

Brandeis University
English Department Courses: Fall 2006

Introductory Courses

11A Introduction to Literary Method

Section 1	Aaron Worth	MWR 9-10
Section 2	Pat Chu	TF 9-10:30
Section 3	Aliyyah Abdur-Rahman	TF 1:30-3

The course's purpose is to train students in the critical reading of literary texts. There will be frequent assignments of writing that involve literary analysis.

Courses Pre 1850

18b For Better or Worse?: Marriage in Renaissance Drama Roselyn Farren
MWR 10-11

Love or Money? Personal or Political? English Renaissance drama questions what marriage should be about and what makes a relationship succeed or fail. We will read nine plays, examining how much each imagines wedlock. Includes works by Shakespeare, Jonson, and Middleton.

43A Major English Authors: Chaucer to Milton Ramie Targoff
TF 12-1:30

A survey of major English authors from the Middle Ages through the Renaissance, including Chaucer, Wyatt, Spencer, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Sidney, Donne, Herbert, Marvell, Milton. No prior experience in medieval or Renaissance literature is required.

125A Romanticism I William Flesch
MWR 12-1

This course may not be repeated for credit by students who have taken ENG 25a in previous years. Examines the major poetry and some prose by the first generation of English Romantic poets who may be said to have defined Romanticism and set the tone for the last two centuries of English literature.

135A

Major British Novelists

John Plotz
MWR 11-12

This course examines classic works from the 19th century, when the novel was at once popular entertainment and moral/spiritual guide. How do they reach us today? The heart of the course is intense close reading, coupled with comparisons to visual art and other literature of the period, including short works by Dostoyevsky and Melville. Film screenings help trace how these texts resonate with contemporary aesthetic forms. Novels: *Wuthering Heights*, *Bleak House*, *Middlemarch*.

Courses Post 1850

8A

21st Century American Literature

Caren Irr
TF 1:30-3

An introductory survey of trends in recent American literature. Focus on prose. Readings vary yearly but always include winners of major literary prizes such as the Pulitzer, National Book Award, PEN/Faulkner Award, Pushcart Prize, O. Henry Award, or the Nobel Prize.

21A

Adolescent Literature

William Flesch
MWR 10-11

Literature for adolescents can't afford any self-indulgences: its audience is too impatient. So it's a great place to see what's essential to story-telling. Authors include Shelley, Twain, Salinger, Pullman, and Rowling, whom we'll use to test basic narrative theory.

26A

Deciphering Theories of Madness

Michaele Whelan
TF 3-4:30

The expert reader is a detective, a gatherer of clues and intimations. The field of detection will range from poems to short stories, from novels to drama and span five centuries. First-person narrators, poetic speakers, and soliloquizers characterized as marginal, "Other," distressed, disturbed, meandering, and even "mad" will unite our reading and critical thinking.

37B

Modern Drama

Paul Morrison
MW 2-3:30
Film: M 7-9

An intensive study of British, U.S., and European drama of the last hundred years. Topics to be considered: new definitions of tragedy; changing sex/gender roles and the stage; the well-made play; the "angry" play; theater of the absurd.

47A

Asian American Literature

Pat Chu
TF 12-1:30

Examines literature in English by North American writers of Asian descent from the 19th century to the present. Focuses on issues of literary collectivity based on national origin and race, and how gender, sexuality, and class have affected critical approaches to this literature.

121A

Sex and Culture

Paul Morrison

MWR 11-12

Film: W 7-9

An exploration of the virtually unlimited explanatory power attributed to sexuality in the modern world. "Texts" include examples from literature, film, television, pornography, sexology, and theory.

167B

The Postmodern African American Novel

Aliyyah Abdur-Rahman

Study of experimental fiction of prominent twentieth-century African-American authors. Investigates features of the postmodern novel—including disruptive chronologies, the representation of fragmented identities, intertextual play and parody, and the critique of western modernity—as longstanding practices in black writing.

177B

American Popular Music and Contemporary Fiction

Caren Irr

TF 10:30-12

Explores writing by novelists, journalists, and historians who react to the global spread of American popular music (mainly "rock"). Themes include race relations, technology, sound effects, the mystique of the star, and the globalization of the music industry.

World Literature

127B

Migrating Bodies, Migrating Texts

Faith Smith

MW 5-6:30

Beginning with the region's representation as a tabula rasa, examines the textual and visual constructions of the Caribbean as colony, homeland, backyard, paradise, and Babylon, and how the region's migrations have prompted ideas about evolution, hedonism, imperialism, nationalism, and diaspora.

Creative Writing Courses

19B The Autobiographical Imagination Melanie Braverman
R 2-5

Formerly ENG 117b, Offered exclusively on a credit/no credit basis. Signature of the instructor required. Students will be selected after the submission of a sample of writing, preferably four to seven pages of poetry. Samples should be submitted to the English department office, Rabb 144, no later than two days before the first meeting of class This combination literature/creative writing course will combine the study of contemporary autobiographical prose and poetry with a series of writing exercises based on these texts. Examines—as writers—what is the ways in which lies, metaphor, and imagination transform memory to reveal and conceal the self.

79A Beginning Screenplay Marc Weinberg
R 2-5

This class cannot be repeated for credit by students who have taken ENG 129b in previous years. Fundamentals of screenwriting: structure, plot, conflict, character, and dialog. Students will read screenwriting theory, scripts, analyze films, and produce an outline and the first act of an original screenplay.

109A Directed Writing: Poetry Olga Broumas
W 2-5

Offered exclusively on a credit/no credit basis. Students will be selected after the submission of a sample of writing, preferably 4-7 pages. Samples should be submitted to the department office (Rabb 144) no later than two days before the first class meeting. May be repeated for credit. A workshop for poets willing to explore and develop their craft through intense reading in current poetry, stylistic explorations of content, and imaginative stretching of forms. Usually offered every year.

109B Directed Writing: Short Fiction Stephen McCauley
T 1:30-4:30

Offered exclusively on a credit/no credit basis. Signature of the instructor required. Students will be selected after the submission of a sample of writing, preferably four to seven pages of fiction. Samples should be submitted to the English department office, Rabb 144, no later than two days before the first meeting of class. A workshop for motivated students with a serious interest in pursuing writing. Student stories will be copied and distributed before each class meeting. Students' stories, as well as exemplary published short stories, will provide the occasion for textual criticism in class.

119A

Directed Writing: Fiction

Ralph Lombreglia

R 2-5

Offered exclusively on a credit/no credit basis. Signature of the instructor required. Students will be selected after the submission of a sample of writing, preferably four to seven pages of fiction. Samples should be submitted to the English department office, Rabb 144, no later than two days before the first meeting of class

An advanced fiction workshop for students primarily interested in the short story. Students are expected to compose and revise three stories, complete typed critiques of each other's work weekly, and discuss readings based on examples of various techniques.

119B

Directed Writing: Poetry

Franz Wright

T 4:30-7:30

Offered exclusively on a credit/no credit basis. Signature of the instructor required. Students will be selected after the submission of a sample of writing, preferably four to seven pages of poetry. Samples should be submitted to the English department office, Rabb 144, no later than two days before the first meeting of class. For those who wish to improve as poets while broadening their knowledge of poetry. Half the semester will be devoted to prosody, with formal exercises as preparation for later "free-assignments." Student poems will be discussed in a "workshop" format with emphasis on revision. Remaining time will cover assigned readings and issues of craft.

Graduate Student Courses

200A Methods of Literary Study Thomas King
M 2-5

Required of all first-year graduate students

218B The Modern Novel John Plotz
W 2-5

Traces the shifting relationship between ideas of intimacy, sociability, solidarity, and publicity in the Anglo-American novel, 1850-1950. Explores how the novel reacts to crises in the relationship between the individual and such larger groupings as society, nation, gender, race, or species. Marxist, psychoanalytic, Frankfurt School, deconstructive, and New Historicist theory examined. Authors include Melville, Dickens, Eliot, Hardy, Conrad, James, Stein, Cather, and Beckett.

226A Race and Reconstruction Michael Gilmore
T 1:30-4:30

This course will examine the struggles over race and sectional reconciliations that convulsed American culture in the long era of Reconstruction (1865-1905). Works by white and black authors, including Tourgee, Twain, Cable, Jewett, Douglass, Hopkins, and Chesnut.

243b Renaissance Tragedy Ramie Targoff
F 9-12

This course examines the genre of tragedy in the English Renaissance. Readings include plays by Marlowe, Kyd, Shakespeare, Tourneur, Middleton, Webster, philosophical texts by Aristotle, Nietzsche, and Benjamin, among others.