

Smith College English Courses

Fall 2019

Eng 200 English Literary Tradition (early British or 200+ English elective)

Mon/Wed/Fri 10:50-11:40 Instructor: Douglas Patey

A study of the English literary tradition from the Middle Ages through the 18th century. Recommended for sophomores. Enrollment limited to 20 per section.

Eng 202 Western Classics Homer to Dante (200+ English elective)

Mon/Wed 9:25-10:40 Instructor: Robert Hosmer

Texts include *The Iliad*; tragedies by Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides; Plato's *Symposium*; Virgil's *Aeneid*; Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Lecture and discussion.

Eng 207 Technology of Reading and Writing (200+ English elective)

Mon/Wed/Fri 9:25-10:15 Instructor: Douglas Patey

An introductory exploration of the physical forms that knowledge and communication have taken in the West, from ancient oral cultures to modern print-literate culture. Our main interest is in discovering how what is said and thought in a culture reflects its available kinds of literacy and media of communication. Topics to include poetry and memory in oral cultures; the invention of writing; the invention of prose; literature and science in a script culture; the coming of printing; changing concepts of publication, authorship and originality; movements toward standardization in language; the fundamentally transformative effects of electronic communication.

Eng 231 Inventing America (course in American literature before 1865 or 200+ English elective)

Mon/Wed/Fri 10:50-12:05 Instructor: Robert Millington

This course will focus on the extraordinary burst of literary creativity that coincided with the emergence of a new American nation. From its conflicted founding episodes to the crisis of the Civil War, American writers interpreted and criticized American life with unmatched imaginative intensity and formal boldness, taking as their particular subject both the promise of freedom implicit in the nation's invention—and the betrayals of that promise: in the horrors of slavery, and in the subtler entrapments of orthodox thinking, constricted vision, a self-poisoning psyche, and a repressive or unjust social life.

Eng 243 Victorian Novel (course in British literature after 1700 or 200+ English elective)

TuTh 9:25-10:40 Instructor: Cornelia Pearsall

An exploration of the worlds of the Victorian novel, from the city to the country, from the vast reaches of empire to the minute intricacies of the drawing room. Attention to a variety of critical perspectives, with emphasis on issues of narrative form, authorial voice, and the representation of race, class, gender and disability. Novelists will include Brontë, Collins, Dickens, Eliot and Kipling.

Engl 250 Chaucer (early British or 200+ English elective)

MW 2:45-4 pm Instructor: Nancy Bradbury

A contextualized close reading of Geoffrey Chaucer's ambitious and enduring literary project, *The Canterbury Tales*, with attention to language change, narrative technique, the

representation of varied and distinctive medieval voices, and the poem as vivid introduction to life and thought in the later Middle Ages. Not open to first year-students.

Eng 256 Shakespeare (early British or 200+ English elective)

TuTh 10:50-12:05 Instructor: Gillian Kendall

A Midsummer Night's Dream, As You Like It, I Henry IV, Measure for Measure, King Lear, Macbeth, The Tempest, and Shakespeare's sonnets. Enrollment in each section limited to 25. Not open to first-year students: This class investigates questions of contact between peoples and cultures, in Latin American texts and films that tell stories of travel. We analyze how the concept of the journey as exploration and learning appears in Latin American culture, configuring identities and negotiating conflicts raised by the transit of people, objects and ideas in the region. Assignments include texts written since the late 19th century, and films from several countries, representing travels in different historical periods. Some theoretical writings on the cultural meanings of travel is also included. Meets the writing requirement for the major. Prerequisite: SPN 220 or above. Enrollment limited to 19. Not open to first-years.

Eng 264 Faulkner (American literature after 1865 or 200+ English elective)

TuTh 10:50-12:05 Instructor: Michael Gorra

The sustained explosion of Faulkner's work in the dozen-odd years between *The Sound and the Fury* and *Go Down, Moses* has no parallel in American literature. He explored the microtones of consciousness and conducted the most radical of experiments in narrative form. At the same time he relied more heavily on the spoken vernacular than anyone since Mark Twain, and he made his "little postage stamp of native soil" in northern Mississippi stand for the world itself. We read the great novels of his Yoknapatawpha cycle along with a selection of short stories, examining the linked and always problematic issues of race, region and remembrance in terms of the forms that he invented to deal with them. Not open to first-years.

Eng 285 Intro to Contemporary Literary Theory (200+ English elective)

TuTh 1:20-2:35 Instructor: Andrea Stone

What do we do when we read literature? Does the meaning of a text depend on the author's intention or on how readers read? What counts as a valid interpretation? Who decides? How do some texts get canonized and others forgotten? How does literature function in culture and society? How do changing understandings of language, the unconscious, class, gender, race, history, sexuality or disability affect how we read? "Theory" is "thinking about thinking," questioning common sense, critically examining the categories we use to approach literature or any discursive text. This course introduces some of the most influential questions that have shaped contemporary literary studies. We start with New Criticism but focus on interdisciplinary approaches such as structuralism, poststructuralism, Marxism, psychoanalysis, New Historicism, postcolonialism, feminism, queer, cultural, race and disability studies with some attention to film and film theory.

Eng 290 Creative Nonfiction (300+ English elective)(creative writing elective)

Tues 1:20-4 pm Instructor: Russell Rymer

A writer's workshop designed to explore the complexities and delights of creative nonfiction. Constant reading, writing and critiquing. Writing sample and permission of the instructor are required. Enrollment limited to 12: New topic pending CAP approval. Writing Sample Required.

**Eng 295 Advanced Poetry Writing)(300+ English elective)(English 356 equivalent)
(creative writing)**

Tues 1:10-4 pm

Instructor: Ellen Watson

Taught by the Grace Hazard Conkling Poet in Residence, this advanced poetry workshop is for students who have developed a passionate relationship with poetry and who have substantial experience in writing poems. Texts are based on the poets who are reading at Smith during the semester, and students gain expertise in reading, writing and critiquing poems. Writing sample and permission of the instructor are required. Enrollment limited to 12. Writing Sample Required.

Eng 296 Advanced Fiction Writing (300+ English elective)(English 355 equivalent)(creative writing)

Mon 1:20-4 pm

Instructor: TBA

The goal of this workshop is to help more advanced fiction-writing students become stronger writers in a supportive context that encourages experimentation, contemplation, and attention to craft. The workshop will include all the traditional elements of a fiction writing workshop, focusing on writing skills and technique, close reading, and the production of new work. In addition, the workshop will include instruction in mindfulness meditation to help students cultivate their powers of concentration, observation, imagination, and creative expression on the page. Students will be asked to submit manuscripts for discussion in class, to revise and edit their work, and to keep a process journal about their writing practice. They will be asked to read fiction by established authors in a range of genres and to lead a class forum discussion on a published short story of their choosing. Reading Like A Writer by Francine Prose, will be a required text for the class. Writing Sample Required.

Eng 310 Early Modern literature and culture (early British or 300+ English elective)

Wed 1:20-4 pm

Instructor: TBA

Topics course by the visiting Kennedy Professor: This seminar studies the pre-modern history of dream as a narrative, metaphorical, and prophetic genre, created in sleep and recreated in speech and writing. We will focus on the 14th to 17th centuries, which saw the dream's loss of prestige and credibility in the gradual turn from spirit to brain, inspiration to induction. Readings include several genres of dream record, including poetic and prose dream vision and drama ("Tundale's *Vision*," Dante's *Inferno*, Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowls*, Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Anna Trapnel's *Cry of a Stone*) and influential theories of dream-readers, philosophers, physicians and shamans--pagan, Muslim, Jewish, Christian, Huron and Iroquois--including Aristotle, Macrobius, Descartes, Freud. Instructor Permission. Not open to first-years, sophomores.

Eng 312 Print Culture of African Diaspora (Anglophone or 300+ English elective)

Tues 9:25-12:05

Instructor: Andrea Stone

This seminar explores the varied publications produced by people of the African diaspora in the U.S., Canada, the Caribbean, and England — early sermons and conversion narratives, criminal confessions, fugitive slave narratives and the black press. We consider these works in terms of publishing history, editorship (especially women editors), authorship, readership, circulation, advertising, influence, literacy, community building, politics and geography. We examine their engagements with such topics as religion, law economics, emigration, gender, race and temperance. Smith's manuscript and periodical holdings offer us a treasure trove of source materials. Permission of the instructor is required. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor Permission. Not open to first-years, sophomores.

Eng 323 Toni Morrison (American literature after 1865 or Anglophone/ethnic American or 300+ English elective)

Tues 1:20-4 pm Instructor: Flavia Santos De Araujo

This seminar focuses on Toni Morrison's literary production. In reading her novels, essays, lectures and interviews, we pay particular attention to three things: her interest in the epic anxieties of American identities; her interest in form, language and theory; and her study of love. Instructor Permission. Not open to first-years, sophomores.

Eng 333 Tolkein (300+ English elective)

Mon 9:25-12:05 Instructor: Craig Davis

J. R. R. Tolkien was an Oxford don and professor of Old and Middle English literature who used fantasy fiction as a technique of moral philosophy and historical analysis, a way of pondering the meaning of human life on earth and the trajectory of human experience through time. We will explore Tolkien's Middle-earth in *The Hobbit* (1936), *The Lord of the Rings* (1965) and *The Silmarillion* (2001) with special attention to the medieval and early modern sources of Tolkien's literary imagination as intimated in his essays, "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics" (1936) and "On Fairy-Stories" (1947). Permission of the instructor is required. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor Permission. Not open to first-years, sophomores.

Eng 334 Servants in Literature and Film (300+ English elective)

Tues 1:20-4 pm Instructor: Ambreen Hai

Crucial but often invisible, servants in English literature have served as comic relief, go-betweens, storytellers, or sexual targets, yet rarely as central protagonists. What roles do they play in contemporary literature and film that challenges this tradition? What can we learn from (imagined) servants about modernity, class, power relations, gender, sexuality, intimacy across difference, marriage or family? This seminar explores how narratives from various cultures and times call upon the figure of the domestic servant, and how a view from (or of) the margins can change how and what we see. Writers/filmmakers include Shakespeare, Richardson, Collins, Ishiguro, Umrigar, Adiga, Cuarón. By permission of the instructor. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor Permission. Not open to first-years, sophomores.

Eng 384 Writing American Society: Women/Gender (American literature after 1865 or 300+ English elective)(creative writing elective)

Tues 1:20-4 pm Instructor: Susan Faludi

A writing sample and permission of the instructor are required. Enrollment limited to 12: Women have historically exerted their voice and power through writing, even as the professional writing trades of journalism and publishing have historically been unwelcoming of their presence. This class examines reporting and writing by and about women, and engages students in the practice of writing about gender, feminism, and women's lives. This is a workshop class where students produce their own research and reported magazine-style writing, while simultaneously inspecting how the media represents women's issues and learning the history of women writers in American journalism. As we examine these works, we grapple with questions of interviewing, structure, ethics, fair representation and more. This critical approach informs the course's workshop component, in which students compose and revise their own stories, receiving feedback from peers as well as the instructor. Writing Sample Required. Not open to first-years, sophomores.

Eng 399 Teaching Literature (300+ English elective)

Wed 7-9:30 Instructor: Samuel Scheer

Discussion of poetry, short stories, short novels, essays and drama with particular emphasis on the ways in which one might teach them. Consideration of the uses of writing and the leading of discussion classes. For upper-level undergraduates and graduate students who have an interest in teaching. Enrollment limited to 15: Same as AMS 351. This course focuses on audio as a narrative technology. How are stories told in sound? How does writing for the ear differ from writing for the eye? What can the history of narrative audio, from Golden Age radio drama to European "features" tell us about the work being produced amid the current explosion of interest surrounding podcasting? This course features extensive listening and readings in these and other aspects of audio; students also produce workshop pieces of their own, exploring sonic forms including short documentary, essay, fiction and sound installation. (No previous technical knowledge is required.) Writing sample and permission of the instructor are required. Limited to juniors, seniors.