

EN Course Descriptions for Spring 2015

(Arranged by Alphabetically-listed Instructor)

Dr. George Bilgere

EN 201—Introduction to Poetry

This course is designed for students who haven't had much experience with poetry. The aim of the course is to gently persuade you that reading poetry is not a form of torture, but can, in fact, be a real pleasure, in much the same way that listening to music is pleasurable. In a sense, poetry is language that aspires to be music. The poems we'll be looking at will, for the most part, be by modern and contemporary writers, although from time to time we'll sample the work of some old masters. By the end of the term you will be familiar with the work of many American and British major poets of the last century, and you will have learned to speak about poetry with knowledge and confidence. This course is essential to anyone wishing to sound frighteningly sophisticated at cocktail parties. We'll use an anthology of poetry from which we'll read about a dozen poems for each class period. And I'll ask you to buy and read a couple of short books of poetry by contemporary poets. A brief, three-page paper will be due every two weeks.

EN 301—Introduction to Poetry Writing Workshop

This course has three goals: to make you a better writer of poetry, a better reader of poetry, and to make you more knowledgeable about modern and contemporary poetry in general. You will read and discuss poems by many modern and contemporary poets. You will write poems of your own and talk about them in class. You will read and write enough that slowly you'll begin to develop a sense of critical judgment. What is a good poem? What factors work against a poem's success? You'll revise your work, hone and chisel it, and by the end of the term you will have created a body of work I think you'll be proud of. I think you'll find the workshop meetings to be a lot of fun. And we'll also do a couple of public readings of our work during the term. Students will write and revise one poem each week. They will also read and critique the work of their fellow poets in the course. There will be daily reading assignments from the assigned texts.

EN 401/501—Advanced Poetry Writing Workshop

I'm not sure if there really is such a thing as "advanced" poetry, but if there is, we'll try to write it. How does this course differ from EN301? I would hope the poems we attempt here are more sophisticated in language and form, larger in scope and ambition, and more deeply informed by that mysterious quality called "voice." The poems you wrote in 301 were gestures toward accomplishing that seemingly simplest of things: trying to sound like yourself. But it's tricky to do that in language, as no doubt you already know by now. As in 301, we'll write in form and in free verse. We'll put our work through the same intensive scrutiny, the same exhaustive revision process. We'll read a lot of contemporary poetry with the aim of trying to get a sense of what the particular cacophony that is the American poetry scene is all about. We will take another step toward developing a personal poetic aesthetic. Students will write and revise one poem each week. They will read and critique their classmates' poems. In addition, students will write a short chapbook of poetry, a "creative project," due at the end of the course.

Dr. Jean Feerick

EN 214—Major British Writers

This course will provide a broad introduction to some of the most influential British writers from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century, exploring the place that their texts enjoyed in the shaping and transforming of British culture. In addition to providing an introduction to the formal features of their texts and experience with close reading, we will learn about the changing cultural contexts in which these authors wrote, with particular attention to topics such as religion, social hierarchy, gender roles, print culture, transatlanticism and the internal colonization of the British isles. Authors will include Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Behn, Shelley, and Conrad.

EN 421—Studies in Renaissance Lit

“The Ties that Bind: Revenge in Renaissance Plays”

From revenge plays to domestic tragedies, family is a value to kill and die for in Renaissance drama. This course considers the cultural pressures such violence responds to, the contaminations it guards against, and explores the political life of these violent domestic affairs. What drives crimes of passion in this early modern era? What leads people to kill? What is the cultural logic that underpins such violence? How do shifts in the definition of the household affect the forms of violent expression? In grappling with these questions, we will read works by Kyd, Shakespeare, Heywood, Webster, and Middleton, observing changes to plays performed roughly between 1590 and 1620. All of the plays we will read share a preoccupation with domestic order and disorder, imagining the home as a locus of conflict between father and son; husband and wife; and master and servant. What conceptions of family do these plays actively express and reshape as a constitutive element of Renaissance culture and how do such notions diverge from modern notions of the family and home as sites of intimacy?

EN 580C—Race and Place in Renaissance Literature

In this course, we will explore the uneven development of racial ideologies in literature of the early modern period. Our focus will be on English writing (especially drama) that connects identity to place, initially reading plays set in England and, subsequently, turning to representations of migration to and settlement in foreign places (the Americas, East and West Indies). We will explore how these representations associate movement from England and contact with foreign places with a range of social, physical, and sexual displacements. We will also ask what the implications of these shifts are for the English social body. How are emergent discourses of race contesting and actively revising older ways of classifying people in which “race” referred to blood, rank, and status? In the drive to value environment as against blood as a determinant of identity which marks people as “strange,” “alien,” or “natural,” we will try to tease out a major ideological shift for this period. Primary readings will include works by Kyd, Shakespeare, Fletcher, Massinger, Heywood, Bacon and Behn, among others. These will be supplemented by a range of critical and theoretical readings.

Lauren Greenwald, M.B.A.**EN 300A/410—Advanced Writing: Medical Science Writing**

Using a variety of sources, from medical articles for lay people to medical journals, we'll explore storytelling technique while honing critical thinking skills and strengthening fundamental and creative writing skills. We will read/discuss/critique texts by various authors, complete in-class writing activities and engage in workshopping our final paper. We will also work on developing basic reporting skills. Be prepared to work independently and collaboratively, and to read and write a lot. If you have an interest in English, communications, the sciences or public health and wish to strengthen your writing skills, you will find this course beneficial.

Denise Kadliak, M.A.**EN 300B/409—Technical Writing in the Digital Age**

This is a "W" course. It introduces you to the principles and methods of technical communication. We will examine a number of writing and design principles common to technical communication with a focus on online delivery, such as web sites, blogs, professional profiles, and publishing. The course objectives are as follows: technical-writing principles and methods, online communication best practices, principles of minimalism and progressive disclosure, and trade tools, such as InDesign.

Dr. Peter Kvidera**EN 277—Major American Writers**

English 277 surveys American literature from the colonial period to the present. Beginning with the earliest texts, authors in America have continually attempted to record and make sense of their world through their writing. They often observed a land and nation in the midst of being created or re-created, whether by new settlement, by changing religious and philosophical traditions, or by social conflict and war. The literature these writers produced, in many respects, responded and contributed to these re-creations. It re-imagined the nation and helped form the ways in which America was (and is) understood. To expand our understanding of America as created and re-created through its literary tradition, we will examine a broad array of writers, genres, and styles, paying close attention to the historical conditions and events that influenced the writing.

Dr. David La Guardia**EN 372—Twentieth-Century American Literature**

This course examines key writers and works from the century we now look back upon. With an emphasis on writers of fiction, including Hemingway, Faulkner, Fitzgerald, O'Connor, Heller, Nabokov, Morrison, students will experience texts that provide a unique perspective on cultural, political, religious and social trends from the twenties to the nineties. Lots of discussion; lots of interaction.

EN 473—Faulkner

This course presents to students the opportunity for a focused approach to a single artist and to his most significant novels and short stories. Discussion-based in format, our analysis will unpack the complexities of works which earned Faulkner the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1950. Our study will demonstrate how these works inform of themselves yet reach beyond into an intricate history of the South, of America as a whole country, and of the modern world temper. Works considered: *The Sound and the Fury*, *As I Lay Dying*, *Light in August*, *Absalom, Absalom!*, *Sanctuary*, and *Go Down, Moses*.

EN 573—Studies in Modern American Literature--The Twenties

Interpreters of American Literature frequently draw parallels between the decade of the nineteen twenties and that extraordinary five-year period between 1850 and 1855 that produced *The Scarlet Letter*, *Moby-Dick*, *Walden*, *Leaves of Grass*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and key Emerson essays. Whether the parallel is justified may be open to debate, yet there is little reason to argue the premise that the "The Twenties" looms in the modern lexicon as a pivotal and defining decade. "If literature is important to history," writes Frederick Hoffman, "it is not because it serves as a social document or as a footnote to political or intellectual history, but primarily because it is a culmination, a genuine means of realizing the major issues of its time." This course intends to probe the significance of the "culmination." The socio-political bookends of the decade are a World War and a Stock Market collapse, colossal events that provide external snapshots for a deep interior monologue involving the essence of human value, ethics and identity. The course will examine this monologue from the perspective of key literary texts that help to define the age, or that argue against its complex premises. The hope is to emerge as a group from our discussions better informed about the gigantic shift from movements in American literature called "realism" and "naturalism" to American "modernism" with all its subtle, elusive implications.

Dr. Brian Macaskill

EN 286—African Literatures (L; R; D)

As a Literature core-course, EN 286 explores aspects of African history and its many cultures by way of an inquiry into the twentieth-century literary accomplishments of the three Anglophone regions located on the African continent: West Africa, East Africa, and Southern Africa. The course thus also meets core criteria for the "R" (International) designation by focusing specifically on the historical and cultural contexts shaping literary works from Nigeria and Ghana (West Africa); Kenya (East Africa); Zimbabwe, Botswana, and the Republic of South Africa (Southern Africa), and by emphasizing within this international array diverse viewpoints concerning the relationship between European colonization and indigenous African values. This latter emphasis, coupled with the particular attention the course pays in its second half to African articulations of gender relationships, further entitles the course to a "D" or "Diversity" core designation.

EN 360—Modern British Literature

This section of 360 provides an overview of twentieth-century Anglophone literature by concentrating on exemplary Modernist works from the first half of the century. After initial considerations, the course turns to poetry by Yeats, Pound, Eliot, and Auden, say, and thereafter also provides a brief sense of how later British and other Anglophone poets respond to the modernist poets. A similar procedure shapes our inquiry into twentieth-century narrative contributions (Conrad, Joyce, Woolf, Orwell, and / or Beckett, for example, again set in relief by narrative examples from later in the century).

EN 490/590—History of Literary Theory and Criticism

Those of us interested in literature take pleasure in the fact that words and their arrangement convey more than just information; we know—in all sorts of ways—that reading (in all sorts of ways) is never a neutral activity. EN 490/590 reads some of the history of reading by considering how language in general and poetic or literary language in particular has engaged other registers of discursive power over the centuries, finding and defining itself in more or less political competition with philosophy, say, or theology, or empirical science. We start at the beginning—with Plato, Aristotle and Horace—and read our way into the nineteenth century, the parent-century of that century into which we were born (the twentieth, also called “The Age of Theory”); Various additional progenitors demand attention along the way: Longinus, Aquinas, Dante and Boccaccio, say, or Kant, Vico, Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Mill, and Arnold.

Dr. Patrick McBrine

EN 411/511—Studies in Medieval Literature

This term’s “Studies in Medieval Literature” class will be taught by the Hopkins professor and will introduce students to Old English literature in the original language and in translation. The class will meet once a week, and part of the class cover the essentials of Old English grammar, that is the skills you will need to read the original language. The second part of class will involve readings and discussions of literature in translation, so that students may gain a broader sense of the literature of the period, while they learn the original language.

Dr. John McBratney

EN 214—Major British Writers

This may be the closest you come to a “Great Books” (or “Great Works”) course in college. Ben Jonson said of his friend William Shakespeare that “He was not of an age, but for all time.” We’ll be reading authors who are also “for all time”—authors whom each generation of readers reads and rediscovers as very worth reading. In addition to Shakespeare, we’ll be studying Geoffrey Chaucer, John Milton, Jonathan Swift, William Wordsworth, Robert Louis Stevenson, Virginia Woolf, and Seamus Heaney. One essay and three exams, including the final.

Dr. Philip Metres

EN 280—Israeli and Palestinian Literatures

Interested in linking social justice issues and global perspectives to literature? This course may be for you. It will illuminate the ways in which Palestinians and Israelis narrate their personal and national stories, staking a claim to a certain way of being and of belonging to the land which they co-inhabit. We will examine these two national narratives through the eyes of the poets and writers with an eye to the following questions: How is narration itself—the ability to speak one’s story on one’s behalf—complicated by the problem of war, terrorism or military occupation? How do these narratives frame our understanding not simply of an individual’s subjectivity, but also stands in for a national subjectivity? How have they shifted over time? How do these narratives complicate our way of seeing Arabs and Jews? In other words, what does this

literature teach us that American mass media representations have not? What sorts of answers to the present Israeli-Palestinian conflict does this literature provide? How might peace and reconciliation be possible?

EN 299A/PJHR 375—Irish Literature and Film: The Stories of Peace-Building and Conflict Transformation (*plus a two-week immersion in Northern Ireland in May or June*)

This course is designed to explore the dynamics of conflict and peacemaking at work in Northern Ireland. We will examine the historical and cultural roots of conflict from a multidisciplinary approach by reading histories, cultural studies, literary narratives, and film. While we will establish a background for how and why the conflict persisted, we will also focus on gaining skills necessary to do the courageous but difficult work of peace-building, conflict transformation, reconciliation, and social restoration. We take as our inspiration the call for a well-educated solidarity, in which we pose the question, “How can we live together in this time and place?”

At the end of the course, after graduation, we will have a two-week academic immersion in Northern Ireland. We will take advantage of our presence in Northern Ireland in two ways. We will frequently call upon local officials and experts to speak to the class. Students will also be expected to participate fully in the experiential learning aspect of the course. This means that students will be placed in situations where they will witness local activities related to peace-building and conflict transformation.

EN 303—Introduction to Creative Writing

This class will introduce you to the tradition, craft, and techniques of creative writing through reading and writing poetry, fiction, and creative non-fiction. Writers, like sculptors and painters, often improve from studying and imitating the great works in their medium. In this course, we will read writing the way an architect scans and tests an old house—noticing the overall plan, the materials, and how it’s put together. Through imitations and other directed exercises, we will try our hand at making some of our own linguistic dwellings. Then we will work together, in a workshop format, to provide constructive feedback to each other.

Dr. Maryclaire Moroney

EN 320—Literature of Henry VII / Elizabeth 1

No course description available. Please contact Dr Moroney.

Dr. Alissa Nutting

EN299C—The Graphic Novel as Literature

This course will study the literature of the modern and contemporary graphic novel, explore the genre's postmodern cultural inquiries both nationally and internationally, and deepen students' skill sets for writing analytically about text and image-based arguments and narratives. Proceeding chronologically from novels positioned in WWII to the present, we will study politically and contextually diverse works that examine intersections of class, race, sexuality, and religion.

EN 302—Intro Fiction Writing Workshop

This course studies and mimics contemporary fiction in its various forms, from flash to epistolary to electronic literature. With a priority on close reading and attention to process, the class focus is on becoming a better writer in all senses, as well as a better reader. Students have two major workshops, a revision workshop, and have to give a presentation relative to their aesthetic interest and goals. Grading is based on preparation (10%), discussion participation (20%), workshop participation (20%), final portfolio (30%), presentation (10%), and assignments (10%).

EN 404/504—Advanced Nonfiction Writing Workshop

This course is an in-depth study and practicum on crafting nonfiction. This class will focus on the breadth, scope, and various genres of creative non-fiction, with supplementary readings and discussions of contemporary and classic nonfiction and writing theory, particularly focusing on the goals of nonfiction and the academic and cultural dialogues surrounding nonfiction. Participants will each compose two major pieces of nonfiction (essays, articles, or nonfiction book chapters) for workshop critique throughout the course of the semester, in addition to completing exercises exploring nonfiction genres.

Clint O'Connor

EN 300 C/ 405—Film Criticism in the Digital Age

From Tarantino to "Toy Story"! Sharpen your critical eye for film, become a more confident writer, and expand your understanding of the art form in the context of the digital revolution. Watch features, shorts, and documentaries, attend the Cleveland International Film Festival, meet with filmmakers, and study a wide range of directors and styles in this writing-intensive, discussion-intensive class.

Dr. Tom Pace

EN 277–Major American Writers (Honors section)

“Don’t you want to be somebody?”

The quote above comes from the 2011 film, *The Social Network*, in which Facebook creator Mark Zuckerberg (played by Jesse Eisenberg) entreats his college roommate to join him in California, as they build their new online network. American literature has long focused on the struggles of individuals to “be somebody.” Without the Old World reliance on class privilege and tradition, Americans have had to prove their value and forge their own identity. This course, what I like to think of as “fun with books,” is a survey of American literature from the earliest Puritans to more recent writers. Along the way, this course will enable you to read poems, essays, sermons, fiction,, drama, and film by 1) gaining a basic understanding of how each literary genre works; 2) providing cultural, historical, and literary contexts from which these works emerge and explore questions such as, How do we become individuals? How do we as Americans create a self? Does that entail a struggle against our society? How is our identity related to others’ identities? How does this literary text alter how I think about myself or the world? Requirements include 3 exams and 1 paper. This honors course is open to all students.

EN 299B–Shakespeare’s Theatre in London

Our aim in this course is to enjoy Shakespeare’s plays and explore how the culture of Shakespeare’s England provided the conditions for the kind of drama he wrote and produced. We will read three plays: *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Othello*, and *Richard III*. As in most courses, we will sit on our backsides and work on reading skills and analysis, with specific attention to the material and cultural development of his plays while he lived and worked in London. Unlike most courses, though, for one week (February 27-March 7), we will shed the “eating rust of obscurity” and travel to London, attend plays in performance, explore the Globe theatre, and take field trips around London and Stratford-Upon-Avon. We will be traveling with Professor Keith Nagy’s course, British Theatre Experience. The class will meet MWF from January 12-March 20. As an intro course, I expect most students’ experience with Shakespeare might be a play or two in high school. If you have no experience with Shakespeare, that is no problem. Requirements include reading quizzes and a final paper. No exams.

Dr. Thomas Roche / Robert (Bo) Smith

EN 214– Major British Writers

In this critical survey of British authors and literary periods from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century, we will establish a common language for literary inquiry and trace major topics across the canon of literature we will discuss.

EN 299D—Performing Shakespeare

The course is intended to be one of freedom for you as an actor and scholar. The essential value of this course is the journey you will experience in delving into a character, finding that character in you, finding you in that character, and of investing that character with the vital spark of being alive through your creative and empathic projection. In this process, you will also learn to approach Shakespearean text and its historical context through close readings that will make the work accessible.

EN 331—Late Eighteenth-Century Literature

Study of major authors, themes, genres, and forms of British literature during the latter half of the eighteenth century.

Dr. Debra Rosenthal

EN 199—Literary Sampler

Can't decide which English course to take? EN 199 lets you take them all by filling your plate with bite-sized samples of many classes. This one-credit, pass/fail-only course meets twice a week for the first seven weeks of the semester. Each class period a different professor will talk to you about various topics of general literary interest. The course is designed for the English major and non-major alike.

EN 278—African American Literature

In this course we will trace the dazzling and rich African American literary and artistic tradition from the 19th to 21st centuries and read a wide variety of genres: fiction, nonfiction, poetry, essays, and film. EN 472 merits a "D" designation because the entire course is devoted to black American literary production.

EN 299E—Alcohol and American Literature

Although you can't get credit for drinking beer, you can can credit for reading about others who drink beer (and wine and rot-gut whiskey). Alcohol and drunkenness stand as pervasive themes in American literature from colonial times until today. We will round up some of the usual drunk suspects (Hemingway, Fitzgerald) and read them alongside an array of African American, Native American, and women writers whose works thematize alcohol. WARNING: do NOT tell your parents about this course because it will confirm their suspicion that English majors can make any topic seem a legitimate form of inquiry.

Maria Soriano, M.A.

EN 290—Let's Talk About Writing: Collaboration and Tutoring Across Contexts

Focuses on tutoring in the Writing Center, but examines theories and practices applicable to teaching and tutoring writing in other contexts. Students complete practicum work in the Writing Center, and may apply for future Writing Center positions upon course completion. Instructor permission required to register; please contact Maria Soriano at 397-1911 or msoriano10@jcu.edu.

Dr. Jayme Stayer

EN 277—Major American Authors

This course covers some of the most important authors of English-language literature of the United States. Though it's not a history or a survey course, we'll consider historical context as needed. The general aim of the course is to get students to become more fluent and agile interpreters of literature, using major authors as grist for their thinking and writing. Since interpretation is an art rather than an exact science, the bulk of the course is devoted to coming up with defensible interpretations based on the evidence of the text.

Literature is an art form that addresses all aspects of the human experience—the emotions, the body, the spirit, love, ambition and despair, suffering and joy, bravery and self-deception, cultural roles and inner longings. So no matter what your major or your interests, much if not all of the material in this course will be relevant to you as a human being who seeks meaning and purpose in your life.

EN 441—Studies in Romanticism: Romantic Music and Literature (Honors seminar)

This course concentrates on European Romanticism in symphonic music, chamber music, opera, drama, poetry, and fiction of the 19th century. In British literature, the term “Romanticism” refers to a historically restricted period, running roughly from the 1780s through 1830. But when applied to the continent of Europe, and especially to the musical arts, Romanticism encompasses the entire nineteenth century. Its stylistic and ideological marks extend even beyond that historical limit, well into the twentieth century.

This course, then, takes the broader definition of continental Romanticism, placing the abiding interests of Romantic authors and composers (love, the Infinite, the Unreachable, the supernatural, democracy, the Common Man, etc.) inside of the pressing political and cultural concerns of the day, such as the industrial revolution, the waning of institutional religion, the increase in philosophical skepticism, faith in science and material/technological progress, and especially the divided reactions to the French Revolution and its vexed and complicated consequences. No previous knowledge of, or expertise in, classical music is required.