

Course Descriptions
Spring 2018

English 12M-Introduction to Literature
Introduction to Asian American Literature

This course is a class that introduces students to some of the fundamentals of literature: how to close read a text and write critically, interestingly and insightfully about it – and we will be doing so through the particular lens of Asian American literary production. We will be concentrating on the genre of the short story. The writers we will read range from canonical writers to contemporary authors who have only recently published their first collections. Often, there are a set of assumptions and presumptions about so-called ethnic literatures (a phrase that is itself increasingly under question): that it is always in the realist mode, concerns itself with recounting historical events (immigration, discrimination, etc.), and is generally autobiographical. What we will be reading will complicate and upend such notions. These writers grapple with questions of self and its performances, the vagaries of memory, the ethics of know ability, the way in which sexualities are constructed and deployed, and much more.

Possible texts – please check the bookstore for the final list of required texts: Ted Chiang, *Stories of Your Life and Others*; Charles Yu, *Sorry Please Thank You*.

Yamamoto. **Lecture:** MWF 4:10-5:00pm

English 14- Major American Writers
America: Not a Place. An Idea.

The United States is a place. America—is an idea. A trope. From indigenous folks and the enslaved, to Kendrick Lamar and President Donald J. Trump, the idea of America and how it informs American imaginations, constructs who counts as American, where, and by whom matters. And by extension, who is acknowledged as fully human and from whom such acknowledgment conveys *presence*, continues to be struggled for and fought over. We will contribute to the conflict. Through different genres and approaches (close reading, music, art, images, comedy, and news and politics), class introduces students to important classic and contemporary novels from American writers. Writers who address and trouble what it is to be both fully American and fully human. Writer's whom Ursula K. Le Guin might consider "realists of a larger reality." Concepts and concerns such as aesthetic form and symbol, myth, imagery, citizenship (immigration, internment/concentration camps, migration, genocide, the Enslavement, and the trope of the refugee) ethnicity and race, nationality, gender (masculinity/femininity), beauty, love, violence, domestic violence, and the futurity of the utopian energize class discussion and enhance literary insight.

Texts:

<i>The Underground Railroad</i>	Colson Whitehead
<i>The Left-Hand of Darkness</i>	Ursula K. Le Guin
<i>The Bluest Eye</i>	Toni Morrison
<i>The Sympathizer</i>	Viet Thanh Nguyen
<i>The Invisible Man</i>	Ralph Ellison

Nunley. **Lecture:** TR 12:40-2:00pm

English 20C- Introduction Alternative Critical Perspective Literature & Culture

The course will use film adaptation, literature, and visual culture as a means of introducing alternative critical perspectives. The underlying assumption regarding adaptation is that it is not only a means of transforming the written to the cinematic, but also a means of acculturation, translation, and critique—among other things. We will look at five texts and their cinematic adaptations. The texts will include novel, autobiography, crime novel, and short story. We will spend a week on the written text and a week on the cinematic film adaptation. In doing so, students will engage literary and cultural theory and film and visual theory, including adaptation theory, deconstruction, African-American literary, cultural, and film theory, queer theory, feminist theory, and gender theory among them.

These titles are subject to change.

Tess of the D'Urbervilles (Thomas Hardy)- *Tess* (Roman Polanski)

Lady Sings the Blues (Billie Holiday)- *Lady sings the blues* (Sidney J. Furie)

Clockers (Richard Price)- *Clockers* (Spike Lee)

Billy Budd (Herman Melville)-*Beau Travail* (Claire Deni)

What we talk about when we talk about love (Raymond Carver)- *Short Cuts* (Robert Altman)

Harris. **Lecture:** TR 3:40-5:00pm. **Discussion:** M 9:10-10:00am, M 3:10-4:00pm, T 2:10-3:00pm, T 1:10-2:00pm, T 5:10-6:00pm, W 9:10-10:00am, W 10:10-11:00am, R 2:10-3:00pm, R 1:10-2:00pm, R 5:10-6:00pm, F 9:10-10:00am, F 10:10-11:00am.

Fulfills #1 in the English Major Requirements.

English 101- Critical Theory

Critical Theory: The Body and the Senses

Bodies register and provoke pleasure and anxiety as they broadcast and receive messages through a sensory apparatus that is as much social as biological. Bodies and sensations support and subvert common sense about the senses, embodiment, proper bodies and bodily property, appropriation and expropriation, identity and difference. This course engages with such bodily transceiving and its ideological and experiential dimensions, focusing mostly on bodies in the modern west. It considers the production, circulation, and consumption of representations of a broad array of bodies and sensations, in a range of media, including literature, film, and visual art, though the emphasis is on theory and criticism. Potential topics of discussion include being and having a body; bodily wholes, lack, and ideality; illness, prosthesis, and disability; monstrosity and freakishness; sexual desire and “perversity”; body modification and plastic surgery; sexing and gendering bodies; racialization of bodies; disgust and abjection; sight and “the gaze”; audition and “the voice”; touch, skin, boundaries, and contact; death and finitude; affect, feeling, emotion, and subjectivity.

Requirements include active participation in class discussion and 3-4 mini papers.

Tyler. **Lecture:** TR 12:40-2:00pm

Fulfills #4 in the English Major Requirements.

English 102W:001- Introduction To Critical Methods
“What We Talk About When We Talk About Literature”

This course is an introduction to reading and writing about literature in a critical fashion. This means analyzing how authors use figurative language and the basic elements of literature to make us think and feel about various issues and questions in our modern world. We will also learn about some critical theories weaving together social, cultural, and political questions, such as Marxist theory, gender and sexuality studies, and postcolonial theory. We will apply our understanding of the elements of literature and critical theories to some short fiction and novels by writers from India and the Indian diaspora, which may include: *Coolie* by Mulk Raj Anand, *The Hungry Tide* by Amitav Ghosh, *The Paths of Marriage* by Mala Kumar, *The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga.

Assignments: frequent in-class quizzes and short writing assignments; midterm essay; final essay.

Gui. **Lecture:** MWF 9:10-10:00am

Fulfills #2 in the English Major Requirements.

English 102W:002- Introduction To Critical Methods

This course we will develop interpretive reading skills and analytical writing abilities as we explore US literary cultures, with a primary focus on the literatures, sounds, images and diverse cultures of 20th and 21st century Southern California. Exploring narrative, poetry, and visual and auditory culture, students will gain an understanding of a range of methods for analyzing the forms, genres, and contexts of literature, literacies, and cultural production.

Course work will include two short papers and a final course paper.

Tobias. **Lecture:** MWF 10:10-11:00am

Fulfills #2 in the English Major Requirements.

English 103-Advanced Composition

This course explores the principles of expository prose, with an emphasis on practice-based work. Students will be asked to produce and revise their writing as a method of enhancing critical thinking and effective communication across disciplines. Together, we will analyze and practice how to develop common discursive forms, research practices, and stylistic patterns. This is a workshop style course that will focus on process work: revision, feedback, and peer review, while students create a unique portfolio of written work.

Kenny. **Lecture:** MWF 9:10-10:00am

Fulfills #6 in the English Major Requirements.

English 114-Rhetorical Studies

No Rhetoric? No Truth: Rhetorics of Reality, Religion, Gender, and Meaningful Life

"Fake News"

President Donald J. Trump

"We do not see things as they are. We see things as we are."

The Babylonian Talmud

Reality and truth. Knowledge and facts: They are not self-evident. Neither is how they interact with rhetoric, resonance, masculinity, femininity, the nation-state, and personhood. *Class* will argue that what circulates as truth and (be)ing is rarely free of rhetoric. Of a rhetorical scaffolding of resonance, power, culture, emotions, and communal/personal investment. Through rhetoric (speech, visual, musical, theoretical, somatic, vibrational), we will examine and explore how commonly misunderstood notions of rhetoric—how we use it and how it uses us—its relationship to reality, knowledge, and femininity mediate, and often warp, how we encounter and experience truth, conflict, politics, people, religion and spirituality, ethnic rhetorics, neurotic suffering, and the living of a meaningful existence in our daily lives. *Class Goal:* Provide a *critical* lens to increase the possibility of your thriving in a neoliberal age where what "You buy; therefore *you* are" is the new religion. Rhetoric (and resonance), not rationality, are the very condition of possibility of truth, of democracy, and of the human.

Nunley. **Lecture:** TR 3:40-5:00pm

Fulfills #4 in the English Major Requirements.

English 117B-Shakespeare: Comedy

How do we define comedy? Does it have to be funny? What are the limits of comedy? Why does Shakespeare play with the limits and notion of this genre throughout his career? This course will consider early modern conventions of comedy and analyze the ways Shakespeare problematizes the genre in several of his plays. Together, we will discuss how the architecture and audience of the Globe theatre contributed to laughter, pace, and tone of his comedies. We will also consider how the genre evolves over the course of his career as a playwright, from slapstick style to the romances.

Reading will include *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Measure for Measure*, and *The Winter's Tale*.

Kenny. **Lecture:** MWF 8:10-9:00am

Fulfills #3-A in the English Major Requirements.

English 117T-Topics In Shakespeare

This course focuses on Shakespeare's tetralogy of history plays chronicling the War of the Roses. We'll begin on the brink of unrest with the anonymous *Edward III*, increasingly thought to have been written by Shakespeare. We'll then turn to the plays of *Richard II*, Shakespeare's poet-king, his usurper *Henry IV*, and his prodigal son *Henry V*. Throughout, we'll explore the roles of women, family, and friendship in dramas of the state and attend to questions of language, authorship, power, and nationalism.

Requirements: active participation, reading quizzes and frequent informal writing, midterm and two papers.

Brayman. **Lecture:** MWF 9:10-10:00am

Fulfills #3-A in the English Major Requirements.

English 120T-Studies in Native American Literature Indigenous Inhumanities and Rhetorical Theory

The normative history of Rhetorical theory tells the story of the progressive destabilization of the relationship between things and signs. As described by Michel Foucault, “From the 19th century on, beginning with Freud, Marx, and Nietzsche, the sign is going to become malevolent. There is in the sign an ambiguous quality and a slight suspicion of ill will and ‘malice’.” Depending on the trajectory, this story often ends with the complete replacement of “the real” by signs in the form of simulation, or with the overthrowing of modernist categories that separate humans, things, and nature. The other side of this story is the loss of faith in human agency—the human confidence in control over one’s actions through individual will—leading to a decentering of the human both in terms of how the human knows (epistemology) and how and where the human is (ontology). In this course, we will approach this story from the standpoint of Critical Indigenous Theory, particularly by tracing the figure of the inhuman as it has conditioned the ongoing colonization of Indigenous peoples and lands from the early moments of conquest up until the present. The term “inhuman” is ambiguous and relates to both ethical discussions of cruelty and violence imposed upon (external) others and philosophical discussions of the conditioning of human individual subjects by an (internal) impersonal otherness. We will ask what the relation is between these two senses of the term and how it has informed colonizer/settler and Indigenous relations. Further, taking the decentering of the human as an opportunity to recenter Indigeneity, we will also discuss Indigenous relations to other-than-humans as something much more than belief and as a challenge to the Western progressivist project of overcoming the human.

Through the lens of Indigenous inhumanities, then, we will look at the current nonhuman turn in its scientifically inflected humanities guise, reading these texts alongside critiques coming from Critical Indigenous Theory as well as texts in the tradition of what Vine Deloria Jr. called “American Indian Metaphysics.” We will also look at legal and philosophical arguments about the constitution of the human in human rights discourse and their relation to Indigenous forms of thought and modes of being in the context of often genocidal violence.

Minch. **Lecture:** TR 2:10-3:30pm

Fulfills #3-D in the English Major Requirements.

English 122N-Queer Texts and Bodies

This course explores the art and aesthetics of LGBTQ cultural production. We will read a variety of literary, audiovisual, and digital works concerned with autobiographical expression. We will be especially interested in works that are “extra”: that is, works that demonstrate reflexive, performative, interdisciplinary and other critical techniques. And we’ll explore how that “extra” dimension of an artwork has historically allowed queer expression to get around or work against political censorship, economic inequity, or social prohibitions, to reframe the understanding of self, sexuality, and society and to transform cultural expression. Works will be situated in relation to political and cultural movements historically.

Course work will include responses to the works studied, as well as a final research project, whose format is typically a final paper but may include presentation in other forms, with the permission of the instructor.

Tobias. **Lecture:** MWF 1:10-2:00pm. **Screening:** M 6:10-9:00pm.

Fulfills #4 in the English Major Requirements.

English 127A-American Poetry: Before 1900

We will read and discuss a range of American poems, representing the amazing cultural diversity and imaginative visions of our country. We will look at the poems both in themselves as artistic productions and in historical context as cultural and political interventions.

We will focus much attention on Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, and Paul Laurence Dunbar. We will also study lesser-known Native American, African American, Mexican American, and Asian American poetry. We will also read poems, well-known in their own day and again in ours, by Edgar Allan Poe, Anne Bradstreet, Phillis Wheatley, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Sarah Piatt, Frances Harper, Adah Menken, Sadakichi Hartmann, Stephen Crane, and Edwin Arlington Robinson.

There will be two short papers, a midterm, and a final exam. Required text: *The New Anthology of American Poetry, Volume 1*, edited by Steven Axelrod, et al. (Rutgers University Press, ISBN 0813531624). Please obtain an unmarked copy from an online site or the bookstore.

I celebrate myself, and sing myself,
And what I assume you shall assume,
For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.
—Walt Whitman

I dwell in Possibility—
—Emily Dickinson

With beauty all around me, I walk.
It is finished in beauty.
—Navajo “Night Chant”

Axelrod. **Lecture:** TR 11:10am-12:30pm
Fulfills #3-C in the English Major Requirements.

English 128G-Major Authors: John Milton

This course centers on John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (pub. 1667-74), arguably the most ambitious work in English literature, an epic poem that aims to "justify the ways of God to man." Though Milton's subject is the Judeo-Christian origin story of Creation and the Fall, the poem's explorations extend well beyond the Bible into meditations on love, temptation, ambition, power, and choice. Composed after Milton went blind and dictated largely to his daughters, the poem opens up to fascinating questions about disability and also the role of women in literary production.

Together, we will share the valuable experience of studying an epic poem closely, getting Milton's poetry in our ears and engaging with his fascinations: Why is knowledge seductive? Is it, as Satan puts it, "better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven"? What kind of God both grants free will and knows that humans will make catastrophic choices? Do angels have sex?

We will supplement our reading of *Paradise Lost* with excursions into other works of Milton; analogs in Ovid, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Margaret Cavendish; and the reach of the poem's influence on later writers and artists. A central inspiration for the English Romantics (Blake, Mary Shelley, Coleridge especially), *Paradise Lost* continues a conversation with contemporary

authors, musicians, and even gamers, among them Phillip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* Trilogy, Neil Gaiman's *Sandman* series, and an Eminem music video.

Requirements: active participation, reading quizzes and frequent informal writing, three papers. Brayman. **Lecture:** MWF 11:10am-12:00pm

Fulfills #3-A in the English Major Requirements.

English 132-American Literature From the Civil War-1914

Prerequisite(s): upper-division standing or lower-division English course, other than composition, or consent of instructor. This course is a study in new departures in the American literary consciousness as registered in works selected from such writers as Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. DuBois, Rebecca Harding Davis, Mark Twain, Ambrose Pierce, Sarah Winnemucca, Kate Chopin, Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Edith Wharton, Mary Hunter Austin, Theodore Dreiser, Frank Norris, Stephen Crane, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Zitkala Ša, Jane Addams, and others. Through literature, we will explore reactions to the end of slavery, to westward expansion, to cultural disenfranchisement and disruptions in Native American traditions, to industrialization and modernization, to class conflicts, and to emerging women's identities.

B.Ganim. **Lecture:** MWF 1:10-2:00pm

Fulfills #3-C in the English major requirements.

English 134-American Literature 1945

"Then and Now": We will read three of the most influential novels of the post-WWII era: Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* (1952), Flannery O'Conner's *Wise Blood* (1952), and Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* (1961). One key question will be the ways these novels challenge conventional notions of realism, yet are seen to represent their time. We will then ask how novels might help us understand our own moment by reading three celebrated works from the last ten years: Jennifer Egan's *A Visit From the Goon Squad* (2010), Emily St. John Mandel's *Station Eleven* (2014), and Colson Whitehead's *The Underground Railroad* (2016).

Requirements: Two papers, a group research project, and a final exam.

Kinney. **Lecture:** MWF 11:10am-12:00pm

Fulfills #3-D in the English Major Requirements.

English 139-Asian American Literature

Asian American Literature: Immigration, Displacement, Mobility

Mobility has been a major trope in the American imaginary, a synonym for a liberatory remaking of the self. In his 1893 essay, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History,” Frederick Jackson Turner declared that “movement has been [America’s] dominant fact In the crucible of the frontier the immigrants were Amercanized, liberated, and fused into a mixed race.” Referring *only* to immigrants who would later be legally categorized as racially “white” and *not* referring to the decimation of Native lands and cultures, Turner’s belief in “expansion westward” as the site of “new opportunities” offered a narrative of renewal that subordinated the destruction, displacement and disenfranchisement upon which it depended. What do narratives of American mobility mean for racialized communities and cultures? How might we critically deploy other modalities of mobility – forced migration, immigration, displacement, exile – to more fully engage with the mobility-freedom trope that continues to underpin the organizing narrative of the American Dream?

This course will examine these questions through Asian American literary production that specifically takes up notions of mobility in relation to history, war, economics, and the demand to assimilate. How might we think more critically about this trope, given Japanese American incarceration and displacement during WWII, the American war in VietNam, post-1965 South Asian immigration, and South Korean phenomenon of “goose parenting”? At the same time, we will also be thinking about the particulars of literary production and how it contributes differently to thinking about issues of American national identity and mobility – in other words, what work does literature do that sociology, political science or history do not?

Possible texts – please check the bookstore for the final list of required texts: Joy Kogawa, *Obasan*; lê, *The Gangster We are All Looking For*; Bharati Mukherjee, *Jasmine*; Nina Revoyr, *Southland*; Susan Choi, *American Woman*.

Yamamoto. **Lecture:** MWF 1:10-2:00pm

Fulfills #3-D in the English Major Requirements.

English 142E-Cultural Studies

Witchcraft and Cultural Practice in Early Modern England.

A course on witchcraft and witch-hunting in sixteenth and seventeenth century English literature and culture. We will explore representations of witches and witch-hunting in legal documents, “notorious crime” pamphlets, religious tracts, and plays by Shakespeare, Marlowe, and their contemporaries in the context of a broad range of early modern beliefs about witchcraft and magic. In addition, we will investigate interpretations of witch-hunting offered by historians, feminists, literary scholars, and contemporary film-makers, giving special attention to the role of gender, sexuality, and class in the hunts.

Required texts will include Rosen, ed., *Witchcraft in England 1558 – 1618* (a collection of witchcraft pamphlets and legal documents); Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus*; Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*; Rowley, Dekker, and Ford, *The Witch of Edmonton*, among other readings.

Willis. **Lecture:** TR 3:40-5:00pm

Fulfills #4 in the English Major Requirements.

English 148E-Studies In Major Authors

Sylvia Plath

Not an introductory class, this course is designed for dedicated English, Creative Writing, and Comparative Literature majors. We will focus on Sylvia Plath (1932-1963) as a personal writer, a political and historical writer, an experimental writer, and an icon. We will read her *Collected Poems*, her novel *The Bell Jar*, and her stories collected in *Johnny Panic and the Bible of Dreams*. We will also read two books by her contemporaries, who influenced and/or complemented her: Robert Lowell's *Selected Poems (Expanded Edition)* and Hisaye Yamamoto's *Seventeen Syllables and Other Stories (Revised and Expanded Edition)*. Please obtain these five volumes from the bookstore or an online site.

We will think about why Plath, Lowell, and Yamamoto wrote about life on the edge in the way that they did; what that writing says about mid-twentieth-century America; and what it says about the present moment, when all three writers are still widely read. Why did Plath become and remain a cultural icon, and what does it tell us about individual and collective life in postmodernity? Why does Plath particularly speak to readers and writers who self-identify as female, queer, injured, other, disabled, creative, resistant, or marginal?

Requirements: a brief analysis of a poem, a longer researched or creative essay, midterm and final exams, and active participation.

O my God, what am I

--Sylvia Plath, "Poppies in October"

Axelrod. **Lecture:** TR 2:10-3:30pm

Fulfills #3-D in the English Major Requirements.

English 151A-Middle English Literature

For readers in later periods, the literary form most characteristic of the Middle Ages is allegory. Allegorical writing is writing with a double meaning: what appears on the surface and another level of meaning to which the apparent sense directs us. As Dante writes in a famous letter to his patron, Can Grande della Scala, "you must know that the sense of this work is not simple, rather it may be called polysemantic, that is, of many senses; the first sense is that which comes from the letter, the second is that of that which is signified by the letter. And the first is called the literal, the second allegorical or moral or anagogical." Critics and theorists from Walter Benjamin to C. S. Lewis to Northrop Frye to Fredric Jameson to Paul de Man to David James and beyond have built their methods on a theory of allegory. In this class, we will read some allegorical works, mostly in Middle English, that form the basis for the understanding of the allegorical mode in later centuries, including *Pearl*, which may or may not be an elegy by the poet for his deceased daughter; *Everyman*, traditionally (and problematically) one of the beginnings of English drama; and *Piers Plowman* by William Langland, Chaucer's contemporary, and, according to some scholars, his equal or more, which ranges from the raucous streets of London to the dance of the Four Daughters of God and the Light that speaks to them. We will consider how well these allegorical poems achieve their stated aims, or whether, in the words of the great scholar Erich Auerbach, "the image of man eclipses the image of God."

Ganim. **Lecture:** TR 3:40-5:00pm

Fulfills #3-A in the English Major Requirements.

English 161B-Restoration & 18TH Century English Literature: 1730-1790

Sentiment and Sensibility

In this course, we will examine a range of literary works that demonstrate the interplay between the new understanding of the body (“sensibility”) and the codification of various practices (slavery, the family, sexuality, colonialism, trade) and their relation to feeling (“sentiment”). At the same time, we will discuss how such personal concerns were central to larger cultural issues that we discover in our readings.

Texts:

Austen, Jane. *Sense and Sensibility*

Frances Burney, Diaries

 Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*.

Thomas Gray and William Collins, Poems

 Samuel Richardson, Samuel. *Clarissa* (Broadview abridgement)

 Sheridan, Richard B. *The Rivals*

Haggerty. **Lecture:** TR 9:40-11:00am

Fulfills #3-B in the English Major Requirements.

English 166T-English Romanticism Studies

A Frankenstein Bicentennial

How did a debut teenage novel manage to capture the global imagination for two hundred years? This year marks the bicentennial of the initial publication of Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1818), and we will celebrate Shelley’s remarkable achievement by delving into her sources and revealing the novel’s aesthetic, political, and world-historical importance. As we know from her journals, Shelley was reading voraciously just a year before the novel’s conception in 1816. While we’ll be unable to match her entire 1815 reading list in these ten weeks, we’ll make do with Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (1667), Rousseau’s *Confessions* (1782), and Goethe’s *Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774). In addition to close reading the original *Frankenstein* of 1818, we’ll also tackle Shelley’s sprawling, science fiction follow-up, *The Last Man* (1826).

Wang. **Lecture:** TR 2:10-3:30pm

Fulfills #3-B in the English Major Requirements.

English 189- English Capstone Seminar

Thinking With José

A seminar focused on the work of José Muñoz and the emergence of queer theory and queer of color critique. We will read *Disidentifications* and *Cruising Utopia*, study their archives and bibliographies and explore the work of the artists and writers who figure prominently in Muñoz’s thought.

Doyle. **Lecture:** MW 4:10-5:30pm

Fulfills #5 in the English Major Requirements.