

Fall 2019

English Graduate Seminar Descriptions



CRN	Course	Faculty
14419	ENGL 200	Jennifer Doyle
27963	ENGL 260	Andrea Denny-Brown
25782	ENGL 262	Heidi Brayman-Hackel
27964	ENGL 276	Weihsin Gui
27965	ENGL 289	David Lloyd
24778	ENGL 410	Weihsin Gui

English 200 – Introduction to Graduate Study in English
Wednesdays, 11:00AM – 1:50PM, HMNSS 2212 (ENGL conference room)
Professor Jennifer Doyle

This seminar is dedicated to orienting new students to our department and to PhD-level research and writing. We will review a few foundational critical texts by scholars like Barbara Johnson and Gayatri Spivak, reflect on different modes of critical practice (review essays, interventions, performative writing) and explore the politics of form. Students in this class will periodically take the lead in discussing assigned readings; students will also present and workshop their own work.

ENGL 260 – Seminar in Medieval Literature
Architecture and Poetry: A Dialogue
Fridays, 10:00AM-12:50PM, HMNSS 2212 (ENGL conference room)
Associate Professor Andrea Denny-Brown

This seminar will explore the related interests, practices, and theories of architecture and literature, with a focus on the European Middle Ages. As creative cultural forms, poetry and architecture have often been seen as intimately connected: in his thirteenth-century manual on literary theory and practice, the *Poetria Nova*, for example, Geoffrey of Vinsauf famously likened the creation of a poem to the building of a house. Over two centuries later, the Italian Renaissance humanist Leon Battista Alberti returned the favor, grounding his discussion of the practice and theory of architecture in the rhetorical arts in his landmark architectural manual, *De re aedificatoria* [*On the Art of Building*].

Using these texts and others, in this course we will explore the dialogue between poetry and architecture in the Middle Ages and its critical contexts. Our readings will be twofold. We will study primary texts, images, and architecture from medieval Europe, including works such as Hrabanus Maurus's *De Universo*, Jean de Meun's *Roman de La Rose*, Dante's *Inferno*, Chaucer's *House of Fame*, Christine de Pizan's *Book of the City of Ladies*, and Lydgate's *Temple of Glass*. We will also read foundational critical texts from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that have informed historical understandings of the interplay between medieval poetry and architecture, including works by art historians John Ruskin and Erwin Panofsky and selections from modern theorists Adolf Loos, Martin Heidegger, Walter Benjamin, Theodor Adorno, and Henri Lefebvre.

Discussion terms and subjects are likely to include the following: surface theory, material culture, Gothic style, ornament, dwelling, presencing, rhythmanalysis, aesthetic experience, *ut picture poesis*, perceptions of medievalisms/archaisms in critical history, borrowings of medieval Islamic and Asian art and architecture, aureate style, pattern poetry, verbal stacking, architectural poetry.

Non-English graduate students who want to take this seminar should contact the professor to see if the seminar connects with their research interests.

ENGL262 – Seminar in Renaissance Literature
Wednesday, 3:00PM-5:50PM, HMNSS 2212 (ENGL conference room)
Associate Professor Heidi Brayman-Hackel

Description TBD

ENGL 276 - Seminar in Colonialism and Postcoloniality
“Graphic Narratives from Southeast Asia and its Diasporas”
Thursday, 2:00 to 4:50 PM, Watkins 2141
Associate Professor Weihsin Gui

This graduate seminar will focus on late twentieth- and early twenty-first century comics and graphic narratives from and about Southeast Asia, either written originally in English or translated into English. It is primarily intended for graduate students with an interest in Southeast Asia. (Despite the course catalog title, this version of ENGL276 is *not* a general introduction to postcolonial studies or postcolonial literature; students interested in these topics should contact Prof. Gui separately.)

Although the study of comics and graphic narratives in the USA has been largely focused on European and American texts, there are active communities of comics creators and readers in various Southeast Asian countries and among their diasporas. Moreover, while many contemporary graphic novels depict biographical or autobiographical experiences of suffering, trauma, and displacement (often as a result of military violence), there are also other social, political, and cultural issues that are represented across a range of graphic narratives from Southeast Asia and its diasporas, which we will investigate. We will read some introductory criticism about comics studies and criticism together with background material to situate each comic or graphic narrative in its own context. But our primary focus will be asking how graphic narratives work poetically, combining visual and textual elements to tell a story and make us think about wider issues in particular ways.

Readings may include: excerpts from Baetens and Frey, *The Graphic Novel: An Introduction*; Groensteen, *The System of Comics*; Lent, *Asian Comics*; Chute, *Disaster Drawn* and *Graphic Women*; Koh, *Last Train From Tanjong Pagar*; Oh, *Ten Sticks and One Rice*; Tran, *Vietnamerica*; Bui, *The Best We Could Do*; Mapa, *Duran Duran, Imelda Marcos and Me*; Arre, *Martial Law Babies*, and other graphic narratives. Assignments: seminar presentations; annotated bibliography; research essay.

ENGL 289 - Seminar in Genres: Reading Poetry
Tuesdays, 2:00PM-4:50PM, Sproul Hall 2364
Professor David Lloyd

The course is principally about reading. How to read. How not to read. How to think about what we read. What to expect from reading different kinds of poetry. Above all, about the qualities of attention that we can bring to bear in reading. We will read poems, one at a time, until we consider that we have read them as exhaustively as they—or we—can bear. Mostly we will be considering what kinds of attention poetry, as a mode of apprehending the world, demands and brings to bear. We will be thinking about language—as something we use to grasp our worlds, as something that intervenes between us and our world, as something that is our world, as play, as representation. I will be trying to find poems that, in turn, make the models of reading we have developed up to any point on the basis of reading other poems irrelevant, hard to sustain, unproductive. We will spend as much time as we want on anything we read: there is no set quantity of material to cover, no particular thing you need to know at the end of this course, no body of information you need to master. Every so often, I will introduce critical essays that may help us to refine our thinking about poetry, but the main thing is our collective focus on reading poems.

Although we will mostly be reading modern poems, this course is not intended to introduce you to the full range of modern poetry, American or British. It is not by any means a survey or an introduction to the canon. Rather, this seminar is designed to think about the changing practices of English-language poetry from more or less the Romantic period down to the present. We will combine reading carefully a small number of lyric poems with reading of both critical and theoretical texts, as well as some readings that reflect on the relationship of poetry to philosophy.

I expect to the readings into three very rough sections: Song, Voice, and Ethics and Politics. In the first, we consider the relation of lyric—originally poetry performed to music—to song, including ballads and hymns as well as things like love songs. We will also consider what the *written* lyric's relation to song implies about hierarchies of orality and literacy and about reading and knowing as well as our thinking about sound qualities in poetry. "Voice" will consider another key concept in lyric, namely its supposed expression of the individual self-consciousness and its consequent particularity and authenticity. We will put some pressure on that connection, especially through reading poets whose work is very suspicious of such assumptions about the expressive lyric. This section will take us back to concerns about sound and meaning, but also about oral and written work in the context of poetics and race. In "Ethics and Politics" we will consider the kinds of claims made for poetry's ethical and political effects: in the modern period, can poetry have direct political influence? Is there something intrinsically ethically formative about the use of language in poetry and the special demands it makes on readers' attention? How does poetry respond to the instrumentalization of language in contemporary society?

No previous extensive work on poetry will be assumed but students will be expected to commit to attentive reading both of poetic works and of sometimes quite challenging, but not less interesting theoretical texts.

ENGL410 - Seminar in Professional Development
Monday, 10:00 to 11:50 AM, HMNSS 2212 (ENGL conference room)
Associate Professor Weihsin Gui

This workshop is primarily intended for graduate students who have advanced to candidacy (i.e. passed their Qualifying Exam 2 / PhD exam) although graduate students at earlier stages in the program are also welcome. Depending on how many participants are in the workshop and what priorities they have, we will cover the following topics related to becoming a professional scholar-teacher: pedagogy and classroom management, attending and presenting at conferences, applying for grants and fellowships, submitting and revising journal articles for publication, and others. We will not, however, be drafting application documents for faculty jobs. Interested students should contact Prof. Gui for more details. ENGL410 is a required course in the English PhD program.