

Graduate Courses Fall 2023

ENGL6301 Seminar: Nineteenth-Century African American Literature and Culture (G/UG, pre-1900) W 4:30-6:55

This course will examine literary, art, performance, and other cultural texts from the long nineteenth century produced by, alongside, about, and/or significant to African American life and culture. The class will be organized around a critical topic which Black Studies, American Studies, and/or literary studies scholars have identified as significant to the discourse on this history and body of texts. In our examination of this topic we will engage a myriad of texts by diverse authors across different mediums and genres; explore a variety of nineteenth century US archives; and constantly interrogate the relationship between history and black literary and artistic production.

Allison Curseen

ENGL6302 Seminar: Black Feminist Literature, Art, and Performance, 1970s-1990s (G/UG) TH 2-4:25

In this course, we will explore Black feminism and its emergence as a cultural field from the 1970s through the 90s. Black feminism began in the 1970s as a movement that centered the lived experiences, political visions, and intellectual ideas of Black women who didn't see themselves as fully accounted for in mainstream civil rights and women's rights movements. The Black feminist movement birthed a generation of writers and artists who foregrounded Black women's stories and audiences paid attention to their voices like never before. Authors and artists in this course may include The Combahee River Collective, Ntozake Shange, bell hooks, Toni Morrison, Faith Ringgold, Michele Wallace, Audre Lorde, Alice Walker, Kathleen Collins, Howardena Pindell, Julie Dash, Joan Morgan, and more.

Jovonna Jones

ENGL6649 Seminar: Irish Romanticism (G/UG, pre-1900) Tu 2-4:25

Irish literature written in English in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century registers and responds to a still palpable history of unjust colonial land settlements, revolution and war, a rural society in transition, famine and displacement. This course tracks the work of key Irish writers (Lady Morgan, Maria Edgeworth, Thomas Moore, Gerald Griffin and James Clarence Mangan) who together developed a distinctively textured aesthetic that draws on the past in order to shape new literary futures. Topics to include population, political economy, gender, memory, landscape and empire.

Claire Connolly

ENGL7029 Literature and the Political Tu 4:30-6:55**Fulfills the graduate theory requirement**

What is the difference between Politics and The Political? What does political ontology mean, and how does it condition our interpretation of a literary text? How are the political and the ethical differentiated and related? What is the role of responsibility in ethics and politics?

In this course we shall sample a variety of approaches to the political as developed by philosophers and activists to develop a reading protocol for identifying and interpreting the literary text. While concepts such as political contingency, sovereignty, normativity, and universality are crucial for grappling with the diverse manifestations of the political, the question of what constitutes the literary element in a given textual situation in contradistinction to literature and its politics of representation will serve as a focal point for our discussions.

Theorists will include Carl Schmitt, Hannah Arendt, Heidegger, John Rawls, Judith Butler, Bernard Williams, Foucault, Derrida, Gayatri Spivak and Nancy Fraser.

Kalpana Seshadri

ENGL7030 Psychoanalytic Theory W 7-9:30**Fulfills the graduate theory requirement**

A course on psychoanalytic theory, featuring works by Freud, Lacan, Kristeva, Zizek, Dolar, and possibly Abraham and Torok, Deleuze, and Han. We will focus on concepts such as melancholia & abjection, masochism, fetishism, castration/lack, the drive (in particular, the death drive), the gaze, transference, love/desire, sublimation, the Symbolic/Imaginary/Real triad, and jouissance as well as the clinical categories of obsessional neurosis, hysteria, perversion, psychosis. We will read material on these thinkers, such as Fink's *A Clinical Introduction to Lacanian Psychoanalysis*, Restuccia's *Amorous Acts* and *The Blue Box* (on contemporary film), Zupancic's *What is Sex?* as well as her newest book on *Antigone*, and possibly essays by Copjec. Especially through Zizek's *Sexuality and the Failed Absolute*, we will tie psychoanalysis to philosophy. Two papers will be required.

Frances Restuccia

ENGL7031 Nineteenth-Century Poetry, Prose, & Cultural Criticism M 4:30-6:55

Matthew Arnold famously wrote "Art is a criticism of life." Naguib Mahfouz has taken this a step further: "Art is a criticism of society and life, and I believe that if life became perfect, art would be meaningless and cease to exist." Nineteenth-Century Poetry, Prose, and Cultural Criticism will explore connections among three different modes of Victorian writing: poetry, cultural criticism, and life writing. Authors we will read include Elizabeth Barrett Browning, John Keble, Thomas Carlyle, Alfred Tennyson, Christina Rossetti, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Matthew Arnold, Annie Besant, Margaret Oliphant, Harriet Martineau, John Ruskin, Florence Nightingale, Matthew Arnold, Frederic Harrison, and Leslie Stephen, among others. It will try to examine the buried positions and controversies in these works. Most important, it will try to examine the struggles of these works in the marketplace, and within the vivid milieus of

Victorian intellectual and literary life, taking into account their reception and dissemination; their influence of lack of it, and their nascent afterlives.

James Najarian

ENGL7888 Graduate Colloquium: Digital Humanities Tu 2-4:25

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.

Eric Weiskott

ENGL8802 Joyce's *Ulysses* Th 4:30-6:55

This course will be dedicated to an extended exploration of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, a novel that has often been called the most important literary work of the twentieth century. Most of our time will be devoted to an intensive reading of the novel itself, but we will also read selected critical and historical materials. No prior knowledge of Joyce's works is required, just a willingness to tackle the challenges offered by his most influential masterpiece.

Marjorie Howes

ENGL8887 Introduction to Advanced Research F 2-4:30

Fulfills the graduate methods requirement

This course will acquaint you with the essential resources to carry out the central tasks of literary scholarship. Bibliography (broadly defined as the investigation of the production, dissemination, collection, location, and identification of literary artifacts) is indispensable to scholarship and criticism of all kinds, just as a critical sensibility guides our choice of what books to look for. You will be guided through the reference works and databases available in the Boston College library and others, discuss the goals, purposes, and future of the field of literary studies, and produce an original project based on archival sources.

Robert Stanton

ENGL9912 PhD Seminar: How Philosophy Turned into Science: Literature and Knowledge in Early Modern England

W 10-1 (PhD Students Only)

Sixteenth and early Seventeenth-Century England saw enormous changes in understanding what knowledge was and how it could be attained. These changes shaped the construction of modern attitudes toward the environment, race, gender, religion, and politics--toward our sense of what human beings are and what their role in nature should be. In this seminar we will read primary texts that reflect and participate in these changes, and secondary works that bring different methods and approaches to understanding them. Readings will include works by More, Shakespeare, Donne, Bacon, Cavendish, and others. There will be space for students to pursue research projects relevant to their own fields and interests.

Mary Crane