

Course Descriptions Spring 2019

English 12A: Poetry and Poetics

In 2018, the National Endowment of the Arts announced that poetry readership in the American adult population had reached a fifteen-year high. In this ostensible age of plain-speaking prose, why have so many of us turned to poets like Emily Dickinson who prefer to “tell it slant”? In this course, we read poetry alongside poetics to understand the form and function of an ancient art. We will cover a wide historical range of English poetry, from early Anglo-Saxon elegies to contemporary experiments in multimedia verse. To help us unpack the frequently dense and difficult language of poetry, we will also hear from some of the most famous theorizers of poetry itself: Plato’s warning against the seductions of poetry in his Republic, Longinus’s codification of sublime aesthetics, Friedrich Schiller’s preference the simple and sentimental, Percy Shelley’s elevation of poets to legislative power, and Victor Shklovsky’s resurrection of dead language. Only by reading poetry and poetics together can we begin to understand the enduring power of verse.

Wang. Lecture: MWF 10:10-11:00 a.m.

Units count towards **Additional Units** in the Degree Audit. Course does not fulfill any category in English Major Requirements.

English 20C: Art & Ideology

This course introduces students to key concepts in arts-based scholarship. We will study the term "ideology", explore social media ecologies (by looking at artist projects), learn about performance art and spend time thinking about how different kinds of cultural forms sustain us — sometimes by giving us joy and sometimes by holding our sense of outrage and despair. The aim of this course is to understand not only what art is about, but what art is, what it can be and do. We will reflect on the role of the arts in difficult times.

The main assignments for this course include an annotated bibliography offering social, historical and political contexts for understanding one work of art (in any medium), and an essay which makes use of your research. The aim of this class is to get students thinking about the politics of the aesthetic, and to help students develop their research skills. While this course is designed for English majors, it will be useful to any student interested in thinking critically about the arts.

Required reading includes:

Sarah Jeong, "The Internet of Garbage" (available online)

James Scully, Line Break: Poetry as Social Practice

David Wojnarowicz, Close to the Knives

Doyle. Lecture: TR 2:10-3:30 p.m. **Mandatory Discussion Sections:** See course schedule

Applies to #1-20C in the English Major Requirements

ENGL 101: Critical Indigenous Theory: Texts and Things

One thread of the history of critical 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. In this course, we will approach this story from the standpoint of critical Indigenous theory. This will require a select survey of different approaches to and types of critical thought, the tracing of influences of Indigenous thought on these various thinkers as well as engaging Indigenous approaches to language often at odds with this story. The goal of the class is to try to understand what happens to critical theory when understood as a form of Indigenous thought and practice.

Minch. Lecture: MWF 12:10-1:00 p.m.

Course Applies to #4 in the English Major Requirements

ENGL102W Sections 001 and 002 Introduction to Critical Methods (Section 001 and Section 002)

“What We Talk About When We Talk About Literature: Contemporary South Asian Fiction”

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. Assignments: regular quizzes and in-class writing assignments; group discussion and presentations; two essays. Primary texts may include: Thalassa Ali, *_A Singular Hostage_*, Amitav Ghosh, *_The Hungry Tide_*, Mala Kumar, *_The Paths of Marriage_*, Aravind Adiga, *_The White Tiger_*.

Weihsin Gui. Lecture: MWF 8:10-10 a.m. (001) Or MWF 9:10-10 a.m. (002)

Fulfills #2 in the English Major Requirements

ENGL 103: Advanced Composition – Experiments in Criticism

In this course we will work to develop your individual writing voice through practice-based work. We will read and write in a variety of genres: reviews, personal essays, and other forms of criticism. This class will be about bending the writing rules that you already know (first and foremost, the prohibition on the use of “I”). This is a workshop style course that will incorporate revision, feedback, and peer review.

Manshel. Lecture: MWF 9:10-10:10 a.m.

Course Applies to #6 in the English Major Requirements

ENGL 117C: English 117C: Shakespeare: Tragedy

What makes a Shakespearean tragedy? Does it have to include a sudden downfall of a tragic hero, or can it simply cultivate pity and fear? Can tragedies ever be funny? Why are soliloquies the method tragedians use to communicate with the audience? This course will consider a variety of responses to these questions in our discussion of Titus Andronicus, Othello, Macbeth, King Lear, and Antony & Cleopatra. Together, we will explore early modern conventions of staging tragedy and analyze how Shakespeare mediates the genre in several plays using hamartia, catharsis, and peripeteia. We will discuss how the structure, form, and markers of tragedy evolve throughout his career as a dramatist to study the genre in a nuanced way.

Kenny. Lecture: TR 9:40-11:00 a.m.

Fulfills #3-A in the English Major Requirements

English 122R

This summer marks the 50th year anniversary of the Stonewall Riots, a commemoration of the disruptive queer activism sparking the contemporary LGBTQ movement in the U.S. However, the political insurgencies of queers of color and, in particular, queer Latinxs precede and exceed this historical episode. Drawing on what Chicana lesbian playwright and poet, Cherrie Moraga, has termed “Queer Aztlan” (1993), this course examines queer Latinx literary, visual, and performance expressions that seek visibility and representation in the present but also in the past and the future. A renewed interest in historical fiction, cultural revisionism, and even queer futurism persists among emergent queer Latinx voices and thus, demands new ways to interpret queer Latinx interventions beyond the contemporary LGBTQ movement and Chicana nationalism. Students in the course will explore a rich repertoire of writers, visual artists, filmmakers, and performers remapping and redefining the meaning of “Queer Aztlán” since its initial introduction twenty-five years ago. Course materials may include writing by Leticia Alvarado, Julio Capó, Josh Chambers-Letson, Gil Cuadros, Brian Herrera, Arturo Islas, José Esteban Muñoz, Manuel Muñoz, Michael Nava, Emma Perez, Ramon Rivera-Servera and Horacio Roque-Ramirez.

Hernandez. Lecture: MWF 11:10-12:00 p.m. / Fulfills #4 in the English Major Requirements / Cross listed with LGBS 122R

English 128P: Beckett, Theater and Visual Art

In this course we will read and watch Samuel Beckett's plays, read some of his art criticism and view work by artists he admired. As a dramatist, Beckett makes extensive use of painterly effects, both in stage design and in direction. We will be able to watch both TV productions of plays like Krapp's Last Tape, Not I and Eh Joe that Beckett himself closely supervised, and the film versions of his plays (including Waiting for Godot and Endgame) by directors that range from Neil Jordan and Atom Egoyan to David Mamet. Artists we will look at will include the Irish painter Jack B. Yeats (brother of W.B. Yeats), Bram Van Velde, the Dutch abstract painter, and Avigdor Arikha, the Romanian-Israeli painter and close friend of the writer from the late 1950s, as well as a range of other modern and Renaissance artists. We will, accordingly, read Beckett as dramatist in the context of the visual arts and their influence on his work, and learn to read visual material—painting, film, plays. We will try to understand Beckett both in the context of Irish drama and art (reading and watching a little of the drama of Irish playwrights J.M. Synge and W.B. Yeats) and in the context of the international avant-garde of which he was part. The plays and visual material will be supplemented by a small number of critical works that will aid students in understanding Beckett's works.

Lloyd. Lecture: TR 3:40-5:00 p.m.

Fulfills #3-D in the English Major Requirements

***English 131: American Literature, 1830 to the Civil War**

A study of innovation and conflict in the American Renaissance, as represented in such writers as Emerson, Hawthorne, Poe, Melville, Stowe, Thoreau, Douglass, and Whitman.

Stapely. Lecture: MWF 2:10-3:00 p.m.

Fulfills #3-C in the English Major Requirements

*Course description may not be accurate. Description taken from spring 2017.

ENGL 136T: Art and the Chicax Movement

Visual culture has played a critical role in Chicax social protest and civil rights activism. From the political graphics mobilizing the masses to street muralism reclaiming an ancient indigenous past, Chicax art was a profound arsenal in the struggle for equality. However, the recent historiography homogenizes this cultural production overlooking the concurrent movements, offshoots, detachments and international influences. Rather than posit a dichotomous relationship between social realist and avant-garde expression, this course will interrogate other genealogies of this movement uncovering its synchronicities and transnational cross-pollinations with Asia, United Kingdom, and Caribbean. This course will also consider how Chicaxs' adoption of different media technologies permitted unexpected forays into commercial forums, including: music video, set design, retail, fashion, advertising, typography, and graphic art illustration. Students in this course will not only consider foundational writings in

the field but will also other literatures of the period: manifestos, image-texts, oral history transcripts, and exhibition catalogues. Students will conduct original research investigating Chicana creative communities in Riverside and San Bernardino counties. Course materials may include: Chicano and Chicana Art: A Critical Anthology, Chicana/o Remix, The Heart of the Mission, Remex: Toward an Art History of the Nafta Era, and Flying Under the Radar with the Royal Chicano Air Force.

Hernandez. Lecture: MWF 1:10 – 2 pm

Fulfills #3-D and **one course in bold** in the English Major Requirements

ENGL 140E: Autobiography & Memoir / Writing the Conflicted Self: Inscription, Education & Home

Autobiography has a long and varied tradition in the literature of the United States. It has been used to delineate the exemplary American subject (Benjamin Franklin, John Adams), question the reality of espoused American values (African American slave narrative, Japanese American incarceration memoir), and trace the trajectory of the immigrant subject in response to ever-changing definitions of whiteness (Jewish and Irish American autobiography). Marginalized and minoritized communities have often first been represented in American literature through the autobiographical form – though the form itself has shifted in ways that suggest rich formulations of the self and our apprehension of it.

This course will focus on 20th and 21st century autobiographies that evoke questions of class, the concept of home, the “American Dream,” immigration, and the ethics and aesthetics of becoming and “upward mobility,” particularly through education. What is lost, gained or exacted in that process? What happens when formal education seems to put one in conflict with family, or when educational institutions seem hostile to everything through which one understands oneself? And how does the scene of writing constitute both a site of self-making and of (painful, but also healing) departure? We will pay particular attention to the conflicts between subjectivity and identity, the process of writing oneself into being, and the tensions that underpin concepts of cultural belonging and national identity. Primary texts will be contextualized by key works in autobiography theory.

Texts (please check bookstore for final text selection, though this is more than likely the list): Jade Snow Wong, *Fifth Chinese Daughter*; Richard Rodriguez, *Hunger for Memory*; Reyna Grande, *A Dream Called Home*; Thomas Chatterton Williams, *Losing My Cool* and Lac Su, *I Love You Are for White People*. Supplementary primary texts and theory articles will be posted in pdf form to the Blackboard site.

Yamamoto. Lecture: TR 11:10-12:30 p.m.

Fulfills #4 in the English Major Requirements

ENGL 140J: Modes of Narrative: The Modern Short Story

This course interprets “mode” as “genre” and focuses on the genre of short fiction, whose history and conventions are somewhat different from those of the novel. For each class meeting, we will discuss 1-2 classic or contemporary stories, mostly written in English, as well as some non-fiction about the short story and the elements and techniques of fiction, ways of reading fiction, and writing about fiction. Other required work includes several in-class individual, pair, or group exercises, some of them quizzes (usually assigned as take-home quizzes) and some writing workshops; class meetings comprise completing and presenting the results of those exercises, as well as short lectures by the instructor. We will focus primarily on practicing “close reading” of fiction, attending to the formal aspects of fiction (plot, characters, style, etc.) and how they develop story themes while bearing in mind how a text’s socio-historical and literary contexts inform its interpretation. Required writing includes quizzes, a mid-term, and a final, with a mini-paper question on each of the exams, as well as short answer and short essay questions. By the end of the quarter, students should be able to discuss the elements and techniques of fiction, some critical approaches to interpreting fiction, and the history and techniques of the genre of the “short story,” as well as the specific stories assigned, mostly from the 19th and 20th c, the period when the genre in its modern sense is consolidated (and distinguished from other kinds of short fiction, such as the tale or legend). The required textbook is Frank Myszor’s *The Modern Short Story*.

Tyler. Lecture: MWF 12:10-1:00 p.m.
Fulfills #4 in the English Major Requirements

ENGL 142N: Indigeneity and The Rhetoric of Culture

This course will trace an interdisciplinary itinerary of “the culture concept” in its manifestations in cultural anthropology, cultural studies, and Indigenous studies. Often seen to be at odds with each other and engaging with very different objects of study, these disciplines intersect nonetheless at the points of contentiousness associated with the concept of culture. In this sense, we will look at resonances, engagements, dissonances, and interventions of these approaches with each other as well as some of their less visible material and historical connections, genealogies, and influences. There is no appropriate way to cover the range of issues regarding the concept of culture in one of these disciplines in a ten week course, much less all three, so we will be emphasizing the itinerary of the concept itself at the intersection as a form of mapping, or perhaps sketching, of something like its rhetorical life. At the same time, our direction will be towards its relation to Indigeneity and its resurgence within Indigenous discourses and importance for Indigenous communities and their survival.

Minch. Lecture: MWF 1:10 - 2 p.m.
Fulfills #4 in the English Major Requirements

English 145K: African American Visual Culture

Two primary questions are guiding the objectives and methodologies of the course: first, what is the “black” in black visual culture; in other words, what distinguishes “black” as a signifier of a social category, or phenomenal and existential difference, from the qualifier of visual culture found in the title of the course. The distinction at which we arrive in answering the first leads to the second question: What is the aesthetic and cultural value of “black”? We will examine the shifting hermeneutics of black through the visual rhetoric of blackness in the American arts.

Harris. Lecture: TR 2:10-3:30 p.m. and Mandatory Screenings: T 6:10-9 p.m.
Fulfills #4 in the English Major Requirements
Cross listed with MCS 145.

English 166B: The Later Romantics

This course explores the aftermath of the revolutionary energies of early Romantic literature. After the radical experiments of William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and William Blake, a second generation of Romantics emerged, including, most famously, John Keats, Percy Shelley, and George Gordon Byron. These authors reckoned with both political disappointments and realized social reform. The first half of the course will be author-driven by these three canonical Romantic poets. The second half of the course will broaden the discussion to include more heterogeneous late Romantic debates about the imagination, the slave trade, women’s rights, and the Revolution Controversy.

Wang. Lecture: MWF 11:10-12:00 p.m.
Fulfills #3-B in the English Major Requirements

English 179T: Butler and Le Guin: Rhetorics of Science Fiction, the Speculative, and the Racial Order of Things

“The Future is unevenly distributed (Diaz),” and Science fiction is always, in part, about the contemporary. Class will explore futurity and the contemporary, and examine some of the works and themes of germinal writers Octavia E. Butler and Ursula K. Le Guin through speculative, imaginative, and rhetorical—not philosophical-- lenses. Both encountering and exceeding the boundaries of the science fiction genre, Butler’s and Le Guin’s work provides a rich terrain to think, re-think, and reconsider dominant and emerging notions of religion/spirituality, God, gender, the (S)elf, race, neoliberalism, ethnicity, quantum physics, futurity, and the nature of reality.

Texts: *The Left Hand of Darkness*, *Parable of the Talents*, *Parable of the Sower*, *Mind of My Mind*

Nunley. Lecture: MWF 2:10-3:00 p.m.
Fulfills #4 in the English Major Requirements

ENGL189: Senior Capstone: Victorian Panic: The Empire at the End of the World

At the end of the nineteenth century Britain was the most prosperous and powerful nation in the world with an empire that spanned the globe. This triumph came with costs: smoke-filled, slum-riddled metropolises, constant colonial warfare, and a long-abused, malnourished, and increasingly angry underclass of laborers. This course will explore Victorian anxieties over environmental degradation, social unrest, racial and civilizational decline, foreign invasion, and “superfluous,” unruly women. Our central text is Henry James’s *Princess Casamassima*, a novel about a very confused London bookbinder turned terrorist. Alongside this (lengthy) novel we will read early science fiction, detective stories, political tracts, and poetry to flesh out the novel’s political and cultural contexts. Authors include Marx, Carlyle, Morris, Mill, Bakunin, de Quincey, Eliot, Conan Doyle, Wells, and Ruskin.

Rangarajan. Lecture: MWF 10:10-11 a.m.

Fulfills #5 in the English Major Requirements. See note.

Note: If a student began fall 2017, then English 189 is mandatory and required. If a student began before fall 2017, then English 189 is optional.