Welcome to the world of English. We hope you enjoy our pocket series guide to our spring classes.

One thing we know: our students tell us they love their major. And loving your major leads to good things: higher GPAs, greater satisfaction, a sense of purpose, and some indispensable skills.

We hope you’ll peruse the following pages and discover great possibilities for next semester.

LOVE YOUR MAJOR:
CHOOSE ENGLISH

Our design is an homage to our two favorite literary publishers. Can you identify them?
ENGLISH MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

(33 credit hours)

• L203-206 (choose one), intro to genre (drama, fiction, poetry, or prose)

• L260, intro to advanced study of literature and language

• One course from each of the following time periods:
  ○ Beginnings – 17th c.
  ○ 18 – 19th c.
  ○ 20 – 21st c.

• L371, critical practices

• 5 English electives:
  ○ 2 @ 200+
  ○ 2 @ 300+
  ○ 1 @ 400
MINOR REQUIREMENTS

MINOR IN ENGLISH

• L203-206 (choose one), intro to genre (drama, fiction, poetry, or prose)
• L260, intro to advanced study of literature and language
• One course from each of the following time periods:
  Beginnings–17th c, 18–19th c, 20–21st c
  • 1 English elective at the 300+ level

MINOR IN CREATIVE WRITING

• 12 credits from L260, W203, W301, W303, W311, W401, W403, and W413
• 3 credits from W381 or W383

MINOR IN COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC ADVOCACY

15 credit hours chosen from all 200+ R-classes, W231, W240, W241, W270, W321, or W350
(minimum of 9 credit hours @ 300+)

— all 15 credit hours —
CONTENTS AND KEY

100 LEVEL
A&H  ARTS & HUMANITIES
DUS  DIVERSITY IN U.S.
GCC  GLOBAL CIVILIZATIONS & CULTURES

300 LEVEL
POC  PUBLIC ORAL COMMUNICATION
S&H  SOCIAL & HISTORICAL
WC   WORLD CULTURE

200 LEVEL

400 LEVEL

CASE  COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES EDUCATION
GENERAL EDUCATION
COMPOSITION CLASSES

W131 READING, WRITING, AND INQUIRY

aims to show students how the use of sources, agreement/disagreement, and personal response can be made to serve independent, purposeful, and well-supported analytical writing

W170 PROJECTS IN READING AND WRITING

offers more intensive writing and reading instruction by organizing the semester around a single, rich area of inquiry

W171 PROJECTS IN DIGITAL LITERACY AND COMPOSITION

offers more intensive writing and reading instruction by organizing the semester around a single, rich area of inquiry, incorporating the use of digital technologies, and introducing students to key concepts of digital literacy, digital problem solving, and digital creativity (no tech experience required!)
W103 Introductory Creative Writing

BOB BLEDSOE  
W 1:30 – 2:40pm

W103 is an introductory-level course in creative writing. We will focus on the basic elements of fiction and poetry. Through guided practice in writing, and through assigned readings, lectures, and workshop discussions, you will gain a better understanding of how fiction and poetry are made. While becoming a more resourceful and articulate writer, you will also become a more informed and capable reader. You will gain first-hand insight into the creative process, and you will learn something about the importance of telling a good story.
W103 is an introductory-level course in creative writing. We’ll focus on the basic elements of writing fiction, non-fiction/memoir, and poetry. You’ll write and revise (through a series of drafts) four fiction assignments, one non-fiction assignment, and three poems. You’ll also write various creative assignments during class, and take two examinations (one in fiction/non-fiction, and one in poetry) based on the material covered in the main lectures and the assigned course readings listed in the syllabus. Finally, you’ll revise each of your fiction, non-fiction, and poetry assignments, and submit them in a portfolio of revised work.
In Monster Theory: Reading Culture, Jeffrey Jerome Cohen tells us that the monster "dwells at the gates of difference." The monster, in other words, comes to represent the "Other" or the non-normative in cultural texts we consume (and have consumed) since the Middle Ages. In this class, we will look at how the monster is shaped by and continues shaping American culture by turning to specific horror stories from the 20th and 21st centuries. Prepare to explore the chilling world of the monsters and examine what they reveal to us about what frightens us most and how we deal with our collective fears in the context of American traditions of storytelling.
At the dawn of the digital age, we considered our time in virtual spaces a “second life.” We “escaped” into digital worlds. But the allure of video games was too powerful, their reward systems too compelling, and soon “gamification” (the use of feedback loops to spur engagement) crept out of mom’s basement and into your brain. In this hands-on, activity-centric class, we’ll explore the semiotics and cultural importance of video games, and we’ll do so using the methodology that most-closely matches our subject: digital ways of seeing, thinking, and composing. This course brings together digital literacy and active learning, asking students to develop their capacities with digital collaboration, digital communication, digital critical thinking, and digital creativity. Prepare to create video essays, podcasts, webpages, and perhaps even a Minecraft build or two. No tech expertise required. Game on!
World Literature about the Other World

ANNE DELGADO
MWF 12:40 – 1:30pm

Ghost stories remain one of the most popular genres in contemporary film and fiction. One of the reasons for this may be because the ghost story tells us quite a bit about our collective hopes and fears concerning the afterlife and the unknown. In this class, we will explore the long tradition of the ghost story in tales from Mexico, Japan, China, and India. In addition to examining fictional and folkloric ghost stories, we will also study regional conceptions of the other world and how these ideas have contributed to the evolution of both the ghost and the ghost story. Bring your popcorn and your proton packs for a class that is sure to be out of this world.
Public Speaking

KURT ZEMLICKA

TR 1:15 – 2:30pm

This course prepares students in the liberal arts to communicate effectively with public audiences. It emphasizes oral communication as practiced in public contexts: how to advance reasoned claims in public; how to adapt public oral presentations to particular audiences; how to listen to, interpret, and evaluate public discourse; and how to formulate a clear response.
GENRE CLASSES

L203 INTRO TO DRAMA
characteristics of drama as a type of literature through the study of representative significant plays

L204 INTRO TO FICTION
representative works of fiction; structural techniques in the novel and short stories

L205 INTRO TO POETRY
kinds, conventions, and elements of poetry in a selection of poems from several historical periods

L206 INTRO TO PROSE
varieties of nonfictional prose, such as autobiography, biography, and the essay
This course offers a slow, unhurried reading of two very long novels: Henry Fielding’s *Tom Jones* (1749) and George Eliot’s *Middlemarch* (1871-72). We will take each novel part by part, book by book, and even page by page, examining form, content, and overall theme. Our central question is: what is gained from excessive length? What can be accomplished within the span of a long novel that cannot be accomplished in the form of a shorter novel? Since this course is intended to offer an introduction to the study of fiction, we will spend much time discussing the fundamental formal features of fiction, including point of view, plot, characterization, description, setting, and style. Topics will include the novel’s relationship with the epic tradition, narrative techniques like omniscience and the free indirect style, the rise of realism, the ethics of fiction, and the relationship between form and meaning.
Introduction to Poetry

NICK WILLIAMS
TR 9:45 – 11am

Although poetry is something that people often regard as hard to understand or intended only for a small, specialized audience, in reality we all have the ability to be moved, amused, or otherwise interested by language, a response which is the essence of poetry. A major part of the assessment of student performance will involve a series of writing assignments, with an emphasis on interpretive essays in which students will formulate meaningful questions about poems and articulate their responses to those questions in sustained and organized compositions. We’ll use an anthology that also serves to introduce key concepts in poetry, as well as a couple of collections by single authors.
Women and Literature: A Portrait of the Artist as a Woman

What happens to painting in the hands of great writers? We’ll look at painters and painting as they are depicted in prose and poetry, and explore the intersection of literature and visual art. Our readings will range from 1899 to 2020 and we’ll talk about the different challenges women faced, and their role as artists, or near-artists. Did it matter that they were women at all?
Thinking and Co-creating with Shakespeare

JOAN LINTON
MW 11:30 – 12:45pm

In learning to think and co-create with Shakespeare, we will read five of his plays across the genres of comedy, tragedy, and tragicomedy: Measure for Measure, Othello, Timon of Athens, Twelfth Night, and The Winter's Tale. Short analyses of character, events, and language will help prepare for class discussion. Bridging between plays and student knowledge, we will co-produce a Commons for Commonplacing (on Canvas), with attention to issues of hospitality and hostility. In thought experiments, we will draw from the plays’ resources—their historically-distanced perspectives on, and fictive explorations of, real-world issues—to address issues confronting our society and world today. A final research paper will help consolidate knowledge and skills developed through the course.
All the Universe: The Evolution of Science Fiction

The past century has seen science fiction evolve as a literature that dramatizes the interaction of science, technology and society, exploring the connection between physical knowledge, private aspiration and public destiny. The principle aim of this course will be to examine SF as a genre that comments on our present by creating speculative futures. We will investigate how the genre links developments in science and technology with ongoing social concerns regarding race, gender, and the desire for human progress. We will explore how the genre's conventions address earthly fears and hopes through themes such as space travel, alien contact, robotics, technological utopianism, and human evolution.
The proliferation of hate amplified by misinformation divides communities, undermines trust in public institutions, and endangers our democracy. These conditions call for constructive response from college classrooms, coproduced by students as equipment for living in a complex world. By studying the psycho-socio-political workings of hate, we aim to counter its destructive influences. By analyzing literary works, we will learn from their fictive explorations of issues critical and creative means to imagine possibilities for healing and write stories towards collective futures. To this end, students will receive basic mediation training and collaborate with peers from New York City-based Hostos Community College in coproducing civil conversation and group projects that constitute, at heart, democracy in action.
This course explores the fiction
and poetry of some American
Jewish writers appearing in the last
one hundred years. We will
witness and reflect on how, in the
first half of the twentieth-century,
Jewish writers largely focused on
their distinctiveness as Jews and
immigrants; how in the century’s
second half, their emphasis fell on
their Americanness; and, finally,
how of late there has been a return
to a kind of Jewish identification.
Much of this work is funny (Philip
Roth, Woody Allen); much of it is
tragic (Allen Ginsberg, Cynthia
Ozick, and Jonathan Safran Foer).
It is also angry and playful and
many times all four of these.
Hence, this writing should be of
interest to all who are lovers of
good literature, regardless of their
relation to the Jewish tradition.
L260
Introduction to Advanced Study of Literature: Literary Interpretation and Critical Perspectives

LINDA CHARNES
TR 11:30 – 12:45pm

What makes a text “literary”? What does it mean to study literature critically? This class will introduce strategies of analysis that help us unlock how the texts we read achieve their effects. The genre—whether poetic, novelistic, dramatic, prose, or film—is central to what an author sets out to do, as well as to how a reader responds. We’ll consider works in a range of genres as well as brief selections from critical scholars on linguistics, narrative theory, gender and race studies, and aesthetics.
This class is designed to give students confidence in critically reading, interpreting, and writing about works of literature. We will focus on a series of texts, ranging from Shakespearean drama through twentieth-century fiction and poetry, which pose the question of interpretation as one of the issues at play within the literary work itself. Specifically, each will approach from a different angle the problem of how to make sense of a feminine figure who seems to step beyond the bounds of social propriety. While others within the text spend time trying to make sense of out of her, we will learn to distinguish our activity from theirs and think about the text as a whole as containing not only the problem they seek to solve, but also their own problem-solving activity.
Heroes and Villains: Cognitive Dissonance and Political Change

What to do when your heroes turn out to be villains? When dreams of justice and equality give birth to tyranny? This course engages a key moment in US politics and intellectual life, following the Moscow show trials of the late 1930’s and their revelation of the murderous nature of the Stalinist regime. The course specifically examines the public arguments of a small group of intellectuals writing for the various New York based “little magazines” of the day regarding the future of Socialism and the status of the Soviet Union as moral exemplar. Our goal will to be to examine the particulars of this debate, through reading some of its key texts, both for their native interest and as a case study of public advocacy, moral courage, dogma and the conflict between evidence and ideology.
This course will explore how various kinds of feminist rhetoric address key public issues. Feminist rhetorical strategies are influenced by different feminist traditions and assumptions about how change happens. As we sort through these differences, we will ask: What does “feminism” mean today? Is there even a single meaning? These questions will be addressed in the context of controversial high-profile North American public issues such as sexual violence, mandatory paid maternity leave, health care access, and transgender inclusion. Students will write essays about each public issue and do an in-class presentation about feminist rhetoric on a topic chosen in consultation with the instructor.
Hope looks forward. Informed by a specific past, it shapes the present through its anticipation—its desire—for the future to unfold in some certain way. Sometimes fulfilled, sometimes frustrated, but always a challenge and a risk, hope asserts its wants upon moments to come that we cannot foretell but which we must inevitably live out. We will examine hope in its character as a linguistic phenomenon. Drawing on the many disciplines that are invested in the subject of hope (including psychology, theology, and medicine), we will explore what a decidedly rhetorical perspective brings to an understanding of hope as a force for influencing beliefs and behaviors at both the individual and the collective level. The result will be a more thorough understanding of both rhetoric and hope as tools for engaging the future, clarifying hope’s unique function within a constellation of related terms that includes reason, emotion, optimism, skepticism, dreaming, wishing, and faith.
Write your heart out in this course focused on fiction writing (a total of 40-50 pages in the semester, stories/novel chapters of varied length). By writing, reading, and critiquing, you will develop your fiction and understand more deeply how various aspects of the story come together to give it organic unity. Analysis and discussion will make you better writers and sharper critics. We will read a variety of fiction, both in the short and the long form. Class periods will also include brief writing exercises to engage your creative imagination. Overall, this will be a stimulating course where you will consider and reconsider your own approaches and methods through reading and critiquing and writing.
W301
Writing Fiction
ANGELA JACKSON-BROWN
TR 1:15 – 2:30pm

This course is designed to take students further into the art and craft of fiction than can be covered in a creative writing overview course. It raises questions about the value of fiction, what makes fiction good, successful, outstanding and beautiful, and how to workshop and Re-Vision your fiction. The course is also designed for those who wish to develop a writing routine on their own, as well as those who plan to continue the study of fiction in some other upper-level fiction writing class or workshop.
How does the design of a document—the material shaping of text on a page—contribute to its effectiveness in achieving its purposes? Likewise, how do poor design choices prevent documents from accomplishing their aims? How are design elements such as page layout, font, spacing, size, proximity, color, and contrast central to our visual literacy—our ability to interpret, understand, and make use of information based on how it is physically structured for our reading?

These are the questions we’ll be exploring as we look at a range of different documents, especially (but not limiting ourselves to) those that we would call “professional writing”—reports, proposals, process and procedure descriptions, brochures, announcements, online documents such as web pages, and the like. We will learn about more than essential concepts and theories of document design: we will learn how design choices have very real, specific consequences, rhetorical consequences, for how persuasive texts are in the purposes they seek to accomplish.
In this course we will examine elements of fiction—point of view, character, setting etc.—to figure out how stories are made. We will do close readings of accomplished pieces of fiction and learn how they’re put together. We’ll do writing exercises to hone our craft. The goal of this course is to help us become a better craftsperson of fiction so that we are able, eventually, to write complete stories (or novels) with an eye towards publication. We will read an anthology and a book on craft, in addition to a couple of books of fiction.
The Craft of Poetry

CATHY BOWMAN
TR 11:30 – 12:45pm

This is a class for anyone that wishes to explore and practice the “oldest art.” In this class we will look at ancient and sacred texts, as well as contemporary poetry. We will experiment with the traditional fixed forms of poetry such as the sonnet and the sestina. We will explore the journey a poem makes down the page. We will look at diction, syntax, the line, tone and rhythm in a variety of poems. We will look at literary lineages, poetic schools and communities, aesthetic and cultural values embodied in poems past and present, the art of translation, poets and painters, poets and musicians, visual forms of poetry, publication and what’s going on in the poetry world today. There will be lots of in-class writing, craft assignments, and response papers. You will also write and revise your own poems. We will also read several collections of poetry and essays on craft and poetics.
Medieval and
Tudor Drama

SHANNON GAYK
MW 11:30 – 12:45pm

From biblical cycles to allegorical morality plays, medieval theater offers a unique mix of the sacred and the profane, the high and the low, the bawdy and the profound. Unlike the renaissance theater that followed it, medieval drama was amateur, community theater. Often the project of entire towns, it was performed in the streets rather than in theaters and acted by merchants, artisans, and laborers rather than professionals. We will read widely in early English drama, exploring the literary strategies used to move, teach, and make audiences laugh, discussing issues of performance and staging, and considering the larger social, economic, and religious contexts in which the drama is produced. After beginning with a focus on the biblical dramas, we will turn to morality plays, and finish with modern reimaginings of several of these plays in text and performance.
This course will explore a variety of different texts, beginning and ending with epic poems (Beowulf and Paradise Lost), medieval romance, Chaucer’s The Canterbury Tales, drama of the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (but not Shakespeare), and lyric poetry from Chaucer to Milton, with focus on the sonnet. Coursework will include midterm and final examinations, as well as two relatively brief (5-8 page) essays. Our only text will be Volumes A and B of the Norton Anthology of English Literature.
The period between 1700 and 1900 witnessed massive political revolutions in America, France, and Haiti. It also witnessed massive revolutions in both culture and in literature. This course surveys the most significant aesthetic and historical developments in both Britain and in America during this time. What marks a literary text as “revolutionary”? How are revolutions waged not with weapons but with words?

Topics will include the following: the quarrel between the ancients and the moderns, the American, French, and Haitian Revolutions, British Romanticism, American Transcendentalism, slavery, emancipation, and democracy. Authors studied will include Alexander Pope, Jonathan Swift, Jane Austen, William Wordsworth, William Blake, Herman Melville, Frederick Douglass, Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, and Oscar Wilde.
L313
The Early Plays of Shakespeare

LINDA CHARNES
TR 1:15 – 2:30pm

In this course we will read six plays from Shakespeare’s earlier career, roughly pre-1600. What were the issues that most obsessed the young playwright, and how do they provide a roadmap into how to understand his entire career? A self-made man who came to London with little means, how did Shakespeare manage to create such a staggering career? Why were his plays popular? More importantly, how does he carve a place for himself by upping the ante for his fellow playwrights? Reading will include The Taming of the Shrew; The Merchant of Venice; King Richard II; Henry V; Troilus and Cressida; Hamlet.

Requirements: two essays, a midterm and a creative final exam. Attendance and participation will count for 20% of your course grade.
Victorian poetry has been described as a “poetry of sensation,” concerned with embodied, sensory experience. It was also often focused on “sensations” in another sense – on the scandalous, the taboo, and the criminal. We will read a wide range of Victorian poetry, but we’ll also focus on the dramatic monologue – a form that often explores unusual emotions, immoral behaviors, and social restrictions. In addition, we will read non-fiction prose and examples of Victorian sensation fiction, science fiction, and detective fiction: Wilkie Collins’ *The Moonstone*, Robert Louis Stevenson’s *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and Sherlock Holmes stories by Arthur Conan Doyle. Evaluation will be based on attendance, class participation, discussion posts, and three essays.
A survey of English prose in the second half of the twentieth century. We’ll read works that respond to the dizzying pace of change in an era that saw the great European empires give way to the Cold War, and ordinary life transformed by counter-cultural rebellions and globalization. We’ll read plays by JP Priestley, Tom Stoppard and Caryl Churchill, and novels by Sam Selvon, Salman Rushdie, Kazuo Ishiguro, Pat Barker, David Mitchell, and Bernadine Evaristo. These writers will introduce you to the experimentation of postmodernism, the challenge of the postcolonial, and the irony of new realism. By the end of the semester you’ll have a map of the period that touches upon its history, philosophy, and aesthetics. Each week you’ll work through lectures and quizzes and participate in an online discussion with substantial writing. You’ll also write two formal essays.
This is a class about what happens when fiction and politics mix. Our area of study is the mid- to late nineteenth-century U.S., a period that saw a remarkable proliferation of movements for social reform. Often overlapping, these movements championed such causes as antislavery and (later) racial equality; women’s rights; workers’ rights; legal reform; communitarian living; and sometimes the complete overhaul of society. We will focus primarily (though not exclusively) on the first three of these, and on novels and stories in which they come forward as major subjects.
How do literary texts mean? What is the power of what Roland Barthes will call “the pleasure of the text”? This course will acquaint students with the conceptual and historical roots of contemporary critical practice in literary and cultural studies, by thinking through the primary categories of ‘meaning and pleasure.’ We will use these categories to examine a variety of critical and theoretical assumptions about texts and how they mean.

In other words, this course aims to teach you HOW to think about language, literature, and culture, but not WHAT to think. Students enrolling in this class should be ready to participate actively, to come to class with things to say, questions to ask, and reactions to share. We will take an eclectic approach. While you will gain a sense of the intellectual history of contemporary critical methods, our primary commitment will be to ask questions about the meaning, value, and implications of various critical perceptions and aesthetic experiences.
In this section, we will consider literature focused on the period of young adulthood as a rich resource for the work of identity and its many contexts. We will actively read, discuss, and write about literature that explores the young adult experience from the last fifty years and we will also try our hand at writing from our own experiences of adolescence. We will discuss critical and cultural supplementary materials. As we read, we will formulate our own perimeters for young adult literature. We will look at the role of the imagination and literacy in adolescent life and development and will consider: notions of adolescence and young and near adulthood; perceptions of adults and adulthood from adolescent perspective; the role of imagination and fantasy in the lives of teens and their relationship to literacy both textual and cultural; censorship and what it means to be literate in a free society; and issues of identity and representation including age, class, gender, race and sexuality.
“Comics” have a deep history and even deeper stigmas, as they are too often relegated to the realm of “childish things.” But anyone who has read The Walking Dead or Murmurs of Doubt knows that graphic novels are not always about superheroes—and are not always written for the young. Instead, they are a viable and valuable art form that offers the best of hybridization, drawing on the strengths of the visual and the written to create a unique multi-modal space. And graphic memoirs, which turn their gaze back toward the author, examine and proffer experience in multiple dimensions and with possibilities unavailable to poetry and nonfiction. In this class, we will examine five graphic memoirs through a lens of visual and written literacy, taking into account the history of comics as well as the blurred boundaries and overlapping spaces between genres.
The collapse of empire, socialism, counter-culture rebellions, globalization: the second half of the twentieth century was a period of dramatic, fast-paced change in Britain and in the world. Film brings history home by exploring how ordinary people are affected by public events. Our topic of masculinity and the nation will provide a thematic focus as we examine the work of significant directors, including Lean, Richardson, Hudson, Frears, Jordan, and Cattaneo. We’ll cover the genres of the epic, experimental cinema, the thriller, historical drama, and social realism. This online course will include weekly writing, lectures and quizzes.
Black Planets: Afrofuturism in American Literature and Culture

DE WITT KILGORE

This course focuses on Afrofuturism, a speculative form practiced primarily by black writers, artists, and musicians. In this mode they create stories, images, and sounds invoking pasts and futures directed by the experiences and designs of the African Diaspora. Often operating within the conventions of mainstream futurism, Afrofuturism also serves as a counter to the persistence of tomorrows in which whiteness is the historical and social dominant. We will trace the transracial traffic of ideas, words, and images that has made Afrofuturism an important concept in recent science fiction and American musical culture.
Advocacy and Debate

KURT ZEMLICKA
TR 4:45 – 6pm

The course examines on the role of debate in public life and its applications for public advocacy within a democracy. Over the course of the semester, students will read foundational theories of the role of debate in democratic societies and engage in multiple debates against other classmates. Recommended for students interested in pre-law or considering non-profit, public policy, or advocacy fields after graduation.
R305 focuses on the application of a variety of critical approaches to a range of communicative texts. This class understands “text” broadly to include written and spoken discourse, films, museums, comic books, websites, sculpture, architecture, dance, and more. Anything that communicates (intentionally or unintentionally) can be the subject for the intensive investigation rhetorical criticism provides.
Rhetoric, Law, & Culture

JOHN ARTHOS
TR 11:30 – 12:45pm

This course takes you directly into the day-to-day performance of legal deliberation and judgment by mining the treasure-house of rhetorical resources that sustain and nurture our jurisprudential practices. We will study the rhetorical bases for techniques of public accusation and defense, the narrative drama of legal argument, the canons of legal interpretation, and the writing of legal opinions. A student coming out of this course will develop a better understanding of the origins of our precedent and case-law legal systems, and gain performative competencies by putting those principles into practice through mock court exercises. This semester we will take constitutional law as our focus, with particular attention to the historical and present-day U.S. Supreme Court.
This course will take a primarily historical perspective to explore the ways that people in the United States have written and spoken about the topic of race. Our goal will be to become better acquainted with historical conversations about race so that we can become more effective participants in contemporary conversations about race. We’ll begin in the early 19th century, and work our way more-or-less chronologically up toward the present. Some of the speakers, writers, and topics that we may study include: Nat Turner’s rebellion, intersectionalities of race and gender, Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, Supreme Court decisions, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Jim Crow, W. E. B. Du Bois, Booker T. Washington, Black Nationalism, James Baldwin, white privilege, Barack Obama, and Black Lives Matter.
This course explores the myriad of ways public communication shapes our understanding of nature and the environment. It examines how symbol use and communicative practices shape the relationship between humanity, culture, and nature in order to better understand how communication can be used for advocacy in an era of environmental crisis. The course is recommended for students studying environmental policy who wish to improve their communication skills, as well as students looking to enter professional, non-profit, or public policy fields related to environmental issues.
Queer activism about public issues sometimes strives to persuade mainstream or conservative audiences. Sometimes, however, queer activism is more radical: about love, family, political organization, and community. Many forms of queer movement attempt to speak to mainstream audiences and make radical progress, but what happens when they come into conflict? Students in this course will examine multiple examples of historical and contemporary queer political rhetoric. These cases may include the Stonewall demonstrations, AIDS activism, marriage equality, Pride parades, responses to book bans, campaigns for trans rights, and others. As we study these examples we will ask: what is the relationship between radical activism that strongly rejects political and gender/sexuality norms and more conventional activism that attempts to develop stronger ties between LGBTQ+ politics and mainstream progressive and liberal politics and cis/het lifestyles? How is queer history being told differently today to include the contributions of trans people and people of color?
Culture, Identity, and the Rhetoric of Place

CINDY SMITH
TR 1:15 – 2:30pm

R398 explores the persuasive dimensions of places and spaces people build and that simultaneously shape those people. It examines how structures like buildings, theme parks, and housing developments are the product of strategic communication choices designed to influence how we think and behave. This class will explore how the built environment is rhetorically constructed and therefore both reveals and influences the social values and issues of the past, present, and future.
W401
Advanced Fiction Writing
BOB BLEDSOE
MW 4:45 – 5:00pm

W401 is an advanced course in fiction writing with a focus on the art and craft of storytelling. You will write two original and full-length short stories (20 pages or approximately 6,000 words), which we will discuss in a workshop setting. We will read two focused craft books in addition to a collection of short stories and a novel. Along the way we will consider the creative process, our working habits, and revision, the most important consideration in the production of completed stories.
While writing poems this semester we’ll pay close attention to attention itself, particularly the attention engendered by the lyric I’s scrupulous eye. In order to better understand our work’s place in the contemporary tradition, we’ll consider criticism and poems by several living American poets, including Anne Carson, Chen Chen, Joy Harjo, Harryette Mullen, Eileen Myles, and Carl Phillips. Ben Lerner’s *The Hatred of Poetry* will be our primary guide. Students should expect a sizeable amount of reading and writing, and to show their peers’ work every respect as we develop a unique contract-based workshop.
In this workshop, we will read and write personal essays that embrace what we may ordinarily view as error. One of the form’s greatest appeals is a sense of the essayist thinking on the page. Taken from the French, essay translates as a trial or attempt, and the form, characterized as “digressive,” resembles conversation more than argument even as it persuades, in this case, by risking discomfort. We will read a variety of personal essays, and we will explore them in class discussion and through original essay writing. In workshop, we will focus on how craft elements from shape to syntax are used; ways the essays-in-process engage the genre and its conventions; and what is striking and what might be further explored within them.
It is a truism of literary history that the rise of the novel in the 18C is definitive of literary modernity. But short fiction, or the short story, is also distinctively modern. In this seminar, we will explore a wide range of short fiction — both historical and contemporary— in order to understand and appreciate the modes, techniques, and unique powers of literary expression characterizing short fiction. Weekly reading will be 60-100 pages. Bi-weekly short writing (and editing) will amount to 12 pages. There will be a final paper of 12-15 pages, developed in conversation with me. Consult the longer description here for likely readings.
Lives of Property in the Colonial Atlantic World

CASS TURNER
TR 1:15 – 2:30pm

In this course, we’ll ask how colonial models of property and personhood shaped both the eighteenth-century Atlantic world and the world we continue to inhabit today. Drawing on critical work in Indigenous Studies, Black Studies, and Gender and Sexuality Studies, we’ll examine the ways in which political and economic ideas associated with the Enlightenment helped to produce racialized and gendered subject positions that were coded as pathological and subordinate. Through readings of eighteenth-century fiction and poetry, political and philosophical treatises, and autobiographical narratives, we will explore how the notion of a “possessive individual” affected the lives of laborers, women, indigenous peoples, and enslaved Africans. In addition to eighteenth century texts, we’ll turn to a number of more recent sources as a way of grappling with the ongoing realities of settler colonial histories.
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