
Salen and Zimmerman, *Rules of Play*