ENGL7701: English Language Training for Graduate Level Students: Focus on Writing
Department permission is required.

Designed for those whose first language is not English, this course offers students practice writing in a range of academic modes including reflection, summary, analysis, and critique. Early in the semester, students will explore the composition process from brainstorming to drafting to revision to editing. Grammar is taught in the context of student writing. Several classes will be devoted to e-mail, reference letter, and proposal writing. Non-credit, offered free of charge by GSAS to its students during the spring. Department permission required. Students who enroll in the course are expected to attend all classes and complete short writing assignments weekly.

Lynne Anderson

ENGL7709: Visual Culture
Fulfills the Theory Requirement

This course will introduce students to basic concepts in the field of visual culture studies. We will explore potential and limitations of a semiotic approach to reading images drawn from popular culture and high art (with help of Roland Barthes, John Berger, Mieke Bal, WJT Mitchell and others). Readings will engage with the history of seeing as it is continually transformed by technology, ideology, and various cultural institutions of knowledge and control (through Benjamin, Crary, Krauss and others). Theoretical readings will take us through methodologies and disciplines including psychoanalysis, political theory, aesthetics, deconstruction, gender studies, philosophy, and (yes, even) literature.

Robin Lydenberg

ENGL7754: The Making of Renaissance Literature

When colleges in the U.S. began to offer courses called “English,” the term “Renaissance” came gradually to be applied to early modern literature. On the basis of research that we’ll conduct principally in the Archives of Harvard and M.I.T., this course will attend to texts—by Marlowe, Shakespeare, Milton and others—that were made to illustrate the prestige of “the Renaissance.” Students will receive training in doing archival research in order to foster projects that probe continuities and differences between early attempts to turn literature in English into a school subject and our current critical practices.

Dayton Haskin

ENGL7762: Fourth Genre: Contemporary American Literary Nonfiction

The "fourth genre" refers to works of nonfiction that contain literary features more commonly associated with fiction, poetry, and drama. We will examine a few pioneers of the form, including Woolf, Thoreau, and Freud, but our study will focus primarily on subgenres of contemporary American creative nonfiction, including immersion journalism; autobiography; graphic memoir; and literary and lyric essay. Readings will include work by creative nonfiction by writers such as Wolfe, Didion, Talese, Dillard,
Kincaid, Bechdel, and Slater. Writing assignments will include both academic and creative essays.

Lad Tobin

ENGL7771 The Victorian Novel
Provides graduate students with an advanced introduction to the scholarly and critical study of the Victorian novel (1837-1901). It is appropriate both for students who have had some undergraduate course work in the field and those who are relatively new to Victorian Studies. We will read a number of the major novels of the period, probably including novels by Charlotte Brontë, W. M. Thackeray, Charles Dickens, George Eliot, and Thomas Hardy. We will also explore the historical context of the Victorian era and develop a critical framework for theorizing these texts and, more broadly, the novel as a genre.

Maia McAleavey

FREN7780 Readings in Theory
Cross Listed with: PHIL7780, ENGL7780
Conducted in English
Open to undergraduates with permission of instructor only
Fulfills a Ph.D. requirement in Romance Languages and Literatures
This course is organized as an introduction to the reading of literary theory for graduate students in various disciplines. Its aim is to develop an awareness of and sensitivity to the specific means and consequences of interpreting literary and extra-literary language today. The course allows students to acquire a basic familiarity with some of the most formative linguistic, philosophical, and anthropological antecedents underpinning any attempt to understand and account for the special status reserved for rhetorical language in literature or beyond it. Readings from Saussure, Lvi-Strauss, Jakobson, Barthes, Lacan, Ricoeur, Geertz, Austin, Derrida, and de Man, among others.

Kevin Newmark

ENGL7786 T.S. Eliot & Walter Benjamin
In this class, we will focus on two giants of European modernism: T. S. Eliot (1888-1965) and Walter Benjamin (1892-1940), who, during the early decades of the twentieth century, struggled to construct the (literary and political) future out of the ruins of the past. Topics of discussion will likely include the politics of (difficult) art; the role of technology in modern life; and the possibility of historical representation.

Robert Lehman

ENGL8806 American Literatures of Slavery & Abolition
In this seminar we will examine nineteenth-century American literature by focusing on the theme of slavery and abolition. We will consider this theme’s influence on several important literary genres, including slave narratives, sentimental novels, gothic short stories, as well as popular print forms such as pamphlets and newspapers. Authors covered include Frederick Douglass, Harriet Jacobs, Edgar Allan Poe, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Herman Melville, and Mark Twain. Alongside scholarship that situates our readings within different literary and historical contexts, we’ll also read and discuss pedagogical material to consider strategies for teaching American literature of slavery and abolition.

Adam Lewis
ENGL8818 Yeats: Work, Thoughts, Contexts
This course will explore Yeats’s major works, with a special emphasis on his poetry. We will examine issues of form and poetics; we will also engage with his work’s social, political, and historical contexts and concerns. We will engage with a wide range of contemporary scholarship on Yeats, as well as Yeats’s own formulations and theorizations of his work.
Marjorie Howes

ENGL8825 Composition Theory and the Teaching of Writing
Department Permission required
This course is designed to prepare graduate students to teach first-year college writing courses; to introduce students to central issues, problems and theories in composition studies; and to examine ways in which contemporary critical theories (including feminism, psychoanalysis, cultural studies, and critical pedagogy) have influenced the teaching and study of composition. Requirements will include a theoretically-informed analysis of a student essay; a piece of creative nonfiction and an accompanying description of the process used to produce it; an annotated syllabus for a first-year college course; and a week of student teaching in an FWS classroom.
Paula Mathieu

ENGL8849 Romantic Texts and Contexts
“Romantic Texts and Contexts” provides graduate students with an advanced introduction to the scholarly and critical study of poetry published in the British Romantic era (1780-1834). It is appropriate both for students who have had some undergraduate course work in the field and those who are relatively new to British Romanticism. We will read novels and poems in various genres (lyric, narrative, and dramatic) and in relation to various ways of contextualizing literary works. Authors will probably include Wollstonecraft and Austen, Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, and Keats, and selected women poets (Smith, Hemans, Robinson).
Alan Richardson

ENGL8858 Postcolonial Literature and Theory
Fulfills the Theory requirement
This course takes up major Asian and African Anglophone novels and cultural theory pertaining to the concept of Empire—mainly British colonialism and contemporary Globalization. Our focus will be on relations of “Power” as mediated by discourses of race and euro-centrism, educational policy, identity formation, nationalism and political economy. The second half of the course will deal with the consequences of the globalized economy and the ways in which creative writers and intellectuals in the developing world represent issues such as food security, environmental degradation, rapid industrialization and the onslaught of consumer values.
Kalpana Seshadri

ENGL8873 Shakespeare
This course will cover a selection of plays spanning Shakespeare’s whole career and will also read critical essays chosen to represent a range of theoretical approaches to the plays, including attention to
bibliography and stage history.

Mary Crane

ENGL9917 Ph.D. Seminar: Issues and Methods in American Studies
Introduction to the interdisciplinary study of American culture and to the field of cultural history. Focus will be on reading scholarship that interprets works of popular fiction, film, music, painting, public memory, and material culture in relation to their historical moments. Culminates in a research paper on an artifact of student's choosing.

Christina Klein