

English Graduate Electives Spring 2024

ENGL4915 Advanced Fiction Writing Workshop - Graver | Tu 11:30-1:55 (G/UG)

Admission by permission of the instructor. Graduate/Undergraduate Level. Restricted to Graduate Students, Seniors, Juniors and Sophomores. The Advanced Fiction Workshop provides encouragement, practice, and criticism for students who have demonstrated accomplishment in writing fiction. The workshop format demands self-motivation and universal participation. Since students' stories are texts for class discussion, a generous willingness to respond to others' writing and to expose one's own work to such reactions is an essential prerequisite. Individual conferences with the instructor supplement workshop discussions. Students are expected to produce a steady stream of new and revised fiction throughout the semester. Narrative preferences from the traditional to the experimental are welcome. **Students should submit up to 8 double-spaced pages of writing, preferably fiction** (your submission may be part of a larger piece; if so, indicate this on the manuscript), **along with an email explaining your interest in the course and a list of previous creative writing or journalism workshops, with instructors, school (if not BC), and grades, to Professor Elizabeth Graver (graver@bc.edu) by 11/8 at 5pm.** Late applications may be accepted on a rolling basis if space permits.

ENGL4917 Advanced Poetry Workshop - Matson | Th 2-4:25 (G/UG)

Admission to this course is by permission of the instructor. Graduate/Undergraduate Level. Restricted to Graduate Students, Seniors, Juniors and Sophomores. This is a workshop for those who already have some experience writing poetry, and who wish to work intensively on matters of craft and revision. Students will produce roughly two poems a week, responding to each other's drafts in workshop discussion. Though the bulk of class discussion will be about student writing, some class time will be devoted to a discussion of useful models and what they can teach us about strategy and craft. Short in-class exercises will be given weekly as prompts to begin the writing process. In ongoing consultation with the instructor about which poets might interest them most, students will devise their own reading list of contemporary poets and keep a response journal. In at least two half-hour conferences over the semester, each student will be given individual feedback on revisions. The final project will be a chapbook of at least 12 revised poems produced over the semester, culled from around 25 drafts produced in and out of class. **Interested students should send 3-5 poems to Professor Suzanne Matson at (suzanne.matson@bc.edu) by 11/8.**

ENGL6017 Seminar: Chaucer and Gower - Weiskott | Tu 2-4:25 (G/UG)

In fourteenth-century London, Geoffrey Chaucer and John Gower were frenemies. Chaucer was the upwardly mobile bureaucrat, ready to poke fun at everyone; Gower was the well-heeled and straitlaced lawyer. Their bodies of poetry, spanning four decades and three languages, influence

and respond to one another. We will read the two poets side by side, with attention to topics of mutual relevance such as multilingualism, politics, literary form, source study, and social status. This seminar has no overlap with the syllabus of ENGL6041: Game of Thrones: Medieval English Political Poetry. No prior knowledge of Middle English required. Gower's French and Latin texts read in translation.

ENGL6303 Seminar: Disability Studies - Boesky | Tu 2-4:25 (G/UG)

This grad/undergrad seminar will consider constructions of norms and embodied otherness in literature and culture. Readings will include theoretical texts by Alison Kafir, Lennard Davis, Elizabeth Grosz, Tom Shakespeare, Simi Linton, Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, and Tobin Siebers, among others. Literature, film, and other forms from several periods and perspectives will supplement our exploration of the dynamic (and problematic) representations of able-bodiedness as well as disability. Responsibilities will include a presentation and short paper, several short critical and creative exercises, and a final substantive paper. **Fulfills the theory requirement for English MA students.**

ENGL6305 Seminar: Beckett - Sofer | Th 4:30-6:55 (G/UG)

This course introduces a major Irish (post)modernist writer, arguably the most important playwright of the twentieth century. Reading a range of Beckett's fiction and drama, and with the help of various critical essays, we will place Beckett in his biographical, geographical, theatrical, and historical contexts. Texts will include *Waiting for Godot*, *Endgame*, short fictions early and late, and several plays for television. Work will include a class presentation, a short project, and a final long essay for which original archival research in Burns Library is an option. No previous familiarity with Beckett is required.

ENGL6699 Seminar: Old English - Stanton | MWF 11 (G/UG)

Over a thousand years ago, English looked and sounded eerily different, though it resonates in both weird and familiar ways with the language we speak, hear, and write today. The core of English (*stone, water, bone*) comes from Old English, but in the centuries since, the language has appropriated and absorbed parts of many other languages, in historically determined ways. No previous language knowledge is required, and grammar is learned quickly, with lots of memorization. Very quickly, a world of early English literature opens up: violent poetry, mournful elegy, spiritual meditations, fanciful romance. We might read Genesis, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, mesmerizing homilies, Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*, and unforgettable poetry: the moody elegies *The Wanderer*, *The Wife's Lament*, and *The Husband's Message*, the Christian psychedelia of *Dream of the Rood*, the cryptic remnant *Wulf and Eadwacer*, and the feminist Biblical narrative Judith, and maybe even a bit of *Beowulf* too.

ENGL7020 Experimental Writing for Scholars - Rotella | Tu 7-9:30

Research and field knowledge doesn't always have to lead to writing the usual scholarly papers and articles. In this workshop-style graduate seminar, we try out alternative forms presented by journalism, the essay, and other traditions: magazine feature, op-ed, interview, explainer piece, reported essay, memoir, obituary, digital forms, and more. Our objective is to expand our writerly repertoires and audiences. We write and workshop every week, and analyze examples of the genres we study. We also have class visits from colleagues who offer their own perspective on the rich variety of forms available to the experimentally ambitious scholarly writer.

ENGL7032 Irish Environmental Fictions - Connolly | W 2-4:25

A course that tracks Irish literary engagement with forms of environmental knowledge, beginning with contemporary fictions of climate crisis and tracking back to the beginnings of the Anthropocene in the eighteenth century. Authors to be studied include Mike McCormack, Paula Meehan, Sinéad Morrissey, J. M. Synge, Jane Barlow, James Clarence Mangan, Lady Morgan and Maria Edgeworth; topics to include scale, periodisation, hunger, food security, energy and interdisciplinarity. The course will also explore the literary inscription of specific Irish environments including coast, shore, bog and mountain.

ENGL7033 Doing What Happens: Action & Event in Modern Literature - Lehman | W 4:30-6:55

Can works of art and, especially, works of literature teach us anything about what it means to *act* in the world? Should we treat these works as themselves the products of meaningful actions? Or should we think of them instead as the effects of unconscious (social or libidinal or linguistic) forces? Have current events, climate change for example, thanks to their complexity or their scale, made effective action harder to imagine? In this class, we'll consider how these questions are broached in works of literature, philosophy, and visual art composed over, roughly, the last century and half. We'll likely discuss novelists including Joseph Conrad, Samuel Beckett, and Tom McCarthy; theorists including Elizabeth Anscombe, Bruno Latour, and Walter Benn Michaels; and visual artists including Marcel Duchamp, Jackson Pollock, and Robert Rauschenberg. This class should be of interest to students of literature, students of philosophy, and anyone who wants to develop a more thoughtful relationship to literary texts. Assignments will include Canvas posts, a book review, and a longer seminar paper. **Fulfills the graduate theory requirement.**

ENGL7782 Issues and Methods in American Studies - Klein | Tu 4:30-6:50

This course offers an introduction to the field of American Studies, which focuses on the interdisciplinary study of American culture. We will read a range of recent scholarship, exploring diverse approaches, methods, and issues of interest. In the process, we will assemble a tool kit of critical skills for making interpretive arguments about works of culture in their historical

moments. The cultural forms we analyze may include popular fiction, film, music, religion, and others.

ENGL8275 Capstone: Digital Humanities as Public Scholarship - DEPT | W 3-5:20

Many schools across the United States teach different versions of survey classes for which instructors have to reach outside their own focuses. To do so, those instructors often search for visualizations of historical change, literary development, and examinations of religious networks, depending on the field and course. In this capstone, graduate students will develop projects within their areas of specializations to produce digestible digital exhibits, visualizations, and more that can be made freely available to scholars across the world. The goal would be to promote the free exchange of high quality information and digital sources available in the public domain. Furthermore, through the capstone, students should understand the process of a project from conception to presentation. They should have developed skills engaging metadata, transcription, the process of digitization, and more. Students can bring their own research data from their dissertation project or from previous coursework, or they can be provided with a historical or literary dataset from the Boston College Libraries to utilize over the semester. There are four phases to the class, beginning with performing an environmental scan and writing a proposal for their project. In Phase II and III, students will implement and carry out their projects. Finally in Phase IV, students will engage in peer consulting and prepare their work for online publication.

ENGL8825 Composition Theory and the Teaching of Writing - Pauszek | M 4:30-6:55

This course is designed to prepare graduate students to teach first-year college writing courses; to introduce students to central issues, problems and theories in composition studies; and to examine ways in which contemporary critical theories (including feminism, psychoanalysis, cultural studies, and critical pedagogy) have influenced the teaching and study of composition. Requirements will include a theoretically-informed analysis of a student essay; a piece of creative nonfiction and an accompanying description of the process used to produce it; an annotated syllabus for a first-year college course; and a week of student teaching in a First Year Writing classroom. **(Admission to this course is by application.)**

ENGL9913 PhD Seminar: Tripping the Dark Fantastic: African Diaspora in/and Genre Fictions - Frederick | Th 10-1

Refracted through the lens of popular fiction written by black writers, we will journey through the field of African Diaspora Studies (ADS) to explore a variety of thematic preoccupations. Tripping the Dark Fantastic asks: what do contemporary discussions of identities, race, gender, class, place, and diaspora look like when depicted in popular literature written by black writers? What critical work can readers do with these extra-literary themes imagined in popular fiction? We address this question by examining contemporary genre literatures specifically horror, science fiction, fantasy, thriller, detective/mystery, as well as urban romances to determine how

each form represents concerns of 20th/21st century black peoples in Africa, the Caribbean, the U.S., and Canada. Our focus on these literatures' explorations of ADS concerns is complemented by historical and sociological studies of these countries. This class explores social, historical, creative, and ADS themes depicted in works by Steven Barnes (U.S., thriller), Patrick Chamoiseau (Martinique, police procedural), Colin Channer (Jamaican, urban romance), Tananarive Due (U.S., horror/mystery), Nalo Hopkinson (Canadian, sci-fi/fantasy), NK Jemisin (U.S., epic fantasy), Barbara Neely (U.S., mystery), and Nnedi Okorafor (Nigerian-American, science fiction). **(Registration is restricted to English PhD Students)**