

SUMMER 2023 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ENG 221: Literature, Nature and the Environment

Dr. Katey Castellano

(1st 4-week summer term)

Online

This course will explore inspiring and strange stories about human relationships with land, plants, and animals. Students can expect to emerge from the class with a working knowledge of concepts from the environmental humanities and a better understanding of how to relate a literary work to its historical, political, and cultural contexts. This class fulfills the General Education Cluster II literature requirement. It also counts towards the Environmental Humanities/Studies minors and the English major/minor.

ENG 221: Literature of Trauma, Healing, and Resilience

Prof. Erica Cavanagh

(1st 4-week summer term)

Asynchronous 1-hour lectures

In this course, we will read nonfiction, fiction, poetry, and hybrids of these genres on the themes of trauma, healing, and resilience. Scientific and psychiatric research on trauma, such as Bessel van der Kolk's *The Body Keeps the Score*, will supplement the literary works we read and offer us a lens for interpreting that literature as well as a language for talking about the effects of adverse life experiences and how we might better understand and address them. We will also read and discuss the themes of healing and resilience.

This course has been emerging for several years out of our changing understanding of what trauma is and its effects on our bodies and lives. Only in the early 2000s did a critical mass of

cognitive scientists and mental health professionals collectively recognize that the effects of trauma live in the body, impacting the central nervous system and all other organs connected to that system. Prior to that, psychiatric fields recognized that flight, fight, and freeze were common long-term reflexes in response to trauma and its triggers, but during much of the twentieth century, it was more popularly believed that the effects of trauma were housed in one's brain, and that one could heal and control the flight, fight, and freeze responses with talk therapy, exercise, stoicism, and other mind-over-matter approaches. We now have a more complex and informed understanding of how trauma behaves in the body and how we might address it.

ENG 222: Lyric Poetry

Prof. Greg Wrenn

(1st 4-week summer term)

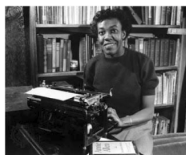
Online

This totally online GenEd course is meant to introduce you to the pleasures of reading and writing about lyric poetry, which focuses on emotion rather than telling a story. William Shakespeare, Gwendolyn Brooks, Sylvia Plath, Walt Whitman, Robert Frost—they're all lyric poets, and we'll be discussing their masterpieces in order to learn the fundamentals of poetic craft and contend with some central poetic themes.

At the heart of this course are the vital skills of critical thinking, close reading, and empathy, and we'll be practicing them as best we can in writing assignments, creative exercises, and class discussions.

English 222: Lyric Poetry
James Madison University
Summer 2023 (May 22-June 16)
Online

Prof. Greg Wrenn (wrenngj@jmu.edu)
Office Hours: by appointment



And remembering...
Remembering, with twinklings and twinges,
As they lean over the beans in their rented back room that is full of beads and
receipts and dolls and clothes, tobacco crumbs, vases and fringes.

—Gwendolyn Brooks, "The Bean Eaters"

Course Description

This general education course is meant to introduce you to the pleasures of reading and writing about lyric poetry, which focuses on emotion rather than telling a story. William Shakespeare, Gwendolyn Brooks, Sylvia Plath, Walt Whitman, Robert Frost—they're all lyric poets, and we'll be discussing their masterpieces, along with those by the likes of Adrienne Rich, Yusef Komunyakaa, and Li-Young Lee, in order to learn the fundamentals of poetic craft and contend with some central poetic themes. At the heart of this course are the vital skills of critical thinking, close reading, and empathy, and we'll be practicing them as best we can in writing assignments and online discussions.

As part of Group 3 in GenEd Cluster 2, the course will prepare you to:

- Generate increasingly nuanced questions (interpretations, ideas) about literature and explain why those questions matter.
- Use appropriate vocabulary and tactics to analyze specific literary expressions of culture and the relationship between the reader, the author, and text.

ENG 235: Survey of Early British Literature (Beowulf-18th Century)

Dr. Mark Rankin

(1st 4-week summer term)

Online

Forget everything you know – or think you know about early British Literature!

- Heroes who kill the monsters, steal the treasure, and stab their buddies!
- Satire before Stephen Colbert! Farting millers, talking birds! Come and see what you have been missing!
- Who gets locked in the Tower this week? The wrong book in the wrong hands means **death!**—you haven't heard this before!
- Henry VIII, Bloody Mary, Good Queen Bess—learn who they *really* were!
- Sex in paradise! The *unsanitized* version of Adam and Eve!
- Counts for General Education Arts & Humanities

ENG 239: Studies in World Literature

Dr. Mookerjee-Leonard

(1st 4-week summer term)

Online

The Holocaust, the civil war in Sri Lanka, 9/11, and other conflicts around the world have claimed children as victims. Many have died but thousands of children have suffered through

these disasters and lived to tell their tales. Through an engagement with writing on children's experience of war and violence this course will examine the issue of children's trauma. We will study a range of memoirs, short stories, and novels.

This course counts towards the General Education Cluster 2 Group 3 (Literature) requirement, the English major, and the World Literature Minor.

ENG 247: American Literature to 1865

Professor Matthew Rebhorn

(1st 4-week summer term)

Online

This course aims to explore the foundations of American Literature from its origins to, arguably, the most significant event in this country's history—the American Civil War. Helping to guide our exploration of the diverse literary texts constituting "American Literature" during this time period, we will be looking at the numerous formal, stylistic, and thematic ways in which all of these texts "contest" or challenge what it meant to be American. Exploring the rich texts of this course, therefore, from Puritan sermons to Enlightenment autobiographies, from Transcendental essays to gothic stories, we will not discover the "real" American experience beneath this era, but rather, we will begin to see the ways in which these contests over the meaning of race, gender, history, class, and religion supplied the foundational energy that drove this country onto the national stage.

ENG 248: American Literature – (1865-Present)

Dr. Allison Fagan

Online

(1st 4-week summer term)

This course surveys the production of literature in the United States from the mid 19th century to the present, tracing the major historical and formal movements including regionalism, realism, naturalism, the Harlem Renaissance, modernism, minimalism, and postmodernism. We will explore narratives and counternarratives, histories and counter-histories, seeking to understand how American literature presents multiple and even competing interpretations of American life.

ENG 260-4101 (4W1) & (4W2): Survey of African American Literature

Dr. Mollie Godfrey

(1st 4-week summer term)

Asynchronous Online

This course introduces students to major authors, literary forms, and movements in African

American literature. Throughout the semester we will explore antebellum, Reconstruction, Harlem Renaissance, Civil Rights, Black Arts, and contemporary writers in their historical contexts as well as make connections between texts across historical periods. By way of readings made up entirely of literary works by Black authors, this course also interrogates systems of power, oppression, and discrimination, and introduces foundational theories of Black resistance, resilience, intersectionality, and liberation.

ENG 320L: Shakespeare on the Page and Stage in London

Dr. Mark Rankin

6/20/23-7/14/23

In person (study abroad)

Students will study the plays of Shakespeare currently in production in London and England with special emphasis on the productions of the Royal Shakespeare Company and the National Theatre. Course can be substituted for either ENG 317 or ENG 318 but may not be taken for credit in addition to both.

ENG 392: Introduction to Creative Nonfiction

Prof. Greg Wrenn

(1st 4-week summer term)

Online

This online creative nonfiction course is truly introductory. Even as we confront the darkness, our focus will be on the uplifting aspects of the human experience: beauty, well-being, healing, kindness, nature, humor, gratitude, forgiveness, and love.

As we write essays this Maymester, I'll be encouraging you to see the writing process as an exploratory quest. An unmapped journey through beguiling, surprising thoughts and feelings. A labyrinth. To paraphrase memoirist Patricia Hampl, we don't aspire to write what we know; we write in order to know. Indeed, the best essays feel like archaeological dig sites around which the dust is still settling, rather than like stuffy, curated museums.

Each week we will read the work of celebrated essayists such as James Baldwin and pieces by lesser-known contemporary writers such as Paisley Rekdal and Ryan Van Meter. Along the way, we will aspire to exceptional craft, paying special attention to plot, scene, dialogue, imagery, setting, characterization, point of view/persona, syntax, and figurative language.

My wish is for each of you to walk away less timid as artists, more open to the mystery of language and life.

ENG 222: Lyric Poetry

Prof. Greg Wrenn

(1st 4-week summer term)

Online

This totally online GenEd course is meant to introduce you to the pleasures of reading and writing about lyric poetry, which focuses on emotion rather than telling a story. William Shakespeare, Gwendolyn Brooks, Sylvia Plath, Walt Whitman, Robert Frost—they're all lyric poets, and we'll be discussing their masterpieces in order to learn the fundamentals of poetic craft and contend with some central poetic themes.

At the heart of this course are the vital skills of critical thinking, close reading, and empathy, and we'll be practicing them as best we can in writing assignments, creative exercises, and class discussions.

ENG 392: Introduction to Poetry Writing

Prof. Kutchins

(1st 4-week summer term)

Asynchronous online, with 1 weekly synchronous workshop on Friday afternoons.

Poetry can save lives! Writing Poetry can keep us more grounded, stable and resilient in times of confusion, crisis, upheaval, war, and unprecedented pandemics. This 4-week summer course will give you ample opportunities to write poems, to learn about poetic craft, and to put the craft to use in your creative writing. As an online course, you will work with a weekly structure composed of reading and writing assignments, and participating in Group Critique Sessions online. The course culminates in a Poetry Portfolio of revised, finished poems. This course counts toward the Creative Writing Minor at JMU.

AMST

AMST 200-4101: Introduction to American Studies

Dr. Henigman

On-line asynchronous

(1st 4-week summer term)

How and why do we study America? This course takes a multidisciplinary approach to understanding American culture -- we will look at films, art, fiction and autobiographies, popular culture, and works of analysis of sociology and technology to ask the question: how do Americans define themselves, and how do those historical self-definitions respond to a growing and changing world? This course fulfills the General Education requirement Arts and Humanities Group One.