Brandeis University
English Department Courses: Fall 2011

Gateway Course

1a  Introduction to Literary Studies  Aliyyah Abdur-Rahman
     MWR 10-11

This course is designed to introduce students to basic skills and concepts needed for the study of Anglophone literature and culture. These include skills in close reading; identification and differentiation of major literary styles and periods; knowledge of basic critical terms; definition of genres. Usually offered every semester.

Courses Pre-1800

4a  The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century:
    Reason, Pleasure, Power  Thomas King
    TF 12:30-1:50

1660-1800: The age of reason and contradiction, enlightenment, and xenophobia. Surveys literary, critical, philosophical, political, and life writing, investigating the emergence of a literary public sphere, a national canon, and the first professional women writers. Usually offered every second year.

54a  Comedy, Sympathy, and the Problem of Other Minds
     in the 18th-Century Novel  Steven Plunkett
     MW 5-6:20

Explores the origins of the novel with reference to representations of consciousness. Attention paid not only to social and historical contexts, but also to empirical philosophy of the period and its concern with recognizing other minds. Special one-time offering, fall 2011.

128a  Alternative Worlds: Modern Utopian Texts  Mary Baine Campbell
      MW 3:30-4:50

Prerequisite: ENG 1a or ENG 11a.

132b  Chaucer  Mary Baine Campbell
       MWR 12-12:50

Prerequisite: ENG 1a or ENG 10a or ENG 11a.
In addition to reading Chaucer's major work *The Canterbury Tales* in Middle English, pays
special attention to situating the Tales in relation to linguistic, literary, and social developments of the later Middle Ages. No previous knowledge of Middle English required. Usually offered every second year.

183b Gods and Humans in the Renaissance Ramie Targoff and Jonathan Unglaub
TF 11-12:20

Examines the relationship between gods and humans in literature and art from the Renaissance, exploring how classical gods and goddesses, as well as biblical figures of the divine, are represented by major European artists and authors. Special one-time offering, fall 2011.

Courses Post-1800

5a British Literature in the Age of Darwin and Dickens Sebastian Lecourt
TR 2-3:20

Offers general coverage of the major literary genres in the nineteenth century. The course studies the cultural context forged by the interaction of fiction, prose, and poetry. Usually offered every third year.

8a 21st-Century American Literature Caren Irr
MWR 11-11:50

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

26a Detection and Analysis: Deciphering Theories of Madness Michaela Whelan
TR 3:30-4:50

Prerequisite: ENG 1a or 11a.
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. Usually offered every second year.

36a America’s First Bestsellers Michael Gilmore
MW 2-3:20

The first century of American bestsellers. What made these books so attractive to readers at the time? Explores themes of social mobility, racial and gender conflict, romance and seduction, and warfare. Authors include Cooper, Stowe, Alcott, and Crane. Usually offered every second year.
In what ways, and for what purposes, has postcolonial Britain sought imaginatively to recreate its imperial past? Discusses recent literary and cinematic representations of empire, in which critique, fascination, and nostalgia are, often problematically, blended. Authors include Paul Scott, Rushdie, Ishiguro, and Zadie Smith. Usually offered every fourth year.

A study of the major novels and stories of William Faulkner, the most influential American novelist of the twentieth century. Usually offered every third year.

Focuses on how some of the central American Realists and Naturalists set about representing and analyzing American social and political life. Topics include the changing status of individuals, classes, and genders, among others. Usually offered every third year.

Prerequisite: ENG 1a, ENG 10a, HUM 10a or ENG 11a.
Students imagine meanings for terms like "American" and "women" in relation to poetry. After introductory study of Anne Bradstreet, Phillis Wheatley, and Emily Dickinson, readings of (and about) women whose work was circulated widely, especially among other women poets, will be selected from mainly twentieth-century writers. Usually offered every second year.

A critical examination of the history of mainstream U.S. cinema from the 1930s to the present. Focuses on major developments in film content and form, the rise and fall of the studio and star system, the changing nature of spectatorship, and the social context of film production and reception. Usually offered every second year.

Film/Media Courses

Literary Theory Courses
Prerequisite: An introductory course in gender/sexuality and/or a course in critical theory. Historical, literary, and theoretical perspectives on the construction and performance of queer subjectivities. How do queer bodies and queer representations challenge heteronormativity? How might we imagine public spaces and queer citizenship? Usually offered every second year.

161b The Death and Life of the Subject Laura Quinney
TF 11-12:20

Studies the disintegration of the unified self in modern philosophy, literature and critical theory, primarily of the twentieth century. Topics include empiricist, existential and psychoanalytic accounts of the self. Literary works by Woolf, Proust, Beckett, Blanchot and Duras. Usually offered every third year.

171a History of Literary Criticism: From Plato to Postmodernism Sebastian Lecourt
TF 9:30-10:50

Explores major documents in the history of criticism from Plato to the present. Texts will be read as representative moments in the history of criticism and as documents of self-sufficient literary and intellectual interest. Usually offered every third year.

Multicultural / World Anglophone Literature Courses

16a Slavery and Self-making in African American Literature A. Abdur-Rahman

Critical investigation of African American writing as it engages slavery, freedom, and literary self-fashioning. We will read autobiographies, uplift novels, protest fiction and neo-slave narratives. Particular attention will be paid to issues of identity, sexuality, and social status; textual modes of representation and liberatory politics; the literary culture of sentiment; and African American constructions and contestations of race, gender, nation, and expressive culture since the antebellum period. Authors may include Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Jacobs, Gayl Jones, Harriet Wilson, William Wells Brown, Frances E. W. Harper, Pauline Hopkins, and Toni Morrison. Contemporary films may include Sankofa, Amistad, and Daughters of the Dust. Usually offered every third year.

77b Literatures of Global English David Babcock
MW 2-3:20

Survey of world Anglophone literatures with attention to writers' literary responses to aspects of English as a global language with a colonial history. Focus on Indian subcontinent, Africa, the Caribbean, North America. Writers may include Rushdie, Coetzee, Kincaid, Atwood, Anzaldua. Usually offered every third year.

138a Making Modern Subjects: Empire, Citizenship, Intimacy Faith Smith
TF 12:30-1:50
Considers inflections of "the modern" across the Americas, allowing us to compare models and strategies at a historical moment when shifts from slavery to "freedom" and from Europe to the U.S.A., frame anxieties about empire, citizenship, technology, vernaculars, and aesthetics. Usually offered every third year.

Creative Writing Courses

19b The Autobiographical Imagination Melanie Braverman
R 2-5

This is an experiential learning course. Offered exclusively on a credit/no credit basis. Students will be selected after the submission of a sample of writing, preferably four to seven pages. Please refer to the Schedule of Classes for submission formats and deadlines within registration periods.

Combines the study of contemporary autobiographical prose and poetry with intense writing practice arising from these texts. Examines--as writers--what it means to construct the story of one's life, and ways in which lies, metaphor, and imagination transform memory to reveal and conceal the self. Usually offered every second year.

79a Directed Writing: Beginning Screenplay Marc Weinberg
M 6:30-9:30

This is an experiential learning course. This course may not be repeated by students who have taken ENG 129b in previous years. Offered exclusively on a credit/no credit basis. Students will be selected after the submission of a sample of writing of no more than five pages. Please refer to the Schedule of Classes for submission formats and deadlines within registration periods.

Fundamentals of screenwriting: structure, plot, conflict, character, and dialogue. Students read screenwriting theory, scripts, analyze files, and produce an outline and the first act of an original screenplay. Usually offered every third year.

109a Directed Writing: Poetry Melanie Braverman
F 9-12

This is an experiential learning course. Offered exclusively on a credit/no credit basis. Students will be selected after the submission of a sample of writing, preferably four to seven pages. Please refer to the Schedule of Classes for submission formats and deadlines within registration periods. 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 Colin Channer
T 9-12
This is an experiential learning course. Offered exclusively on a credit/no credit basis. Students will be selected after the submission of a sample of writing, preferably four to seven pages. Please refer to the Schedule of Classes for submission formats and deadlines within registration periods. May be repeated for credit.
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. Usually offered every year.

119a Directed Writing: Fiction
Stephen McCauley
T 2-5

This is an experiential learning course. Offered exclusively on a credit/no credit basis. Students will be selected after the submission of a sample of writing, preferably four to seven pages. Please refer to the Schedule of Classes for submission formats and deadlines within registration periods. May be repeated for credit.
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. Usually offered every year.

119b Directed Writing: Poetry
Olga Broumas
W 2-5

This is an experiential learning course. Offered exclusively on a credit/no credit basis. Students will be selected after the submission of a sample of writing, preferably four to seven pages. Please refer to the Schedule of Classes for submission formats and deadlines within registration periods. May be repeated for credit.
For those who wish to improve as poets while broadening their knowledge of poetry, through a wide spectrum of readings. Students' poems will be discussed in a "workshop" format with emphasis on revision. Remaining time will cover assigned readings and issues of craft. Usually offered every year.

**Graduate Courses**

200a Methods of Literary Study
William Flesch
R 2-5

Required of all first-year graduate students.
Usually offered every year.

217a Writing 21st-Century Revolutions
Caren Irr
M 2-5

Explores scenes of revolutionary upheaval in 20th century fiction—from the historical novel to satire and metafiction. Readings in political philosophy accompany study of works by Lawrence,
Hemingway, Bowles, Ngugi, Didion, DeLillo and others. Concludes with 21st century variations on the political novel. One-time special offering.

225a  Romantic Poetry  Laura Quinney

A study of the canon of romantic poetry, with attention to the critical heritage. Topics include: the French Revolution and Napoleon; the lyric, epic, and drama; the philosophy of subjectivity. Usually offered every third year.