

Hampshire College Spring 2010

HACU-0137-1 Reading Generically: Modern Short Prose (Upper-level Elective)

Alicia Ellis MW 10:30AM-11:50AM

This course is intended as a survey of 20th century readings in the short prose form. Short stories are difficult, consuming and complex. A well-written short story will cause you to swoon while a poorly constructed one will inspire violent feelings. The concerns of this course will be: how to read short stories, how and what to write about short stories, innovations in style, form and point of view. This course is about close and attentive reading and writing. Authors may include Flannery O'Connor, Jorge Luis Borges, Charles Johnson, Franz Kafka, Raymond Carver, Alice Munro, Zora Neale Hurston, James Tiptree and James Baldwin. Frequent writing assignments and class presentations.

HACU-0159-1 Moby-Dick and Its Afterlife (2nd American)(Upper-level Elective)

Michele Hardesty TTH 10:30AM-11:50AM

Moby-Dick, that hard-to-classify novel about Captain Ahab's mad search for the White Whale, took its own long voyage to arrive at a position in the canon of U.S. literature. Poorly received when it was published in 1851, Herman Melville's novel gained its current reputation only when it was revived in the 20th century. This course will follow Moby-Dick's voyage: we will read the novel itself and explore its contemporary contexts, then we will examine three moments of the novel's revival: first by writers impressed by Moby-Dick's proto-modernist style, and second by those who tied the "monomaniaca" Captain Ahab to the Cold War threat of "totalitarianism," and third to the revisionist view of C.L.R. James, whose book on Melville (composed in 1952 while awaiting deportation under the McCarran-Walter Act) focused on the abbreviated histories of the novel's "mariners, renegades, and castaways." Course will include frequent writing assignments and a class presentation.

HACU-0161-1 The English Bible (Upper-level Elective)

Alan Hodder TTH 10:30AM-11:50AM

The English Romantic, William Blake, characterized the Bible as "the Great Code of Art," an observation that finds repeated illustration throughout the Western literary tradition from medieval mystery plays to the latest fiction of Toni Morrison. By the same token, biblical stories form the bedrock of the scriptural traditions of Christians, Muslims, and Jews the world over. What are these stories that have so captivated readers for over 2000 years? Why has the Bible had such an immense religious and imaginative appeal? This course introduces students to the full range of biblical literature from the stories of Genesis to the life and times of Jesus of Nazareth. While the course emphasizes literary features of the Bible as it has been rendered in English, we will also consider important religious, moral, and theological implications. Among the biblical texts considered will be the foundational stories of Genesis and Exodus; the books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth; the stories of David and Kings; the Book of Job and the Song of Solomon; the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel; New Testament gospels; Acts of the Apostles; and the Book of Revelation.

HACU-0172-1 Myth, Belief, and Reality in World Literature (Upper-level Elective)

McKinley Melton TTH 02:00PM-03:20PM

What does it take for a myth to become a widely-held belief? At what point does that belief become reality? This course will engage these questions by examining literature from different time periods representing various cultures throughout the world. Furthermore, we will consider the role of mythology, legend, and popular lore in defining a culture as well as the people within it, shaping societal views on everything from gender, race, and class to religious beliefs and family dynamics. Throughout the semester, as we focus on novels, short stories, and drama, we will also discuss the manner by which writers have represented the belief systems that undergird the communities in their literature. With the literature as our guide, we will seek greater understanding of the construction of not only other cultures, but also our own.

HACU-0185-1 Literature of Crime and Detection (Upper-level Elective)

Jeffrey Wallen TTH 02:00PM-03:20PM

In this class we will explore the appeal of the detective story. Why has the detection of crime become so fascinating for readers during the last 150 years? What do these stories reveal to us about the nature of narrative and plot, about cultural anxieties and the possibilities of justice? We will focus on the detective as a reader (both of texts and of the world), as a social phenomenon, and as a literary construct. We will look at both "analytic" detective stories (Poe, Agatha Christie, Borges), and at ones featuring a "hard-boiled" detective (Hammett, Chandler, Chester Himes, Paco Ignacio Taibo II). We will read critical essays exploring formal and socio-cultural aspects of detective fiction, study detective stories from many parts of the world, and see some films. We may also read works that use the detective story as the point of departure, such as Paul Auster's City of Glass.

HACU-0225-1 American Literature at the Turn of the 20th Century (2nd American)(Upper-level Elective)

Rachel Rubinstein TTH 12:30PM-01:50PM

The period between the Civil War and the first World War saw profound ethno-racial, political, economic and social transformations in American society. Industrialization and urbanization, the increase in immigration and internal migrations, the development of consumer culture, America's new self-consciousness as an imperial power, a developing discourse about race, class and gender, all contributed to the literary innovations of the turn of the century. We will explore realism, literary naturalism, "local color" writing, literature of social reform, and literature by immigrants and writers of color, up against such cultural phenomena as world's fairs and expositions; vaudeville, wild west shows and other popular performance; advertising, middle-class affluence and its discontents.

HACU-0237-1 To Be Queer, Black, & Beautiful: The Transgressive Black Body in Black Diasporic Literature (Upper-level Elective)

Jeannette Lee TTH 01:00PM-02:20PM

This is an advanced introductory literature class that examines African-American, Caribbean, and Black British literature through the framework of gender, sexuality, and sexual orientation. We will read novels, poetry, and plays to analyze how black diasporic writers portray the intersection of these identity categories. Selected readings will demonstrate the range of imagined possibilities as well as critiques and the shoring-up of limiting notions of sexual identity. Our intervention will necessarily consider the black body as a contested site through which the meaning of gender and sexuality has been disputed. This approach considers how gender and sexuality are constructed and what types of persons are privileged and de-privileged as well as the choices that are made available and legitimate for black characters. We will read literature by black lesbian, gay, and bi-sexual authors as well as writing that portrays black LGBT characters. In this focus, this class will examine the depiction of same-sex intimacy as well as address the critique launched through sexuality and sexual orientation of essentialist constructions of black communities and "authentic" blackness. Some of the questions we will consider: What are gender, sexuality, and sexual orientation? How do gender, sexuality, and sexual orientation intersect with and refract each other as well as race, color, class? How are gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgendered, and heterosexual bodies scripted? What types of bodies and persons are legitimated and why? What does it mean to have a sexual identity? What structures of feeling can be read through sexuality? And who is black? These queries will be addressed through the literature as well as theoretical and literary critical readings from Black Feminist Criticism, Feminist Theory, Masculinity Studies, and Queer Theory. Students will also be assigned recommended readings that provide an understanding of the specific historical contexts and cultural trajectories within which the literature is situated. Writing by Audre Lorde, Hilton Als, Thomas Glave, Jewelle Gomez, Samuel Delaney, Dionne Brand, R. Erica Doyle, and Michelle Cliff and others will be assigned.

HACU-0240-1 The Personal Essay (Upper-level Elective)(Writing)

Marian MacCurdy TTH 12:30PM-01:50PM

The rigors of academia mandate that we write in one form or another for most of the first 21 years of our lives. After that we write to get jobs and to keep them, we write to engage in the commerce of our culture, and we write to communicate with others and with ourselves. This last genre is perhaps the least

practiced but among the most important since writing is a process that helps us make meaning. Writing is both a verb and a noun; it represents our best thinking and helps us arrive at it. The irony of the term, the personal essay, is in learning to make rhetorical choices to help us to develop our own literary and personal values and the experiences that helped to generate them we begin a journey that ultimately takes us beyond ourselves and into the community, which can establish our common humanity.

HACU-0263-1 Americans Abroad: U.S. Exceptionalism, Foreign Policy and the Literary Imagination (2nd American)(Upper-level Elective)

Michele Hardesty W 02:30PM-05:20PM

The common stereotype of the "ugly American" has a literary history: the phrase derives from Eugene Burdick's and William Lederer's 1958 novel of the same name, and as a character the "American abroad" has an even longer history that goes back to the mid-19th century. This course will trace a genealogy of the "American abroad" in literature and film from just before the closing of the U.S. frontier in the late 19th century up to our own time. While the majority of the material we will examine in class is literary, we will be asking both literary and non-literary questions about these materials, focusing on how these texts create and contest a literary imagination of American exceptionalism. Authors include Margaret Fuller, Mark Twain, Henry James, James Baldwin, Graham Greene, Paul Bowles, and Joan Didion. The course will include frequent writing assignments, a class presentation, and a research essay. Prerequisite: one prior literature course.

HACU-0275-1 The Idea of Europe: Readings in the 20th Century Novel (Upper-level Elective)

Alicia Ellis MW 01:00PM-02:20PM

Readings in the works of twentieth-century authors, who, in very different ways, challenge the conventional ways in which Europe is identified and understood by its constituents. Particular attention is paid to a sense of a shared transnational European identity, the theorization of political, cultural and sexual spaces, themes of historical memory, postcolonial legacies and the negotiation of multiculturalism. In addition, we will explore the relationship between the margin and the center, the layered structure of violence and the articulation of a unique European self whose boundaries are fluid, defiant and contested. Focus will be on close readings of text. Authors may include but are not limited to Elfriede Jelinek, Sarah Waters, Orhan Pamuk, Michel Houellebecq, Kazuo Ishiguro, Hanif Kureishi, Philippe Grimbert and Jeanette Winterson. Instructor permission required.

HACU-0276-1 Brecht and Beckett, and Benjamin and Adorno (Upper-level Elective)

Jeffrey Wallen TTH 10:30AM-11:50AM

In his writings, Theodor Adorno contrasts the plays of Samuel Beckett and Bertolt Brecht, suggesting they represent two major tendencies of twentieth-century art, and he praises Beckett while critiquing Brecht. Adorno's friend and colleague Walter Benjamin, on the other hand, ardently promoted Brecht's work. Profound and incompatible views about the nature of aesthetics and politics are at the heart of their disagreement. In this course, we will read several plays by Brecht and Beckett, and explore the aesthetic, critical, and social possibilities that their work engages. We will analyze their very different approaches to theater, and read some of their critical, fictional, and poetic work. We will also read several essays by Adorno and Benjamin, and grapple with their unsettling and provocative ideas.

HACU-0283-1 The Nineteenth-Century Novel and the British Empire (Brit-Lit 2)(Upper-level Elective)

Lise Sanders TTH 02:00PM-03:20PM

This course uses the British empire as a case study in order to examine the cultural politics of imperialism and colonization. Focusing on British India but with excursions into other colonial contexts, readings will explore the connections between race, gender, sexuality and empire. In reading nineteenth-century literary and historical texts in conjunction with postcolonial criticism and contemporary fiction, we will ask the following questions: How does the imperialist project affect or determine constructions of sexuality and gender? How are ethnicity, nationality, and racial difference deployed in the service of empire? How is the body figured under imperialism? We will also study the relationship between empire and nationalism, examining writings that represent and/or theorize domination and resistance in the colonial

encounter. The goal of this course is to enable students to explore the relationship between literature and history in narratives of empire, and to develop a set of theoretical lenses by which to examine these concerns.

HACU-0293-1 Literature, Violence, and the State (Upper-level Elective)

Mary Russo W 02:30PM-05:20PM

A course on the poetics and politics of tragedy focusing on representations of state violence whose victims and agents of criminality have been women. The class will examine closely Sophocles' *Antigone*; Shakespeare's "Rape of Lucrece" and *Titus Andronicus*; and nineteenth- and twentieth-century depictions of the life and death of Beatrice Cenci (Shelley's and Artaud's among others). Beginning with Aristotle's *Poetics*, students will consider other writings in philosophy, classical and romantic poetics and contemporary literary and social theories that link ethical, aesthetic, and emotional criteria to the question of what constitute legitimate acts of sovereign force or of individual self-sacrifice. Evaluation criteria: Students will be evaluated on their preparation for class discussion, a group project, and short, written assignments and a final portfolio. Prerequisite: Two or more previous courses in the Humanities.

IA/HACU-0103-1 Introduction to Writing (Upper-level Elective)

Deborah Gorlin TTH 10:30AM-11:50AM

This course will explore the work of scholars, essayists, and creative writers in order to use their prose as models for our own. We'll analyze scholarly explication and argument; we'll also try to appreciate the artistry in our finest personal essays, short fiction, and poetry. Students will complete a series of critical essays in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, respectively, and follow with a personal essay, a brief memoir, and a piece of short fiction or poetry. Students will have an opportunity to submit their work for peer review and discussion. Frequent, enthusiastic revision is an expectation.

IA-0131-1 Playwriting (Upper-level Elective)(Writing)

Ellen Donkin MW 10:30AM-11:50AM

Our work in this course will be more or less equally divided between reading plays and writing a one-act. The plays we read, which will include a wide variety of playwrights, will inform our exercise work even as they deepen and extend our sense of drama as a form. We will be paying particular attention to the way character is revealed through dialogue, ways to unfold exposition, segmentation of dramatic action, and how dialogue is shaped by character activity.

IA-0213-1 A Century of British and Irish Drama (Upper-level Elective)

Talya Kingston MW 09:00AM-10:20AM

This course will take a close look at plays written in Britain and Ireland over the last century, exploring works by playwrights such as John M. Synge, George Bernard Shaw, Shelagh Delaney, Harold Pinter, Carol Churchill, Brian Friel and Martin McDonagh. Each week will be devoted to a different playwright. Students will both examine how the plays speak to the particular time and society in which they were written, and explore the creative potential of producing them on our own stages now.

IA-0236-1 The Practice of Literary Journalism (Upper-level Elective)

Michael Lesy TTH 09:00AM-10:20AM

Literary journalism encompasses a variety of genres, including portrait/biography, memoir, and investigation of the social landscape. At its best, literary journalism uses such dramatic devices as plot, characterization, and dialogue to extend and elaborate the who/what/where/when/and why of traditional journalism. By combining evocation with analysis, immersion with investigation, literary journalism tries to reproduce the complex surfaces and depths of the real world. Books to be read will include: (1) Kerrane and Yagoda's *Art of Fact*; (2) Filkins' *Endless War*; (3) Malan's *My Traitor's Heart*; (4) Oliver Sack's *Awakenings*; (5) Wendy Doniger's *The Implied Spider*. Students will be asked to write as many as six, medium length nonfiction narratives. These narratives will require participant-observation of local scenes and interview/conversation with the people who inhabit them. Students will then be asked to extend these "short stories" into longer pieces that have casts of "characters" and plots. The very best of these longer pieces may be published in *LIVING NOW*, the online magazine. All fieldwork will demand initiative,

patience, curiosity, and guts. The writing itself will have to be excellent. An ability to meet weekly deadlines as well as well-prepared class participation will be required. No excuses.

IA-0277-1 Style and Sensibility: Strategies for Fiction Writing (Upper-level Elective)(Writing)

Nathalie Arnold W 12:30PM-03:20PM

What does it mean to say a writer's work is "lyrical" or "spare," "realistic," "modern" or "mythical"? In this reading and workshop course, we will explore the concepts of 'sensibility' and 'style' as they apply to language and story. We will identify the actual sentence-level underpinnings of specific tonal/narrative effects, considering: syntax, diction, word families, the color and rhythm of language, punctuation, point of view, voice, and the arrangement of imageries. Through close reading of works by a wide range of writers, we will analyze writing styles, link aesthetic effects and intellectual/political commitments to craft choices, and explore relationships between literal content and the way content is delivered. The course will function as a workshop. In addition to weekly imitation exercises and analyses of readings, members will submit one long (10-20 p) piece for peer critique, which they will significantly revise. At least one 200-level creative writing course that featured significant peer reviews/workshops. Instructor Permission Required.

IA-0286-1 Poetry Workshop (Upper-level Elective)(Writing)

Heather Madden TH 12:30PM-03:20PM

Francis Ponge wrote, "Halfway between cage (cage) and cachot (prison cell), the French language has cageot, a simple openwork container for transporting fruits that sicken at the least hint of suffocation" (trans. by Margaret Guiton). In this poetry workshop, we'll read critically, write copiously, revise fervently, imitate with abandon, and experiment with language, line, and form?all in the hopes of understanding how we can effectively transfer what we observe into the cageot of language. In addition to completing in-class and out-of-class exercises, members will produce poems for workshop sessions; engage in critical discussions of peer work; complete a collaborative presentation; and submit a final portfolio that includes: drafts and revisions of eight poems, one critical analysis, and a statement of poetic disposition. Members should bring a poem they admire to the first class meeting. Please note: the class is limited to 16 students so that each workshop member is offered individualized attention. Instructor permission is required. Please contact Heather Madden hmadden@hampshire.edu.

IA-0298-1 Mysterious Fictions: writing about secrets (Upper-level Elective)(Writing)

Natalie Arnold T 06:30PM-09:20PM

Why are secrets so fascinating? Is every story a mystery at heart? When should the hidden remain hidden, or all truths be told? This introductory course assumes that managing the tension between the said and the unsaid can be central to any story's success. We will read stories about different styles of secrets: family secrets, unsolved secrets, terrible secrets and different kinds of characters who keep, reveal, and actively seek to discover secrets of their own or those of others. Inventing and writing about various types of secrets, class members will acquire skills for balancing the hidden and the known in stories of their own. Through focused writing exercises and short fiction assignments, students will learn to create believable characters who keep, discover, or spill secrets; and write effective scenes in which the implications of a secret are felt but not told, as well as convincing depictions of secrets revealed. Student should have taken at least one 100 or 200-level creative writing course that featured significant peer reviews/workshops. Instructor Permission Required.

IA-399A-1 Advanced Seminar in Writing (Upper-level Elective)(Writing)

Lynne Hanley; Paul Jenkins T 12:30PM-03:20PM

This course is a workshop for students doing independent projects in writing poetry, fiction, and literary nonfiction. Participants are expected to present work in progress, to read and write critiques of their classmates' work, and to participate in class discussions. Both students and the instructors will assign readings for the class as a whole, and students should expect to read a wide range of published work in a number of different genres.