

## SPRING 2018 UNDERGRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

### **ENG 221: Literature / Culture / Ideas: Modernity and Appetite** **Dr. Molly O'Donnell, TU/TH 12:30 – 1:45 PM**

"Modernity and Appetite" introduces students to global literary figures and movements (17th c. – present) through inquiry into "appetites." Through this theme, we will consider both the pitfalls and triumphs of appetite in all its forms as presented in literature. Without appetite, there would be no science; without appetite, there would be no war.

- What drives our actions?
- What passions help or hurt us?
- Is man innately subject to physical, emotional, or intellectual appetite?
- How do our appetites define / control us? How do we suppress them to conform, achieve, disguise, or stand out?
- What are the consequences of sated desire or, alternately, want?
- Is the response to specific appetites individual or collective?
- How do our appetites impact others?
- Do our notions of the validity of appetite change over history and in different cultures? Is there something that remains the same?

In this course students think critically about these issues and grapple with these questions within the larger contexts of literature, history, politics, economics, philosophy, and science.

### **ENG 221: Environmental Literature of Crisis and Wonder** **Gregory Wrenn, TU/TH 3:30-4:45 PM**

What is it like to read about Thoreau's Walden Pond or Dillard's Tinker Creek as our 21<sup>st</sup>-century oceans are warming, rising, and acidifying? What is it like to experience natural beauty that we're unintentionally helping to destroy? How are contemporary writers responding to climate change? This general education course is meant to introduce you to environmental literature and how societal and ecological pressures help to shape it. As we learn the fundamentals of climate change science, we will read canonical environmental texts by Thoreau, Abbey, and Carson, seeing how wonder and crisis are nothing new to environmental writers. We will then analyze ecologically alert novels, essays, films, and poems from our era. At the heart of this course are the vital skills of critical thinking, close reading, and empathy, and we'll be practicing them often in small groups, in-class writing assignments, and exams.

**ENG221H: Literature / Culture / Ideas: Honors topic: “Being”**  
**Dr. Sharon Cote, TU/TH 2:00 – 3:15 PM**

This course will consider literature that explores the concept “being” from a variety of perspectives, including identity, the body and the physical world, communities, choice(s), and experiences. We will struggle with the (im)possibility of absolute dichotomies such as being human vs. non-human and even being happy vs. unhappy, and we’ll consider how such ideas can affect our own state of being. Primary texts will include works of speculative and non-speculative fiction, memoir, and poetry.

What is *being*? Is it simply existence vs. non-existence or perhaps a state of affairs—being alive, being happy, being part of a community? Or should we say it is an act we perform, something we do—being creative, being passionate, being involved? Or is it really best thought of as a noun, a description of an individual identity—a *being*, a leader, a scientist, a human?

*Being* is an elusive concept, the single idea that haunts our lives and our deaths. Literature lets us shadow the footsteps of other paths of being, lets us temporarily “be” someone else, someplace else, lets us intimately explore being as it is framed through the lives, thoughts, emotions, and beliefs of others. When we approach literature with an awareness of this power, prepared to actively engage with what it tells us about what it means to be, we expand our sense of our own being.

Honors English courses on this theme may consider literary works of different genres, from Greek tragedy and realist novels, to science fiction and contemporary poetry, to explore different aspects of and questions about *being*.

**ENG 221H Literature / Culture / Ideas: Honors topic: “Being”**  
***Borderlands: Narratives of Illness, Death, and Dying***  
**Dr. Annette Federico, 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM**

This course will explore how novelists, playwrights, and filmmakers have sought to represent the in-between state of being at the approach of death—what the philosopher Jacques Derrida has called “unexperienced experience,” the single dimension of human life that is universal, but also unknowable. In fatal illness, the individual is both in the world and elsewhere, a self that is about to be erased, already disappearing into an incomprehensible new identity. How do international artists imaginatively render for us the last act in the drama of human life? These are challenging stories of interiority and memory, regret and self-knowledge, terror, acceptance, and love.

Phillippe Aries, *Western Attitudes Towards Death from the Middle Ages to the Present*  
Anton Chekhov, *Ward No. 6 and Other Stories*  
Leo Tolstoy, *The Death of Ivan Illych*  
Thomas Mann, *Death in Venice*  
Thornton Wilder, *Our Town*

Yukio Mishima, *Patriotism*  
Tillie Olsen, *Tell Me a Riddle*  
May Sarton, *A Reckoning*  
Marsha Norman *'Night, Mother*  
Margaret Edson, *Wit*

**ENG 222 (Genres): Weird World Fiction**  
**Dr. Sofia Samatar, MWF 12:20 – 1:00 PM**

This course examines fantasy, science fiction, and horror in a global context. We will explore stories of the strange and supernatural from ancient mythology to contemporary horror film, and investigate how these narratives interact with psychology, politics, and cultural studies. As we read about gods, ghosts, aliens, and magical creatures, we will develop our own ideas about what stories of the unreal from around the world can teach us about the realities of human experience.

**ENG 222: Genres: Studies in Short Fiction**  
**Dr. Richard Gaughran/Bill Lawton, TU/TH 11:00 – 12:15 PM**

The course presents a study of short fiction as a form distinct from the novel and other literary forms, attempting to draw conclusions about what qualities define this distinctiveness. Various writers will be studied through close textual analysis. We will read many American stories, from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present, some from masters of the form, some from lesser known writers. We'll also read several stories in translation from other cultures.

**ENG 222 (Genres): The American Short Story**  
**Dr. Thomas Martin, MWF 10:10 – 11:00 AM**

In this class, which fulfills the General Education Cluster II literature requirement, we get to immerse ourselves in reading and discussing the stories in *The Best American Short Stories 2011*, edited by Geraldine Brooks. I will supplement these readings with many other stories. To encourage close scrutiny, I will give six short-answer quizzes on our assigned readings. Our class will consist of many discussions, two exams, and one 2000-word paper of critical analysis.

**English 222, Introduction to Poetry.**  
**Dr. Mark Parker, MW 11:15 – 12:05 PM w/ additional discussion meeting (see section detail)**

Section 0001: (M 2:30 – 3:20 PM)  
Section 0002: (W 2:30 – 3:20 PM)  
Section 0003: (F 2:30 – 3:20 PM)  
Section 0004: (W 1:25 – 2:15 PM)  
Section 0005: (F 1:25 – 2:15 PM)

This course explains basic techniques of reading poetry through close consideration of lyric poems. It assumes no prior knowledge of poetry or literature, but it expects students to develop considerable sophistication by the end of the term. There will be two lectures per week and one discussion section meeting.

**ENG 236: Survey of English Literature (18<sup>th</sup> Cen – Modern)**

**Dr. Heidi Pennington/Julie Sorge Way, TU/TH 9:30 – 10:45 AM**

In this overview of British literature from the last two hundred years or so, we'll examine works of poetry, prose, fiction, and drama. Paying careful attention to historical context, thematic content, and poetic and narrative form, we'll attempt to generate a rudimentary understanding of what's so "British" about this literature. In the process, we'll trace shifting ideas about personal and national identities (considering gender, race, and class), authority and authorship, and sociability through the literary creations of diverse writers.

**ENG 239: Studies in World Literature**

**Introduction to African Oral Literature**

This course offers an overview of African oral literatures, exploring form and style, relevance and function in specific genres including folktales, witticisms, praise poetry, children's games, and songs. Through an exploration of spiritual, social, and political themes and content of oral literature, this introductory course contextualizes orature as part of the world sense and day-to-day structures and operations of African communities. Discussed as central to oral literature will be the identities performer/creator and the audience/performer. Students will encounter the aesthetics and philosophies of African verbal art as they engage debates on orality, memorialization, and edutainment through a critical African studies lens. To ensure an experience of the performed nature of oral literature, the course will heavily incorporate the viewing and analysis of video and audio recordings of oral performances.

**ENG 247: Survey of American Literature (Begin – Civil War)**

**Dr. Matthew Reborn/Nick Webb, MWF 10:10 – 11:00**

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 slave narratives, we will not discover the "real" American experience beneath this era. 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 260: Survey of African American Literature****Dr. Mollie Godfrey/ Courtney Swartzentruber, MWF 10:10 – 11:00 AM**

This course introduces students to major authors, literary forms, and movements in African American literature. We study the emergence and flourishing of African American literature over the past two centuries, noting common as well as diverging themes, techniques, and arguments over the coherence of African American literature as a genre. 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. Students can expect to complete in-class reading quizzes and group work, as well as three short essays and three exams.

**ENG 299: Writing About Literature (ENG/IDLS Majors Only)****Dr. Sofia Samatar, MW 2:30 PM – 3:45 PM**

This course introduces students to current methods of reading and interpreting literature, addressing a variety of genres and theories. Students will learn how to pursue sound research, hone their close reading skills, and develop confidence and poise in speaking about literary works.

**English 299: Writing about Literature****Dr. Heidi Pennington, 12:30 – 1:45 PM**

This course introduces students to the English major by developing their familiarity with literary genres, important terms and concepts, and different approaches to literary analysis. With an emphasis on the processes of close reading, critical thinking, and revision, this course will hone students' skills in analysis, scholarly writing, research, and public speaking. All students will be expected to contribute to in-class discussions. Our primary texts will explore the tensions among acts of creation, various concepts of knowledge, and "reality."

**ENG 302: Special Topics in Literature and Language: Meaning and Metaphor****Dr. Sharon Cote, TU/TH 11:00 – 12:15 PM**

It is surprising hard to pin down what a "meaning" is. We can consider meaning in language itself (semantics), but even in language we must aware that interpretations depend on particular discourse and situational contexts (pragmatics). In this course, we'll begin by exploring how contemporary semanticists and others are attempting to explain not only what is "said" but also, crucially, what is intended and what is conveyed. We'll then use this knowledge as background for a critical examination of different perspectives on how non-literal language, such as metaphor, fits into theories of meaning in language and meaning in human cognition. Through the examination of issues in the study of meaning in literal and non-literal language, students should gain an appreciation of the difference between casual and careful discussions of meaning, should acquire a solid vocabulary for describing word meanings and also some basic vocabulary for the study of

phrasal meaning, should be able to identify certain semantic/pragmatic components of the meanings of specific literal and nonliteral examples, should be able to describe and use contemporary metaphorical theory, and should become aware of how theoretical approaches to metaphor reflect attempts to handle some complex linguistic and cognitive issues.

### **ENG 322: Restoration and 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Drama**

**Dr. Dawn Goode, M/W/F 2:30 – 3:45 PM**

Acknowledged by scholars from a variety of fields as a transformative period, the eighteenth century and its drama embodied notions of gender, class, and sexuality that shifted from fluid and circumstantial behaviors to codified identity categories. Our task for the semester is to explore through our selected texts the intense gerrymandering of identity construction that occurred on the stage throughout the period. While reading within various sub-genres (heroic romance, political tragedy, personal tragedy, tragicomic romance, social comedy, corrective satire, and laughing comedy), we will consider such dramatic figures as the rake, the fop, the man of feeling, the amorous widow, the witty heroine, the cross-dressed woman, and the fallen woman. We also will examine how changes in the political, economic, and social landscape of eighteenth-century England helped determine the evolution of these various identity categories, and influenced the changing genre conventions on the period's stage.

### **ENG 327: The Gothic**

**Dr. Katey Castellano, TU/TH 12:30 – 1:45 PM**

Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* and M.G. Lewis's *The Monk* are often considered to be the first articulations of the gothic novel; however, this course will outline the way Romantic women writers creatively use the Gothic novel to name previously unspeakable, violent crimes against women and assert emergent forms of female agency. Our case studies will be Clara Reeve's *The Old English Baron*, Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian*, Mary Wollstonecraft's *Mary/Maria*, Mary Shelley's *Matilda*, and Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey*. The primary texts will be supplemented by feminist and queer theoretical readings of the novels.

### **English 329, Victorian Literature: Self, Subjectivity, and the Social**

**Dr. Heidi Pennington, TU/TH 2:00 – 3:15 PM**

In "The Buried Life," Matthew Arnold's speaker despairs that, "hardly have we, for one little hour, / Been on our own line, have we been ourselves." This anxiety—how can we be "ourselves" in a crowded and chaotic modern world?—is representative of the period. One could say that the Victorian period was a time of identity crises: national, personal, intellectual, and literary. Our goal in this class will be to analyze the conditions and changing experiences of subjectivity and sociability in the Victorian period. We'll ask how the Victorians understood personal identity, and what ideals and practices became associated with Victorian selfhood. We'll attempt to answer these questions by analyzing a wide range of Victorian poetry, fiction, essays, and select excerpts

of more recent critical theory. As we examine these diverse texts and writers, we'll attempt to articulate what it meant to be a Victorian subject in a modern, social world.

### **ENG 352: American Novel to 1914**

**Dr. Matthew Reborn, MWF 1:25-2:15 PM**

This course follows the development of the American novel from its beginnings in the late eighteenth century and the formation of the nation to World War I and the advent of Modernism. Reading novels by Brown, Cooper, Poe, Hawthorne, James, Howells, and Twain, we will pay particular attention to the intertwined relationships between the aesthetics of the novel—what does an American novel look like—and the politics of long narrative—what does an American novel do. To that end, we will use our readings to explore how the novel is always already two things simultaneously: it is both a *material object* with certain generic characteristics and artistic structures, and a *mode of reading* that is affected by the socio-historical context surrounding the text. NB: This course satisfies the pre-1900 overlay requirement.

### **ENG 363: Native American Literature**

**Dr. Laura Henigman, T/TH 12:30 – 1:45 PM**

From Hollywood westerns to children “playing Indian”, American Indians loom large in the American imagination. But the images pop culture gives us are little more than stereotypes: humorous or ineffective sidekicks; savages, whether violent or noble; and overall, a tragic and disappearing race, inarticulate, silent, absent from modern American life. However, Native American people have not vanished and have never been silent. Throughout the centuries in which they've been in contact with American newcomers, they have been writing to respond to these distorting images and assert their own sovereignty.

This semester we will study these writings by indigenous American people from various tribal groups. We will examine the variety of literacies available to them; the ways in which they have engaged with settler culture and literary forms; and the various genres (as-told-to stories and other autobiographical forms, novels, treaties and treaty speeches, and other experimental forms) that they have employed to represent personal and national identity and experience. Along the way, we will need to learn about the political history and cultural practices of America's First Peoples, about how they have respond to changing US government policies and actions, and the varying strategies, at once realistic and principled (revitalization movements, the creation of an “Indian public sphere”, and others) they employ to ensure their survivance as Indian nations.

### **ENG 368: Women's Literature**

**Dr. Mary Thompson, TU/TH 11:00 AM– 12:15 PM**

This course explores women's literature through a focus on the *Kunstlerroman* or artist's novel. By comparing these texts to the traditional *Bildungsroman* and drawing on relevant feminist literary criticism, we will explore issues faced by women artists, the suppression and expression of

their art, and its relationship to the unique experiences of women within patriarchal societies. We will also examine the politics of canon formation and consider the intersection of gender with other salient markers of identity such as race/ethnicity, social class, and sexuality.

### **ENG 383: Melodrama and Chinese Cinemas**

**Dr. Dennis Lo, TU/TH 3:30 – 4:45 PM (w/film screening TH 6:30 – 9:00 PM)**

This course examines the history and aesthetics of contemporary Chinese-language cinemas (post-1980s Taiwan, P.R.C., Hong Kong), with a focus on how film melodramas both impact and reflect the region's sociocultural and political developments. Rather than attempting a sweeping survey of Chinese film history, this course critically investigates a rich variety of comparative and interdisciplinary perspectives. Students will learn to apply various methods of qualitative analysis that draw from fields such as film studies, genre studies, cultural studies, cultural geography, gender studies, and globalization studies.

The course begins by tracing the development of the film industries in Taiwan, China, and Hong Kong, while introducing students to basic techniques in critical, genre, narrative, and stylistic analysis of national cinemas. We will view representative films in a variety of genres infused with melodramatic form – martial arts, historical epics, thrillers, propaganda, and art films – that best capture the cultural and political dynamics of defining historical periods.

This will be followed by an in-depth study of how film melodramas imagine China's rapidly changing cultural geographies. To explore how social changes are represented in rural, urban, and transnational settings, we will embark on a series of close readings of twelve select films by representative directors of key Chinese-language film movements, including Hou Hsiao Hsien, Chen Kaige, Zhang Yimou, Lou Ye, Wong Kar Wai, Tsai Ming Liang, Ann Hui, Edward Yang, and Jia Zhangke. We will focus on the directors' visual styles, narrative forms, and theories of filmmaking as critical historiography, social activism, and cultural interrogation. Along the way, we will more broadly investigate how Chinese film melodramas act as a social and political force in response to issues of historical consciousness, gender and family values, modernization and urbanization, ethnic identity, education, and social displacement.

### **ENG 384: Film Authorship: Martin Scorsese**

**Dr. Richard Gaughran, TU/TH 3:30 – 4:45 PM**

The course aims at a critical in-depth study of the films of Martin Scorsese (1942- ). The class will together view and analyze several of the director's feature films, concentrating on the signature themes and styles. The course will also take into account the various influences upon Scorsese, sampling the films of these influences as appropriate.



## **ENG 390 The Environmental Imagination**

**Dr. Paul Bogard, Wednesdays 5:00 -7:45 PM**

In this creative writing course we have two goals—to improve your ability as a writer of prose and to improve your ecological education—each a quality that promises to improve your career aspirations and enrich your life. Far from being self-indulgent musings on grass or flowers or kitties, environmental literature is today one of the most vibrant and vital genres of literature in the world. While engaging with subjects such as the food we eat, the water we drink, the energy we mine and burn, and the health of our body, mind, and spirit, its main subject is the question of how shall we live? In an age when humans are straining the earth’s abilities to sustain life, this question has never been more important.

We will begin by reading published creative nonfiction to understand the breadth and possibility of the genre, and to practice reading as writers—asking, ‘How can I learn from what they are doing, and what can I steal?’ (Or, at least, borrow.) Later in the semester we will read fiction—including Cormac McCarthy’s devastating novel *The Road*—and poetry, and we will use all three genres to learn the language creative writers use, such as “voice” and “tone,” and essential craft features such as scene and reflection, place, and description. We will learn the process of the workshop, of commenting constructively on the work of our peers. And, we will write our own essays—trying our hand at weaving sensory detail, firsthand experience, vulnerability, and humor into our own “true stories, well-told.”

This course counts toward both the Environmental Humanities minor and the Creative Writing minor.

## **ENG 391: Intro to CW Nonfiction**

**Jay Varner, (section 0001) T/TH 9:30 – 10:45 & (section 0002) T/TH 2:00 – 3:15**

Through reading and writing, we will explore creative nonfiction, an umbrella term that includes the subgenres of memoir, personal essays, literary journalism, and travel writing, among others. We will explore the elasticity of truth and fact in our lives, while employing techniques such as character, point of view, dialogue, and others traditionally credited to fiction writers. Student writing will be discussed in both workshop and conferences. At the end of the semester, each student will turn in a portfolio of three polished pieces.

## **ENG 392: Introduction to Poetry Writing**

**Dr. Laurie Kutchins, TU/TH 12:30 – 1:45 PM**

This creative writing course will introduce you to the art and craft of writing poetry. Our focus is your own creative process, supported and directed by close readings of accomplished published poems. Through weekly writing and reading assignments, you will learn to use the poetic tools by

which poets construct effective, meaningful, and memorable poems. As readers, you'll learn to provide constructive interpretation and critique of poems written by your peers in this class. And as writers in a workshop community, you will be guided to write original poems reflecting a wide range of stylistic and thematic choices.

**ENG 393: Intro to Creative Writing – Fiction**

**Dr. Thomas Martin 12:20 – 1:10 PM (section 0002), 1:25 – 2:15 PM (section 0003)**

In this class we will explore the underlying architecture of stories and find constructive ways to improve them. To that end, we will spend the first third of the class studying stories and reading Stephen King's *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft*. I will give five short-answer quizzes on assigned readings from this writing text. I will also give many generative writing exercises in the first third of the class. During the rest of the class, students will distribute stories or novel excerpts of their own for workshops in which we will find ways to make their fiction more compelling.

**ENG 410: Advanced Studies in an Author: Cormac McCarthy**

**Dr. Jean Cash, TU/TH 2:00 – 3:15 PM**

This survey of Cormac McCarthy's work will explore the depth and great variety of this man's opus. McCarthy started as a Southern writer, but has moved well beyond the South in setting and scope. Emphasis will be on close reading of the texts, general and specific discussion, and review of the most significant critical approaches to McCarthy's work. Students will write four analytical papers, a research article, be responsible for frequent individual presentations, participate on panels that review criticism of the individual works, and be actively involved in class discussion.

**ENG 413: Advanced Topics in Literature and Ideas**

**Cli-Fi: Climate Change in Contemporary Fiction**

**Dr. Katey Castellano, TU/TH 9:30 – 10:45 AM**

This course will explore the emerging genre of climate change fiction, or "cli-fi." Throughout the course, we will be investigating how contemporary fiction imagines the immense scale of climate change and its effects, such as dangerous heat waves, water and food scarcity, rising sea levels, monster storms, species extinction, and mass migration. We will also consider how genre of fiction allows writers to imagine climate futures with post-fossil fuel economies that prioritize environmental justice. Likely texts include Paulo Bacigalupi's *The Water Knife*, Tobias Bucknell's *Arctic Rising*, Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower*, Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*, Sarah Hall's *Daughters of the North*, Barbara Kingsolver's *Flight Behavior*, Ian McEwan's *Solar*, and Jeanette Winterson's *The Stone Gods*.

**ENG 415: Advanced Studies in Textuality/History of the Book**

***Manuscript and Print Culture in the Medieval and Early Modern Eras***

**Dr. Mark Rankin, TU/TH 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM**

We all read books, but we may not think about how we read, and especially about how the printed word shapes our reading experience. We flip to title pages, prefaces, contents lists, and introductions for basic information on what a book is about. We expect indexes, selected bibliographies, and footnotes to be present and useful when appropriate. We are familiar with these very familiar conventions, which constitute a “culture” of print. But they were not always familiar. Indeed, the recent emergence of digital reading and electronic books helps us understand how these common features of a book control the way in which the reading process works. By studying the history of these common features, we can come to a greater understanding not only of the future of the book, but of how we currently classify and process information itself.

This course offers an introduction to manuscript, print, and reading culture in the European west during the late medieval and early modern eras. We will begin before Johannes Gutenberg refined the technique of printing books from moveable type in the 1450s. The *terminus ad quem* of our investigation will be the conclusion of the Tudor dynasty in England (1603). Our approach will be broadly historical, but we will substantially incorporate theoretical models drawn from the interdisciplinary sub-fields of the history of the book and the history of reading. In attending to the embodiment of texts as material objects in manuscripts, manuscript leaf fragments, and printed books from the European middle ages into the Renaissance, we will scrutinize physical, intellectual, political, and economic connections among authors, scribes, publishers, printers, patrons, and readers. Study of the manufacture of manuscripts and printed books will reveal conventions associated with the making of different categories of books and patterns of reception, readership, and sales. Such techniques may include the use of writing supports (i.e., the material on which a book is written or printed); paleography (i.e., the study and reading of ancient handwriting); illumination (i.e., early illustration by hand); typefaces, fonts, and overall book design (incorporating methods of type design and use); book format and page layout (i.e., the ways in which large sheets of paper are folded to form books, and the way that page space is employed); paratext (i.e., title pages, dedications, prefaces, marginal notes, indexes, and colophons); production patterns; and the like. Among other issues, we will investigate the ways in which books from our period deploy material features in order to shape the intellectual reception of their contents.

Assignments will include three response papers to shared reading of selected scholarly articles; the creation of a small manuscript “book” and a mini-edition of a manuscript excerpt using medieval scribal techniques; a 15-page formal research project; and a final exam on terminology.

**ENG 420: Advanced Studies in Film and Media Theory**

**Dr. Dennis Lo, TU/TH 12:30 – 1:45 PM (W/Optional film screening TU 6:00 – 8:30 PM)**

Cultural pundits have recently caricatured the blurring between fact and fiction in political discourse as a symptom of our “post-truth” zeitgeist, where media no longer fulfills its role as an objective communicator of truth, but rather reduces civil discourse into hyperrealist spectacle. While the nature by which new media is transforming civil discourse may be unprecedented, dystopian sentiments about how mass media erodes our moral compass originated much earlier at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the rise of cinema, a medium no less popular and controversial than social and digital medias today.

This course examines major theories, positions, and issues related to how cinema shapes and is shaped by individual and collective perceptions of reality. As the most influential mass medium of modernity and the “template” for 21<sup>st</sup> century new media (streaming media, virtual reality, augmented reality, and interactive stories), cinema is naturally a hotbed for critical theorizing regarding the effects – both dystopian and utopian – of media on our experience of modernity. Thus, since the first film audiences flocked to nickelodeon theaters, scholars have perennially asked questions of what cinema is, how it signifies, documents, or transforms reality, while simultaneously mirroring and distorting the spectator’s perception.

We will explore the development of film and media theories chronologically, engaging in close readings of primary writings by the most influential thinkers in the field, including Sergei Eisenstein, Andre Bazin, Walter Benjamin, Roland Barthes, Christian Metz, Louis Althusser, Laura Mulvey, Fredric Jameson, Homi Bhaba, Henri Lefebvre, Gilles Deleuze, Lev Manovich, and David Rodowick, just to name a few. Foundational schools of thought will be explored in terms of how they contributed to intellectual understandings of the relationship between media and modernity, ranging from classical film theory, political modernism, (post)-structuralism, psychoanalysis, apparatus theory, feminist and queer film theory, postcolonial theory, cultural geography, and postmodernism, to media archaeology. Viewings of key film and media texts from a variety of formats, historical periods, genres, and nations will help to ground our theoretical examinations. Students will also have the opportunity to enter into a reflexive dialogue with critical theories of new media by producing visual essays and watching aesthetically groundbreaking virtual reality films.

Ultimately, our investigations will lead us to interrogate both the complex nature of the cinema and the realities it molds, raising questions such as: is cinema a language or a philosophy? How are issues of ontology, epistemology, phenomenology, agency, and embodiment refracted through the cinematic experience? Is the “reality effect” of cinema so total that it casts an ideological veil over unsuspecting viewers, or does it depend on how the spectator is positioned in terms of gender, sexuality, race, nationality, and class? Most importantly, how are our varied experiences of modernity – its spaces, places, and temporalities – being fundamentally transformed by cinematic modes of perception?

**ENG 423: Advanced Studies in Gender & Sexuality**  
*A Novel in Stories: Women and the Short Story Cycle*  
Dr. Mary Thompson, TU/TH 3:30 – 4:45 PM

This course examines the genre of the short story cycle as it has been used by multi-ethnic American women writers. Also known as the composite novel or story sequence, the short story cycle allows for an exploration of self and community, a question of particular interest to women writers and feminist critics. We will consider the conventions of this genre as well as how women authors have developed the genre to explore the position of women in their communities, women's friendships, ethnic assimilation and identity, and issues of gender-based and race-based inequality.

Possible texts include:

Louise Erdrich, *Love Medicine*  
Gloria Naylor, *The Women of Brewster Place*  
Elizabeth Strout, *Olive Kitteridge*  
Amy Tan, *The Joy Luck Club*  
Sandra Cisneros, *The House on Mango Street*  
Julia Alvarez, *Yo*  
Jamaica Kincaid, *Annie John*  
Sarah Orne Jewett, *The Country of Pointed Firs*

**ENG 484: Poetic Craft and Creativity**  
Dr. Laurie Kutchins, Tuesdays 3:30 – 6:15 PM

From sonnets to slam, haiku to hybrid forms, this course will focus on the practice of poetic forms. We'll explore form as the shape, or blueprint for a poem's structure and unique energy. Students will study and apprentice to a diverse variety of poetic forms, from different cultures, traditions and aesthetics. You will also focus on a particular form of your choice. This course will be a workshop format, with students bringing their original poems to class each week. English 392 is the pre-requisite.

**ENG 493 Advanced Creative Nonfiction**  
Dr. Paul Bogard, Tuesdays 5:00 – 7:45 PM

In this advanced-level creative writing course we will strive to make our writing increasingly resonate, compelling, and satisfying. After an initial series of readings—including Jonathan Safran Foer's brilliant book *Eating Animals*—designed to give us a common perspective on the history, craft, and state of the genre, the majority of the semester will be given to workshopping student writing. While building on our skills of reading as writers and of writing stories full of sensory detail and thoughtful reflection, we will work to improve our skills at revision, workshopping, and

blending outside research with narrative, memory, and insight. Students will write two main essays and workshop each, plus workshop one of these essays twice. In this way, we will practice the invaluable skill of revision, and of what it means to push ourselves beyond the “pretty good” into the realm of “so good I would read it even if I didn’t have to for class.”

**ENG 494 Advanced Poetry Writing**  
**Gregory Wrenn, TU/TH 12:30-1:45 PM**

In this course, building on the lessons of English 392, we alternate between workshopping your work and closely studying masterpieces by such poets as Anne Carson, William Shakespeare, Gwendolyn Brooks, Walt Whitman, John Keats, Natasha Trethewey, and Louise Glück. Craft elements such as rhythm, rhyme, syntax, lineation, metaphor, and imagery are emphasized. Your final project consists of a 14-page poetic sequence, the beginnings of a chapbook. While this course closely considers technique, it is ultimately meant to support you as you gradually feel into—and clarify—your poetic vision.

**ENG 495 Advanced Fiction Writing**  
**Dr. Inman Majors, Mondays 12:20 – 2:50 PM**

An advanced fiction writing workshop with emphasis on narrative technique and strategy. We will look for ways to minimize the narrator as monologist, striving instead for a more immediate brand of fiction where “the scene” is predominate. In short, we will be working toward that old maxim of “showing, not telling.” The class is designed for the serious writer of fiction, so editing, grammar, and proofreading will be emphasized. Students will submit three pieces, approximately twelve pages in length, for the class to discuss/critique. Students may submit short stories or novel chapters.

Prerequisite: ENG 393 or permission of instructor.

**ENG 496 (Section 0002) Advanced Topics in CW: Food Writing**  
**Dr. Erica Cavanagh, TU/TH 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM**

In this food writing workshop, food memoir, food journalism, and recipe essays take center stage as we consider the ways in which food shapes our lives. “Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you what you are,” said seminal food writer Jean Brillat-Savarin. Through our reading and writing activities we will reflect on this bold statement and excavate our own lives for the food stories we have yet to write: stories of hunger, ritual, obsession, gluttony, connection, division, cultivation, family, friends, cooks, farmers, and much more. The works we read will offer tools for writing your own stories as well as the inspiration to claim and develop your own voice. We’ll also pay attention to how writers put stories together through structural maneuvers and the accretion of vivid details. In our writing activities, we’ll hone our skills in developing memorable characters, evocative settings, and layered scenes to deliver the story you were meant to tell, and through our writing workshops, we will help each other refine the quality of our writing.

**ENG 496 (Section 0003) Advanced Topics in CW: Wanderer, Pilgrim, Artist**  
**Dr. Erica Cavanagh, TU/TH 3:30 – 4:45 PM**

This workshop is for seekers. In this interdisciplinary course, we will read and write works of nonfiction while also taking in poetry, music, short films, photography, and other visual arts to explore the relationship between wandering and pilgrimage and becoming an artist (I include writer under this umbrella term of artist). Journeys involve movement through both a physical and internal space. We will write about our journeys, record them on paper and digitally. We will also record our journeys through photographic images and other forms of material culture as a means to build a sense of what we seek, what we notice, and how we make meaning, all of which contributes toward cultivating a voice of your own.

**ENG 496, Advanced Topics in Creative Writing: Comedy Writing**  
**Dr. Inman Majors, Wednesdays 12:20 – 2:50 PM**

An advanced fiction writing workshop with emphasis on developing comedic voice, timing, style and vision. Students will write three comedic pieces, approximately twelve pages in length, for the class to discuss/critique. These submissions may be three separate stories, or the first three chapters of a comedic novel, or some combination of the two. The class is designed for the serious writer of fiction, so editing, grammar, and proofreading will be emphasized. An optional but recommended reading list will include *A Confederacy of Dunces*, *Lucky Jim*, and a large helping of P.G. Wodehouse. Students are free to read these before the class starts.

Prerequisite: ENG 393 or permission of instructor. Sense of humor optional, but encouraged.