

Fall 2023 Undergraduate Course Descriptions



English

College of Liberal Arts
and Social Sciences



1

ENGL 3306 – 12769 Shakespeare's Major Works Dr. Ann Christensen



“High/Low Shakespeare”

Early modern English society was certainly hierarchical and believed that rank was part of “the natural order;” for example, apprentices were expected to remove their caps before their superiors and the very fabric of the caps was dictated by laws that separated lower classes of people (and their clothes and food) from higher. Shakespeare’s plays, for instance, are obsessed with what certain classes of people should (or not) do: noblemen should serve in wars, not drink at taverns; a daughter or servant should obey a father and master; first-born sons should inherit family property; Blacks and Jews should not intermarry with whites. Our course will focus on Shakespearean “caste systems” structuring personal relationships, families, and commonwealths, and the ways that people, ideas, and events question and upturn the dominant order to create spaces for alternative order, change, and renewal. In all, we will read and view (on film and video) 5 plays and selected sonnets that deliberate these ideas in Shakespeare’s time, as we reflect on caste our own time. We will study plays across genres, including comedy, tragedy, romance, and history as well as sonnets.

Requirements:

- The class is hybrid and meets only one day in person and students work one asynchronous online period per week*
- The course is not fully online.
- Formal writing projects –one short paper, one final project
- Serious discussion board activity (major course grade%)
- Genuine collaboration in the classroom
- Lots of reading, film viewing, and analysis in and outside of class

Texts

- *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
- *Coriolanus*
- *The Tempest*
- *Othello*
- *Henry IV, Part 1*

Recommended edition of Shakespeare

The Bedford Shakespeare; Russ McDonald and Lena Cowen Orlin, editors.
Bedford/St. Martins, 2014, but any recent scholarly edition will do. Your texts must be in print (not online); the Folger SHX Library editions of individual plays are easy to find second-hand. Sonnets provided online.

2

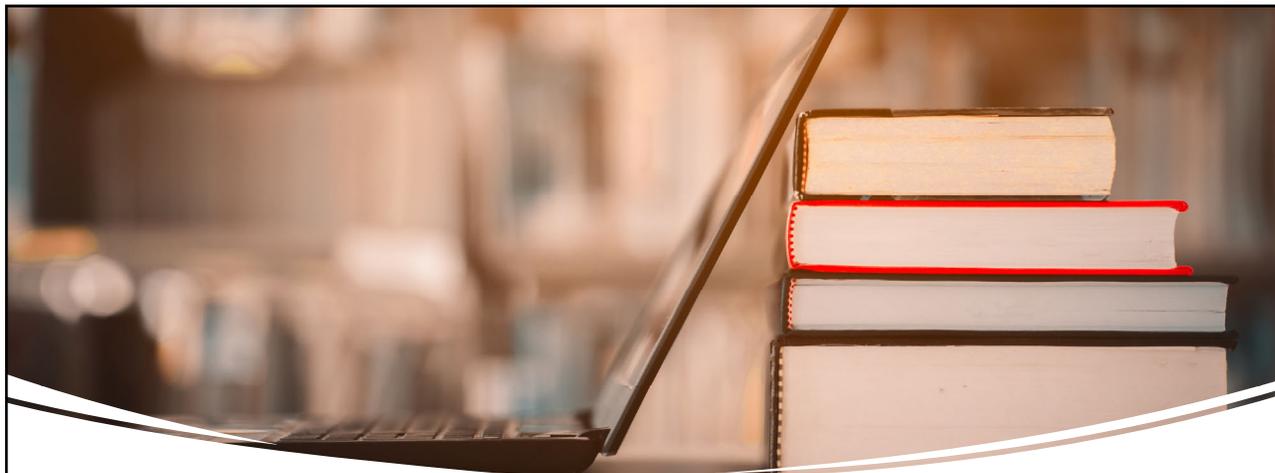


ENGL 3318 – 18420
The British Novel
since 1832
Dr. Sreya Chatterjee

English 3318 explores the representation of the countryside and the metropole in the British novel, since 1832. In many ways, the developments of the late nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, re-defined life in the major metropolitan centers in the British empire. The latter found expression in the works of Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy and the Brontë Sisters. These writers combined elements of the Gothic and literary realism with the Romantic sensibilities of the previous decades to interrogate the idyllic and pastoral image of the countryside. In turn, they revealed the shallow veneer of the dazzling metropole, made rich through the systematic underdevelopment of the rural peripheries. The texts assigned in this syllabus engage with and emphasize the rich complexity of Victorian England and they enrich our understanding of the social, material and cultural milieu in which the late nineteenth century British novel was produced and perused. In addition, students will be familiarized with the tools of close-reading, critical analysis and narrative technique specific to the genre of the novel.

This will be a discussion-based course where meaningful and constructive class participation will be a fundamental component. Students will be expected to do the reading in advance and be prepared for group discussions and writing on a regular basis. There will be a close reading paper, a final paper and regular classroom discussion to which students will have to contribute regularly and meaningfully as a form of participation. Grading will be calculated on a 100-point scale with points assigned to each of the lengthy papers, the posts and to participation. See below for a detailed grading chart.

3



ENGL 3322 – 13373
Contemporary Novel
Dr. Auritro Majumder

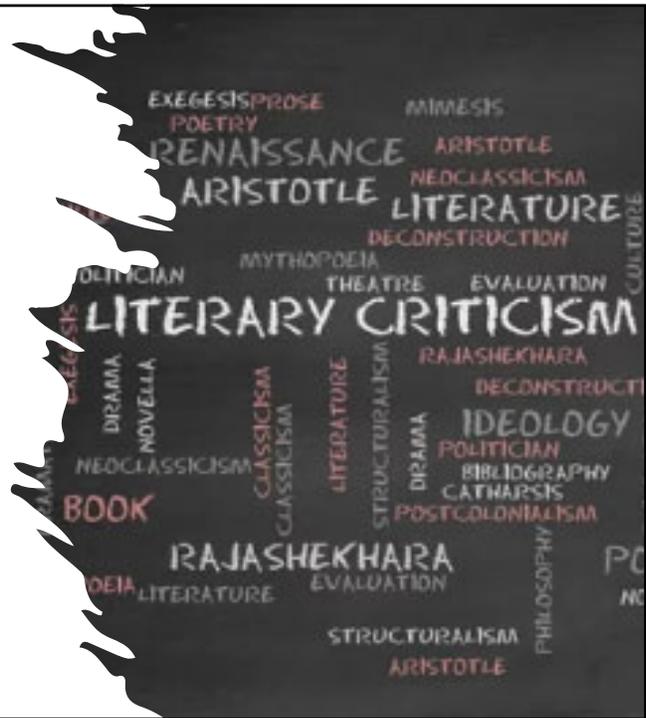
The novel is by far the most significant type of literature today. Novel reading and writing is a global cultural phenomenon, as we see in this course by exploring the work of some internationally acclaimed novelists mostly outside the conventional West. What are some of the themes, styles, and concerns of contemporary novel writing, and how has the novel evolved from its earlier stages? Also, how does the novel engage with other contemporary, and non-literary media? This will be an in-person course; assignments include regular discussion posts, midterm and final essays.

4

ENGL 3323 –16892 Development of Literary Criticism and Theory Dr. Jason Berger

Where do the questions we ask in English courses come from? This course will introduce the historical contexts for how “critical theory” developed in the twentieth century as well as how it is evolving today. In so doing, we will consider a number of earlier texts (from Plato to Marx and Freud) and the ways they were taken up within modernity. Throughout the semester, we will learn about important movements of critical theory in the twentieth century, including structuralism, post-structuralism, Marxism, feminism, psychoanalysis, postcolonial studies, and queer theory.

We’ll also look at more contemporary developments of these models in fields such as new materialism, Black Studies, and the environmental humanities. Occasional literary readings throughout the course will exemplify the theoretical readings and will help develop our analytical skills.

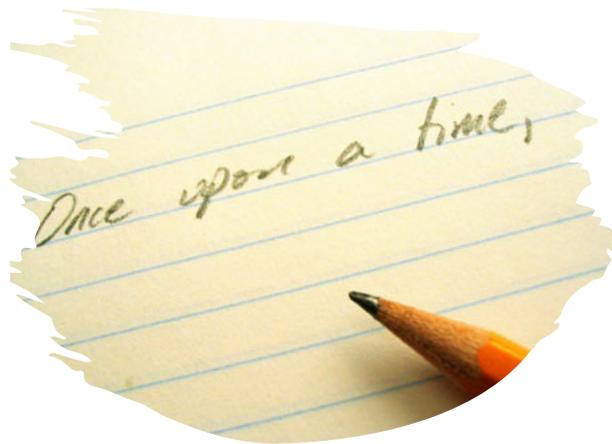


5

ENGL 3330 – 15308 Async Online Beginning Creative Writing-Fiction Alex Parsons

This course is a workshop-based seminar on the short story. We will read and analyze fiction from a writer’s perspective, which is to say we will concentrate on how the different elements of fiction writing (dialogue, structure, characterization, metaphor, etc.) function and combine to create compelling narratives. You’ll be able to employ these techniques in many ways, be it screenplays and teleplays or simply inspiring proposals or interoffice memos (well, that last bit is a stretch).

During the class you will write various short exercises (2-3 pages) based on prompts as well as a short story you will revise. You will also keep a writing journal and, if all goes to plan, have an awesome time.



6

What is Creative Nonfiction Anyway?

© SherreyMeyer.com

ENGL 3332 – 15957 Beginning Creative Writing- Non-Fiction Dr. Audrey Colombe

Introduction to Writing Nonfiction.

What's the story? Where's the line between fact and fiction?

Perhaps you are a biographer, essayist, memoirist, or social critic. We will consider what it means to choose a story and a point of view--after all, behind every viewfinder is another story.

The writer's story.

This course will look at narrative structure in standard patterns of published nonfiction that the students are familiar with (bring your suggestions). We will try out new methods of generating work; we will configure individual plans for editing and revising. Attempts will be made to take every wandering side path that pulls us in.

Students will be writing many short forms assignments and eventually choosing a topic to develop into a finished product. Prepare to surprise yourself.

This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-NC

7

ENGL 3348 - 15889 Thoreau & the Transcendentalists Dr. Paul Guajardo

Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862) stands among the great philosophers, naturalists, environmentalists, vegetarians, essayists, and journal writers. Thoreau influenced Leo Tolstoy, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr, John F. Kennedy, Marcel Proust, William Butler Yeats, Ernest Hemingway, John Muir, Ed Abbey, E.B. White, B.F. Skinner, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Loren Eiseley, among others.

Walden (1854) is a uniquely American text that has been enormously influential and is one of a handful of works that deserves to be studied slowly over the course of a semester. Nevertheless, it is important to read *Walden* in context of the American transcendental movement, so we will also study Ralph Waldo Emerson's essays, "The American Scholar," "Self-Reliance," and the "Divinity School Address."

Because there is only one required textbook, (approximately \$10 used on-line), I insist that everyone purchase a hardcopy of *The Portable Thoreau* edited by Jeffrey S. Cramer ISBN # 978-0-14-310650-0. Order only this edition as we all need to be on the same page, as it were.

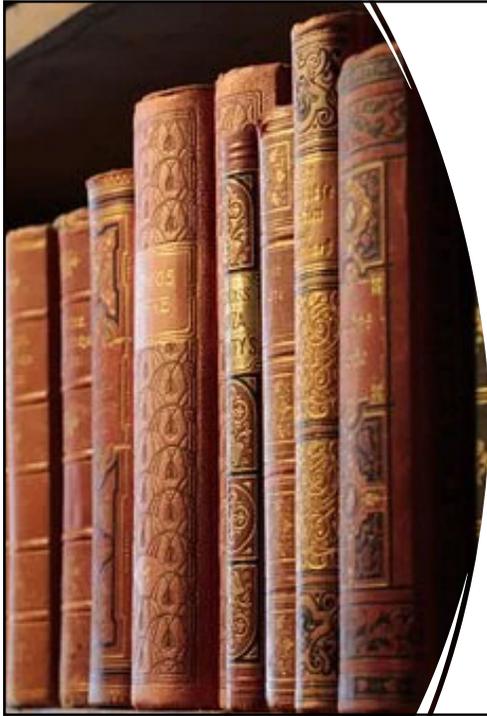
Requirements (explained on syllabus and in class):

- 1% letter of introduction
- 14% unannounced quizzes
- 15% attendance and participation
- 22% expository essay
- 15% personal project & 15 min. class presentation
- 33% research paper



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-NC

8



ENGL 3350 – 14109 American Literature to 1865 Dr. Jason Berger

Considering a wide scope of narratives ranging from “discovery” through the Civil War, this asynchronous online survey course will explore literary, historical, and social aspects of the construction of the United States. Since the earliest European excursions into the lands of the Americas, the “new world” was represented as both an opportunity and a problem: a means to garner lands, wealth, and resources, but also a site of complex cultural and social exchange and antagonism. Our approach toward American literature will be to explore the ways it negotiates such sites of crisis and anxiety as the country moves from a network of agrarian colonies into a modern industrial nation state. Throughout, we will interrogate how writers and literary genres—from Anne Bradstreet’s poetry to Frederick Douglass’s narratives to Hawthorne’s fiction—respond to tension-wrought aspects of American experience and identity.

9

ENGL 3351 – 13098 American Literature Since 1865 Dr. Amanda Ellis Sync Online

Course Description: This course surveys American Literature written post-1865 and asks: What is American literature? Students will read a diverse body of literary texts (novels, short stories, essays, and poetry) and gain an understanding of the protean quality of American literature. Our goal will be to develop an awareness of the historical, cultural, political, and literary trends and forces shaping how “America” is defined across various written works.

Required Texts:

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Mark Twain
The Great Gatsby, F. Scott Fitzgerald
The Grapes of Wrath, John Steinbeck
Their Eyes Were Watching God, Zora Neale Hurston
Under the Feud of Jesus, Helena María Viramontes



10

Interracial Intimacies in American Lit Post-Loving v. Virginia

ENGL 3354 – 23567
**Contemporary
American
Fiction**
Dr. Haylee Harrell

Students seeking African
American Studies credit
should register for AAS
3394- 25819

Course Description: On June 12, 1967, the United States Supreme Court overturned anti-miscegenation laws across the United States—officially legalizing interracial marriage. This historical supreme court case has been heralded as a moment of “racial progress” that ushered in a new era of multiracialism in the United States. This course will investigate what is meant by both “interracial intimacy” and “racial progress” in the afterlives of the transatlantic chattel slave trade. Specifically, then, this course will explore multiracialism through the lens of blackness to ask: How has writing—stylistically, rhetorically, or otherwise, been deployed to discuss racial intermixture *as* racial progress? How has multiracialism in literature and popular culture forwarded notions of the exceptional mixed-raced protagonist? How does multiracialism respond to claims of antiblackness? Overall, this course will ask students to attend to the overarching question: How does multiracialism and interracial literature contend with questions of blackness, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and class?

11

English 3361 – 18512 Mexican American Literature Dr. Amanda Ellis Sync Online

This course interrogates the literary and historical contributions of Mexican American writers. It introduces students to a body of written works (novel, short story, poetry, memoir) that constitute the Mexican American literary tradition in the post-Chicano Movement era. This course is specifically organized around and focuses principally on literature that foregrounds the distinguishing facets of late 20th and early 21st century Chicana/o literature, including but not limited to thematic representations of: Anti-Mexican racism in the neoliberal era, immigration, New World histories of conquest and trauma, immigration, spirituality, Chicana feminism, civil rights, and healing etc.—topics that continue to preoccupy Mexican American writers.

Required Reading:

Borderlands, Gloria Anzaldúa
So Far from God, Ana Castillo
Their Dogs Came with Them, Helena María Viramontes
Flesh to Bone, ire'ne lara silva
Citizen Illegal, José Olivarez
Promises of Gold, José Olivarez

Decolonial Medicine and Holistic Healing
in Mexican American Literature



Letras y Limpias

12

**English 3368 – 23569
Asian American Literature
Dr. Sunny Yang**

This course offers an introduction to Asian American literature with a focus on the social and historical contexts that have shaped this diverse body of writing. We will read a range of texts (novels, short stories, essays, etc.) to examine how writers of East, South, and Southeast Asian descent have grappled with issues such as immigration and exclusion, heritage/history and assimilation, U.S. empire, the “model minority” myth, and citizenship and belonging.

We will pay particular attention to the ways in which gender, sexuality, class, and national origin have structured representations of Asian Americans and Asian American experience while also troubling the conceptual coherence of this identity category. By the end of the course, students will learn how to critically analyze and discuss literature, as well gain an understanding of the major works, themes, and political concerns of Asian American writing.



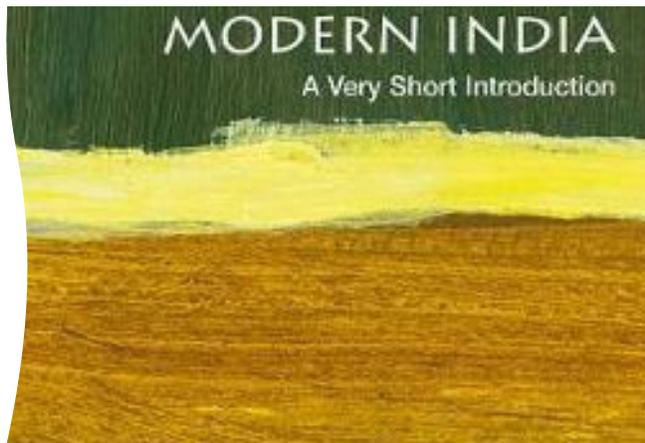
This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA

13

**English 3380 –18421 Async Online
Modern Indian Literature
Dr. Auritro Majumder**

What are some of the themes, styles, and concerns of modern Indian literature? The course introduces students to two related topics: how India, the world’s second-most populous nation after China, appears when seen through a literary-cultural lens; and second, how conventional Euro-American categories of literature are reconfigured in the Indian context.

This will be an online asynchronous course; assignments include regular discussion posts, midterm and final essays. No prior familiarity with the topic needed.



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND

14



ENGL 4311 – 23571 Async Online Language Socialization: News Media, Social Media, and Democracy Dr. Lauren Zentz

In this course, we will examine research conducted on socialization practices in online contexts of both social media and news media genres. Our readings will consist primarily of recent research publications (articles and book chapters) and news items (articles and podcasts) that explore the current political, informational, and ideological divides that are ongoing both within the United States as well as in various other countries. Throughout the semester, students will converse in the course's online forum regarding these articles and the themes and theories that run throughout them. As I will explain in Week 1, we are taking a broad view of the topic of "Language Socialization" by examining how people and institutions aim to socialize each other to think, believe, and act in certain ways regarding currently salient issues, and with a specific focus on online/social media/news media language.

No required text.

17

ENGL 4315 – 14778 Sociolinguistics Dr. Eunjeong Lee

"How are varieties of languages, dialects or accents discussed and researched in our multilingual realities?" "How do people think about, experience, and become influenced by different varieties of language and beliefs toward language?" "What features and strategies do people use to convey and negotiate social relationships, norms, power, and identities?" This class grapples with these questions, focusing on examining the connections between language and society, as broadly conceived. Students will read, discuss, and interrogate basic assumptions, concepts, and concerns that are central in the study of sociolinguistics, including colonial ideologies, variations across language(s), race, gender, disabilities, and language, language policy, and more. The work includes weekly homework assignments, participating group discussion, conducting empirical sociolinguistic research, and leading a collaborative sociolinguistic justice campaign. The class will work together to better understand and document sociolinguistic realities of Houston and beyond, drawing on the conceptual and methodological tools that we will be learning.



18



ENGL 4330* – 25711
European Renaissance
Dr. Alessandro Carrera

The course introduces the major poetical works of Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), one of the greatest poets of Western literature. Students will be taught how to read and understand the cultural complexity of Dante's *Vita Nova* (*New Life*) and *Divine Comedy*.

In addition to the necessary historical background information on Dante's life and times, the course will include (given time) analysis of contemporary works of visual art, literature, and cinema that have been inspired by Dante and have kept Dante's legacy alive.

*ENGL 4330 does not fulfill Core-Writing in the Discipline



ENGL 4342 – 24402
Gender and Writing
Houston LGBTQ+
Archive History
Dr. Maria Gonzalez

Course Description:

This course has been specially created to show the importance of Houston in LGBTQ+ history. The course will focus on our own Houston LGBT Archive in the library. The importance in using contemporary archive work in developing research topics will represent the bulk of the course. The course will begin with traditional readings of texts that contextualize historical understandings of Queerness. Beginning with a reading of Oscar Wilde's classic text, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, the narrative will help us to understand how sexuality was read at the turn of the last century. We will follow this with a 19th century memoir by a French "hermaphrodite," *Herculine Barbin: Being the Recently Discovered Memoirs of a Nineteenth-Century French Hermaphrodite*. Next, using the theoretical works of Foucault, Anzaldúa, and Butler, a queer framing device will provide the foundations for research in the archive. We will read *The Gender Book*, a locally created resource on gender 101, as the authors themselves acknowledge. This text provides some of the more current understandings of gender. Finally, we will read Dale Carpenter's *Flagrant Conduct: The Story of Lawrence v. Texas*, the Houston 2003 case that decriminalized homosexuality in the United States. I will make available to the students, individuals in Houston who participated in this landmark case. We will also go to the Houston LGBT Archive in the library and begin the exploration for individual research topics. Also available will be the digital Houston LGBT archives.

The archivists themselves working on these projects will also be made available to students. The students will have an opportunity to seek archival objects in the community that they wish to contribute to the archive.

Course Requirements:

Students will write three brief explications of a concept for Foucault, Anzaldúa, and Butler each (approximately 2-3 pages); an archive worksheet describing the archive object; a presentation on the archive object; and a final research paper or project (10-15 pages) derived from the archive or to be added to the archive.



ENGL 4373 – 24404
Forms of Film Authorship
(Film, Text, and Politics)
Dr. Karen Fang

Who deserves credit for making a film? Is it the director? Screenwriter? The star who carries it, or the studio and producer who fund and realize it? At the Oscars, these various roles are discrete categories, but cinema is an expensive and labor-intensive product that depends on many contributors and is vulnerable to countless conditions. These exigencies make film a notably challenging medium in which to identify authorship. While a novel, painting, or even a contemporary song usually has a single or limited set of creators, movies defy our traditional notions of solitary, unique genius. These ambiguities of authorship in cinema, moreover, have only grown more complex with digital and online media, as fan culture, narrowcast platforms, and adjacent and spinoff industries like gaming and retail goods transform the origins of narrative content.

This version of ENGL 4373: Film, Text, and Politics explores questions of authorship in film history and theory. Combining analytic readings alongside a selection of narrative film, this course explores Hollywood history and practice, art and film criticism, and new media theory.

Requirements: Midterm and final, as well as 1-2 classroom presentations. As with the assigned reading, students must view films independently outside of class. Course also includes an optional creative final project.

21

ENGL 4382 – 16293
Poetry Writing
Erin Belieu
Sync Online

This class will be conducted in the traditional workshop format. Students will bring in their original poems to which their classmates and professor will respond with thoughtful, critical evaluations and ideas for the work's improvement. We will begin each class by looking at examples of fine verse which you will sometimes be asked to use as prompts for writing poems of your own. Your final project will be gathering the poems together you've made over the course of the semester, as well as a short paper on the life and work of a contemporary poet you admire.



22

ENGL 4385 – 17088

Fiction Forms

Giuseppe Taurino

Overview

Form: The shape and structure of anything as distinguished from the material of which it is composed; particular or distinctive disposition or arrangement of matter; figure.

- Webster's dictionary

I find that most people know what a story is until they sit down to write one. Then they find themselves writing a sketch with an essay woven through it, or an essay with a sketch woven through it, or an editorial with a character in it, or a case history with a moral, or some other mongrel thing. When they realize they aren't writing stories, they decide that the remedy for this is to learn something that they refer to as the "technique of the short story." Technique in the minds of many is something rigid, something like a formula that you impose on the material, but in the best stories it is something organic, something that grows out of the material, and this being the case, it is different for every story of any account that has ever been written.

- Flannery O'Connor

This is a course for fiction writers, about writing. It is not a course in theory, and any discussions of theme and meaning will be secondary.

Our overall goal this semester is to learn as much as we can about fiction writing. Towards this end, we are going to exam some of the formal options and elements available to fiction writers. We're going to read texts closely, think about them seriously, try to articulate what interests us, and listen carefully to what others in the class find. (We will, in short, "read as writers.") We're going to discuss form, but we're also going to discuss story and plot, causation and chronology, character, point of view, scene, narration, the organization and release of information, voice, figurative speech, diction and syntax. You've more than likely discussed some or all of these things in previous fiction writing classes. If you're serious about writing, you're going to end up studying/thinking/talking about them the rest of your life.

Our reading will focus primarily on 20th and 21st century writers. We'll look at "conventional" stories as well as "experimental" ones. That said, this class will focus on literary fiction (as opposed to genre fiction, fan fiction, children's books, plays, screenplays, game narratives, etc.). Those other kinds of fiction are hugely appealing to many people and they are worth studying if you want to write them, but we don't have time for everything. For our purposes, a literary story will be one that aims to explore and investigate an idea, a situation, and/or one or more characters through a narrative defined not just by a sequence of actions but by cause and effect; one that takes into account the complexity of human emotions and psychology; and one that means not to satisfy a reader's expectations for the familiar but to explore the unknown.



23

English 4387 – 23573

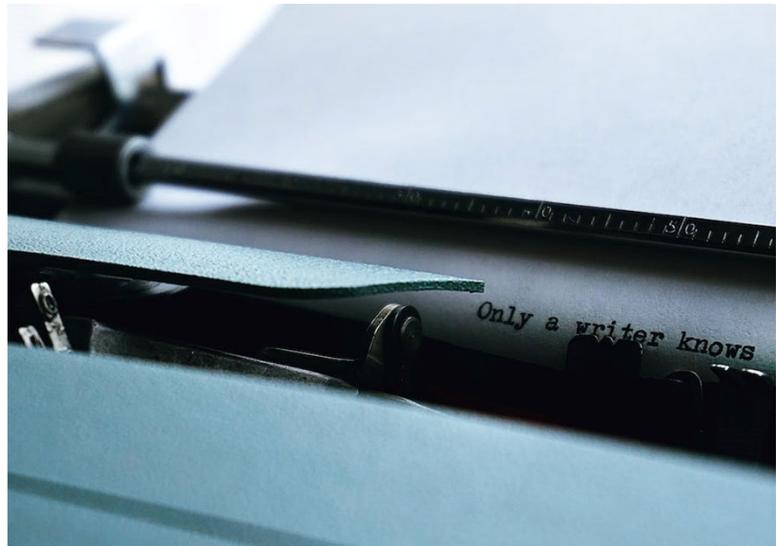
Senior Writing Projects

(Fiction)

Dr. Peter Turchi
2:30-5:30 Tuesdays

The Senior Writing Seminar will touch on all aspects of fiction writing, but we'll give particular attention to structure and revision.

The seminar will be divided between reading published work—short stories and one novel—and discussing your drafts.



24

ENGL 4396 – 23576

Dictators and The Novel

Dr. Hosam About-Ela

DESCRIPTION: This course surveys the way dictatorship as a central feature of the postcolonial condition and histories of populism and oligarchy in the North Atlantic have either shaped (Latin America) or influenced (Middle East, Africa, North America) the historical trajectory of these regions. Topics include the form of the political postmodern novel, the relationship between history and the novel, the postcolonial condition, populism, and current events. The course builds on offerings in the global novel and the American novel in the department's curriculum. It also invites students to consider critically the relationship of literature to history and of literature to current events. It serves as an effective capstone for seniors in the following ways:

1. It emphasizes literary genre
2. It includes a final research paper incorporating historical and literary critical reading
3. It pushes graduating seniors to think globally
4. It connects the study of literature with current events

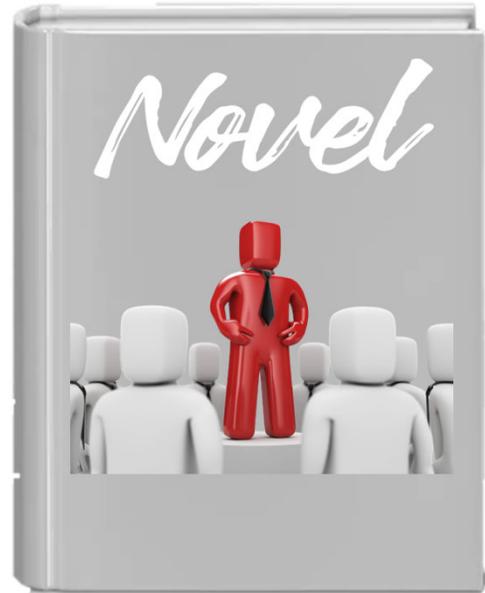
REQUIREMENTS: quizzes, midterm paper, final paper (including historical research).

READINGS: Unit 1 Totalitarian Traditions: Miguel Angel Asturias (Guatemala), The President [excerpts] Hannah Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism*

Unit 2 Classical Dictatorship: Marical Riquelme (Paraguay), "Toward a Weberian Characterization of the Stoenner Regime" Gabriel Garcia Marquez (Colombia), One Hundred Years of Solitude Abdel-Malek, Egypt, Military Society* Gamal Ghitany (Egypt), Zini Barakat Edwidge Danticat (Haiti/US), The Farming of the Bones Nuruddin Farah (Somalia), Sweet and Sour Milk

Unit 3 Dictatorship Today: Han Kang (South Korea), Human Acts Philip Roth (USA), The Plot Against America

* selected passages



25

ENGL 4396 – 23575

Representation of AIDS: Past, Present, and Future of a Pandemic

Dr. Paul Butler

Course Description: The AIDS pandemic has been a cultural force in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The course will explore its impact on rhetoric, writing, literature, and creative writing in our society. From the beginning of the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s until today, the way in which the disease has been received in the U.S. and around the world helps us to understand more than AIDS itself. It is a view of the way our very culture has evolved, and different representations of AIDS reveal a great deal about the way the field of English studies (fiction, nonfiction, the essay documentary, film, drama, etc.) has shaped receptions—and perceptions—of the disease. The course will explore the way English studies helped us focus on a once-marginalized epidemic and, through various forms of written (and other) activism, helped change the course of AIDS' history as well as our approach to current pandemics like COVID-19 and the social and cultural issues associated with disease.

Proposed Readings/Texts:

- Kramer, *The Normal Heart*
- Kushner, *Angels in America*
- Holleran, *Ground Zero*
- Shilts, *And The Band Played On*
- Doty, *Heaven's Coast*
- Weissman, *We Were Here*
- Schecter, *The AIDS Notebooks*
- Crimp, *Melancholia and Moralism: Essays on AIDS and Queer Politics*
- Rodriguez, "Late Victorians"
- Treat, *The Rise and Fall of the Yellow House*
- Monette, *Last Watch of the Night*
- Cowen and Lipman, *An Early Frost*

Writing Requirements and other assignments:

Quizzes	150
Short Essay One	150
Short Essay Two	150
Participation	150
Final Project	200
Final Exam	200
TOTAL	1000



26