

FALL 2025 LITERATURE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
(as of 4/17/25)



NB: All classes meet in person unless otherwise specified. Please double-check times and modalities against the university class schedule.

ENG 218

ENG 218: Literature is Not a Luxury: Writing For Self and Community MW 1530-1645 (Schoerke)

This course will explore how literature enables us to see the world through perspectives different from our own, to wrestle with ethical questions, and to sharpen our understanding of the relationship between language and culture. Throughout the semester, students will refine their writing by learning how to propose and develop arguments, draft and revise essays, and constructively build on peer and faculty feedback. Readings will include a variety of genres: poetry, drama (Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*), prose narrative (Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*), and an experimental book that includes—and blurs the boundaries between—these three genres (Jean Toomer's *Cane*).

LOWER-DIVISION LITERATURE COURSES

ENG 250: Topics in Literature and Culture: Literature and Film TuTh 1230-1345 (Christmas)

This course examines the relationship between literature and film by pairing selected literary texts with their filmic adaptations. Our focus is on close reading of both literary and visual textual forms, and we will pay particular attention to those elements, techniques, and terminologies that both connect and separate film from literature. We'll read a diverse

range of texts, and students will have the opportunity to choose their own literary text for treatment in the course's final project assignment.

*This course also fulfills the following GE requirement: Area C2: Humanities

ENG 256: Queer Crip Lit TuTh 1400-1515 (Paulson)



What does it mean to be “normal”? And who gets to decide? This course draws on queer and disability studies to explore how literature shapes—and unravels—our ideas about what counts as a “normal” or “abnormal” body or mind. We’ll read texts that don’t just represent disability and queerness, but that unsettle dominant assumptions about ability, identity, desire, intelligence, neurodivergence, and embodiment. Along the way, we’ll consider how disability intersects with race, gender, class, and sexuality, and

how literature can both reinforce and resist the stories we tell about difference. Readings will be drawn from works by Audre Lorde, Eli Clare, Alice Wong, Julia Bascom, Susan Nussbaum, and others.

NB: Students may take ENG 256 to fulfill the ENG 250 requirement for majors OR to fulfill one of three required electives for Literature majors.

This course also fulfills the following GE requirements:

- American Ethnic and Racial Minorities
- Social Justice

WRITING IN ENGLISH GVAR

ENG 480 GW Writing in English: GVAR Seminar MW 1100-1215 hybrid: M asynchronous, W in-person (Kwok)

This course is an introduction to the English major and as such, will focus on concerns and issues that pertain to the study of literature. We will examine closely selected works of poetry, fiction, non-fiction, and literary criticism. We will not only learn to read texts critically, analytically, and imaginatively, but will also think about what it is that we are reading (the nature of literature, for example) and what its relationship to politics, history, and culture might be. We will learn how to go about conducting research on texts—how to choose what to focus on, where to look for relevant information, and how to integrate this information into the interpretation of specific works.

SURVEY COURSES

ENG 460: Literature in English to 1800 TuTh 0930-1045 (Christmas)

This is a survey course designed to introduce students to a representative selection of literature published in English from the Middle Ages through the Eighteenth Century. Given this chronological breadth, we cannot possibly attain anything like “coverage.” However, this course aims to provide students with a broad sense of the literary historical and cultural developments that took place during this period. We will pay particular attention to the following topics throughout the semester: Poetics (focusing on connections between poets, poetic forms, and poetic movements rather than teleological development), the early novel in English, drama in English, transatlanticism, abolition, colonialism, and representations of women and the laboring classes (to name a few). This class will be discussion-based, with some mini-lectures built in on a regular basis.

ENG 461: Literature in English Since 1800 MW 1100-1215 (De Guzman)

English 461 provides a broad and necessarily selective overview of literature from 1800 to the present day. The course is divided into five modules: the Romantic period, the Victorian era, Modernism, postmodernism, and postcolonialism. The major topics we will study include the relationship between Romanticism and revolution; the rise of realist aesthetics in the face of rapid industrialization; how scientific advancements and two horrific global wars prompted a crisis of literary representation; and the profound upheavals for justice in the face of imperialism. Readings will include poetry, nonfiction, and excerpts from novels. I will also draw from the visual arts to emphasize the complex forces that shaped ideas such as “the other,” modernist fragmentation, and postcolonial uprising. The readings from the nineteenth century (1800-1899) will skew British, while those from the twentieth century onwards (1900-present) will be more U.S.-based. Because of my own expertise in postcolonial studies, the course in general will be attuned to the role of empire that haunts the very idea of “literature in English.”

SHAKESPEARE

ENG 583: Shakespeare: Representative Plays MW 1230-1345 synchronous online (Mylander)



Active Zoom conversations employing both theatrical and literary modes of analyzing Shakespeare's living texts. Consider Shakespeare as a global phenomenon, exploring productions from Mexico, India, Turkey, Lithuania, and more. Discover Shakespeare's genius as an adapter of texts while tracking contemporary adaptations and reinventions of these classics. Complete a central project with linguistic, pedagogical, creative, and professional options; bring your interests and expertise to a unique project. If you decide to join us, expect to contribute to one of the liveliest courses you've ever had on Zoom.

Comedy, history, and tragedy all represented. Fulfills the Shakespeare requirement for all concentrations.

Non-English-majors welcome!

PRE-1800 LITERATURE COURSE

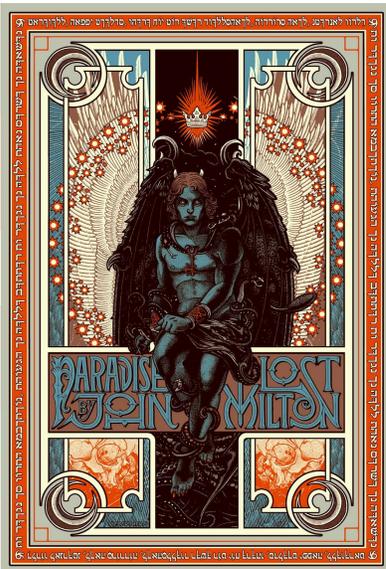
ENG 589: Milton MW 1400-1515 synchronous online (Mylander)

Feel like you're languishing? At 52 Milton was blind, in jail for political activism, a widower with 3 children, and he had not written the great work he believed was his life's mission.

Yet he went on to produce the only complete epic written in English. Milton was a social radical and a political revolutionary, uncompromising in both his poetry and his life.

Expect the unexpected: from female heroism to poignant descriptions of loss, to the infamous antihero Satan—Milton asks the big questions.

Come read some of the most famous verse ever written in English. This course focuses primarily on *Paradise Lost*, an epic of resilience and grit.



THEORY/CRITICISM COURSES

ENG 611: Modern Criticism MW 0930-1045 hybrid: M asynchronous, W in-person (Kwok)

Through a close reading of selected texts in literature and criticism, we will examine how the phenomenon of "literature" and the notion of "literariness" have been defined and characterized in modern times. Among the topics we will be exploring together: the relationships between literature and history, literature and ethics, literature and politics; the ontology of the literary work; the debates over canonization; the polemic over feminist criticism, cultural criticism, and postcolonial criticism; the responsibility of the intellectual as literary scholar, critic, and teacher.

ENG 614: Women in Literature Th 1600-1845 (Stec)

We will read a number of important works by women writers since the end of the 19th century, the majority of which are bildungsromans, or novels of formation. We will therefore be considering how some novelists fictionalize the life trajectories of female characters under differing conditions, and examine how the shapes of women's lives changed as narrative conventions changed. Woolf's 1929 classic *A Room of One's Own*, the theoretical work *Literature After Feminism*, and Sara Ahmed's *Living a Feminist Life* will guide our discussions of literary theory and feminist theory, and the conjunction of the two.



ENG 615: Imagery, Metaphor, and symbol M 1700-1945 (Star)

“Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?” mused Shakespeare in his sonnets. And indeed, it is hard to imagine where we would be, trying to explain feelings as profound and perplexing as those of *love*, without the aid of analogy. Metaphors and similes (not to mention conceit and allegory), symbols, and imagery are not only crucial to the arts of poetry and fiction, but to the way we communicate as humans, and even to the way we make sense of the world in the privacy of our own minds. In this course, we will be considering various theories of metaphor from classical philosophy to those of the present day. These are theories that seek to explain ways in which metaphor and symbol are crucial to our languages and to our cultural practices as well as how they operate aesthetically, in different manners, in literary texts. We will also, of course, be reading some of these texts together – poetry and fiction from an array of eras and cultures – and engaging with craft ourselves through creative writing assignments.

*This course also fulfills the following GE requirement: UD-C: Arts and/or Humanities

SENIOR SEMINAR

ENG 690: Senior Seminar: Caribbean Poetry in English W 1600-1845 (De Guzman)

The Barbadian poet, historian, and critic Kamau Brathwaite (1930-2020) famously asserted, “The hurricane does not roar in pentameters” (*History of the Voice*, 10). Brathwaite was referring to how an influential model of poetic meter that the colonial English education system imposed throughout the Caribbean fails to capture the rhythms—environmental, cultural, aural—of Caribbean experience. This capstone seminar for the Literature concentration will center twentieth-century and contemporary Caribbean poetry. Students will read poetry by canonical writers such as Brathwaite, Derek Walcott, Louise Bennett, Una Marson, and Aimé Césaire. The seminar will also highlight the work of M. NourbeSe Philip and Kei Miller, writers charting new possibilities for poetry in the present. In addition to poetry, readings will regularly include scholarly writing about Caribbean poetics, which will help students as they develop a culminating research paper.

UPPER-DIVISION LITERATURE COURSES

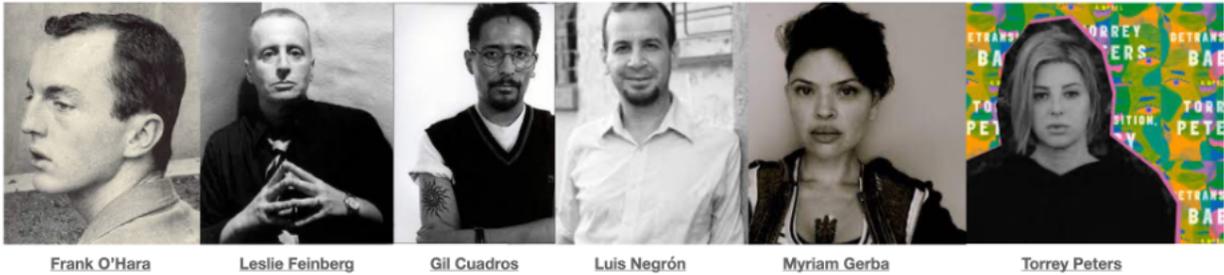
ENG 465: Post-Apocalyptic Science Fiction MW 1230-1345 (Schoerke)

This course will investigate the proliferation of post-apocalyptic narratives in U.S. science fiction in the wake of the atomic era. Beginning with stories and novels from the 1940s, '50s, and '60s that envision human survival and the rebuilding of civilization after a nuclear holocaust, the course will examine fictional explorations of, and the corresponding ethical dilemmas raised by, a variety of post-apocalyptic scenarios, all of which reflect cultural anxieties in response to the threat of rapid change. The course will balance dystopian and utopian perspectives to reflect how mid to late twentieth-century science fiction not only engages in far-ranging socio-political critique but also envisions the possibilities for creating a better world.

*This course also fulfills the following GE requirements:

- Environmental Sustainability
- UD-C: Arts and/or Humanities

ENG 633: Queer(ing) Narrative Literature Tu 1600-1845 (Clark)



How do queer people narrate their existence in a hostile state and society? What are the ways in which queers acquiesce to or reject the narrative conditions of their belonging set by a straight majority? In this class, we examine both the areas in which queer literature envisions inclusion or radical change in our society and investigate the literary as a site of social transformation and imagination. Focusing on U.S. authors, we examine queer narratives from the HIV/AIDS crisis up to our present moment that contrasts a narrative of gay inclusion through marriage with the increasingly embattled rights of trans people now. As a part of this course, you will relate queer conceptions of otherness to major trends in contemporary LGBT politics, especially surrounding the agency of queer and trans difference. We especially focus on the queer and trans countercultural spaces, as well as acts

of connection, that refuse the terms of respectability demanded by the state for full citizenship and rights.

**This course fulfills the American Ethnic and Racial Minorities GE requirement.

GRADUATE SEMINARS

ENG 741: Seminar: Literary Theory and Research Methods Th 1800-2045 (Paulson)

Eng 741 is the portal course for the graduate program in English Literatures. It is designed to give incoming graduate students practice in the theory, criticism, and research methods of literary study in order to help them build the skills they need to succeed in the MA. We will begin the semester by honing our close reading skills, reading some poetry, and reviewing how to build a literary argument. The readings for the remainder of the semester will be organized around three influential theoretical works: Michel Foucault's *History of Sexuality*, Edward Said's *Orientalism*, and Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble*. We will unpack these authors' arguments and think together about how our understanding of these critical texts can enrich our study of literary ones, including Nella Larsen's *Passing* and David Henry Hwang's *M. Butterfly*. As you develop your literary analytical skills through these shared readings, you will also work on a series of independent research papers on a literary text of your choosing. Teaching methods will also include lecture, discussion, and small group work.

ENG 762: Seminar: Twentieth-Century American Literature: Experimental Books W 1800-2045 (Schoerke)

Through a close reading of several important experimental books that combine poetry and prose, the seminar will explore the interrelation between these two genres in 20th century American writing. We will try to answer questions such as: Is there such a thing as "prose poetry"? What is genre--and is it obsolete? How and why have modern and post-modern poets incorporated prose techniques into their work? Texts will include William Carlos Williams's *Spring and All*; Marianne Moore's *Observations*; Jean Toomer's *Cane*; W. H. Auden's *The Sea and the Mirror*; Robert Lowell's *Life Studies*; Elizabeth Bishop's *Question of Travel*; Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire*; and Tyhimba Jess's *Olio*.

ENG 780: Seminar: Individual Authors: Toni Morrison M 1900-2145 (Cannon)

In this course, we will read all 11 novels written by Toni Morrison, the first African-American woman to win the Nobel Prize for Literature. Tackling topics such as familial bonds, emotional, sexual, and physical violence, and the effects of white supremacy in Black communities, Morrison tells stories that provoke, shatter, and heal. She reminds us of the power of language and our responsibility to nurture it. As Morrison stated in her 1993 Nobel Lecture: “We die. That may be the meaning of life. But we do language. That may be the measure of our lives.” Be prepared to read (a lot!), think, write, engage, and feel.



ENG 789: Milton M 1600-1845 synchronous online (Mylander)

Feel like you're languishing? At 52 Milton was blind, in jail for political activism, a widower with 3 children, and he had not written the great work he believed was his life's mission. Yet he went on to produce the only complete epic written in English.

Milton was a social radical and a political revolutionary, uncompromising in both his

poetry and his life. We will read everything from political prose to some of the most famous verse in the English language. Extensive study within the context of religious, political, social, and cultural history.

Expect the unexpected: from female heroism to poignant descriptions of loss, to the infamous antihero Satan—Milton asks the big questions.



ENG 790: Seminar: Selected Studies: Quixotes and Fanatics: Inhabiting Narrative Worlds from Don Quixote to Fanfic Tu 1700-1945 (Hackenberg)

In this class we will explore instances from over four centuries of the power of fictional narratives to affect, change, and even create reality: this is a class about the transformative things that can happen to and because of fans of fictional worlds. We will historicize and theorize contemporary fan practice by linking it with the early modern quixotic narrative. Named after Cervantes's Don Quixote—arguably the first fictional cosplayer—quixotic narratives feature characters who treat fictional worlds as real worlds. While quixotic narratives overtly caution against our tendencies to blur the fictional and the real, they also celebrate and affirm such tendencies. Quixotic characters can be figures of delusion, but they are also characters whose attempts to realize narrative worlds can cause them to become empowered in surprising ways. We might see fanfic writers & practitioners as latter-day quixotes, responding to the narrative worlds and characters that compel them by inhabiting and extending them. Fanfic expands and deepens fictional cosmologies by offering prequels, sequels, parallel-universe scenarios and character back-stories. As fanfic, like quixotic behavior, exemplifies the necessary creativity of readers, it also works to challenge traditional ideas of authorship. Both show us how becoming lost in a narrative world can powerfully reshape the self.

ENG 803: Teaching Practicum: Literature F 1230-1515 synchronous online (Hackenberg)

This course offers graduate students the opportunity to learn about the teaching of literature by assisting professors in running a seminar or lecture course. In addition to the hands-on experience of working closely with a professor as a TO, students participate in a series of workshops designed to introduce them to a variety of pedagogical issues and theories. Students will develop and hone pedagogical skills through professor-led workshops, observation of professors in class, and supervised practice of a variety of pedagogical tasks.

Under the direct guidance of a professor, observing an undergraduate class, students will have the opportunity to learn about:

- Designing lesson plans, breakout discussion sessions and whole-class discussion

- Assessment practices (including assessing undergraduate writing and student progress by practicing evaluating samples of quizzes, papers, and/or exams)*
- Designing a “dream” syllabus
- Crafting a teaching philosophy statement

**Please note: TOs may practice making comments and offering grade suggestions on subsets of assignments but the instructor of record is responsible for all comments and final grades on all assignments.*