

English Graduate Courses Fall 2016

501 / Materials and Methods of Research

Robert Caserio

M / 11:15 a.m. – 2:15 p.m. / 132 Burrowes Building

The course introduces first-year graduate students to methodological and professional dimensions of the discipline of English studies. In doing so, it considers how advanced students might best determine their scholarly interests, and how they might think critically and creatively about the profession and the discipline they are entering.

Short writing assignments throughout the term will be tied to readings in theory and criticism and to panel discussions that introduce the variety of the English graduate faculty's intellectual aims.

Sessions of the course also will orient students to library research and to the protocols that govern participation in professional conferences, publication, and grant applications.

502 / Theory and Teaching of Composition

Jack Selzer

T / 2:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. / 132 Burrowes Building

Theory and Teaching of Composition (3) Study of grammar, logic, rhetoric, and style in their applicability to teaching composition.

506 / The English Language

Scott Smith

R / 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. / 132 Burrowes Building

This course offers a seminar in the History of the English Language (HEL) with both pedagogical and research components. We will generally examine how cultural and historical forces have driven language change over time. Specific topics might include the development of early English, the politics of language and language use, longstanding debates over what constitutes 'standard' English, the power of institutional and educational forces, the impact of language pedagogues and guidebooks, the emergence of English as a global language, and the influence of different technologies. The course also provides pedagogical training for teaching History of the English Language at the undergraduate level. Students will create syllabi, lectures, and reviews of potential course resources; they will also observe the instructor teach an undergraduate HEL course during the semester (which will meet TR 12:05-1:20). Finally, each student will write a ten-page paper that offers a historically informed interpretation of a text or issue from their own area of interest.

512 / The Art of Novel Writing

William Cobb

F / 11:15 a.m. – 2:15 p.m. / 113 Thomas Building

This graduate-level creative writing course will be focused primarily on the art of novel writing. As far as technique goes, we will try to understand and master the demands of sustaining longer narratives: the need for organic, multifaceted characters, captivating locations for the action, dramatic event as the cornerstone of plot, and the role of scintillating detail in conveying a vision—part of the dynamic that Vladimir Nabokov describes as “combination and inspiration.” On a less analytical level, it will also focus on the kaleidoscopic possibilities (and magic) of the world, a chaotic place peopled with fossil collectors, angry dental hygienists, suspicious DirecTV repairmen, morbid elementary school teachers, convenience store artists, perverted bankers, bad grandmothers, good cousins, and that high school coach who scared the bejesus out of everyone. With nothing more than a collection of highly charged words we will attempt to create new worlds and identify new wrinkles and new understandings of our own. Students will be required to write several pieces of fiction during the semester, which should

culminate in three short stories or chapters, and to give it their all. The guiding principle will be Have Fun With It. Create a world that surprises you, and your readers. Put everything you have into it, and make it strange. You will be encouraged, but not required, to work on a novel—a short story is often the fetus of a novel, and a good place to cut one's teeth on narrative. Readings will be a selection of three (or more) recently published novels to be decided at a later date, but student favorites in recent years have been Per Petterson's *Out Stealing Horses*, Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl*, Dave Eggers's *The Circle*, Marilynne Robinson's *Gilead* and *Lila*, Karen Russell's *Swamplandia!* and Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*. I'll likely go "Old School" and require a classic as well, for a nice touch of *Where Are We Going, Where Have We Been*. All but the classic choice will most likely be 21st century novels, with emphasis on works in the last few years. Lastly, there will be a lively focus on the synergistic relationship of fiction and film, and some required film viewings during the semester.

513 / The Writing of Poetry

Robin Becker

M / 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. / 132 Burrowes Building

The Writing of Poetry for the student with considerable experience in writing poetry; a workshop devoted to advanced poetic technique.

515 / The Writing of Nonfiction

Elizabeth Kadetsky

R / 2:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. / 132 Burrowes Building

Supervised workshop in advanced nonfiction techniques.

530 / The Literature of Biography and Autobiography: Digital Autobiography

Leisha Jones

W / 2:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. / 159 Burrowes Building

Digital Autobiography: Electronic literature is a category of textually driven works encompassing a variety of recent and emerging "born-digital" forms, excluding digitized print literature such as the Dostoyevsky you might read on a Kindle. The most ubiquitous form of contemporary autobiography is found on the web, in blogs and vlogs and even Twitter feeds with thousands of subscribers. How does this current form of autobiography compare to its print incarnations? Does our participation in social media mandate a kind of autobiography-ing of our everyday lives? What is the difference between the production of ourselves as brands and the production of an autobiography? Does it remain a literary form if everyone is doing it? The course begins with N. Katherine Hayles's *Electronic Literature: New Horizons for the Literary*, the first systematic survey of electronic literature, with an emphasis on the autobiography. Throughout the semester we will explore and evaluate autobiographical hypertext/media, online performances, Flash and Twitter poems, computer-generated and interactive fiction, art installations, chatterbots, games, XML digital remixes, weblogs and wikis. The course will conclude with a series of autobiographical digital experiments conducted by students that will attempt to find and perform the limits of this genre, including the production of weblogs, vlogs, hypertexts/hypermedia "books," kinetic poetry, and interactive text engines.

549 / Shakespeare

Patrick Cheney

W / 11:15 a.m. – 2:15 p.m. / 132 Burrowes Building

Special problems of sources, chronology, text, characterization, and motivation in the drama.

561 / Studies in the Romantic Movement - Romantic Women Writers

Anne McCarthy

R / 2:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. / 159 Burrowes Building

Since the 1990s, significant scholarly effort has gone towards rethinking the role of women in British Romanticism. Authors such as Jane Austen, Mary Shelley, and Dorothy Wordsworth have been anthologized and canonized, while digital media and textual scholarship have made an array of late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century works particularly those by women more widely accessible than ever before. However, despite these many efforts of recovery and recontextualization, the mythology of the Big Six (male) Romantic poets remains strikingly dominant in accounts of the period. This course, then, will explore the relationship between the female author and Romanticism, asking to what extent these terms might be mutually constitutive and mutually exclusive. In addition to Austen, Shelley, and Wordsworth, we will read works by Charlotte Smith, Mary Wollstonecraft, Ann Radcliffe, Mary Robinson, Anna Seward, and Mary Somerville. Our goal will be not only to expand our sense of a Romantic canon but also to reconceptualize the Romantic itself in relation to the broad interests and experiences of the woman writer. Requirements for the course include a critical bibliography, presentation, and a 20- to 25-page final paper.

565 / American or British Literary Modernism

Kevin Bell

T / 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. / 159 Burrowes Building

Studies of periods in African-American literature. Periods might include the Harlem Renaissance or the Black Arts Movement.

577 / Speculative Fictions: AI, Apocalypse, Aliens, and Alternative Actualities

Tina Chen-Goudie

W / 11:15 a.m. – 2:15 p.m. / 302 Boucke

We will read idiosyncratically in a variety of genres: science fiction, fantasy, horror, the gothic, and magical realism that have been associated with the speculative, the hypothetical, the weird, and the fantastic. Interrogating the categorical distinctions separating these genres from each other and genre fiction from literature we will pay attention to the various topoi that have become associated with these forms, including but not limited to world-building, dystopias, apocalyptic futures, alien encounters, cognitive re-mappings and information technologies, artificial life, ghostly matters, and posthuman embodiments as figured by the dead (zombies), the undead (vampires), and the machinic (robots and/or cyborgs). We will draw on theoretical discussion of genre, gender, posthumanism, ecology, and critical race studies to help frame our discussions. Requirements for the course will include 3 short response papers, a book presentation, a collaborative project, and a final seminar essay.

583 / Studies in Theory: Theory, Popular, Music

Jeff Nealon

T / 2:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. / 103 Ferguson

This course has a dual origin -- first in a provocation, and then in a subsequent thought experiment. The provocation comes in a single line from Lawrence Grossberg, the Dean of cultural studies scholars of popular music. Looking back on the field in 2002, Grossberg wrote that especially where it pertains to critical theory, "I do not think that writing about popular music has significantly changed (to say nothing of 'progressed') in forty years." Well, I think to myself, let's see if, more than a decade later, we can do something about that (and the recent emergence of "Sound Studies" has gone a long way toward offering consistency to the field). Second, the thought experiment: what if we take popular music to be the spine of American cultural production in the late 20th century (and beyond), rather than treating it as the frivolous younger sibling of literature, museum art, classical music, art-house film, or architecture? If we take popular music seriously as artistic production, if we follow popular music on its own terms rather than comparing it (unfavorably) to other art forms, what happens to the cultural stories we've told ourselves about the latter part of the American 20th century -- about modernism and postmodernism, art versus commodity, high versus mass culture, artistic authenticity versus "sold-out" popularity? In short, the course attempts to re-theorize recent American cultural production through a primary, unapologetic emphasis on the history of popular music.

584.1 / Proseminar in Premodern Rhetoric

John Jasso

T / 11:15 a.m. - 2:15 p.m. / 159 Burrowes Building

This proseminar is a survey of the major concepts and controversies of rhetoric in the Western tradition before the Enlightenment. We will explore rhetoric's origins in Ancient Greece and Rome, and trace its reception and evolution through the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance. In so doing we will consider a number of prominent historical figures like the Sophists, Plato, Cicero, St. Augustine, Christine de Pizan, and Petrus Ramus. While the course will cover important rhetorical concepts, we will also consider how these concepts were shaped by and helped shape ideas in philosophy, theology, politics, science, etc. As such, we'll view the conversation around rhetoric as one that is continuously engaged in and evolving throughout the history of the West challenging some contemporary misconceptions that it might have died out in this or that premodern period. Readings will mainly be primary texts in translation. Requirements include: preparation for and engaged participation in discussion; a brief presentation on an important primary text; digital dialectics; and a brief review essay exploring the development of a concept or controversy in rhetorical theory in premodernity.

597.1 / Researching and Theorizing Academic Literacy

Suresh Canagarajah

T / 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. / 132 Burrowes Building

Academic literacy is important at various stages of one's educational trajectory i.e., undergraduate studies, graduate degree, and scholarly research and publishing. While this is a high-stakes genre of communication, the conventions of certain texts (such as the research essay in basic writing courses, dissertation in graduate studies, and research article in peer reviewed journals) have not been well defined. There are also different theoretical orientations to studying and acquiring these genres, including genre analysis, English for Academic Purposes, new literacy studies, and academic socialization. Reading from these diverse orientations, we will identify the areas that need further research and pedagogical intervention in academic literacy. The course will explore questions such as the following: What are the different genres of academic literacy? What types of competence are required to be successful in academic communication? How do academic genres relate to everyday communication? What are the challenges in practicing academic writing to serve public intellectual work? What are the historical and social changes taking place in academic conventions? What are the economic, material, and ideological factors that determine the production, circulation, and reception of academic texts? How do academic genres shape or limit knowledge construction?

597.2 / Special Topics: Literatures of Japanism (Lit of Japanism)

Christopher Reed

W / 2:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. / 132 Burrowes Building

As the farthest extreme of the East and the last civilization opened to Western exploration and travel, Japan signified the utmost in European literatures of the exotic such as Pierre Loti famous or notorious *Madame Chrysanthe* of 1887, with its many derivative and satirical responses. Just as Western artists and designers rushed to deploy Japanese aesthetics in art, interior design, and clothing, authors, from Marcel Proust to Ezra Pound, experimented with Japanist effects in literary style. This course traces these canons of Japanist aesthetics, then complicates them with other perspectives. We will consider the centrality of women authors and artists in creating images of a feminized Japan. We will assess projects by Japanese to appropriate Japanist tropes for their own purposes, creating travel narratives of Japanese abroad, such as Yone Noguchi's *American Diary of a Japanese Girl*, that attempt to contest dynamics of explorer and explored, and novels like Junichiro Tanizaki's *Some Prefer Nettles* that explore the dynamics of Japanism in Japan.', ', 'This background will inform further study of later literatures of Japanism that engage the dynamics of war, defeat, and occupation, including such best-selling books as John Hersey *Hiroshima* and James Michener's *Sayonara*. We will explore the relationship of these popular literatures to middlebrow taste for Japanese art and design aesthetics at a time when the avant-garde was committed to ideals of a purely American aesthetic.', ', 'Finally, we will take up the literatures of expatriation, both before and after the war, by authors such as the South African William Plomer and the American Donald Richie. And we will look at the burgeoning literature associated with Japanese-American identity, beginning with John Okada's 1957 *No No Boy*.

597.3 / Graphic Feminism (cross listed with Women's Studies)**Susan Squier****R / 11:15 a.m. – 2:15 p.m. / 216 Willard Building**

This cross-listed graduate seminar in Women's Studies and English will provide an introduction to the vibrant field of feminist comics and cartooning, 1970-2015. We will study feminist creators and their comics such as Joyce Farmer ("Abortion Eve"), Phoebe Gloecker (*A Child's Life*), Lynda Barry (*One Hundred Demons*), Alison Bechdel (*Fun Home, Are You My Mother*), Marjane Satrapi (*Embroideries, Chicken with Plums*), Ariel Schrag (*Potential*), and Katie Green (*Lighter than My Shadow*). These works address a wide range of feminist issues, including reproductive rights, racism, sexual abuse, sex positivity, religion, aging, the mother-daughter relation, bisexuality and female embodiment. We will also read scholarly studies of contemporary feminist cartooning such as those by Hillary L. Chute; Amelia de Falco, Jared Gardner and Elizabeth El Rafele, among others. Students will write a book review, several response papers, and a seminar paper that takes the course focus (feminist comics) in any direction they want (after consultation with me), as reflecting their own disciplinary positionality. Possible topics can range from the study of a particular feminist issue or a particular feminist cartoonist to the examination of a disciplinary issue (to give just two examples, the geography of space, place, and power, or the history of the reproductive rights movement) as they are refracted through one or more works of feminist cartooning.

597.4 / The Environmental Humanities and American Literature**Hester Blum****T / 11:15 – 2:15 p.m. / 132 Burrowes Building**

This course will provide an introduction to the field of the Environmental Humanities with readings both in recent ecocritical scholarship and pre-1900 American literature. Drawing from insights in the fields of natural history, political ecology, cultural geography and anthropology, philosophy, and ecocriticism, among others in the social and natural sciences, the Environmental Humanities studies the cultural and theoretical implications of environmental conditions. Such questions have become more urgent in our present moment of climate change and resource depletion, in which the effects of human actions on the globe have taken on planetary magnitude and produced, as many have argued, a new geological period designated the anthropocene (the epoch of measurable human impact on the earth). The late-eighteenth-century advent of industrialization marks the beginning of anthropocene, in most accounts. Yet as we will see in our reading of earlier texts, a sense of the exhaustion of worldly resources has been a common trope for centuries. This course will give students the opportunity to read American literature through the lens of the Environmental Humanities: what literary and critical forms are sustainable in an era of environmental depletion?

597.5 / Postwar Literary Intellectuals in America**Chris Castiglia and Benjamin Schreier****F / 11:15 a.m. – 2:15 p.m. / 132 Burrowes Building**

The period following the end of World War II saw seismic shifts in the shape of American universities, in critical methodology, in the public perception of intellectuals (and vice versa), and in the definition of America as an object of study. Between F.O. Matthiessen in the mid-1940s to Leslie Fiedler, James Baldwin, and Susan Sontag in the late 1960s, literary criticism reflected changing attitudes toward Cold War nationalism, urban socialism, Americanism, myth and symbol criticism and other types of formalism, and identity-based studies. In this course, we will cover a range of critics spanning the Cold War, including Richard Chase, Lionel Trilling, Irving Howe, James Baldwin, Richard Poirier, Leslie Fiedler, Newton Arvin, Susan Sontag, and Kenneth Burke in order to accomplish three tasks: first, to give students a solid background in a key chapter of the intellectual history of the twentieth century; second, to provide a background to the critical debates students will need to understand and engage today; and third, to provide an opportunity to evaluate various methodological positions and critical styles, with an eye to thinking about how graduate students might shape their own critical voices. In some cases we will be teaching the critical and theoretical texts alongside works of literature to assess the critical criteria those critics offer.

597.6 / Special Topics: Proseminar in Transatlantic Modernism

Janet Lyon

F / 11:15 a.m. – 2:15 p.m. / 159 Burrowes Building

This course covers a wide range of modernist texts that we'll examine through a set of lenses: what constitutes modernism? Where does modernism happen? What are the relations among various modernist arts? How does modernism circulate? What is meta-modernism? How does a transnational approach to modernism inflect the previous questions? We'll discuss the formal aesthetics and political electricity associated with modernist style. And we'll try to get a handle on the theoretical scaffolding of the "transnational." Biweekly responses, one presentation, seminar paper.

597.7 / Special Topic: Experimental Literature (*cross listed CMLIT*)

Jonathan Eburne

W / 11:15 a.m. – 2:15 p.m. / Room Location TBA

This course will cover a history of "experimentalism" in literature and the other arts, discussing general theories of experimentalism from Nietzsche (i.e. *The Gay Science*) to Avital Ronnel (e.g. *The Test Drive), and focusing on works from the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries.