**English Graduate Courses**

**Fall 2017**

**501 / Materials and Methods of Research**

**Janet Lyon**

**M / 11:15 a.m. – 2:15 p.m. / 301D Huck Life Science Building**

No description provided.

**502 / Introduction to Rhetoric and Composition**

**Suresh Canagarajah**

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

English 502 is a “proseminar”: a survey designed to make you familiar with key texts, issues, and movements in a field.  It is fundamentally a reading course. The seminar will provide an introduction to seminal texts and emerging work in rhetoric and composition so that you will gain a sense of the range of theoretical and pedagogical work being done in the area. To give the course some common core, it has been organized around the theme of “Key Texts and Movements.” The readings will come mainly from The Norton Book of Composition Studies, edited by Susan Miller. Other readings will be made available electronically, as relevant to emerging themes and interests. We will start with early efforts to translate classical rhetoric for composition instruction; then analyze the process movement, which provided a cognitive and empirical basis to writing; review the social constructionist turn in literacy; and finally theorize the influence of developments such as globalization, mobility, and digital technology on rhetoric. To further add coherence, we will return frequently to two key questions: What are the implications for textual analysis? What are the implications for teaching? The two main written assignments, a book review and a seminar paper, will enable you to choose a topic of your interest for closer analysis. You will leave the course with a good understanding of the field of rhetoric and composition, pondering on new questions for research and theorization, with a feeling for diverse options available to you as a teacher of writing, and with a refined understanding of textual analysis.

**512 / The Writing of Fiction**

**Charlotte Holmes**

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

This seminar is designed to address the needs of students enrolled in the BA/MA Program, creative writers working on thesis material (or potential thesis material) in their first or second year in the program.

Most students in the workshop will be writing short fiction, but if you are working on a novel, or what Norwegian writer Karl Ove Knausgaard calls “auto-fiction,” your writing will add some variety to the format. You’ll have at least two pieces discussed in class. You’ll write about the work we discuss in class—both workshop pieces and the published writing—and complete weekly journal exercises, for which you will have a chance to design the prompts. For your final project in the class, you’ll revise one of your pieces that was discussed in workshop.

We will discuss several books over the semester, examining them in terms of craft. The reading list, still under construction, is likely to include five books, a mix of old and new: *Numbers in the Dark* by Italo Calvino, *My Struggle* by Karl Ove Knausgaard, *Love in Infant Monkeys* by Lydia Millet, *In Love and Trouble* by Alice Walker are some of the books I’m considering.

**513 / The Writing of Poetry**

**Lee Peterson**

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

No description provided.

**515 / Writing Nonfiction**

**Toby Thompson**

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

Will concentrate on creative nonfiction and how we, as nonfiction writers, create. Techniques for mining memory, as well as for creating memorable stories, will taught.  Rites of passage, such as love affairs, family deaths, interesting jobs, great trips, various disorders and assets are possible topics.  The line between nonfiction and fiction in creative nonfiction will be discussed.  Several contemporary or near-contemporary texts will be read.  One six-thousand word piece, due at the middle of the semester, and revised by the end, will be required.  Or the student may choose to write a completely new piece for the second due date. Writing samples will be submitted and discussed on a bi or tri-weekly basis. Since this is a writing, not a literature course, readings will be assigned as the subjects they cover emerge in class; a rigid time frame for required readings is not practical. There will be no examinations.  Grades will be based on writing assignments, readings (short written reactions to texts will be required) and class participation. Attendance at all classes is required.

**540 / Renaissance Aesthetics: The Rhetoric of the Humanist Reformation or The Sublime of Classical Authorship?**

**Patrick Cheney**

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

This seminar offers students an opportunity to study Renaissance aesthetics by bringing face to face two dominant critical conversations that pass in the night. The first, preeminent during the past few decades, is an aesthetics featuring the rhetoric of the humanist Reformation. It focuses on godly language and style as the grammatical tool of a Protestant education, and privileges a rationalist aesthetics of persuasion designed to serve English nationhood patriotically. Walter Ong, Richard Helgerson, Debora Shuger, Rebecca Bushnell, Brian Cummings, Peter Mack, Jeffrey Dolven, Sean Keilen, Andrew Wallace, Lynn Enterline, Gavin Alexander, and Catherine Nicholson focus on what Leah Whittington calls in 2017 a ‘genuine revolution in the study of language’: ‘the new humanist learning—with its focus on historical usage and the skills of speaking and writing.’ This revolution, scholars argue, ‘paved the way for the kind of training in Latin grammar’ that ‘Shakespeare’ and colleagues ‘received’ to invent *good* English literature: a civilizing art-form, figured in Orpheus, who uses his art to tame an unruly nature. Such important work, by focusing on the persuasive art of ‘eloquence’ as the gold standard of Reformation education, style, identity, and thus authorship, tells an important story for our time. It does not tell the full story. For a second conversation is now emerging, featuring a radical counter-aesthetics, illustrated in the ecstatic terror of Orpheus: dismembered by Bacchic Maenads, the poet’s severed head floats down the river Hebrus *singing*. In this aesthetics, classical authorship can hardly be ‘rhetorical’; it becomes ‘sublime’. An aesthetics of the sublime may focus on language and style but it explodes the whole goal of a patriotic, rationalist humanist education, substituting the benchmark of *civic goodness* with *literary* *greatness*. ‘Sublimity,’ says Longinus (the West’s first spokesman of a counter-rhetorical aesthetics), ‘is a kind of eminence or excellence of discourse. It is the source of the distinction of the very greatest poets. . . . For grandeur produces ecstasy rather than persuasion in the hearer; and the combination of wonder and astonishment always proves superior to the merely persuasive and pleasant.’ Thus, for Longinus, great literature ‘tears everything up like a whirlwind’; electrifying aesthetic energy does not destroy but *divinizes*: ‘Sublimity raises us toward the spiritual greatness of god.’ Instead of literature chiseling the human as a good citizen, the sublime invents a revolutionary new figure that becomes the seminal achievement of the Renaissance: *a transcendent human who is divine on earth*. James Porter, Robert Doran, Stephen Halliwell, Timothy Costelloe, Philip Shaw, David Sedley, Erik Gunderson, Henry Day, Philip Hardie, Caroline van Eck, and C. Stephen Jaeger have begun to tell the story of the sublime as the premier aesthetic category in classical, medieval, and Continental Renaissance culture. English 540 aims to transpose this conversation to the English Renaissance, where little work has been done, and put it into play with the conversation about Reformation education, asking: how does the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Reformation study of pedagogy as the rhetoric of humanism connect to the classics-based story of sublime English authorship? To approach this question, we will read selections of critical work from both conversations in order to create a dialogue about important poems, plays, and prose of the period, focusing on four major canonical authors: Edmund Spenser, Christopher Marlowe, William Shakespeare, and Ben Jonson. Is it possible that these authors invent great English authorship as the mainframe of the modern English canon by wedding the rhetoric of the humanist Reformation to the sublime of classical authorship? Did the English canon come into view when the rhetorically trained author became sublime? Weekly short response papers; one 30-minute in-class presentation; and a final research project: preliminary abstract and bibliography; conference paper; critical essay.

**546 / Milton and Liberty**

**David Loewenstein**

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

The seventeenth century in England was crucial period in the history of debates about the meaning of liberty, and in this graduate seminar we’ll consider the ways John Milton (1608-74) defined, debated and reshaped discussions about liberty, tyranny, and servility.  Milton examined these issues—still so important to us today—with enormous imagination and polemical energy.  How do his major prose and poems boldly rethink and imagine concepts of civic, domestic, and religious liberty?  How do they envision tyranny and servility?  How close are Milton’s concepts of civic, domestic, and religious liberty to ours today?  Related issues—for example, press censorship, religious toleration, and religious and political dissent—will likewise be important to our discussions.  At the same time, we’ll devote plenty of attention to the literary, rhetorical, and verbal dimensions of Milton’s writings so that we appreciate what makes Milton a particularly outstanding writer and thinker.  We’ll study substantial selections from his early poetry and his controversial prose (much of it written in the middle of his career) before turning our attention to his greatest poems: Paradise Lost, Samson Agonistes, and Paradise Regained.  As we study Milton, we’ll also address some of the methodological and interpretative issues involved in reading literary texts historically and culturally.  At the same time, we’ll consider how Milton’s writings can still speak to us today as we continue to struggle with such issues as political and religious liberty, freedom and gender relations, religious toleration, and freedom of the press.

**561 / Studies in the Romatic Movement: The Young Romantics at 200**

**Anne McCarthy**

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

The lives and works of the second-generation Romantic poets—Byron, Percy Shelley, and Keats—captured the imagination of their contemporaries and continue to fascinate today. This seminar will explore the works of these poets, as well as that of their intimates and contemporaries, including Mary Shelley, Jane Austen, Leigh Hunt, John William Polidori, and Thomas Love Peacock, locating their literary productions against the background of the end of the Napoleonic Wars, the climate catastrophe of the “Year without a Summer,” and the social upheavals of Britain in the first decades of the nineteenth century. Throughout the course, we will also examine ongoing projects of memorialization and institutionalization of British Romanticism, many of which are taking place under the international Romantic Bicentennials initiative ([http://romantics200.org/)](http://romantics200.org/%29). This multi-year bicentennial provides an auspicious occasion for reflecting on the multi-layered temporalities of the romantic ideal as it came to be associated with this core of young poets and on the desire to experience the events of the past in digitally-mediated “real time.” We will participate directly in the work of the Keats Letters Project ([www.keatslettersproject.com](http://www.keatslettersproject.com)), a collaborative digital project engaged in republishing and re-engaging the poet's substantial epistolary output that is partly sponsored by Romantic Bicentennials.

**564 / Topics in American Literature: 19th Century Supernatural and Strange**

**Christopher Castiglia**

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

The seminar will use a variety of current critical approaches  (object-oriented ontology, speculative realism, action-network theory, enchantment theory) to examine a variety of nineteenth-century paranormal phenomena that obsessed nineteenth-century America. We will explore these phenomena through a range of archival and nonliterary documents, as well as in literary works such as Nathaniel Hawthorne’s The House of the Seven Gables, Hannah Crafts's The Bondwoman's Narrative, Edgar Allan Poe's short fiction, Charles Chestnutt's The Conjure Woman, Elizabeth Phelps's The Gates Ajar, and others.

**568 / Gender Issues in African-American Literature:  Black Women’s Writing and African American Cultures of Print**

**Shirley Moody-Turner**

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

This course will consider the innovative strategies black women writers have employed to participate in and shape national and transnational cultures of print. We will consider new ways of reading black women’s writings, in particular by examining how we define literary production, by re-thinking the social geographies of print production, by visiting or re-visiting both print and digital archives, and by focusing on networks of literary actors and agents who have facilitated black women’s literary production and the construction of black women’s intellectual histories. We will read a range of primary texts by black women writers, including newspapers, magazines, letters, speeches, religious and political tracts, published narratives and novels, engravings, poetry and personal journals.  While our readings will be rooted in the nineteenth century, students will have opportunities to work in earlier and later periods.

**583 / Fates of the Performative**

**Jeffrey Nealon**

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

From its birth in J.L. Austin’s speech-act theory of the 1950s, “the performative” has had quite a ride in 20th and 21st century literary and cultural theory. Migrating from its home turf in linguistics and analytic philosophy of language (where the performative served as a powerful critique of logical positivism, insisting that any state of “being” presupposes a “doing” rather than vice versa), performativity has made its way into the ground water of discourses as divergent as gender and sexuality studies (most notably through the work of Eve Sedgwick), deconstruction (Jacques Derrida), political theory (Judith Butler), all the way to the new materialist physics of Karen Barad (who argues that all matter “is” simply what it “does,” and thereby matter itself is performative).

Given the richness of the concept performativity and its rangy disciplinary spread, it might seem that there’s no more theoretical juice to be squeezed out of Austin’s 1955 lecture series *How to Do Things With Words*. However, I want begin this seminar by returning to Austin, to the original site of performative emergence, in the hopes of isolating one element that seems never to have been exploited in the later legacy of performative theory: namely, the sense of humor that’s evident in Austin’s lectures, as well as the important, indeed structuring role of humor in his notion of the performative (not only in Austin, but in Derrida’s re-deployment of Austin, and his subsequent smack-down battle with John Searle over Austin’s legacy).

After following out performativity’s rise, in subsequent weeks we’ll turn to think about the recent return to fashion of various forms of determinist “realism,” concepts that Austin would have associated with “constative” phrases and acts (ones that state whether something is true or false, having no supposed performative dimension). Austin of course shows how the constative phrase is strictly speaking impossible (even statements of truth or falsity bring that truth or falsity into being), but it’s worth thinking, here in the adolescence of the 21st century, about the returning prestige of the “constative,” or more simply put the return of realist, objective truth within 21st century Humanities theory.

The constative real has fans everywhere from Badiou to Latour’s actor-network theory through Zizek; all the way from Speculative Realist and Object-Oriented thinkers to the data sets of the Digital Humanities; among Surface Reading (Sharon Marcus), Distant Reading (Franco Moretti) and Post-Critical Reading (Rita Felske), with a transversal connection to Animal and Environmental Studies (thinking the animal or ecological “real” outside human linguistic categorization). Even gender theory, surely the crux point of performativity in the late 20th century, is entering a constative phase, with work on transsexual identity suggesting that these days gender is the kind of thing one confirms through surgery, rather than undermining gender roles through subversive performance. Indeed, much of this realist turn across the Humanities sets itself up against performativity, or more narrowly against the “linguistic turn” in 20th century theory.

In any case, the crux of this course is simple: we aim to think about several “fates of the performative” (especially its broadly “comic” theory and practice) in the current constative or “realist” (and largely “tragic”) era of Humanities theory, after the linguistic turn. I’m not interested in offering an elegy for the performative, but thinking primarily about what work it can do going forward, offering a sort of diagnosis: what’s living and what’s dead in performative theory? Or as Foucault more eloquently puts the question, “How is today different from yesterday?”

We’ll read work by many of the thinkers cited in the description, pro and con on the future of performativity.

**584.1 / Studies in Rhetoric: Histories and Historiographies of Rhetoric: Evidence, Methods, and Methodologies
Cheryl Glenn
T / 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. / 132 Burrowes Building**

As its title suggests, English 584 will explore histories of rhetoric at the same time that it interrogates the writing of those histories (historiography). Historical narratives are primarily motivated to do something, and that something always has to do with contributing to the growth, the vitality, and the strength of a person, a people, a culture, often at the expense, erasure, or silencing of another person, another people, or another culture. Thus, historiography is always partial and interested, an interpretive enterprise, rhetorical through and through. At the same time that we will read around in over ​two thousand years of rhetorical history, we’ll also examine the rhetorical methods and methodologies by which those rhetorical histories have been produced, reproduced, resisted, revised, and expanded. You will go away with a pretty good foundation in the object under study (the broad sweep of rhetorical history) as well as in the discourse performing the analysis (the historiography). Just as important, you’ll also go away with experience in conducting your own responsible historiography, based on facts, research, and primary materials. Besides learning how to do responsible historiography, your research goals might also include rediscovering or reinterpreting a text, deciding how things “really” were, or discovering ways in which to address the present meaningfully or announce the near future insightfully. Thus, you might decide to concentrate your semester-long research on a historical moment; a rhetorical figure; or a rhetorical art, theory, or practice.

**584.2 / Rhetoric’s Sensorium**

**Debbie Hawhee**

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

The aim of this seminar is to examine the possibilities for—and begin developing—a sensation-based perspective for rhetorical studies. This means engaging a range of work from rhetoric and allied fields (anthropology, disability studies, political theory, philosophy, cultural studies, art) and considering the work of sensation in relation to language, communication, and/or suasion. The seminar’s reading list aims for connectivity rather than comprehensiveness. The hope is that by the end of the seminar participants will practice sensuous scholarship, tuning in to questions that they find galvanizing, and dwelling, moving with, or perhaps even intuitively following them.

**597.1 / Critical Approaches to American Modernism**

**Kevin Bell**

**T / 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. / N205 Millennium Science Complex**

This course examines modernist experimentation’s diverse treatments of the ways in which technological acceleration, global industrialization, and cosmopolitanism converge in the simultaneous transformation and re-inscription of imperatives of “cultural identity” and their extensive sedimentations of racialism, sexism and homophobia in American literature of the first half of the twentieth century.

We will investigate images, traversals and functions of the cityscape and differently fluidic visions of its inhabitation in relation to the logics of confinement and/or exile by which destituted black American life is represented in literature in the early part of the century. Such conversations necessitate theorizing not only displacement, and diaspora, but aesthetic and political radicalism; regimentations and distortions of time; the systematic regulating and reproduction not only of work and of constructs of beauty, but of every dimension of life.

We’ll pursue questions of figure in Djuna Barnes’ Nightwood and Gertrude Stein’s Three Lives before moving on to works such as Jean Toomer’s Cane, Nella Larsen’s Quicksand, Richard Bruce Nugent’s “Smoke, Lilies, and Jade,” and Claude McKay’s Home to Harlem.

We then turn to Faulkner’s The Sound and the Fury and Fitzgerald’s Tender is the Night, in which white masculinity attempts to recuperate a nostalgically conceived past in a transnational context:  the lost South for Faulkner, and the expatriate Paris of the 1920s for Fitzgerald. In contrast to this reverence for an imagined past, Du Bois’s The Dark Princess looks to the future to project a Pan-African global cosmopolitanism. The course also considers eviscerative views of capitalism’s narcotized auto-proliferations including Edith Wharton’s Twilight Sleep and Nathaniel West’s Miss Lonelyhearts.

**597.2 / Reading Beyond Race**

**Tina Chen Goudie**

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

In this course, we will read contemporary Ethnic American literature but consider what it means when authors challenge the conventions of racial, ethnic, and cultural representation by 1) disrupting expected congruences between author and character; 2) destabilizing the borders of Ethnic American literary topographies; 3) appropriating elements from popular genres and incorporating them into “literary” works in what Josh Lukin describes as “genre poaching”; and 4) putting pressure on the relationship between a politics of representation and the representational politics of Ethnic literature.  In addition to figuring out how these writers and text might teach us to “read beyond race,” we will contrapuntally explore a set of keywords—“representation,” “identity,” “autoethnography,” “bildungsroman,” “authenticity,” “transnationalism,” “globalization,” “genre,” “form,” “aesthetics,” and “postracialism”—that have been important in the formation of Ethnic Studies.

**597.3 / African American Rhetoric**

**Keith Gilyard**

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

This course examines various forms that comprise much of the African American rhetorical tradition and thus represent the major portion of the collective African American cultural and political statement. Along with a consideration of the origin and development of African American verbal forms, which includes a look at their fusion with other communicative styles, we will devote attention to several significant African American rhetors and to rhetorical analyses of selected topics and/or events.

Topics for investigation include folklore, African American vernacular speech, personal narratives, political speeches and essays, and literary criticism. Literary texts will be included and/or referenced, and their rhetorical nature emphasized. In the same vein, the polemics of rap and humor will be discussed. Lastly, we will address the question of how African American rhetorical theory can and/or should inform composition pedagogy.

I have taken a slight turn since I last offered this course several years ago. I’m thinking more these days in terms of the African-American rhetorical subject. So while we will still focus on the forms of African American rhetoric, we’ll be considering other aspects related to the performance of African American rhetors. The practical result of my change of direction is that a greater number of theoretical texts will be required at the expense of primary texts that illustrate specific concept. Of course, if one is inclined to seek out a number of primary texts, I am more than happy to assist.

**597.4 / Proseminar on Feminist Theory**

**Leisha Jones**

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

This proseminar delves into primary texts and literary works by women that mark game-changing moments in Western feminism. Our aim is two-fold: 1) to build a chronology of feminist thought along and against the etymological confines of the waves metaphor, with second and third waves comprising our zones of study; and 2) to locate key feminist concepts that interrogate the category woman from philosophical and literary perspectives. How do notions and practices of feminism change over this important century? What impact does 20th century feminism have upon its 21st century incarnations? Authors under review may include: Virginia Wolf, Djuna Barnes, Simone DeBeauvoir, Monique Wittig, Betty Friedan, Kate Millet, Helen Cixous, Joanna Russ, Luce Irigary, Caryl Churchill, Angela Carter, Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, Elaine Showalter, Adrienne Rich, Nawal El Saadawi, Isabel Allende, Angela Y. Davis, Kathy Acker, Gayle Rubin, Christine Brooke-Rose, Donna Haraway, Octavia Butler, Guyatri Chakravorty Spivak, Judith Butler, Chandra Talpade Mohanty, bell hooks, Susan Bordo, Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards. Students will be required to write two short papers on course material, and a short, conference-style presentation on a contemporary feminist critic of your choosing. The class is well suited to students with an investment in feminist thought as well as those new to the discourse.

**597.5 / Platform, Software, and Code Studies**

**Brian Lennon**

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

An introduction to three interrelated domains of the study of computational media as cultural artifacts, or what has come to be called "expressive computing,” with focus on the specifically linguistic and textual elements of computing as those elements most germane to literary and cultural studies. We'll begin with platform studies (the study of the hardware basis for computational media artifacts), move on to software studies (the study of compiled or packaged programs as computational media artifacts) and conclude with code studies (the study of programs as writing and text, and the study of programming languages as cultural artifacts). We will focus on work in these areas by scholars trained and/or working in the literary humanities and/or in new media studies as a domain of humanistic and social-scientific cultural studies. Along the way, we will also read some classic works by programmers and software project managers on cultural aspects of software engineering. Readings may include novels by Ullman (The Bug), Coupland (Microserfs or JPod), Papadimitriou (Turing: A Novel about Computation) and Kim, Behr and Spafford (The Phoenix Project), along with a selection from the following: Abbate, Recoding Gender: Women's Changing Participation in Computing; Berry, The Philosophy of Software; Bogost and Montfort, Racing the Beam; Chun, Programmed Visions: Software and Memory; Dyer-Witheford and de Peuter, Games of Empire: Global Capitalism and Video Games; Britcher, The Limits of Software; Brooks, The Mythical Man-Month: Essays on Software Engineering; Cox, Speaking Code: Coding as Aesthetic and Political Expression; Crogan, Gameplay Mode: War, Simulation, and Technoculture; Croll, If Hemingway Wrote JavaScript; Ensminger, The Computer Boys Take Over; Evens, The Logic of the Digital; Frabetti, Software Theory: A Cultural and Philosophical Study; Fuller, Software Studies: A Lexicon; Galloway, Gaming: Essays on Algorithmic Culture; Golumbia, The Cultural Logic of Computation; Kittler, Literature, Media, Information Systems; Knuth, Literate Programming; Mackenzie, Cutting Code: Software and Sociality; Manovich, Software Takes Command; Montfort et al., 10 PRINT CHR$(205.5+RND(1)); : GOTO 10; Nakamura, Digitizing Race: Visual Cultures of the Internet; Raymond, The Cathedral and the Bazaar; Terranova, Network Culture: Politics for the Information Age; Ullman, Close to the Machine: Technophilia and Its Discontents; Wardrip Fruin, Expressive Processing.