Graduate Courses Fall 2022

ENGL5575  Topics in CNF: Writing about Place  (G/UG) (Instructor Permission)  T 7-9:25
Through the reading and writing of creative nonfiction essays, we will use place as a lens through which to
explore the human relationship to natural and built environments, as well as to ideas of home, travel, exile,
place and displacement in our complex contemporary world. Students will write three essays Home/Insider
Essay; Place/Displacement Essay; Reported Place Profile over the course of the semester and extensively
revise and polish two of them. Readings may include work by Wendell Berry, Joan Didion, Ocean Vuong,
Anne Dillard, Rachel Kushner, David Sedaris, Jonathan Lethem, Carlo Rotella, Robin Wall Kimmerer, and
Jamaica Kincaid. Restricted to Graduate Students, Seniors, Juniors and Sophomores.

To apply: Students should send up to 8 double-spaced pages of creative writing or place-based journalism
to graver@bc.edu by 3/25/22. Your submission may be part of a larger piece; if so, indicate this on the
manuscript. Include a paragraph explaining your interest in the course and a list of college-level writing
workshops you have taken, with instructors and grades. Ideally, the writing sample will be nonfiction, but if
your strongest writing is in fiction, poetry or drama, that is also acceptable. Include your e-mail address.
Late applications will be considered on a rolling basis as space permits.
Elizabeth Graver

ENGL6032  Seminar: Islam on the Shakespearean Stage  (G/UG, pre-1700) TH 4:30-6:55
Muslim characters were a fixture of the early modern English stage. As Englands growing
involvement in global politics led to new partnerships and rivalries with Muslim-ruled states in
the Middle East and North Africa, English drama became increasingly interested in representing
the Islamic world. Dramatists wrote plays featuring Turks, Moors, and renegados (English
converts to Islam), stock characters that spoke to the fantasies, fears, and social and political
questions raised through the interactions between Englishmen and Muslims in the period.

This course will provide you with a grounding in the representation of Islam on the early modern
stage, teaching you to perceive how character, plot device, and genre create larger dialogues
between plays. Additionally, this course will introduce you to how to use archival materials to
approach early modern literature: we will read correspondence, diplomatic records, and travel
narratives in order to contextualize the plays that we are reading in relation to depictions of Islam
across a variety of non-dramatic genres. Finally, we will end this course by reading Sulayman
al-Bassams Richard III, An Arab Tragedy (2007), examining the lasting legacy of early modern
dramas complicated and often troubled representations of Islam.
Andrea Crow

ENGL6036  Seminar: Black Memoir Matters  (G/UG)  TH 2-4:25
This course explores what an engagement with life writing by black Americans teaches us about
the United States and its quest for democracy. We will situate contemporary writers within a
larger literary tradition, beginning with James Baldwin's The Fire Next Time, a quintessential
civil rights movement text, followed by Between the World & Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates, whom
Nobel laureate Toni Morrison called the Baldwin of the Black Lives Matter era. We will also
consider how various forms of memoir—as open letter (Imani Perry's Breathe and Kiese
Laymon's Heavy), as interconnected essays (Emily Bernard's Black Is the Body), as literary
criticism (Farah Jasmine Griffin's Read Until You Understand) meditate upon fundamental questions of citizenship, truth-telling, and fullest human blossoming.

Angela Ards

ENGL6037 Seminar: The Harlem Renaissance (G/UG) T 4:30-6:55
This course explores the early-twentieth-century period of black artistic production alternately referred to as the Harlem Renaissance and the New Negro Renaissance. Challenging traditional views of Harlem as the epicenter of the period, we will read Harlem as a particularly prominent geographic site among many no less vibrant and no less significant sites across the country, the hemisphere and the Atlantic. Examining a wide range of artistic genres and mediums, we join these black artists, scholars, and leaders as they interrogate the relationships between art and politics; freedom and equality; culture and cultured; and blackness and personhood. In our examinations, we will be especially attentive to two contrasting lines of inquiries: 1) What historical, geographic, and socio-economic factors shape the contours of this Renaissance and its legacies? And 2) How might this Renaissance speak to our current questions about race, representation, and what, if anything, is American?

Allison Curseen

ENGL6038 Seminar: Cultural Rhetorics (G/UG) W 4:30-6:55
Fulfills the graduate theory requirement & Counts towards Digital Humanities Elective
This course will explore the intersections of rhetoric, literacy, language, and identity. In particular, we will discuss how we historicize, define, theorize, enact, teach, and do Cultural Rhetorics, as well as think through how various communities have been in/excluded in histories of rhetoric. In doing so, we will consider how our positionalities (of gender, race, class, ethnicity, dis/ability, language, etc) shape how we make meaning in the world. As we think about the practice and study of Cultural Rhetoric, we must also think about how these understandings affect/challenge the research methods we use, the histories we tell, the theories we use, and the curriculum choices that we make.

Jessica Pauszek

ENGL6040 Seminar: The City in American Literature and Culture (G/UG)
TH 4:30-6:55
Counts towards Digital Humanities Elective
We will consider how American literature and culture has responded to the formal and conceptual challenges posed by cities. Taking an American Studies approach to our subject, our inquiry will include not only novels (e.g., Sister Carrie, Native Speaker) and other literary forms but also film (e.g., Chinatown, Blade Runner), music, landscape, and more. We'll also read scholars like Betsy Klimasmith, Thomas Heise, and Catherine Jurca, who offer interdisciplinary models for relating the interpretation of texts to the social, economic, and political facts of city life.

Note: Students may not receive credit for both this course and the graduate version, ENGL7746 The City in American Literature and Culture.

Carlo Rotella
ENGL6041 Seminar: Game of Thrones: Medieval English Political Poetry  (G/UG, pre-1900)  M 2-4:25
Counts towards Digital Humanities Elective
Before House Stark and House Lannister came the House of York and the House of Lancaster. The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in England witnessed a series of social and political upheavals, from the Black Death and the Peasants Revolt to the Wars of the Roses. English poetry responds to and intervenes in these events. Political writing influenced the decisions of kings, shaped public perception of national politics, and landed people in prison (or worse). This course makes a survey of political poetry from England, 1300-1500, with focus on William Langland's *Piers Plowman* and the poetry of John Gower. We read canonical authors such as Chaucer, Gower, and Langland alongside little-known texts from manuscript archives. Topics include multilingualism, the relationship between literature and politics, and the histories of poetic forms. No prior knowledge of Middle English required. Gower's French and Latin poetry is read in translation.

Note: Students may not receive credit for both this course and the graduate version, ENGL7003 Game of Thrones

*Eric Weiskott*

ENGL6675 The Art and Craft of Literary Translation  TTH 3-4:15
Literary translation as an art and a professional discipline. Discussion of the history and theory of literary translation, but mainly practice in translating poetry or artistic prose into English. Conducted in English as a workshop.

Prerequisites: knowledge of a Classical, Germanic, Romance or Slavic language beyond the intermediate level. **Instructor's permission is required for other languages.**

*Maxim D. Shrayer*

ENGL7749 Poetics  F 2-4:25
Fulfills the graduate theory requirement
This course traces the development of poetics from the mid-twentieth century to recent attempts at revival. We'll read Aristotle's Poetics as a "pre-text," followed by key essays in Russian and Prague school poetics, responses by the Bakhtin group, and examples of the transition from Slavic to French structuralist poetics. We then review the poststructuralist critique of structuralist poetics before considering the return of poetics in cognitive poetics and the New Formalism. Although the readings could be described as "theory," most of them are concerned with questions of literary methodology, often illustrating their claims in relation to specific poetic texts.

*Alan Richardson*

ENGL7752 Live Contemporary Theorists  W 7-9:30
Fulfills the graduate theory requirement
Being interdisciplinary, Contemporary Theory enhances sophistication in interpreting just about anything: literature, films, all art, in fact, but also yourself, your relationships, the political world, the international world. Theory enables one to have a sense of what to look for in analyzing a text, rather than stumbling across whatever might strike your fancy. It is important to be conscious of what assumptions one is making about what is valuable when analyzing a text.
Are you a feminist, psychoanalytic, deconstructionist, cultural, queer, post-colonial critic? Theory is pleasurably informative in drawing in the arts, history, theology, political thought, etc. You might be reading Kristeva, and suddenly you are engaging a painting of Saint John the Baptist’s head on a platter; or you might be reading Agamben but then finding yourself confronted with issues of biopolitics or the relation of people to their animality. Theory has a way of leading you to what is fascinating as you learn to read awry. Stimulating and animating, it can even serve as an anti-depressant. This course is an excellent stepping stone to graduate study or further graduate study. It is meant to expose students to several major figures of a second wave of contemporary theory—theorists who are alive and writing today. Through readings of whole books and some essays, it will provide an introduction and offer a substantial experience. We will focus on Badiou, Nancy, Ranciere, Agamben, Kristeva, Žižek, and possibly Sloterdijk, Butler, Copjec, Moten, Spillers, Bhabha, Zupančič, and others.

Frances Restuccia

ENGL7764  Twentieth-Century Irish Fiction  T 4:30-6:55
In this graduate seminar, we will read a selection of Irish novels so as to identify, discuss and better understand complex cultural phenomena that become manifest in the aftermath of the colonial experience. The underlying premise suggests that Irish novelists participate in debates concerning national identity and, in the process, anticipate the evolution of a postnational society. Paying particular attention to issues of language, gender, place and literary authority, and to representations of religion, history, and identity, the seminar seeks to establish the inevitable heterogeneity related to the post-colonial condition.

James Smith

ENGL7801  Graduate Colloquium: Digital Humanities  W 5-7:30
Foundational course for the use of digital scholarship in the humanities. By the end of the course, students will have a grounding in what digital scholarship is as well as an arsenal of techniques for utilizing DS in their own work.

Matthew Naglak

ENGL8876  Issues and Methods in English Studies  T 2-4:25
Fulfills masters methods requirement & Counts towards Digital Humanities Elective
This course offers an introduction to the field of English studies, with focus on problems of method revolving around the fields burning question, What is literature? We read a range of recent scholarship, exploring approaches, methods, and issues of interest, including formalism vs. historicism, periodization, digital humanities, literary and cultural theory, and poetics. Primary works assigned are drawn from different centuries and all major genres, mainly from Britain. Students write either a research paper on a primary text or a position paper on an issue or a method.

Eric Weiskott

ENGL9908  PhD Seminar: Seeing Things Hidden: Modern Literature and Visual Culture  W 10-1 (PhD Students only)
In this class we will concern ourselves with the relationship between literature and the visual arts as it unfolded over (roughly) the last two centuries from the birth of photography in the early 1820s to the present. Rather than attempt to cover every manifestation of this unfolding--an
impossible task—we'll limit ourselves to an in-depth study of three particularly dense moments: 1) the middle of the nineteenth century, the period during which photography was popularized, the detective story was invented, and (at least in France) modernism came into its own; 2) the early decades of the twentieth-century, the period of high modernism, with the latter's paradoxical coupling of a desire to make it new and a fascination with primitive art forms; 3) the post-war twentieth century, and the transition from modernism to postmodernism in the visual arts. We will examine works of literature, philosophy, and visual art. Proper names will likely include Poe, Baudelaire, Manet, Marinetti, Loy, Lewis, Benjamin, and Warhol.

*Robert Lehman*

**ENGL9934  Advanced Research Colloquium (PhD Students only)  M 4:30-6:55**

This seminar for PhD students in their third or fourth years will be run as a series of workshops structured to provide practical advice about how best to facilitate the successful transition from graduate student life to a professional life in academia. Topics will include the Conference Paper, the Scholarly Article, the Dissertation, Teaching and the Academic Job Market.

*Aeron Hunt*