

# Graduate Courses in English

## 2019-20

Course Title	Fall	Winter	Spring
Eng 410 <b>Introduction to Graduate Study</b>	<b>Evans, Kasey</b> Tuesday 2:00-5:00		
Eng 422 <b>Studies in Medieval Literature</b> <i>Forging a Literary Career in the 14<sup>th</sup>-Century (1)</i>	<b>Newman, Barbara</b> Thursday 2:00-5:00		
Eng 434 <b>Studies in Shakespeare &amp; Early Drama</b> <i>Early Modern Sexualities (2)</i>		<b>Masten, Jeffrey</b> Thursday 2:00-5:00	
Eng 435 <b>Studies in 17<sup>th</sup>-Century Literature</b> <i>The Renaissances We Earn (7)</i>			<b>West, Will</b> Monday 2:00-5:00
Eng 441 <b>Studies in 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Literature</b> <i>Fictions of Judgment in the 18<sup>th</sup>-Century (3)</i>	<b>Soni, Viv</b> Monday 2:00-5:00		
Eng 451 <b>Studies in Romantic Literature</b> <i>Lyric Environments (4,7)</i>			<b>Wolff, Tristram</b> Wednesday 2:00-5:00
Eng 461 <b>Studies in Contemporary Literature</b> Fall - <i>Hannah Arendt: Poetry, Politics, and Thought (5)</i> Winter - <i>Contemporary Experiments in Racial Form (5,6)</i>	<b>Gottlieb, Susannah</b> Wednesday 2:00-5:00	<b>Cutler, John Alba &amp; Huang, Michelle</b> Tuesday 2:00-5:00	
Eng 465 <b>Studies in Colonial &amp; Postcolonial Literature</b> <i>Postcolonial Forms and Ecology (6,7)</i>			<b>Mwangi, Evan</b> Tuesday 2:00-5:00
Eng 471 <b>Studies in American Literature</b> Winter - <i>Past and Future Humans in the Archives of American Literature (3,4)</i> Spring - <i>Poetics of Dissolution (6)</i>		<b>Wisecup, Kelly</b> Monday 2:00-5:00	<b>Wilson, Ivy</b> Thursday 2:00-5:00
Eng 481 <b>Studies in Literary Theory and Criticism</b> <i>Theories of Comedy (7)</i>		<b>Davis, Tracy</b> Wednesday 2:00-5:00	
T&D 503 <b>Studies in Drama</b> <i>Dancing the Post-War Avant-Garde (5,6)</i>			<b>Manning, Susan</b> Wednesday 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

## Doctoral Breadth Requirement for Coursework

This is a key to the numbers used in this document to designate which of the seven Breadth Requirement categories each graduate seminar fulfills. Please consult the Guide to Graduate Study for any further information on these categories:

1. Literature from 1200-1500
2. Literature from 1500-1680
3. Literature from 1680-1800
4. Literature from 1800-1900
5. Literature from 1900-1989
6. Literature from 1990-Present
7. *Longue durée*

Though a course might potentially fit into multiple categories, no class can be used to count towards more than one when fulfilling this requirement. The categories here should not be taken as absolutes, and you should always consult with a member of the graduate faculty and the Director of Graduate Study to determine if a class might count toward a category not listed here. The categories for each class are in parentheses after the title on the cover-page and down below.

## Fall Quarter

### English 422

#### Studies in Medieval Literature

*Forging a Literary Career in the Fourteenth Century* (1)

Barbara Newman Thursday 2:00-5:00

Although “professional writers” did not yet exist in fourteenth-century England, a wide range of factors determined the shape of literary careers. In this seminar we’ll examine some of them by looking at four canonical writers: the Pearl Poet, William Langland (a nom de plume), John Gower (ca. 1330-1408), and Geoffrey Chaucer (1343-1400). As for the Pearl Poet, not only his name but also his dates and patronage remain obscure. Yet he exercised considerable control over the manuscript production of his works, which include *Pearl* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. Langland, the author of *Piers Plowman*, was a member of the gentry class, using a pen name for political reasons. Having devoted his entire career to successive revisions of a single masterpiece, he invites us to think about the reasons a controversial author might choose anonymity, as well as the difficulty of supporting oneself by writing and the significant roles of scribes. Gower and Chaucer, who were friends, nevertheless had very different career paths. Gower enables us to reflect on a writer’s choice of languages: he penned his three major poems first in French, then in Latin, finally in English. The civil servant Chaucer, displaying the greatest authorial self-awareness in the period, also allows us to consider the choice of audience. After a political and personal crisis, he deliberately turned from court patronage to produce the closest thing we have to a work “for the general public,” namely

*The Canterbury Tales*. We will read all four poets selectively, along with critical and theoretical work on manuscripts, scribal culture, professional readers, underemployed clerics, multilingualism, and gendered readership.

#### Texts:

*The Complete Works of the Pearl Poet*, ed. Malcolm Andrew and Ronald Waldron, trans. Casey Finch;

William Langland, *The Vision of Piers Plowman* (B-Text), ed. A. V. C. Schmidt;

John Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, ed. Russell Peck;

*The Riverside Chaucer*, 2008 edition;

Paul Strohm, *Chaucer’s Tale: 1386 and the Road to Canterbury*; Critical readings in course packet

### English 441

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

*Fictions of Judgment in the Eighteenth Century* (3)

Vivasvan Soni Monday 2:00-5:00

The eighteenth century witnesses a far-reaching “crisis of judgment,” to which we are still heirs. In the period, the crisis plays itself out in the discourses of empiricism, aesthetics and the novel, as it does today in humanistic interpretation, political theory and the implementation of scientific research to improve our lives. This class will explore the many dimensions of the crisis of judgment in the eighteenth century, with particular attention to the role of fiction in the crisis. Fictions are essential to enable judgment, whether in the perception of three-dimensional objects, the discernment of character or the discovery of purpose in a world stripped of ends. But at the same time, a worry emerges in a number of discourses that fiction corrupts our judgment or leads it astray. Attempts are made to purge judgment of its fictive underpinnings. How do we make sense of these contradictory impulses, and what effects do they have on the prevailing accounts of judgment? Why are fictions perceived to be so threatening to our capacity for judgment? How effective are the efforts to conceal the role of fiction in judgment? Can we admit the agency of fiction in judgment without conceding that judgment is always errant or deceived? In particular, how does the emergence of the novel as a form in the eighteenth century (the rise of the novel) respond to the crisis?

In this class, we will explore the problem from many angles, including accounts of perception and experience in empiricism and the novel (Aristotle, Locke, Sterne, Benjamin), aesthetic discourse as an attempt to restore final causes in the wake of empiricism (Shaftesbury, Addison and Steele, Kant), the prevalence of Quixotic narratives in the early novel (*Don Quixote*, *Joseph Andrews*, *Tristram Shandy*, *Female Quixote*, *Emma*) and the discernment of novelistic character (*Joseph Andrews*, *Tristram Shandy*, *Pride and Prejudice*). Alongside this literature from the period, we will read secondary criticism on the rise of the novel (Georg Lukacs, Ian Watt, Michael McKeon), secularization (Charles Taylor, Alasdair MacIntyre, Thomas Pfau, Iris Murdoch), final causes (Aristotle and the new science), and the status of fiction in the period (Luiz Costa Lima, John Bender, Helen Thompson).

Our goal will be to understand the emergence of the novel in relation to the eighteenth century crisis of judgment.

### English 461

#### Studies in Contemporary Literature

*Hannah Arendt: Poetry, Politics, and Thought* (5)

Susannah Gottlieb      Wednesday 2:00-5:00

This course takes its point of departure from a careful reading of *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Arendt's massive study of Nazi totalitarianism and its origins in anti-Semitism and European imperialism. For the first three weeks of the class, we will read the three sections of the *Origins* along with a selection of Arendt's contemporaneous writings on issues at the heart of her study: wide-scale statelessness and forced migration; racism and imperial expansion; totalitarian propaganda and the "holes of oblivion." Arendt recognized that the *Origins* posed a question that remained unanswered in that work: faced with the manufacture of living corpses, what preserves our humanity and redeems our actions? Arendt's next major work, *The Human Condition*, thus moves toward an analysis of the conditions and modes of human activity: from the biological life process, to the world-creating capacity of homo faber, to the urgency and fragility of human action. As we read *The Human Condition*, which seeks to answer the question posed by the *Origins* by accounting for what European philosophy has generally failed to analyze with sufficient clarity—namely, the dimensions of the "active life"—we examine Arendt's attempt in the same period to review and, in her own way, deconstruct the concepts of thinking around which the ideal of a "contemplative life" concretized. This prepares us for a reading in the final weeks of the seminar of *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, where she re-conceptualizes evil as a certain implementation of systematic thoughtlessness. As we examine these three major works, each of which is a reflection on the relation between language and politics, we will continually attend to the varying ways in which Arendt sought to understand where poetry stands in relation to human "conditionality," and we will use her often-neglected suggestions in this regard to develop an Arendtian poetics.

## Winter Quarter

### English 434

#### Studies in Shakespeare & Early Drama

*Early Modern Sexualities* (2)

Jeffrey Masten      Thursday 2:00-5:00

How can we practice the history and analysis of sexuality in early modern Europe? Is sexuality best described by a continuity of models, or alterity and historical difference? To what extent can we discuss "sexuality" in relation to "identity" in the pre-modern era? To address these complex questions, and to begin to ask new ones, we will concentrate on a range of exemplary literary and historical texts from around 1600 in England. We will be interested to explore both the multiple forms and functions of

desire, eroticism, sex, gender, etc., in this culture, as well as the terms, methods, and theories we now use to read the sexual past. We will be particularly interested in gaining fluency in the languages of early modern identities and desires: sodomy, tribadism, friendship, marriage; bodies, their parts, and their pleasures. We will centrally engage recent critical controversies in the field over the utility of historicism in sexuality studies.

#### Texts:

plays by Beaumont and Fletcher, Margaret Cavendish, Christopher Marlowe, Shakespeare and Fletcher;  
erotic-narrative poetry by Beaumont, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Ovid;  
sodomy trial of the Earl of Castlehaven;  
selected essays of Montaigne;  
sonnets by various writers;  
theory and historical work by Bray, Butler, Edelman, Foucault, Goldberg, Halperin, Loomba, Masten, Menon, Rambuss, Shannon, Traub, others.

### English 461

#### Studies in Contemporary Literature

*Contemporary Experiments in Racial Form* (5, 6)

John Alba Cutler & Michelle Huang      Tuesday 2:00-5:00

This seminar surveys literary experiments in contemporary Ethnic American poetics and narrative that expand notions of what constitutes "ethnic literature," a category historically denigrated as insufficiently imaginative or aesthetically minded. In addition to highlighting the richness and complexity of these literary traditions, our goal in this course is to track evolving referents for racial formation in a "postracial" era defined by the gap between ostensible cultural tolerance and the persistence of structural inequality. Responding to the contradictions of racial representation, scholars of African American, Latinx, Asian American, and Native American literatures have redoubled critical engagement with form, genre, and aesthetics. Some conceptual questions for consideration include the following: how do experimental texts by writers of color destabilize conventional modes of understanding ethnic and racial representation? What tensions and resonances arise when critical race and ethnic studies meet theories of the avant-garde? And to what extent do these literary experiments suggest that race itself can be understood as a cultural form or generic object?

**Possible authors include:** Gloria Anzaldúa, Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, Sesshu Foster, Myung Mi Kim, J. Michael Martinez, Salvador Plascencia, Claudia Rankine, Colson Whitehead, Karen Tei Yamashita, Layli Long Soldier, and David Treuer. Possible critics include: Phillip Brian Harper, Walter Benn Michaels & Sean McCann, Fred Moten, Anthony Reed, Christina Sharpe, Ralph Rodriguez, Ramón Saldivar, Dorothy Wang, and Timothy Yu.

## English 471

### Studies in American Literature

*Past and Future Humans in the Archives of American Literature* (3,4)

Kelly Wisecup

Monday 2:00-5:00

In pre-1900 America, questions about who counted as human and why circulated at the intersection of science and literature, as people worked through the question of the continent's ancient and recent past and its future forms of belonging by experimenting with scientific methods, theories, and representations. Scientific genres—natural history, ethnology, exploration reports, evolutionary description, specimen illustrations, to name a few—offered a vocabulary and set of orientations through which to examine and discuss the repercussions of chattel slavery and settler colonialism and to speculate about the continent's future. Key voices in these debates were African and Native American writers who—while often said to be the objects of science—in fact created their own models of the human and theories of the past and of human difference. What we now call American literary history emerged as a contested category and object of study during this time, in conversation with proto-anthropological texts, illustration, display, and theory.

This course examines this set of interdisciplinary conversations and their import for American literary studies today by taking up the multivocal, interdisciplinary nature of the early American archive and its capacious geographies, and by developing methodologies for reading its texts in their cultural and geographic diversity. What are the ongoing consequences for literary studies of literary-scientific debates about personhood and the past? In what ways does our sense of both “American” and “literature” need to shift to account for the range of voices contributing to these conversations? This course aims to introduce students to a wide-ranging set of writers and genres; to engage with transatlantic, hemispheric, and culturally specific methodologies; and to instigate conversations about American literary studies and its futures. Along the way, we'll gain experience working in literary and historical archives while also critically examining the formation and current configuration of those archives.

Readings will illuminate key debates about the course terms, pairing canonical texts with less well known writers and recent scholarship. Course assignments will ask students to write for multiple audiences and to experiment with various forms for conveying scholarly research.

#### Primary Texts to include:

Caleb Cheesateammuck, epistle to “Honoratissimi Benefactors” and Eleazar's elegy for Thomas Thacher (Wampanoag students at Harvard) (1663)

Hans Sloane, *Voyage to Jamaica* (1707)

“The Confession and Dying Warning of Katherine Garrett” (1738)

Samson Oocom, “To all the Indians in this Boundless Continent”

Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785)

Benjamin Banneker, *Copy of a Letter from Benjamin Banneker, to the Secretary of State, with his Answer* (1792)

Phillis Wheatley, *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* (1773)

Charles Brockden Brown, *Edgar Huntly* (1799)

John Ridge, “Letter to Albert Gallatin” (1826)

James Fenimore Cooper, *Last of the Mohicans* (1826)

William Cullen Bryant, “The Prairies” (1827)

William Apess, “An Indian's Looking Glass for the White Man” (1833)

Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, introduction to *Algonic Researches* (1839)

Jane Johnston Schoolcraft, selected poems

Fredrick Douglass, “The Claims of the Negro, Ethnologically Considered” (1854)

John Russell Bartlett, *Personal Narrative of Explorations and Incidents in Texas...* (1854)

Herman Melville, *Benito Cereno* (1855)

Sarah Mapps Douglass, lectures (1859)

Martin Delany, “The Attraction of Planets”; *Blake* (1859)

Simon Pokagon, *The Red Man's Rebuke* (1893)

#### Scholarly Texts to include:

Monique Allewaert, *Ariel's Ecology: Plantations, Personhood, and Colonialism in the American Tropics* (2011)

Daniela Bleichmar, *Visible Empire: Botanical Expeditions & Visual Culture in the Hispanic Enlightenment* (2012)

Robert Allen Gunn, *Ethnology and Empire: Languages Literature, and the Making of the North American Borderlands* (2015)

Christopher Iannini, *Fatal Revolutions: Natural History, West Indian Slavery, and the Routes of American Literature* (2012)

Justine Murison, *The Politics of Anxiety in Nineteenth-Century American Literature* (2011)

Mark Rifkin, *Beyond Settler Time: Temporal Sovereignty and Indigenous Self-Determination* (2017)

Britt Rusert, *Fugitive Science: Empiricism and Freedom and Early African American Culture* (2017)

## English 481

### Studies in Literary Theory & Criticism

*Theories of Comedy* (7)

Tracy Davis

Wednesday 2:00-5:00

This course has two key objectives: to survey comedic theory from antiquity to the present while enabling each student to delve deeply into the period, genre, and/or theoretical concerns of their intended specialty. Common readings will survey major variants of comic theory from the Western tradition and examine instances of comedy, farce, humor, laughter, satire, parody, jesting, and jokes in their historical contexts, thinking comparatively about past and present. We will also consider what constitutes the butt of comedy and how twentieth-century theories of democracy and twenty-first-century theories of inclusivity—from the standpoints of gender, ethnicity, race, and disability—respond to the long history of laughter and the concept of resolvability. A writing assignment will address these representational traditions comparatively. Students will also develop individual reading lists—for example, drawn from the [English Department's qualifying exam lists](#)—and the other writing assignment will be tailored to these text and traditions.

# Spring Quarter

## English 435

### Studies in 17<sup>th</sup>-Century Literature

*The Renaissances We Earn* (7)

William West

Monday 2:00-5:00

The great scholar of early modernity Aby Warburg declared, “Every age has the Renaissance of antiquity that it earns.” That is, different times have found different things to admire or to deplore in the Renaissance, and have framed their own cultural projects accordingly. There is thus not one Renaissance, and not just because the period itself was multiple. There have been many Renaissances, and they have served different purposes in different cultural moments. The Renaissance has been asked to stand for the rise of science and the decline of faith; an upwelling and channeling of powerful, ancient forces; a point of resistance to industrialism, capitalism, and modernity; the very opening of modernity. Taking its cue from reception studies in Classics, this course will consider how the Renaissance as a cultural and historical phenomenon has been framed and reframed for various ideals in various eras. Case studies may include Italy in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, when the Renaissance declared itself a Renaissance of ancient culture; the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when historians like Burckhardt and Michelet and artists like William Morris, Ruskin, and the pre-Raphaelites imagined a Renaissance that opposed the industrialization that they saw marring Europe; the later 19<sup>th</sup> century, when Pater and Symonds used the Renaissance to explore sexual desires that their own culture did not sanction; and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, when Warburg and Walter Benjamin imagined an apocalyptic Renaissance that shattered the linearity of history itself. Students will be asked to research another moment in the history of the reception of the Renaissance.

## English 451

### Studies in Romantic Literature

*Lyric Environments* (4, 7)

Tristram Wolff

Wednesday 2:00-5:00

This course serves as an introduction to the “greater romantic lyric,” as well as an abbreviated survey of lyric theory. While tracking the sequence and dialogue of a handful of key critical paradigms from the last half century (and more), we will investigate how lyric poetry situates its reader in a universe of discourse through rhetorical address, affective cues, and social disposition. The “environments” in question thus connote familiar Romantic scholarship on “nature poetry,” and the relations of language to nature; but we will do so always bearing in mind that for the Romantics, natural environments implicate social and psychic geographies as well. Relevant critical work will be drawn from intersections of phenomenology, theories of voice, sound ecologies, social theory, and linguistic anthropology. We end the course with a handful of works by living poets that

distinctively (and sometimes self-consciously) reconfigure the conventions of romantic lyric. Poets include Charlotte Smith, William Wordsworth, Samuel Coleridge, Anna Barbauld, John Clare, Percy Shelley, Felicia Hemans and John Keats (depending on student interest, this list may extend farther forward into the C19); contemporary poets: Claudia Rankine, Ed Roberson, Tommy Pico, Lisa Robertson and Daniel Borzutzky.

## English 465

### Studies in Colonial & Postcolonial Literature

*Forms and Ecology* (6, 7)

Evan Mwangi

Tuesday 2:00-5:00

This course will examine experimental texts from Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean that treat environmental concerns, paying particular attention to the interface of form and ecology in postcolonial literature. We will also discuss the relationship between “new” forms and what are considered traditional modes of expression. We will read work by such contemporary thinkers as Jahan Ramazani, Meg Ahrenberg, and Liz Alexander on new forms of minority writing and their relationship to the traditions they respond to. What is the role of literature and the environmental humanities in addressing ecological questions in the Global South? How well have postcolonial artists used avantgarde aesthetics to respond to ecological disasters? How does ecology intersect with other social justice questions (race, gender, sexuality, etc.) through form in postcolonial literary texts? What do the texts tell us about human-animal entanglements? As we respond to these questions, we will explore and critique ideas on postcolonial ecocritical thought (e.g., work by Elizabeth Deloughrey, Amitav Ghosh, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Rob Nixon, Cajetan Iheka, and Byron Caminero-Santangelo). Literary texts will include fictions and poetry by Nnedi Okorafor, Shani Mootoo, Warsan Shire, Nalo Hopkinson, Indra Sinha, Ngugi wa Thiong’o, and Shailja Patel.

## English 471

### Studies in American Literature

*The Poetics of Dissolution* (6)

Ivy Wilson

Thursday 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 put additional, if not different, claims on the lyrical content), and

visual culture (where 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. In addition to material by ethnomusicologists and linguistic anthropologists, theoretical texts include work by Barthes, Freud, Saussure, Lacan, and Fred Moten.

### **Theatre and Drama 503**

#### **Dancing the Postwar Avant-Garde (5,6)**

Susan Manning      Wednesdays 2-5

This course surveys experimental movement-based performance from the 1950s to the present in the U.S., Europe, Japan, India, West Africa, and South Africa. Starting with the Happenings at Black Mountain College, the course looks at Judson Dance Theatre, Butoh, Tanztheater, conceptual dance, black postmodernism, and contemporary dance in Asia and Africa. After situating each movement within the time and place of its initial formation, we'll follow its ideas and practices across national borders. Along the way, we'll discover surprising alliances—Katherine Dunham's impact on Tatsumi Hijikata, the interrelations between Judson and conceptual dance, and the mutual influences of Pina Bausch and Chandralekha. At issue is how to account for the power differentials between the Global North and Global South while also acknowledging the multidimensionality of global circulation.



