



ENGLISH DEPARTMENT GRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTION
SPRING SEMESTER 2025



L504 (29903) ADAMS
Practicum on Research Techniques

9:35a – 10:50a TR

In fact, this won't be a course on research methods. Instead, at the urging of many in the department, we're using the course number to offer "An Introduction to Graduate Studies" until that course gets its own number and is registered in the Bulletin. This coming term will be a bit of an experiment. I have some topics in mind already: the structure and rationale of our graduate program; the histories of literary study, rhetoric, composition, and creative writing within English studies broadly; the complex interrelations of departments, colleges, universities; the variety of teaching and non-teaching roles for Ph.D./M.F.A. graduates and their implications for graduate study; pedagogy; the academic career path; the rationales of research and creative activity in our fields; conferences, academic publishing; public scholarship. We will also consider and practice some fundamental skills: writing a curriculum vitae; writing an abstract for submission to a conference; etc. This course will not replace the practicum on Genres of Academic Writing, but it will point in that course's direction. Finally, as the course will be an experiment for all of us, I welcome any suggestions from prospective members about what subjects we should engage — consider this an invitation to write to me about what you'd hope to encounter in such a course (adamsm@iu.edu). I'll ask the same question of all graduate students via the grad listserv soon and hope to incorporate as many suggestions as possible.

L610 (29803)/L758 GAYK (Pre-1800)
Readings in Late Medieval Literature & Culture
Research in Interdisciplinary Studies

***This course is offered at both the 600- and 700-level and is listed in both places. To sign up at the 700-level, you will need authorization.**

12:45p – 2:00a TR

TOPIC: VISIONARY POETICS

Activists adrienne maree brown and Walidah Imarisha have suggested that a goal of speculative literature "is to change the world." In this class, we will consider this claim by turning to premodern visionary texts that engage some of the most challenging crises of their time—systemic injustice, labor relations, political corruption, ecological disaster—by creatively imagining a world that could be otherwise. We will dig deep into the historical contexts and focus on visionary poems and prose that both critique dominant ideas and frameworks and try to imagine new worlds and new ways of being in the world. We will also discuss how medieval *speculatio* invites deep consideration of the relation of inner worlds and outer ones, and the

relation between what *is* and what *could be*. At the heart of the course will be *Piers Plowman*, an allegorical dream vision that seems to have inspired some of the leaders of the 1381 Peasant's Revolt, but that has a complex relation to authority, visionary world-building, and reform. Other course readings will be drawn from medieval political and religious writing, including texts such as *Pearl*, Julian of Norwich's *Revelations*, and short political and religious allegories. We will conclude with Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower*. Course assignments will include co-leading a discussion and developing and executing a writing plan that allows you to accomplish your larger intellectual, creative, pedagogical, and/or writerly goals for this class (L610 students should expect to write at least 4500 words and L758 students at least 6500 words of polished prose).

L627 (30104)/L680 KRIEGEL (Post-1800)
Readings in 19th C British Literature & Culture
Special Topics in Literary Study & Theory

2:20p – 3:35p TR

TOPIC: VICTORIAN BIOPOLITICS

The demographic, urban, and industrial revolutions of the mid-modern era posed problems of population and power for nineteenth-century culture and society. We need only think of the images of urban poverty, fallen women, and disabled workers that come to the fore in accounts and imaginings of Victorian society. In Britain, these figures and places posed conundrums for state and civic governance, as well as challenges to the social, economic, and moral order. This course will consider the ways in which biopolitics – the power relations around bodies and embodied experience – took shape within this broad context. We will focus especially on the representation of biopolitical challenges (and solutions) in a range of Victorian novels, but we will also read nineteenth-century socioeconomic thought, more recent theory, historical scholarship, and just a little bit of poetry. Our literary texts will include works by *some* of the following authors: Thomas Malthus, Harriet Martineau, Elizabeth Gaskell, Friedrich Engels, Charles Dickens, Mary Elizabeth Braddon, George Gissing, William Morris, Arthur Morrison and George Bernard Shaw. Class participation will be important. Written assignments will include a reading journal, a conference-length paper, and one or two additional exercises.

L638 (13117) HARDISON (Post-1800)
Readings in Contemporary Literature

11:10a – 2:10p M

This course will explore representations of twentieth-century African American freedom struggles, namely the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements. Some African American writers socially active during this era reflect upon their experiences in their fiction published shortly after the campaigns' end. Meanwhile later writers, many of whom came of age after this era, remember the political campaigns and reimagine their legacies for the present. This course will study how contemporary African American fiction documents and conceptualizes the two social movements—their objectives, strategies, challenges, and

accomplishments—as part of a broader discussion of the African American literary tradition’s engagement with notions of agency, oppression, freedom, memory, place, and history. Readings may include the work of such writers as Alice Walker, Charles Johnson, Colson Whitehead, Danzy Senna, James Baldwin, and Toni Cade Bambara. Finally, the class will engage literary criticism about the course’s selection of fiction in an effort to connect historiography to literary history as well as to conceptualize history as a literary trope. Coursework will include a research paper and possibly smaller writing assignments.

L643 (29910) BOSE (Post-1800)

Readings in Colonial & Postcolonial Literatures

5:30p – 8:30p R

TOPIC: INTRODUCTION TO POST-COLONIAL STUDIES

The term “post-colonialism” emerged in the 1980s, signifying an impulse among scholars to periodize history and to identify colonialism as central to an understanding of international/global configurations of power. Less a unified body of interpretive practices than a series of engagements with concepts such as colonialism, the state, nationalism, colonial and native subjectivity, dependency and uneven development, and subalternity, post-colonial studies has involved different forms of analysis, ranging from Marxist analyses of the political economy of colonialism and resistance to post-structuralist elaborations of subjectivity and representation to assessments of the impact of colonialism on the environment. The intellectual and disciplinary reach of post-colonialism has included Literary Studies, Anthropology, Political Theory, History, and Geography, spanning studies of past and present nation-states to colonial discourse analysis and representation.

The capacious nature of the field makes it impossible to cover its key insights in one semester. Consequently, this class should best be approached as an introduction to some debates in the field, which have their own regional complexity and variations. The first third of the course will focus on four foundational texts in the field such as Aime Cesaire’s *A Discourse on Colonialism*, Frantz Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth and A Dying Colonialism*, and Edward Said’s *Orientalism*. *The remaining two thirds of the class will consist of clusters that cohere around one or two central text(s) from different regions of the world to introduce you to a variety of writers, the rich creative traditions to which they belong, and their geopolitical contexts. We will, in other words, read fiction, graphic novels, nonfiction, and theory (whenever possible, we will supplement our readings with film).* Central texts include Arundhati Roy’s *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* and Malik Sajad’s graphic novel *Munnu: A Boy from Kashmir*; Nathan Thrall’s *A Day in the Life of Abed Salama* and Joe Sacco’s graphic novel *Footnotes in Gaza*; Manlio Argueta’s *One Day of Life*; and Bessie Head’s *When the Raid Clouds Gather*. Because our discussion of Head’s novel will coincide with a symposium to honor Byron Santangelo, we will also read his *Different Shades of Green*, along with keynote speaker Cajetan Iheka’s *African Ecomedia*.

Our discussions will take up some of the seminal issues which define the history of post-colonial studies, such as the status of the subaltern and the challenges of archiving subaltern consciousness, the relationship between colonialism and the intimate sphere of domesticity and desire, political violence and contemporary

constructions of terrorism, the impact of colonialism on non-human life forms and the environment, and partition and its ongoing legacies in conflict.

Students should expect to approach our readings with an open mind, participate in class discussion, write a 5-6 summary of a lecture of their choice, attend a session of the symposium in honor of Byron Santangelo, submit a 500 word abstract of their final paper, and write a 10-12 page final paper.

L680 (29805)/L627 KRIEGEL (Post-1800)
Special Topics in Literary Study & Theory
Readings in 19th C British Literature & Culture

2:20p – 3:35p TR

TOPIC: VICTORIAN BIOPOLITICS

The demographic, urban, and industrial revolutions of the mid-modern era posed problems of population and power for nineteenth-century culture and society. We need only think of the images of urban poverty, fallen women, and disabled workers that come to the fore in accounts and imaginings of Victorian society. In Britain, these figures and places posed conundrums for state and civic governance, as well as challenges to the social, economic, and moral order. This course will consider the ways in which biopolitics – the power relations around bodies and embodied experience – took shape within this broad context. We will focus especially on the representation of biopolitical challenges (and solutions) in a range of Victorian novels, but we will also read nineteenth-century socioeconomic thought, more recent theory, historical scholarship, and just a little bit of poetry. Our literary texts will include works by *some* of the following authors: Thomas Malthus, Harriet Martineau, Elizabeth Gaskell, Friedrich Engels, Charles Dickens, Mary Elizabeth Braddon, George Gissing, William Morris, Arthur Morrison and George Bernard Shaw. Class participation will be important. Written assignments will include a reading journal, a conference-length paper, and one or two additional exercises.

R615 (30107)/L750 TERRILL (Post-1800)
Rhetoric of Protest in America
Research in Race & Ethnicities

***This course is offered at both the 600- and 700-level and is listed in both places. To sign up at the 700-level, you will need authorization.**

3:55p – 5:10p TR

TOPIC: PROTEST & PEDAGOGY: BLACK RADICAL RHETORICS FROM DAVID WALKER TO MALCOLM X

The backbone of this course will be a more-or-less chronological survey of African American public address from the early 19th century to the first half of the 20th century, concentrating on texts either advocating for, or responding to, radical change. This historical survey will be interanimated with an exploration of pedagogies that may facilitate the use of these primary texts in undergraduate rhetoric and/or

composition classrooms. This exploration will be supported by a second reading list, interspersed with the first, consisting of recent publications in composition studies that address issues of race and diversity. The two interdependent course goals are to provide an introduction to a rhetorical tradition that is fundamental to US rhetorical and democratic practice and to encourage the integration of texts from this tradition into undergraduate classrooms. Written assignments and presentations will emphasize the pedagogical aspects of the course. Students who take the course at the 700 level will, in addition, be required to produce a research paper on African American rhetorics, suitable for submission to an appropriate conference with the expectation that it may be revised for eventual publication.

W601 (29905) D. ANDERSON
Development of Rhetoric & Composition

9:35a– 10:50a TR

Our work together will examine ways to approach Rhetoric and Composition as things with history. We won't be determining "a" history of these things. (There are plenty of those already, like so many different candy bars, clogging the entry of your checkout lane in Kroger. Pick one.) Instead, we will be examining the texts and approaches with/through which we compose the varied histories of these areas of study. What origins have we established, and why? What events or moments might comprise some "common core" of our histories? What roles do "canonical" texts and figures play—both as vital points on a timeline and as contemporary flashpoints for questions of tradition, conventionality, and power? Our collective goal will be to enfranchise ourselves in the essential practice of being able to account for how our field(s) have developed over time, with an eye toward owning our responsibility to continue guiding that development.

Our written work will almost never take the form of typical seminar writing and will, whenever possible, attempt to compose otherwise. That said, we will also unapologetically read and discuss some of the most established of things, things that people seem averse to considering, even by ethical warrant, because they are old and thus somehow nothing more than perpetuations of systemic privileges and oppressions. Not everything worth putting in your cart is a 2024 Reese's Giant Peanut Butter cup with pretzels in it and also Reese's Pieces. I mean, it *is* incredible. But still.

W612 (6945) UPADHYAY
Writing Fiction 2

9:35a– 12:35p T

DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZATION REQUIRED
Request permission through bhankins@indiana.edu

This is a fiction writing workshop for students enrolled in the graduate creative writing program. You will be writing approximately 45-60 pages of fiction (about three short stories) during the semester. Novel chapters can also be accommodated. You will also be reading three or four works of fiction for insights into craft. You may give a presentation on a topic that's of interest and relevance to your own writing. All

writers enrolled in the graduate creative writing program are welcome to the workshop, but please contact Bev Hankins, Graduate Program Administrative Assistant (bhankins@indiana.edu) for authorization to register.

W614 (3664) BOWMAN
Writing Poetry 2

12:45p– 3:45p R

DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZATION REQUIRED
Request permission through bhankins@indiana.edu

W614 is a workshop in the writing of poetry for students in the MFA Creative Writing Program. The focus of this class will be on the poems students write during the semester, revision, active workshop participation, book presentations, prosody, and poetics. There will be optional and required writing assignments based on our discussions, readings, and the particulars of your work.

W615 (30258) SKYHORSE
Writing Creative Nonfiction

2:20p– 5:20p T

Over the past thirty years, memoir and personal essay have exploded onto the literary scene. What is it about the intimate details of someone else’s life that intrigues the reading public? Is there a hint of voyeurism in our enjoyment? Or do we simply fall in love with real people through the power of their words, and hope for them to overcome the obstacles that life has thrown in their way? Memoir is the act of locating change that’s occurred in a writer’s life, and the writer being in a place where they can recognize what that change is and report that change to their readers. Personal essay is a mode of writing and advocacy that is a literally a self-trying out – a testing of one’s own intellectual, emotional, and physiological responses to a given topic.

In this class, students learn how to, first, identify personal essay and memoir and, second, analyze and interrogate works in this genre that reflect their own interests and voice. They will also learn how to critically read, evaluate, and respond to different memoir and personal essay genres, and discover how to structure and write basic forms of memoir and personal essay.

L738 (13059) SHELDON (Post-1800)
Research in Literary Histories & Theories of History

DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZATION REQUIRED (Non-English Department students please contact the instructor first.)

11:10a – 2:10a W

TOPIC: THE NEW REALISMS

Vibrant Matter. Meeting the Universe Halfway. The Democracy of Objects. The Nonhuman Turn. Animacies. Staying with the Trouble. Becoming Human. The Mushroom at the End of the World. Matters of Care.

The titles of these and other important works of the past two decades speak to the new emphasis on things. Where theory of the 80s and 90s made representation, discourse, culture, and epistemology privileged key terms, current theory engages with resurgent materialisms of all kinds. Where theory *then* sought to analyze processes of signification and subjectivization, theory *now* seeks to grasp science, ecology, objects, and bodies in the fullness of their material realities.

This now-familiar story is the subject of this course. In its most heroic version, this is a story of liberation in which a group of intellectual renegades released us from our limiting obsession with epistemology and enabled us to embrace the unmediated real. Over the course of this semester, we will examine this story, consider its appeal, and witness its fit with the actual practices of theory, during the high-water marks of poststructuralism and the new realisms, and now in the aftermath. We will consider their objects and methods of inquiry and we will be attentive to their style, rhetoric, form, and tone. Finally, we will speculate on the state of theory today. We will consider how the new realisms respond to preceding theoretical conventions, how they are being taken up now and what might happen past the point at which these works have been long forgotten.

Particular subfields may include affect theory, posthumanism, environmental humanities, biopolitics, actor-network theory, feminist science studies, Afropessimism, non-philosophy, and the new animisms.

L740 (29918)/T600 ELMER (Post-1800)

Research in Aesthetics, Genre, & Form

DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZATION REQUIRED (Non-English Department students please contact the instructor first.)

9:35a – 10:50a MW

TOPIC: THE PARADIGM OF PLAY

This course takes a deep dive into the extraordinary writing on play from the 20C—from philosophers, anthropologists, novelists, linguists, sociologists, psychoanalysts, and historians. We will balance the selections from 20C writing, with texts on play, games, gaming, and game design written in the twenty-first century, which has been dubbed the “ludic century.” The goal will be to explore why this behavior—playing—has proven so magnetic and enigmatic over the past century, and also why it so dominates our lives today.

We will read a lot, and some of it is difficult. Because the material for this course is drawn from such an array of disciplines, we'll need to be prepared to be disoriented from time to time, and to do a lot of disciplinary code-switching. To keep things above (or below) any one disciplinary idiom, we'll organize our reading into five topics: threshold, attention, spectator, model, and surplus. These will allow us to ask about how play is defined and located, what kinds of attention and intention are specific to it, if spectatorship is structural to play, how play models the social world and drives socialization, and how we are to understand the economies of play.

Interested students are invited to email me at elmerj@iu.edu with questions.

All students will provide a précis once during the semester, posting it to our course site in advance of the meeting. Each student will also be expected to introduce one exemplary text—TV shows, films, videogames, analog games, etc.—that can add texture to our discussions. Those taking T600 will be expected to submit 20 pages of writing, either as a single paper at the end or in some agreed-upon installment plan. Those taking L740 will be expected to write a seminar paper of 25-30 pages.

Readings will be drawn *from* (not all of these!!)

20C: Agamben, Bateson, Benveniste, Berne, Carse, Csikszentmihalyi, Derrida, Fink, Freud, Geertz, Huizinga, Klein, Lévi-Strauss, Luhmann, Mead, Montessori, Piaget, Schechner, Suits, Sutton-Smith, Turner, Winnicott, and Wittgenstein.

21C: Aarseth, Bogost, Boluk and Lemieux, Castronova, Consalvo, Deterding, Flanagan, Freyermuth, Golumba, Jagoda, Juul, McGonigal, Murray, Myers, Nguyen, Salen and Zimmerman, Seltzer, Upton, and Wark.

L750 (TBA)/R615 TERRILL (Post-1800)

Research in Race & Ethnicities

Rhetoric of Protest in America

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L758 (30099)/L610 GAYK (Pre-1800)

Research in Interdisciplinary Studies

Readings in Late Medieval Literature & Culture

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12:45p – 2:00a TR

TOPIC: VISIONARY POETICS

Activists adrienne maree brown and Walidah Imarisha have suggested that a goal of speculative literature “is to change the world.” In this class, we will consider this claim by turning to premodern visionary texts that engage some of the most challenging crises of their time—systemic injustice, labor relations, political corruption, ecological disaster—by creatively imagining a world that could be otherwise. We will dig deep into the historical contexts and focus on visionary poems and prose that both critique dominant ideas and frameworks and try to imagine new worlds and new ways of being in the world. We will also discuss how medieval *speculatio* invites deep consideration of the relation of inner worlds and outer ones, and the relation between what *is* and what *could be*. At the heart of the course will be *Piers Plowman*, an allegorical dream vision that seems to have inspired some of the leaders of the 1381 Peasant’s Revolt, but that has a complex relation to authority, visionary world-building, and reform. Other course readings will be drawn from medieval political and religious writing, including texts such as *Pearl*, Julian of Norwich’s *Revelations*, and short political and religious allegories. We will conclude with Octavia Butler’s *Parable of the Sower*. Course assignments will include co-leading a discussion and developing and executing a writing plan that allows you to accomplish your larger intellectual, creative, pedagogical, and/or writerly goals for this class (L610 students should expect to write at least 4500 words and L758 students at least 6500 words of polished prose).

L760 (29908) P. ANDERSON (Pre-1800)

Research in Specific

DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZATION REQUIRED (Non-English Department students please contact the instructor first.)

11:10a– 12:25p TR

TOPIC: MILTON & SOME CONTEMPORARIES

In “London, 1802,” William Wordsworth famously invokes Milton: “Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour! / England hath need of thee” (1-2). This plea provokes our first question: what do we need of Milton? What in his work seems particularly relevant for our present moment (or for Wordsworth’s)? Why have his writings proved particularly amenable to certain modes of critical inquiry, and particularly intransigent to others?

This semester we will be reading most of Milton's works together, but we will also be thinking about what it means to read Milton in our time -- the time of powerful movements for racial and gender equity, and in the aftermath of a global pandemic that reshapes our sense of how to live in the world and what our futures might be.

With those two emphases in mind, this course will complement our reading of Milton by doing the following:

1. Working to develop an inclusive pedagogy, in this classroom and your own, by foregrounding the writings of authors and critics from a wide range of backgrounds and perspectives.
2. Integrating exploration of multiple career paths into traditional academic research and writing. Some of this will be mandatory, some will include options for course assignments.

W795 (3653) MOLESWORTH Dissertation Prospectus Workshop

11:10a – 12:25p MW

DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZATION REQUIRED

This class is designed to serve as a workshop for English graduate students in their exam year, to provide regular guidance on the writing and revising of the dissertation prospectus. The course aims toward the successful defense of the prospectus in late spring. We will proceed in groups to the drafting, revision, and submission of the prospectus. We will also discuss and plan for the defense itself, and for the path ahead. Class meets together as a group for the first three or so weeks, then primarily in small-group workshop sessions. (You will, that is, not be expected to attend all weekly class sessions.) You will be asked to submit a *preliminary, provisional, partial first draft* of a dissertation prospectus (min. 7-10 pp.) ready to share with the group by mid-January for workshoping (the more fleshed-out, the better, but it’s expected that this is just the beginning of the process); the DGS will, by late Fall semester, make available previous completed prospectuses that can serve as models as you begin thinking about yours. (2 credit hours).