ENGL 7015  Everyday Fictions (Tanner) TH 2-4:25

This graduate seminar will focus on the representation of ordinary, everyday life in modern and contemporary fiction. The works that we will address may include catastrophic events, tragic accidents, tumultuous love affairs, brutal violence and dramatic discoveries, but we will consider the depiction of those moments of heightened existence in relation to the representation of the fictional “backdrop” of the lived world that functions in part to contribute to the illusion of mimesis. In shifting the lens of analysis from the tragic, the unexpected and the dramatic to the lived experience of the everyday, we will raise questions about the nature of literary representation, the construction of narrative, and the potential of literature to capture the rhythms of ordinary life. Using critical texts on the everyday by writers such as Rita Felski, Liesl Olson, Byrony Randall and Susan Stewart, we will interrogate the way in which fiction represents and/or excludes the daily interactions, habitual motions and sensory perceptions that make up the lived experience of embodied existence.

As we consider issues of work, family, leisure and human relationship in the context of crisis and the everyday, our focus on how fiction frames the ordinary will necessarily lead us to contemplate issues of materiality, space and embodiment, as well as narrative; to that end we will dip briefly into thing theory, cultural geography, and theories of the body, as well as narrative theory and critical work on the everyday. As we read, we will also consider how immersion in the ordinary shapes the experience of reading fictional worlds. If the everyday is constituted in opposition to the heightened experience of dramatic events, are everyday fictions necessarily boring? What do we read for when we shift our interpretive lens to the framework of the ordinary?

Possible texts include Marilynne Robinson’s *Housekeeping* or *Gilead* and *Home*, Don DeLillo’s *White Noise*, Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*, Richard Ford’s *Independence Day*, Gertrude Stein’s *Three Lives*, Nicole Krauss’s *The History of Love*, Ernest Hemingway’s *A Farewell to Arms*, Virginia Woolf’s *To the Lighthouse*, and Joshua Ferris’s *The Unnamed*, as well as short fiction by Jhumpa Lahiri, Junot Diaz and Lorrie Moore. As we think about narrative mechanisms in fiction, we will also briefly address fictional portrayals of the everyday in contemporary films including *Lost in Translation* and *What Maisie Knew*. This class will be a work in progress insofar as it will focus on developing dynamic critical frameworks for productive analysis of subject matter sometimes considered less than dynamic. The ideal student will tolerate boredom well even as he or she demonstrates a willingness to transform the ordinary through the power of fascination.
ENGL7700 English Language Training for Graduate Level Students: Focus on Speech (Anderson) W 4-6

Department permission is required.
Designed for students about to enter or currently enrolled in graduate programs at BC, this course will emphasize the oral/aural language skills required for success in graduate work. The classes will provide students the opportunity to hone their speaking and listening skills through group discussions, presentations, and targeted practice in pronunciation, stress, and intonation through the reading of poetry and tongue twisters. Non-credit and offered free of charge by GSAS to its students. N.B. Students who enroll in the course are expected to attend all classes throughout the semester.

ENGL7705 Early Modern Poetry (Haskin) M 2-4:25

An exploration of poetry from the Tudor and Stuart eras, according some attention to theories of genre and of editorial practice that respond to differences among poems by Shakespeare and Jonson, Donne and Milton. Concentration on developments in erotic and in religious lyrics, the emergence of satire, and the transition from manuscript culture to print publication. Other poets likely to be featured include Sidney, Spenser, the Countess of Pembroke, Herbert, and Marvell.

ENGL7707 W.C. Williams and Wallace Stevens (Mariani) T 4:30-6:55

Two American poets, two Modernists, who between them shaped the course of American and world poetry over the past century. From the 1910s through the 1950s, we will watch as these two interact and develop the possibilities of the Imagination, one coming to identify with the clamoring world around him, the other with the multivalent possibilities of the world within, and then back again as language dictated. Among texts by Williams we will examine Kora in Hell, Spring & All, In the American Grain, An Early Martyr and Other Poems, Adam & Eve & The City, The Desert Music, Journey to Love, and Pictures from Brueghel, and his epic, Paterson (1946—1958). Among texts by Stevens we will examine Harmonium, Ideas of Order, The Man with the Blue Guitar, Parts of a World, Transport to Summer, The Auroras of Autumn and his late poems.

ENGL7731 The Idea of Literature: From Work to Text (Lehman) TH 7-9:30
Fulfills the Theory requirement

This course is dedicated to literary theory. Rather than surveying the main trends represented in most theory anthologies, however, we will focus specifically on theoretical works that pose and attempt to answer the ontological question: What is literature? Surveying the diverse ways in which this question has been posed and answered, we will read works situated at the intersections of literary criticism, literary theory, and philosophical aesthetics. Authors may include Friedrich Schlegel, Novalis, Jean Paulhan, Maurice Blanchot, Paul de Man, Jacques Derrida, Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe & Jean-Luc Nancy, and Jacques Ranciere.
ENGL7732 Contemporary Irish Fiction (Smith) W 4:30-6:55

Concentrating of contemporary Irish fiction, this seminar examines the confluence of "stories" representing Irish society since the mid-1980s. We will discuss significant cultural shifts and attempt answers to ongoing cultural questions. These include issues of national identity in an era of globalization, the relationship between tradition and innovation in Celtic Tiger Ireland, and the challenges and contradictions posed by the Northern Ireland Peace Process, as well as issues of gender, sexuality, and ethnicity in the "new Ireland." Novelists include Roddy Doyle, Colm Tíbin, Patrick McCabe, Emma Donoghue, Mary Morrissy, Anne Enright, Eoin McNamee, Eilis N Dhuibhne, and Deirdre Madden.

ENGL7752 Contemporary Literary and Cultural Theory (Wallace) M 7-9:30
Fulfills the Theory requirement

This course introduces students to the concepts and practices of contemporary cultural and literary theory. Surveying various developments of the field during the last two decades, we will study: Marxist, psychoanalytic, feminist, new historical, structuralist, poststructuralist, and postcolonial approaches to literature and culture. Though our primary focus will be theoretical essays and books, students will also have the opportunity to apply the theories to literary and cultural texts. Possible theorists include: Marx, Althusser, Freud, Lacan, Lévi-Strauss, Derrida, Foucault, Chakrabarty, and Taussig. The course requires a series of short essays.

ENGL7785 Stuart Literature and Culture (Boesky) W 2-4:25

This course explores the early 17th century in Britain through canonical and non-canonical materials. Our central focus will be the changing representation of the body in competing discourses of this period—medical, juridical, political, and aesthetic. Topics may include the gendered body; appetite and its regulation; virginity; deviance; the reproductive body; colonial bodies and foreign "tongues;" anatomical practices; melancholy; prayer, penance, and political martyrdom. Readings will include works by Donne, Shakespeare, Herbert, Harvey, Milton, and Charles I. One presentation and two papers required.

ENGL 7789 Eighteenth-Century Comedies, Dramatic and Narrative (Chibka)

We take as our primary texts a variety of British dramatic comedies and comic novels written from the Restoration through the eighteenth century, when (at various points, if not continuously) comic modes flourished in both genres. Encountering works written over more than a century in two genres that period audiences would have seen as more closely related than we generally do, we’ll explore questions about how generic constraints, expectations, and innovations shaped representations of social life (for comedy is a relentlessly social mode of perceiving and representing). I want to ask about ways in which framing "the world" as comic could (presumably still can, in our popular
descendants of these popular forms) display &/or occlude cultural complacencies &/or
anxieties including, but not limited to, those about gender, class, change, and the salutary
or dangerous effects of plays and novels themselves.

Our plays and novels represent and reconfigure in many combinations and
permutations issues of sex, money, marriage, friendship, animus, love, and
intergenerational confrontation. They range from sophisticated to silly, raunchy to pious,
pleasant to deeply troubling, and comment implicitly (often, explicitly) on assumptions
and theories of what literary writing is or isn't good for. What sorts of questions emerge
from confronting these artifacts will depend in large part, I hope, on students. While I’d be
shocked if we arrived at any definitive, thumbnail definition(s) of "comedy" or "the comic,"
we’ll certainly need to ponder what we want to mean by such terms. We may also find
ourselves considering questions such as whether comic impulses function in peculiar ways
(i.e., work differently, for authors and audiences, than other sorts of impulses, including
some comedy often incorporates or redirects for its own purposes, such as those that
generate satires or romances); what comic shape has (or hasn’t) to do with being funny;
how comedy’s exaggeratedly artificed representations of social existence release skeptical,
iconoclastic, "liberal" ideas and energies, bolster "conservative" policing and purging of
such subversive tendencies, or (paradoxically) both, and thus contribute to shaping the no-
less-constructed social world outside the text.

Both novels and theatrical comedies were widely seen for much of our period as
“low,” vulgar commodities, and most of these works have been critiqued, at some
points in their reception histories, on moral grounds. While they vary widely in this
regard (a few are quite explicitly moralistic), moral questions in comic works are often
processed sidelong as problems in the ethics of mirth. Many of our comedies, for
instance, will contain (and punish) examples of cruel, foolish, or otherwise
inappropriate laughter, as if the comic mode needs to be differentiated not only from
distant genres such as tragedy or heroic romance, but from its own shadows. I’ll want
to ask how such scapegoat-shadows are related to the social, aesthetic, and cultural
work of comedy. How is distance from “other” kinds of gestic, satiric, burlesque,
imaginatively promiscuous, down-&-dirty, farcico-nonsensical, or just Plain
fun tendencies and texts established and manipulated? To what extent is the project of
comedy (significant parts of it, at least) about discriminating among similarities, fencing
off, disaffiliating from, and disowning our own next-of-kin?

We will encounter six to eight plays and probably three novels, making a list
something like the following: Etherege, *The Man of Mode*; Behn, *The Rover*; Congreve, *The
Jones*; Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*; Goldsmith, *She Stoops To Conquer*; Burney, *Evelina*;
Sheridan, *The School for Scandal*. A reasonable amount of critical and theoretical reading
will be assigned, and students will acquaint themselves with more in preparation for
written projects; but this course's primary focus is on its primary texts, which readers,
audiences, critics and theorists of all stripes have found engaging (if, at times,
enraging). My own approach tends to emphasize formal and rhetorical aspects of
texts—as can be seen in this course description—but students are more than welcome to
bring other, possibly quite different, theoretical or historical perspectives to our discussions and to their written work.

No prior coursework in the period is required or assumed. Students write one short critical essay (5-8 pp.) and one longer term paper (about 15 pp.). Each will also deliver one (or, depending on class size, one half of a collaborative) semiformal oral report by way of introducing the class to the fruits of her reading and thinking, and as a springboard for discussion.

**ENGL8805**  Becket (Sofer) T 2-4:25

This course introduces a major Irish (post)modernist writer, arguably the most important playwright of the twentieth century. Reading a range of Beckett’s fiction and drama, and with the help of various critical essays, we will place Beckett in his biographical, geographical, theatrical, and historical contexts. Texts will include Waiting for Godot, Endgame, short fictions early and late, and several plays for television. Work will include a class presentation, a short project, and a final long essay for which original archival research in Burns Library is an option. No previous familiarity with Beckett is required.

**ENGL8836**  Media, Culture, Narrative (Wilson) M 4:30-6:55

This course proposes to provide a seedbed of common readings and questions for graduate students interested in U.S. literary and cultural history from the mid-19th to the mid-20th centuries. Our readings will also concentrate on recent scholarship on the material and cultural placements of various media forms--news writings, self-help manuals, ethnic autobiography, popular entertainments, speeches, pulp magazines, and so forth, adjacent to (and often constituting) mainstream "literary" expression.

**ENGL8887**  Introduction to Advanced Research (Najarian) W 7-9:30

This course asks students to contemplate the kind of literary scholar they want to be and then provides them with basic literary research tools that will help them achieve this goal. By becoming versed in bibliographical and archival methods and learning about research techniques in complimentary fields of study, students will become grounded in the basics of contemporary literary studies. Readings on academic scholarship and disciplinary methods and workshops on traditional and special library collections and internet resources define this course. Students will demonstrate their knowledge of these essentials by producing an original, archived-based research essay.

**ENGL9903**  PhD Seminar: The Victorian Novel and Genre (McAleavey) T 10-1

It was during the Victorian period (1837-1901) that the novel became the dominant literary genre, at once entertaining newly literate populations and anchoring debates on aesthetics, politics, religion, and morality. This course will focus on questions about genre and the relationship between popular and elite literature. Weeks will be devoted to significant subgenres of the period, including the detective novel, science fiction, the historical novel,
and the sentimental novel. A broader set of concerns will turn on issues of periodization, classification, and canonization.

**ENGL9914  Some American Renaissances (Wallace) F 2-4:30**

The American Renaissance is traditionally conceived as the first full flowering of American culture in the 1850s in the writing of Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Melville, Whitman, Dickinson. This course places those authors in juxtaposition to other "renaissances" occurring in the same period: in African-American writing, women's writing, and popular literature. Among the questions engaged will be the difference between "high literary" and "lower" types of writing, the effect of culture on literature and of literature on culture, and the roles of race, class, and gender.

**ENGL9934  Advanced Research Seminar (Bicks) TH 10-1**

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.