

# Graduate Courses in English

## 2021-22

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Course Title	Fall	Winter	Spring
Eng 403 <b>Writers' Studies in Literature</b> Fall: <i>How to Work</i> Winter: no subtitle	Gibbons, Reginald Monday 10:00-1:00	Trethewey, Natasha Tuesday 2:00-5:00	
Eng 410 <b>Introduction to Graduate Study</b> <i>Historicism Uses and Abuses</i>	Feinsod, Harris Monday 2:00-5:00		
Eng 411 <b>Studies in Poetry</b> <i>Poetics of Dissolution</i> (6)	Wilson, Ivy Wednesday 2:00-5:00		
Eng 422 <b>Studies in Medieval Literature</b> <i>Chaucer</i> (1)			Phillips, Susie Tuesday 2:00-5:00
Eng 431 <b>Studies in 16th-Century Literature</b> <i>Political Thought in Shakespearean Contexts</i> (2)			Shannon, Laurie Tuesday 2:00-5:00
Eng 434 <b>Studies in Shakespeare &amp; Early Drama</b> <i>Early Modern Sexualities</i> (2)		Masten, Jeffrey Wednesday 2:00-5:00	
Eng 441 <b>Studies in 18th-Century Literature</b> Fall: <i>Realism/Antirealism</i> (3) Winter: <i>Green Materialisms</i> (3 or 7)	Thompson, Helen Tuesday 2:00-5:00	Wolff, Tristram Tuesday 2:00-5:00	
Eng 455 <b>Studies in Victorian Literature</b> <i>Literatures of the Global 19<sup>th</sup>-Century: The Nabda</i> (4 or 5)			Johnson, Rebecca Thursday 2:00-5:00
Eng 461 sec 20 <b>Studies in Contemporary Literature</b> <i>Black Speculative Fiction and the Black Radical Imagination</i> (6 or 7)		Mann, Justin Monday 2:00-5:00	
Eng 461 sec 21 <b>Studies in Contemporary Literature</b> <i>Hannah Arendt: Poetry, Politics &amp; Thought</i> (5 or 7)		Gottlieb, Susannah Thursday 2:00-5:00	
Eng 465 <b>Studies in Colonial and Postcolonial Literature</b> Fall: <i>Ecology and Postcolonial Forms</i> (7) Spring: <i>Race, Caste, Colorism</i> (4, 5, or 6)	Mwangi, Evan Thursday 2:00-5:00		Brueck, Laura & Wilson, Ivy Thursday 10:00-1:00
Eng 471 <b>Studies in American Literature</b> <i>19<sup>th</sup>-Century Black Women Writers</i> (4 or 7)			Spigner, Nicole & Stern, Julia Wednesday 2:00-5:00
Eng 481 <b>Studies in Literary Theory and Criticism</b> Fall: <i>Racial Ecologies</i> (6) Winter: <i>Cinema at the Turn of the Millennium</i> (6) Spring: <i>Affective Turns</i> (7)	Huang, Michelle Thursday 2:00-5:00	Davis, Nick Wednesday 2:00-5:00	Jackson, Lauren Monday 2:00-5:00

# Graduate Courses in English

## 2021-22

### Page 2

Course Title	Fall	Winter	Spring
Eng 493 <b>Elements of Craft</b> (MFA+MA only)	<b>Abani, Chris</b> Wednesday 2:00-5:00		
Eng 494 <b>MFA The Long Form</b> (MFA+MA only)	<b>Curdy, Averill</b> Tuesday 2:00-5:00		
Eng 496 <b>MFA Poetry Workshop</b> (MA and PhD by application)	<b>Shanahan, Charif</b> Thursday 2:00-5:00		<b>Shanahan, Charif</b> Wednesday 10:00-1:00
Eng 497 <b>MFA Fiction Workshop</b> (MA and PhD by application)		<b>Dawes, Kwame</b> Monday 2:00-5:00	<b>Martinez, Juan</b> Wednesday 2:00-5:00
Eng 498 <b>MFA Creative Nonfiction Workshop</b> (MA and PhD by application)			<b>Stielstra, Megan</b> Tuesday 2:00-5:00
Eng 505 <b>Research Development Seminar</b> (3rd-year PhD only)		<b>Newman, Barbara</b> Thursday 3:00-5:00	
Eng 520 <b>Writing for Publication</b> (PhDs in candidacy only)			<b>Froula, Christine</b> Wednesday 3:00-5:00
Eng 570 <b>Seminar in Teaching College Composition</b> (available to any interested student)			<b>Lenaghan, Elizabeth</b> see description
Eng 571 <b>Teaching Creative Writing</b> (MFA+MA only)			<b>Seliy, Shauna</b> TBD

## Doctoral Breadth Requirement for Coursework

This is a key to the numbers used in this document to designate which of the seven Breadth Requirement categories each graduate seminar fulfills. Please consult the Guide to Graduate Study for any further information on these categories:

1. Literature from 1200-1500
2. Literature from 1500-1680
3. Literature from 1680-1800
4. Literature from 1800-1900
5. Literature from 1900-1989
6. Literature from 1990-Present
7. *Longue durée*

Though a course might potentially fit into multiple categories, no class can be used to count towards more than one when fulfilling this requirement. The categories here should not be taken as absolutes, and you should always consult with a member of the graduate faculty and the Director of Graduate Study to determine if a class might count toward a category not listed here. The categories for each class are in parentheses after the title on the cover-page.

## Fall Quarter

### English 403

#### Writers' Studies in Literature

*How to Work*

Reginald Gibbons

This course for writers of fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction focuses on the contexts and processes of creative writing. Our multi-genre readings enact or exemplify or think or imply something about how what we write develops out of our social, intellectual and artistic formation, intellectual curiosity, psychic processes, emotional investments, sense of language, and artistic goals. Readings will broaden our sense of how writers discover and develop their materials, techniques, and reshape their artistic goals as they work—in the way that the work of writing itself can shift the writer's sense of the work and of the writer's purposes. We'll examine how the complexity of writing from one body of experience and thought may lead not to a "style" but to a range of possible structures, stances, and processes of writing. We'll draw examples, methods and artistic positions from our readings in order to expand our ability to think about (and perhaps begin) new possible projects and—just as important—new ways of working on existing projects. Writing assignments will be unlike those you may have previously completed. This is not a creative writing workshop.

Readings (many of these are brief) will be late 20th and early 21st century writers, including some of the following: Julia Álvarez,

James Baldwin, Christopher Bollas, Julia de Burgos, Helene Cixous, Lucille Clifton, Víctor Hernández Cruz, Mahmoud Darwish, Robert Duncan, William Goyen, Kimiko Hahn, Amy Hempel, Danilo Kiš, Clarice Lispector, Ed Roberson, Katherine Mansfield, Linda McCarriston, Leonard Michaels, Marga Minco, Toni Morrison, Lorine Neidecker, Grace Paley, Sterling Plumpp, Adrienne Rich, Yannis Ritsos, Angela Jackson, Richard Wright, Jenny Xie or others.

### English 410

#### Introduction to Graduate Study

*Historicism: Uses and Abuses*

Harris Feinsod

This course adapts its title from Friedrich Nietzsche's untimely meditation "On the Use and Disadvantage of History for Life" (1874). Beginning with nineteenth- and early twentieth-century debates about historical materialism and the uses of history and literary history as disciplines, we will survey the development and invocations of historicism as an approach to literary study across colonial, imperial, modernist, postcolonial, and environmental episodes in literary history. How does historicism fare in addressing diverse periods? For example, while British Victorian studies recently faced critiques of dominant tendencies toward "positivist historicism," some of the most energizing work in postcolonial literary studies has been deeply historicist in inclination. How has climate change provoked new visions of historical time crossing the traditional periods? Must we continue to follow Jameson's famous injunction to "always historicize!" or do we rather find ourselves in a "weak" theoretical state of affairs by which "we cannot not historicize?" How do we understand Roland Barthes's claim that "a little formalism turns one away from History, but ... a lot brings one back to it?" What is historicism good for? What are its varieties? Where does it fall short? Readings may include works by G.W.F. Hegel, Friedrich Nietzsche, Hayden White, Susan Buck-Morss, Fredric Jameson, Walter Benjamin, Antonio Gramsci, Saidiya Hartman, Reinhart Koselleck, Sianne Ngai, Michael Denning, Sylvia Wynter, Lisa Lowe, Michel-Rolph Trouillot, and/or Dipesh Chakrabarty. We will also watch a film TBD and look at a novel or poems to be selected by the class.

This course serves as a required pro-seminar for students in Comparative Literary Studies and English, and we will therefore emphasize a common project of the "literary humanities." In addition to the usual weekly seminar session, students should plan for biweekly Friday noon sections in which guest faculty introduce University resources and professional topics.

Electronic copies of texts will be made available.

## English 411

### Studies in Poetry

*Poetics of Dissolution*

Ivy Wilson

Frantz Fanon has famously written that the conditions of modernity have rendered blackness increasingly illegible, fraught with contradictions that push it outside the realm of facile comprehension and explicability. Taking Fanon's polemic as a cue, this graduate seminar will look at a number of late twentieth-century textual and performance sites with radical instances of experimentation where articulations of blackness move into the interstitial space between meaning and non-meaning, coming into being precisely at the moment when the compositional logic of their anticipated forms are ruptured. The course will focus on three primary sites where black artists engage what might be called the poetics of dissolution to examine and critique the processes of racial formation: poetry (where the form of the line or stanza dissolves); music (where sonic interpolations puts additional, if not different, claims on the lyrical content), and visual culture (where the moves toward graphic mimesis are refused delineation). The material under consideration may include work by the poets Nathaniel Mackey and Harriet Mullen; turntablists DJ Spooky, Jazzy Jeff, and Premier; songs by musicians from Ella Fitzgerald to MF Doom; and pieces by visual artists Kara Walker and Glenn Ligon. Theoretical texts may include work by Barthes, Baudrillard, Moten, and Saussure, as well as ethnomusicologists and linguistic anthropologists.

## English 441

### Studies in 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Literature

*Realism/Antirealism*

Helen Thompson

This seminar will reexamine two commonplaces in the history of the British novel: that early prose narrative was driven by the rise of empiricism and observational science; and that Restoration and eighteenth-century prose forms led straight to the representational mode known as realism. We begin the seminar by querying accounts of the rise of the New Science based on its strict privileging of sensory data and refusal of imperceptible or "occult" causes. Along with alternative accounts of embodied artisanal knowledge and micromatter, we will also ponder environmental determinism (which antedates the concept of biological race) and the structuring mandates of empire, extraction, and exploitation. The seminar will then confront the constitutive near-repression of the history of the slave trade in the long eighteenth-century archive, which will enable us critically to appraise dominant conceptions of the eighteenth-century "real" and attune us to speculative and/or recuperative interventions in that reality's textual consolidation through the present day. For the rest of the seminar, we will read prose narratives to ponder the strategies through which they claim to represent the real, with special attention to empirical perception and its limits. Are these texts' representational, formal, and

political claims based solely on phenomenal experience, plenitude of naturalistic detail, or verisimilitude? Can we locate other, even anti-realist modes through which eighteenth-century prose forms transmit meaning?

**Primary texts include** (list subject to revision):

- Robert Boyle, *New Experiments Physico-Mechanical Touching the Spring of the Air* (1660);
- Robert Hooke, *Micrographia* (1665);
- Thomas Sprat, *History of the Royal Society* (1667);
- John Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690);
- John Woodward, *Some Thoughts and Experiments Concerning Vegetation* (1699);
- John Arbuthnot, *Essay Concerning the Effects of Air on Human Bodies* (1733);
- Nicole Aljoe, Early Caribbean Digital Archive;
- Henry Neville, *The Isle of Pines* (1668);
- [anonymous,] *The London Jilt* (1683); *Aristotle's Masterpiece* (1684); *The Woman of Colour* (1808);
- Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko* (1688);
- Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (1721);
- Eliza Haywood, *The Adventures of Eovaai* (1736);
- Tobias Smollett, *Roderick Random* (1748)

Scholars and theorists include (list subject to revision): Sara Ahmed; Nicole Aljoe; Srinivas Aravamudan; Mikhail Bakhtin; Roland Barthes; James Delbourgo; Franz Fanon; Simon Gikandi; Lynn Festa; Saidiya Hartman; Fredric Jameson; Jayne Elizabeth Lewis; Bruno Latour; Georg Lukács; Michael McKeon; Tobias Menely; Steven Shapin and Simon Schaffer; Stephanie Smallwood; Pamela H. Smith; Ian Watt; Roxann Wheeler.

## Eng 465

### Studies in Colonial & Postcolonial Literature

*Ecology and Postcolonial Forms*

Evan Mwangi

This course examines the interface of ecology and literary form in colonial/postcolonial literatures. These literatures are rarely examined from either ecocritical or stylistic/narratological perspectives. Yet legacies of and globalization continue to alter local environments, and literary artists have used unique formal techniques to capture these changes and activate political consciousness toward ecological conservation. Avoiding the general assumption that a fixed set of techniques (e.g., hybridity) are exclusive to postcolonial writing, we will study and comment on the various techniques individual colonial/postcolonial texts (or sets of such texts) use to represent postcolonial ecologies. We will also discuss the invocation of ecological metaphors in the various texts of postcolonial theory (e.g., the comparison of the preservation of indigenous languages and cultures with conservation of biodiversity). The course's primary premise is that formalist analysis of texts, as [Robert Langbaum](#) expressed it in his critique of New Criticism, "is where criticism begins, not where it ends." While avoiding

the shortfalls of purely functionalist/instrumentalist approaches to literature that drive much of postcolonial criticism by attending to the literary techniques that artists use, we will discuss the interventionist imperatives in postcolonial writing and criticism about the environment. Building on Rosi Braidotti, we will try to be non-hierarchical in our readings, abandoning any “hierarchical comparisons in deciding the operative potential of humanity or a plant or a fly (for example), since these life forms inhabit or comprise, mutually affective ‘[inter-kingdoms](#).’”

**Evaluation Method:** Active participation in class; regular self-assessment; peer critiques, a 15-page paper or a 10-week undergraduate syllabus. [Students are welcome to propose alternative writing/professionalization assignments].

**Texts: (May change):**

Students are encouraged to read for the ecocritical potential in texts, both literary and theoretical—including those that are not (e.g., Ngugi’s *Decolonising the Mind*, Frantz Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth*, or Paulo Freire *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*) primarily about ecology or transspecies formations.

- Deloughrey, Elizabeth M. *Allegories of the Anthropocene* (Duke, 2019),
- Ghosh, Amitav. *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*. (Chicago, 2016),
- Iheka, Cajetan. *Naturalizing Africa* (Cambridge, 2018),
- Maathai, Wangari. *Replenishing the Earth: Spiritual Values for Healing Ourselves and the World* (Doubleday, 2010),
- Nixon, Rob. *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Harvard, 2011),
- Shiva, Vandana. *Earth Democracy* (North Atlantic, 2015),
- Wenzel, Jennifer. *The Disposition of Nature: Environmental Crisis and World Literature* (Fordham, 2019).

**English 481**

**Studies in Literary Theory & Criticism**

*Racial Ecologies*

Michelle Huang

How does contemporary Ethnic American literature contend with environmental crises such as rising sea levels, desertification, and loss of biodiversity? How do minority writers represent the asymmetrical effects of toxic exposure, crumbling infrastructure, and resource extraction? How might we think of race itself as ecologically constituted? To begin answering these questions, this graduate seminar will survey African American, Native American, Asian American, and Latinx novels, short stories, poetry, and film that explore the differential effects of what Anna Tsing calls “blasted landscapes” on minoritized populations. Concurrently, we will articulate an ecological approach to race, i.e., an interdisciplinary methodology drawing from critical race theory, Ethnic Studies, environmental studies, and posthumanism. Rather than seeing racial justice as a secondary concern to environmental crises, our discussions will highlight how race is always fundamentally imbricated in ecology. This unorthodox approach to racial repre-

sentation will also push us towards formulations of comparative racialization, as we consider, for example, ecological entanglements of U.S. imperialism in Asia and Latin America. Finally, we will examine how art and literature imagine possibilities for minority resilience and flourishing. The class will pressure critical terms and paradigms such as representation, ethics, ecology, environment, risk, nature, and infrastructure.

**Evaluation Method:** graded participation; presentation; shorter writing assignments including reading responses; final essay (12-15 pages).

**Texts: (Please verify final list before purchasing.)**

Assigned primary texts will likely include texts such as,

- Natasha Trethewey’s *Beyond Katrina*,
- Octavia Butler’s *Parable of the Sower*,
- Chang-rae Lee’s *On Such a Full Sea*,
- Leslie Marmon Silko’s *Almanac of the Dead*,
- Daniel Borzutzky’s *Lake Michigan*,
- Marilyn Nelson’s *Carver: A Life in Poems*,
- Nnedi Okorafor’s “Poison Fish,”
- Linda Hogan’s *People of the Whale*,
- Craig Santos Perez’s *from unincorporated territory*,
- Tommy Pico’s *Nature Poem*,
- Percival Everett’s *Watershed*,
- Indra Sinha’s *Animal’s People*,
- Ruth Ozeki’s *My Year of Meats*,
- Ada Limón’s *The Carrying*,
- Jesmyn Ward’s *Salvage the Bones*,
- Mei-mei Berssenbrugge’s *A Treatise on Stars*,
- Alex Rivera’s *Sleep Dealer*,
- Karen Tei Yamashita’s *Through the Arc of the Rainforest*,
- Jeffrey Yang’s *An Aquarium*,
- others.

Assigned scholarship will likely include work by Katherine McKittrick, Mel Y. Chen, Jennifer James, Kyle Whyte, Julie Sze, Sarah Wald, Patricia Solis Ybarra, Donna Haraway, Devon Peña, William Cronon, Laura Pulido, Camille Dungy, Rob Nixon, Stacy Alaimo, John Gamber, Jina Kim, Zoe Todd, Anna Tsing, Macarena Gómez-Barris, Dixa Ramírez D’Oleo, Nayan Shah, Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, Robin Wall Kimmerer, Britt Rusert, Alexis Pauline Gumbs, and others.

Primary texts will be available at Norris Bookstore. All course readings besides the primary texts will be available on Canvas.

**English 496 (MFA+MA only)**

**MFA Poetry Workshop**

*Creative Research*

Charif Shanahan

In this two-quarter workshop, students will focus on creative research as a mode of poetic production. In the fall, we will read several research-based collections, as well as interviews, reviews,



and other secondary media, discussing the formal and thematic composition of the books and investigating how the poet metabolized her research into the making of poems. We will also write to prompts generated from the collections and workshop those poems.

Before the end of fall quarter, students will select a topic of their own and submit a proposal as well as a bibliography of primary and secondary sources, in service of generating a small sample of poems based on this research, due at the beginning of spring quarter.

In the spring, we will focus on workshopping the poems generated in fall and winter quarters. We will workshop poems as discrete objects and part of a group, considering how the organization of poems can generate new possibilities for thematic, narrative, and affective meaning. By the end of spring, students will have drafted and revised a long, thematically unified sequence of poems (20-35 pages), which will provide the basis for their eventual thesis.

#### Sample Reading List:

- *Into Perfect Spheres Such Holes Are Pierced*, Catherine Barnett
- *Seam*, Tarfia Faizullah ,
- *Toxic Flora*, Kimiko Hahn ,
- *Leadbelly*, Tyehimba Jess,
- *Voyage of the Sable Venus*, Robin Coste Lewis,
- *Once*, Meghan O'Rourke ,
- *Blood Dazzler*, Patricia Smith,
- *Thrall*, Natasha Trethewey,
- *One Big Self*, CD Wright.

## Winter Quarter

### English 403

#### Writers' Studies in Literature

Natasha Trethewey

“Because the narrator knew *who* was speaking, she always knew *why* she was speaking.”

—Vivian Gornick

This is a course in writing the personal narrative with a focus on tapping into the wellspring of our material—our lived experience, existential wounds, indefatigable memories—in order to shape some aspect of the situation of our individual being into an arc of story through the creation of a vivid persona, vibrantly alive on the page. As Vivian Gornick wrote, when the narrator becomes a persona, “Its tone of voice, its angle of vision, the rhythm of its sentences, what it selects to observe and what to ignore are chosen to serve the subject; yet at the same time the way the narrator—or the persona—sees things is, to the largest degree, the thing being seen.” In our discussion of the stories we tell, we will consider the use of ekphrasis, documentary evidence and other kinds of supplemental research.

### English 434

#### Studies in Shakespeare & Early Drama

*Early Modern Sexualities*

Jeff Masten

How can we practice the history and analysis of sexuality in early modern Europe? Is sexuality best described by a continuity of models, or alterity and historical difference? To what extent can we discuss “sexuality” in relation to “identity” in the pre-modern era? To address these complex questions, and to begin to ask new ones, we will concentrate on a range of exemplary literary and historical texts from around 1600 in England. We will be interested to explore both the multiple forms and functions of desire, eroticism, sex, gender, etc., in this culture, as well as the terms, methods, and theories we now use to read the sexual past. We will be particularly interested in gaining fluency in the languages of early modern identities and desires: sodomy, tribadism, friendship, marriage; bodies, their parts, and their pleasures. We will centrally engage recent critical controversies in the field over the utility of historicism in sexuality studies. We will interrogate sex/gender's intersections with categories such as race, religion, social class, and nation, and we will engage the emerging scholarship in early modern trans\* studies.

#### Texts include:

- plays by Beaumont and Fletcher, Margaret Cavendish, Christopher Marlowe, Shakespeare and Fletcher;
- erotic-narrative poetry by Beaumont, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Ovid;

- sodomy trial of the Earl of Castlehaven;
- selected essays of Montaigne;
- sonnets by various writers;
- theory and historical work by Bray, Butler, Edelman, Foucault, Goldberg, Gordon/Fisher/Chess, Halperin, Loomba, Masten, Menon, Rambuss, Shannon, Traub, others.

## English 441

### Studies in 18th-Century Literature

*Green Materialisms*

Tristram Wolff

This course introduces students to a sequence of “materialisms” worked out from the 18th century to the present. While readings and discussions will gravitate toward contemporary Marxist and post-Marxist ecological thought (including the afterlives of ideas like “primitive accumulation” and “metabolic rift” in recent feminist, anti-colonial, and environmental frameworks), we will also spend time looking at the writings and influence of earlier thinkers whose controversial materialisms have returned to critical attention in recent decades (e.g. Lucretius, Spinoza, Herder). A guiding aim of the course is to assemble a fuller sense of the historical and conceptual underpinnings of first-world environmentalism; so we will ask what “matters,” and to whom, in part by putting “greenness” under scrutiny as a critical category. Readings will emphasize theory and philosophy, but occasionally cross into poetry and science as well.

## English 461, sec 20

### Studies in Contemporary Literature

*Black Speculative Fiction and the Black Radical Imagination*

Justin Mann

In this graduate course, students will engage the archive of contemporary black speculative fiction, including works by Samuel Delany, Octavia Butler, Toni Morrison, Nalo Hopkinson, Walter Mosley, Victor LaValle, Colson Whitehead, and N.K. Jemisin, to interrogate the possibilities and limits of the black radical imagination as it appears in fantasy, horror, graphic fiction and other genres. Students will read narrative fiction written after the Black Arts Movement to interrogate what the speculative offers in terms of thinking about black worlds. The course argues that speculative writing—narrative fiction *and* theoretical writing—gesture to other social and political modes of thinking about and being in the world. Our study will concern texts written in the contemporary, but students will be invited to consider how contemporary manifestations of the speculative and radical necessarily speak across time and space into both past and future manifestations/imaginaries of black experiences, embodiments, and identities.

**Evaluation Method(s):** presentation, seminar participation, weekly writing, final conference paper.

## Texts include:

- Samuel Delany, *Tales of Neveryon*,
- Octavia Butler, *Dawn*,
- Toni Morrison, *Beloved*,
- N.K. Jemisin, *The Fifth Season*,
- Victor LaValle, *Destroyer*,
- and others

## English 461, sec 21

### Studies in Contemporary Literature

*Hannah Arendt: Poetry, Politics, and Thought*

Susannah Gottlieb

This course takes its point of departure from a careful reading of *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Arendt’s massive study of Nazi totalitarianism and its origins in anti-Semitism and European imperialism. For the first three weeks of the class, we will read the three sections of the *Origins* along with a selection of Arendt’s contemporaneous writings on issues at the heart of her study: wide-scale statelessness and forced migration; racism and imperial expansion; totalitarian propaganda and the “holes of oblivion.” Arendt recognized that the *Origins* posed a question that remained unanswered in that work: faced with the manufacture of living corpses, what preserves our humanity and redeems our actions? Arendt’s next major work, *The Human Condition*, thus moves toward an analysis of the conditions and modes of human activity: from the biological life process, to the world-creating capacity of homo faber, to the urgency and fragility of human action. As we read *The Human Condition*, which seeks to answer the question posed by the *Origins* by accounting for what European philosophy has generally failed to analyze with sufficient clarity—namely, the dimensions of the “active life”—we examine Arendt’s attempt in the same period to review and, in her own way, deconstruct the concepts of thinking around which the ideal of a “contemplative life” concretized. This prepares us for a reading in the final weeks of the seminar of *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, where she re-conceptualizes evil as a certain implementation of systematic thoughtlessness. As we examine these three major works, each of which is a reflection on the relation between language and politics, we will continually attend to the varying ways in which Arendt sought to understand where poetry stands in relation to human “conditionality,” and we will use her often-neglected suggestions in this regard to develop an Arendtian poetics.

## English 481

### Studies in Literary Theory & Criticism

*Cinema at the Turn of the Millennium*

Nick Davis

This course uses an archive of films produced and/or released between 1998 and 2002 to construct a specifically cinematic and more broadly cultural history of the shift into a new millennium. Some conversations will focus on global preoccupations: apoca-

lyptic apprehensions about Y2K, increasing proliferations and paranoid regarding networked technology, previsions of a world less organized by gender binaries, and public climates immediately before and after 9/11. At other times, we will take stock of trends within the U.S. as reflected on silver screens, including changing debates over African American representations and rising crescendos of white male insecurity and neofascist rhetoric. Alongside and amid those discussions, we will assess how film was evolving as a material practice and cultural form, with particular attention to digital advances, web-based writing, and shifting relations with television. Participants in the course will experiment with different genres of writing and practice different research skills in relation to texts and themes that interest them most.

Films screened in full or in part may include *11'09''01* (2002), *Amélie* (2001), *American Beauty* (1999), *Amores perros* (2000), *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner* (2001), *Bamboozled* (2000), *Beau travail* (1999), *Blackboards* (2000), *La Ciénaga* (2001), *Compensation* (1999), *Donnie Darko* (2001), *By Hook or By Crook* (2001), *Election* (1999), *Faat Kine* (2000), *Fight Club* (1999), *Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai* (1999), *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (2001), *The Hole* (1998), *Kandabar* (2001), *Lagaan* (2001), *Life on Earth* (1998), *The Little Girl Who Sold the Sun* (1999), *Lola and Billy the Kid* (1999), *The Matrix* (1999), *Rosetta* (1999), *Les Sanguinaires* (1998), *Southern Comfort* (2001), *Spirited Away* (2001), *Training Day* (2001), and *Y tu mamá también* (2001).

### English 505 (3<sup>rd</sup>-year PhD only) Research Development Seminar

Barbara Newman

English 505 will guide third-year students as they prepare a first draft of the dissertation prospectus and at least one draft of a grant or fellowship proposal. Participants will learn how to identify current conversations in their field, decide which aspects of their QE preparation turned out to be most promising, examine current MLA job ads as well as approved prospectuses to get a sense of the genre, engage both constructively and critically with existing scholarship, and present their proposals in language that is both exciting for specialists and accessible to scholars outside the field. Each student will engage throughout the term with their dissertation adviser, as well as the instructor and a peer partner. The course will be taken P/N.

**Teaching Method:** Seminar, discussion, and exchange.

**Evaluation:** Discussion and exchange. Draft CV, grant proposal, and prospectus

#### Texts:

- *The Craft of Research*. Fourth Edition. Ed. Wayne C. Booth, et. al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016).
- Various readings relevant to writing the a CV, a grant proposal, and a dissertation prospectus.

## Spring Quarter

### English 422

#### Studies in Medieval Literature

Chaucer

Susie Phillips

From the fifteenth-century glossators to twenty-first century critics, readers of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* have sought to interpret and contain this constantly shifting text. The poem poses numerous interpretative puzzles—the objects of the poem's irony, the politics of its author, and the demographics of its intended audience, to name a few—puzzles that have been “solved” in strikingly different ways at different historical moments. This course takes as its subject the *Canterbury Tales* and its reception history, exploring in detail both the poem and its multiple interpretative contexts. As we read the *Tales*, we will consider the narratives (and narrative conventions) that Chaucer transforms and the fourteenth-century voices with whom he is in dialogue. We will investigate the ways in which the tales circulated both individually and as a collection and analyze the various paratexts that accompanied them (glosses, prologues, illustrations, and “spurious” links and tales). Along with the early publication context, we will explore current critical conversation in Chaucer Studies (as well as medieval studies more broadly) and the scholarly history to which it responds, reading the *Tales* through the lens of critical race studies, feminist and queer theory, postcolonial studies, psychoanalysis, and old and new historicisms. In this context, we will use the *Tales* to ask “Why Chaucer?,” taking up some of the recent controversies in medieval literary studies and the responses they have catalyzed.

### English 431

#### Studies in 16th-Century Literature

*Political Thought in Shakespearean Contexts*

Laurie Shannon

A Tudor idiom frames the now commonplace phrase, “the body politic.” What mythographies, theologies, theories, and ideologies built this conception of socio-political organization? While social contract theory would soon reach new predominance (ie with Thomas Hobbes in the 17thC and rising 18thC claims about the foundational role of consent to government), what models preceded it? What claims and values justified the apparent organicism of a faith or reliance on the human body as an allegory for political authority? How do these approaches manage qualities like gender, age, or illness that might trouble the allegory?

This seminar will consider some key texts in early English political thought, beginning with the Tudor court case from which the phrase “the body politic” is mainly cited, and proceeding then to materials from the unsettling events of the English Reforma-



tion that address the question of obedience to the secular power (ie Thomas More's Utopia, William Tyndale's Obedience of a Christian Man, Thomas Cranmer's homilies from the first decade of the English church) and to anatomical and medical materials (like Thomas Elyot's Castel of Helthe and Helkiah Crooke's Microcosmographia). From this groundwork, we will move on to consider early modern English debates about royal authority, including the ideological disarray triggered by the historical facts of a female monarch and of rebellion as treason (ie John Knox's First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women, selected speeches given by Elizabeth I, James I's The Law of Free Monarchy, and John Milton's Tenure of Kings and Magistrates). To explore these dynamics in the context of theater (then the largest assemblages of people into "bodies"), the seminar will delve into several Shakespeare plays (from among Henry IV 1&2, Richard II, Richard III, A Midsummer Night's Dream, King Lear, and most particularly Measure for Measure) to assess the proposition that Shakespeare — among his other forms of attention — was also a political theorist.

### English 455

#### Studies in Victorian Literature

*Literatures of the Global 19<sup>th</sup> Century: The Nabda*

Rebecca Johnson

This course is an introduction to Arabic literary production of the long nineteenth century as it engages the "nahḍa" (awakening), understood variously as a discourse on modernity, a utopian social project, and an epistemological rupture wrought by colonialism and capitalism. With special emphasis on the genealogies, practices, and problematics of Arabic literary modernity, this course will introduce students to the major works of Arabic literature produced in the nineteenth and early twentieth century and to the major debates, social changes, and material developments that attend the period, including (but not limited to) language reform, migration, print capitalism, imperialism, and nationalism. In short, we will try to understand how these authors, through their texts, both produced and theorized modernity for their readers in the localized contexts of Imperial influence and control on the one hand, and the global—though uneven—nineteenth-century processes of social, political, economic, and technological change.

**Primary texts** will be available in English translation and will include:

- Rifa' al-Tahtawi, *The Extraction of Gold from Paris* (1826);
- Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaaq, *Leg over Leg* (1855);
- Khalil al-Khuri, *Oh No! I Am Not a European* (1858);
- Muhammad al-Muwaylihi, *What Isa ibn Hisham Told Us* (1907);
- Ameen Rihani, *The Book of Khalid* (1911); and
- Jurji Zaydan, *Tree of Pearls, Queen of Egypt* (1914).

### English 465

#### Studies in Colonial & Postcolonial Literature

*Race, Caste, Colorism*

Laura Brueck & Ivy Wilson

Taking W.E.B. Du Bois's proclamation that the "color line [is] the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea" as a cue, this graduate seminar examines and engages Afro-Asian critique as a way to interrogate the world-systems of race, caste, and colorism as they are routed through, and inform the political landscapes, of the U.S. and South Asia. By underscoring the limits and possibilities of disciplinarity, the seminar explores the ways the overlapping histories of Blacks and South Asians necessitate new modes of critical analysis, knowledge production, and artistic creation to imagine alternative socialities. As such, course material will cover works ranging from the rhetoric and speeches (of B. R. Ambedkar and Martin Luther King), aesthetic statements on color (Perumal Murugan and Zora Neale Hurston), political manifestos (the Black Panther Party and the Dalit Panthers), as well as art (A/Nil and Casteless Collective).

### English 471

#### Studies in American Literature

*19<sup>th</sup>-Century African American Women Writers*

Nikki Spigner & Julia Stern

This course will explore the autobiographical fictions, slave narratives, serialized tales, memoirs, novels, and poems produced by African American women from the antebellum period through the turn of the twentieth century, and ending with Zora Neale Hurston's 1927 reflection on the life of the last former slave brought to the United States from Africa in 1862. We will begin the course and introduce these literary accounts with recordings and written transcripts of selected WPA interviews of former slaves by largely white interlocutors working for the Roosevelt Administration. By exploring the variety of writing, from travel and slave narrative and to fiction, this course will consider the forms and content produced by Black women during the nineteenth century and raise questions concerning at least: shifting political and social identities, authorship, proto-Black feminism, and the possibilities and limitations of the Black woman "archive" versus a "canon."

Course materials will include Mary Prince, *The Slave Narrative of Mary Prince: A West Indian Slave* (1831); Hannah Crafts, *The Bondswoman's Narrative* (n.d. 1850s); Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861); Julia Collins, *The Curse of Caste; or, The Slave Bride* (1865); *Elizabeth Keckley, Behind the Scenes; 30 Years a Slave, and Four Years in the White House* (1868); Alice Dunbar Nelson, *Confessions of a Lazy Woman* (~1903); Pauline Hopkins, *Of One Blood* (1902-1903); and Zora Neale Hurston, *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"* (unpub. 1927/2018). Professors Spigner and Stern will also distribute poems written by Black women across

the course of the quarter to supplement our discussion of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Black women's prose works.

Each seminar participant will be required to give a presentation and lead the class for the first hour of the seminar. Participants will also produce several short, argument-based reflection papers. Final projects will enable students to feature their own research interests in creative installations involving literary texts, historical documents, cinematic or televisual materials and artifacts from the popular culture of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century. Professors Spigner and Stern will consult with all seminar participants on their topics for the final project.

### Required Texts:

- Mary Prince, *The Slave Narrative of Mary Prince: A West Indian Slave* (1831)  
- 2001 Penguin Edition ISBN: 978-0140437492  
- Electronic version:  
<https://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/prince/prince.html>
- Hannah Crafts, *The Bondswoman's Narrative* (n.d. 1850s)  
- 2016 Warner Books Edition ISBN: 978-0446690294
- Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861)  
- 2010 Signet Classic Reissue Edition ISBN: 978-0451531469  
- Electronic version:  
<https://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/jacobs/jacobs.html>
- Julia Collins, *The Curse of Caste; or, The Slave Bride* (1865)  
- 2006 Oxford University Press Edition ISBN: 978-0195301601
- Elizabeth Keckley, *Behind the Scenes; 30 Years a Slave, and Four Years in the White House* (1868)  
- 2016 Eno Publishers Reissue Edition ISBN: 978-0989609272
- Alice Dunbar Nelson, *Confessions of a Lazy Woman*  
- Electronic version (only): pdf available through Canvas
- Pauline Hopkins, *Of One Blood* (1902-1903)  
- 2004 Washington Square Press Edition ISBN: 978-0743467698
- Zora Neale Hurston, *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"* (unpub. 1927/2018).  
- 2020 Amistad Reprint Edition ISBN: 978-0062748218

### English 481

#### Studies in Literary Theory & Criticism

*Affective Turns*

Lauren Jackson

This course serves as an introduction to affect theory. In concert with a long-view study of philosophies of emotion, feeling, and embodiment, readings will focus on charting out the various interpretative methods, disciplines, and debates constitutive of what's been dubbed "the affective turn"; this alongside practicing readings of fiction.

**Possible readings:** Aristotle, Ralph Ellison, Gilles Deleuze, Toni Morrison, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Brian Massumi, Ruth Leys, Lauren Berlant, Fred Moten, Sara Ahmed, Eugenie Brinkema.

### English 496 (MFA+MA only)

#### MFA Poetry Workshop

*Creative Research*

Charif Shanahan

In this two-quarter workshop, students will focus on creative research as a mode of poetic production. In the fall, we will read several research-based collections, as well as interviews, reviews, and other secondary media, discussing the formal and thematic composition of the books and investigating how the poet metabolized her research into the making of poems. We will also write to prompts generated from the collections and workshop those poems.

Before the end of fall quarter, students will select a topic of their own and submit a proposal as well as a bibliography of primary and secondary sources, in service of generating a small sample of poems based on this research, due at the beginning of spring quarter.

In the spring, we will focus on workshopping the poems generated in fall and winter quarters. We will workshop poems as discrete objects and part of a group, considering how the organization of poems can generate new possibilities for thematic, narrative, and affective meaning. By the end of spring, students will have drafted and revised a long, thematically unified sequence of poems (20-35 pages), which will provide the basis for their eventual thesis.

#### Sample Reading List:

- *Into Perfect Spheres Such Holes Are Pierced*, Catherine Barnett
- *Seam*, Tarfia Faizullah
- *Toxic Flora*, Kimiko Hahn
- *Leadbelly*, Tyechimba Jess
- *Voyage of the Sable Venus*, Robin Coste Lewis
- *Once*, Meghan O'Rourke
- *Blood Dazzler*, Patricia Smith
- *Thrall*, Natasha Trethewey
- *One Big Self*, CD Wright

### English 497 (MFA+MA only)

#### MFA Fiction Workshop

Juan Martinez

Course Description: TBA

### English 498 (MFA+MA only)

#### MFA Creative Nonfiction Workshop

Megan Stielstra

Course Description: TBA

**English 520 (PhD in candidacy only)**  
**Writing for Publication**

Christine Froula

Our collective goal in this workshop is to help each member prepare a scholarly article for submission by the end of the quarter. Each member will work to develop and revise a dissertation chapter for publication in article form. We'll discuss how to think about and select a suitable journal, scholarly conversation, and audience; how to relate an article's frame, argument, and rhetoric to the journal and its audience; how to identify and address any weaknesses in research, argument, structure, and style; how to decide where and how to cut and compress the argument, where and how to develop or expand it; how best to organize the article; how to write a strong, attention-catching lead; how to follow a journal's style sheet; how to check references with meticulous care; how to submit the article for publication; and how to respond to readers' reports. We'll discuss broader issues of scholarly publication, such as pros and cons of publishing in edited volumes, special journal issues, and online venues; whether and how to publish work that forms part of a future monograph; and how scholarly publication relates to publication for a wider, non-specialist audience. One for all and all for one, we'll begin with workshop members analyzing and critiquing their own and each other's submissions. Each writer will receive readers' reports from the instructor and, where possible, from a specialist colleague in the field. Each will work closely with the instructor and workshop members on successive drafts.

Eng 520 is offered P/N and open to all students in candidacy with their advisers' consent. If there is high demand, PhD candidates in English who are approaching the job market will have enrollment priority.

**Teaching method:** seminar discussion and workshop.

**English 570**  
**Seminar in Teaching College Composition**

Elizabeth Lenaghan

This seminar is designed to serve two purposes. First, it offers an introduction to current theories, practices, and controversies in the teaching of writing in American colleges and universities, placing these matters in the context of various definitions of literacy in American culture. And second, it prepares graduate students to teach writing intensive courses, including English 105 (Expository Writing) and first-year writing seminars, here at Northwestern. Graduate students who expect to teach Expository Writing should take 570; other graduate students interested in the teaching of writing are welcome to enroll.

The time of meetings will be determined closer to Spring quarter based on student schedules.

**English 571**  
**Teaching Creative Writing**

Shauna Seliy

Students will study the history and models of teaching for Creative Writing programs. Students will design creative writing courses, set clear, achievable learning objectives, draft syllabi, generate exercises, and select reading material for introductory courses in poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction.