

AMHERST COLLEGE FALL 2009

**ENGL 01-04 Novels, Plays, Poems (Engl 200)**

**Howell Chickering MWF 10:00AM-10:50AM**

A first course in reading fictional, dramatic, and lyric texts: stories, a major novel, one or more plays by Shakespeare, poems by Donne, Dickinson, Frost, and others. Why does any writer—an Amherst College student, Philip Roth, Emily Dickinson, Shakespeare—say what he or she says one way rather than another? And what in the expression itself makes a story, a play, a poem effective, something a reader might care about, be moved or delighted by? We will try to answer these questions by reading primary examples of each genre, including much recent work, with close and sustained attention to details of expressive language. There will be frequent writing exercises. The course will be taught in sections of 15-20 students. Preference will be given to first-year students.

**ENGL 01-05 Novels, Plays, Poems (Engl 200)**

**William Pritchard MWF 11:00AM-11:50AM**

**ENGL 01-06 Novels, Plays, Poems (Engl 200)**

**David Sofield MW 12:30-01:50 PM**

**ENGL 01-07 Novels, Plays, Poems (Engl 200)**

**Peter Berek TTH 10:00-11:20 AM**

**ENGL 10-03 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Literature (2nd Am Lit)**

**Barry O'Connell TTH 10:00-11:20 AM**

The focus in this course will be on lesser-known writers alongside the “major” figures: James Weldon Johnson, Willa Cather, Nella Larsen, Fitzgerald, Sherwood Anderson, Ernest Hemingway, Zora Neale Hurston, Langston Hughes, Edward Dahlberg, Henry Roth, Tillie Olsen, Hisaye Yamamoto, Toshio Mori, Saul Bellow, Eudora Welty, James Baldwin and others. Limited to 40 students.

**ENGL 21-01 Writing Poetry I (Upper-level elective)/Writing**

**Daniel Hall MWF 11:00-11:50 AM**

A first workshop in the writing of poetry. Class members will read and discuss each others' work and will study the elements of prosody: the line, stanza forms, meter, free verse, and more. Open to anyone interested in writing poetry and learning about the rudiments of craft. Writing exercises weekly. Limited enrollment. Preregistration is not allowed. Please consult the Creative Writing Center website for information on admission to this course.

**ENGL 24-01 Screenwriting (Upper-level elective)/Writing**

**Sabina Murray M 02:00-05:00 PM**

This is an introductory course in screenwriting with a focus on narrative. We will look at film, adaptation, structure, and "the business," with an emphasis on workshopping original screenplay. Requisite: At least one film course and/or one creative writing course at the college level recommended. Limited to 15 students. Preference given to juniors and seniors.

**ENGL 26-01 Fiction Writing I (Upper-level elective)/Writing**

**Judith Frank TTH 08:30-09:50 AM**

A first course in writing fiction. Emphasis will be on experimentation as well as on developing skill and craft. Workshop (discussion) format. Limited enrollment. Preregistration is not allowed. Please consult the Creative Writing Center website for information on admission to this course.

**ENGL 27-01 Writing Poetry II (Upper-level elective)/Writing**  
**Daniel Hall MWF 12:00-12:50 PM**

A second, advanced workshop for practicing poets. Students will undertake a longer project as well as doing exercises every week exploring technical problems. Requisite: English 21 or the equivalent. Limited enrollment. Preregistration is not allowed. Please consult the Creative Writing Center website for information on admission to this course.

**ENGL 28-01 Fiction Writing II (Upper-level elective)/Writing**  
**Alexander Chee M 02:00-04:30 PM**

An advanced level fiction class. Students will undertake a longer project as well as doing exercises every week exploring technical problems. Requisite: Completion of a previous course in creative writing. Limited enrollment. Preregistration is not allowed. Please consult the Creative Writing Center website for information on admission to this course.

**ENGL 31-01 Chaucer: Canterbury Tales (Brit Lit Pre-1700) (Upper-level elective)**  
**Howell Chickering MWF 11:00AM-11:50AM**

The course aims to give the student rapid mastery of Chaucer's English and an active appreciation of his poetry. No prior knowledge of Middle English is expected. A knowledge of Modern English grammar and its nomenclature, or a similar knowledge of another language, will be helpful. Short critical papers and frequent declamation in class. The emphasis will be on Chaucer's humor, irony, and his narrative and dramatic gifts. We will read all of the poetic Tales and excerpts from the two prose Tales. Three class hours per week.

**ENGL 35-01 Shakespeare (Engl 221/222) (Upper-level elective)**  
**Allison Deutermann TTH 11:30 AM – 12:50 PM**

A study of selected comedies, histories, tragedies, and romances spanning the length of Shakespeare's career. We will read the plays closely, focusing on form and language, and consider how they were shaped by the culture in which they were written, the theaters where they were first performed, and the publishing and performance histories that continue to mediate our access to them. Limited to 50 students.

**ENGL 37-01 Medieval Poetry (Brit Lit Pre-1700) (Upper-level elective)**  
**Amanda Walling MW 02:00-03:20 PM**

Medieval Poetry and Its Afterlives. This course will explore the characteristic verse forms, imagery, and themes of late medieval and early Renaissance poetry and will examine how these characteristics have resonated throughout the work of later poets into the present day. We will consider the work of translators from Dryden to Pound and Heaney, trace the reinventions of alliterative poetry by such poets as Hopkins and Auden, and analyze the medievalism of poets from Spenser through Eliot. Throughout, we will explore the particular meaning these medieval devices carry for later poets and what they suggest about the changing role of the Middle Ages in the English poetic tradition.

**ENGL 45-01 Modern British & American Poetry (Upper-level elective)**  
**William Pritchard MWF 10:10-10:50 AM**

Readings and discussions centering on the work of Thomas Hardy, W.B. Yeats, T.S. Eliot, Robert Frost, and Wallace Stevens. Some attention also to A.E. Housman, Edward Thomas, Ezra Pound, and William Carlos Williams. Not open to first-year students.

**ENGL 50-01 Composition (Upper-level elective)/Writing****Helen von Schmidt****MW 12:30-01:50 PM**

Organizing and expressing one's intellectual and social experience. Twice weekly writing assignments: a sketch or short essay of self-definition in relation to others, using language in a particular way-for example, as spectator of, witness to, or participant in, a situation. These short essays serve as preparation for a final, more extended, autobiographical essay assessing the student's own intellectual growth. Limited to 20 students. Open to juniors and seniors.

**ENGL 55-01 Childhood in African/Caribbean Literature (Upper-level elective)****C. Rhonda Cobham-Sander****MW 12:30-01:50 PM**

Also Black Studies 29 [A/CLA.] The course will concentrate on Caribbean authors. It explores the process of self-definition in literary works from Africa and the Caribbean that are built around child protagonists. We will examine the authors' various methods of ordering experience through the choice of literary form and narrative technique, as well as the child/author's perception of his or her society. French texts will be read in translation. Open to first-year students with consent of the instructor.

**ENGL 60-01 Cont Novel: Sexuality & History (Upper-level elective)****Judith Frank****TTH 11:30 AM – 12:50 PM**

A study of American and British gay and lesbian novelists, from 1990 to the present, who have written historical novels. We will examine such topics as the kinds of expressive and ideological possibilities the historical novel offers gay and lesbian novelists, the representation of sexuality in narratives that take place before Stonewall, and the way these authors position queer lives in history. Novelists include Sarah Waters, Emma Donoghue, Jeanette Winterson, Leslie Feinberg, Alan Hollinghurst, Colm Tóibín, and Michael Cunningham.

**ENGL 74-01 Graphic Novel (Upper-level elective)****Alexander Chee****T 02:00-04:30 PM**

This is a course in the reading of the contemporary graphic novel, a form with a voice made from the juxtaposition of visual art and text. Readings will focus on the unique demands this voice places on the reader, the writer/artist and the story as well as how a form first known for pulp science fiction and melodrama now tells stories about war, illness, censorship, terrorism, immigrant experiences and sexual identity. We will read Max Ernst, Frank Miller, Art Spiegelman, David Wojnarowicz, Kazuo Koike, David B., Guy Delisle, Joann Sfar, Jaime and Gilbert Hernandez, Marjane Satrapi, Alison Bechdel, and Eugene Yang. All French and Japanese work will be read in translation. Two class meetings per week. Admission with consent of the instructor. Preference given to junior and senior English majors. Limited to 15 students.

**ENGL 83-01 The Non-Fiction Film (Upper-level elective)****Helen von Schmidt****TTH 11:30 AM – 12:50 PM**

The study of a range of non-fiction films, including (but not limited to) the "documentary," ethnographic film, autobiographical film, the film essay. Will include the work of Eisenstein, Vertov, Ivens, Franju, Ophüls, Leacock, Kopple, Gardner, Herzog, Chopra, Citron, Wiseman, Blank, Apted, Marker, Morris, Joslin, Riggs, McElwee. Two film programs weekly. Readings will focus on issues of representation, of "truth" in documentary, and the ethical issues raised by the films. Limited to 25 students.

**ENGL 95-02 Synaesthetic Renaissance (2<sup>nd</sup> Am Lit)(Upper-level elective)****Barry O'Connell****TTH 02:00-03:20 PM**

EDWARDS, EMERSON, AND WILLIAM JAMES. These three men are arguably the greatest American philosophers and psychologists yet they are rarely taught. Remarkably enough they may be least taught in departments of philosophy or psychology. In years they stretch from the eighteenth

century to the twentieth. In accomplishment and influence each dominated his time, and it would be difficult to limit them to any one academic field. Their writings can be read as literature, as religion, as theology, philosophy, psychology, education—the list could cover most of the humanities and much of the social sciences—and each kept current with the most advanced natural scientific thought in his period. This seminar will engage in close readings of their most important writings. Two class meetings per week. Open to all juniors and seniors as well as English majors. Limited to 15 students.

**ENGL 95-03 Poetry 1950-2009 (Upper-level elective)**

**David Sofield, Richard Wilbur TTH 02:00-03:20 PM**

**THEATER AND ANTHROPOLOGY: READINGS IN PERFORMANCE STUDIES.** Theater and anthropology have been linked, from debates on the ritual origins of theater to those accounts of the performative dimensions of rendering the fieldwork experience in writing. “Performance” is a key term for both disciplines. We will begin with the links forged between theater and anthropology, and the debates and discussions that contributed to the development of performance studies as a discipline. We will then look closely at the relationship between performance art practices and the enterprise of fieldwork-based ethnography. What does it mean to stage theatrically an “other” or the idea of otherness? How have artists used the body in performance to imagine and enact culture, nation, otherness, selfhood, and the complex relations among them? Our comparison of artistic and social practices will be grounded in the following topics: ritual, play, gender, documentation, primitivism, exoticism, the participant-observer process as it relates to self-other dynamics, and practices of spectatorship and the gaze.

Limited to 15 students.

**EUST 24-01 Poetic Translation (Upper-level elective)**

**James Maraniss TTH 10:00-11:20 AM**

This is a workshop in translating poetry into English from another European language, preferably but not necessarily a Germanic, Slavic, or Romance language (including Latin, of course), whose aim is to produce good poems in English. Students will present first and subsequent drafts to the entire class for regular analysis, which will be fed by reference to readings in translation theory and contemporary translations from European languages. Two class meetings per week. Limited to 12 students.

**LATI 15-01 Catullus & Lyric Spirit (Upper-level elective)**

**Bruce Arnold MWF 01:00-01:50 PM**

This course will examine Catullus’ poetic technique, as well as his place in the literary history of Rome. Extensive reading of Catullus in Latin, together with other lyric poets of Greece and Rome in English. Three class hours per week. Requisite: Latin 02 or equivalent.

**RUSS 17-01 Strange Russian Writers (Upper-level elective)**

**Stanley Rabinowitz TTH 11:30 AM – 12:50 PM**

A course that examines the stories and novels of rebels, deviants, dissidents, loners, and losers in some of the weirdest fictions in Russian literature. The writers, most of whom imagine themselves to be every bit as bizarre as their heroes, include from the nineteenth century: Gogol (“Viy,” “Diary of a Madman,” “Ivan Shponka and His Aunt,” “The Nose,” “The Overcoat”); Dostoevsky (“The Double,” “A Gentle Creature,” “Bobok,” “The Dream of a Ridiculous Man”); Tolstoy (“The Kreutzer Sonata,” “Father Sergius”), and from the twentieth century: Olesha (Envy); Platonov (The Foundation Pit); Kharm’s (Stories); Bulgakov (The Master and Margarita); Nabokov (The Eye, Despair); Erofeev (Moscow Circles); Pelevin (“The Yellow Arrow”). Our goal will be less to construct a canon of strangeness than to consider closely how estranged women, men, animals, and objects become the center of narrative attention and, in doing so, reflect the writer Tatyana Tolstaya’s claim that “Russia is broader and more diverse, stranger and more contradictory than any idea of it. It resists all theories about what makes it tick,

confounds all the paths to its possible transformation.” All readings in English translation. Limited to 35 students. Not open to first-year students.

**RUSS 27-01 Fyodor Dostoevsky (Upper-level elective)**

**Catherine Ciepiela**

**TTH 10:00-11:20 AM**

Among the many paradoxes Dostoevsky presents is the paradox of his own achievement. Perceived as the most “Russian” of Russian writers, he finds many enthusiastic readers in the West. A nineteenth-century author, urgently engaged in the debates of his time, his work remains relevant today. The most influential theorists of the novel feel called upon to account for the Dostoevsky phenomenon. How can we understand Dostoevsky’s appeal to so many audiences? This broad question will inform our reading of Dostoevsky’s fiction, as we consider its social-critical, metaphysical, psychological, and formal significance. We will begin with several early works (“Notes from Underground,” “The Double”) whose concerns persist and develop in the great novels that are the focus of the course: *Crime and Punishment*, *The Idiot* and *The Brothers Karamazov*. All readings and discussion in English. Conducted as a seminar. Two class meetings per week.

**SPAN 94-01 Spanglish (Upper-level elective)**

**Ilan Stavchansky**

**TTH 11:30 AM – 12:50 PM**

A cultural study of language in the Hispanic world (Spain, Latin America, the Caribbean, and the United States), this course spans almost five hundred years, from the arrival of Spanish to the Americas with Columbus' first voyage, to present-day "pocho lingo" in Los Angeles. It focuses on the verbal interactions of the missionaries to Florida and the Southwest, the linguistic repercussions of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo of 1848, the age of acculturation in the early half of the 20th century, the political agitation of the Chicano Movement as manifested in word games, and the hip-hop age of agitprop. Students will analyze works by Junor Díaz, Giannina Braschi, Susana Chávez-Silverman, Luis Humberto Crosthwaite, and others. Topics like translation, Bilingual Education, lexicography, and the social impact of mass media will be contemplated. Emphasis will be made on the various modalities of Spanglish, such as Dominicanish, Cubonics, and Nuyorican. Plus, the development of Spanglish as a street jargon will be compared to Yiddish, Black English, and other minority tongues. Conducted in English. Limited to 25 students.