

**VCU DEPARTMENT
OF ENGLISH**

**GRADUATE
COURSE
DESCRIPTIONS**

Fall 2012

ENGL 500-003**Practicum: Teaching College English**

A course for graduate teaching assistants only. The course provides training, instructional support and professional development for graduate teaching assistants. It includes practical teaching strategies, curricula development, and managerial skills for the classroom, the Writing Center, and the Computer Center. Does not count toward graduate degrees.

Prichard**MWF 1:00-1:50pm****Call#: 12446****ENGL 501-901****Introduction to Graduate Studies in English**

Introduction to graduate studies in English. This one-credit, pass/fail course offers a very practical introduction to graduate studies in English. For it largely ignores the literary genres that we tend to study in English departments in order to focus on the under-discussed academic genres central to MA students' success: the conference paper and presentation; the MA thesis; and the curriculum vitae. MA students who are not writing a thesis should nevertheless know how to access and use one, as well as what precisely it is that they have decided not to write. Students who are writing a thesis and, so, not presenting a directed study will still have plenty of opportunities to present their work at conferences and, so, should know what they are getting into, or avoiding.

Eckhardt**M 7:00-9:40pm****Call #: 12447****ENGL 532-902****Applied English Linguistics**

Please contact instructor for course details.

Griffin**MW 5:30-6:45pm****Call #: 23826****ENGL 560-901****Topics: Shakespeare**

In this course, we will focus our attention on the inter-related ideas of love, sex, romance, and marriage as they develop in the works of Shakespeare. We will begin by reading a selection his sonnets and one of his early narrative poems, *Venus and Adonis*. We will then read 10 plays, beginning with two earlier comedies, *The Merchant of Venice* and *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and then considering two of the high romances, *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*. We will then read four problematic plays, *Othello*, *Measure for Measure*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*. And we will end the semester with two of his late romances, *Pericles* and *The Winter's Tale*. Students will be asked to write two shorter essays (8 to 10 pages – 2000 to 2500 words) and a final, longer paper (20 pages – 5000 words).

Sharp**Call #: 25488****ENGL 560-902****Topics: Ovid in English 1565-1632**

Ovid in English, 1565-1632. This course, for advanced undergraduate majors and graduate students, analyzes the works of Ovid in early modern English: two translations of *Metamorphoses* by Arthur Golding and George Sandys; shorter narrative poems based on this work by Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare; and Marlowe's translations, and John Donne's adaptations, of the *Amores*. It may also include English translations and adaptations of Petrarch's more or less Ovidian works, if only for contrast.

Eckhardt

R 7:00-9:40pm

Call #: 28219

ENGL 601-901

Young Adult Literature

Housed in School of Education. Please contact School of Education for course details.

Christenbury

R 4:00-6:40pm

Call#: 19437

ENGL 605-901

Introduction to Scholarship in English Studies

This course introduces students to the philosophy, method, and materials for research in literary and some media studies, as well as introducing them to fundamentals of textual studies. It emphasizes techniques of conducting original research and of assessing the quality of others' research; it stresses both analytical and synthetic aspects of research-based argumentation. Students acquire knowledge of and expertise in using a wide variety of research tools (electronic and print), broadening their imaginations in employing research materials and methods in the development of their own scholarship. In the final project, students prepare a critical edition of a section of literary work. Several papers are required, from 2 to 15 pages in length.

Oggel

TR 5:30-6:45pm

Call #: 27881

ENGL 614-901

18th Century Novels by Women

The twentieth-century English novelist E. P. Hartley has said, "The past is a foreign country. They do things differently there." This is a course for enthusiastic readers of modern novels who want to know more about how "early" novels are different from modern novels. The "early" novel is a capacious category; we will focus in particular on eighteenth-century English novels that are by women and are centered on female protagonists. There will be **pirates** and **cross-dressers** and **orangutans** and **erotic intrigues** and **rapacious sea monsters** and **haunted castles**. But wait, there's more!

Here is an over-simplification: the eighteenth century is when "the novel" was "born." Critics disagree about what it means to talk about the "rise" of the "novel" in the period; however, there is no question that we see in this century a wealth of fictional prose narratives that are marked by some of the depth,

interiority, and concern with “the individual” that we associate with modern novels. And, yet, these early novels are not simply early and pale imaginings of modern novels. Early novels have their own narrative concerns. How do early novels by women, about women, in England, in the eighteenth century, come at these narrative concerns? That will be the question we will ask ourselves all term. This course comes at the question of “early” novels by women, and their special approaches to the novel genre, by reading a number of canonical eighteenth-century English novels that are concerned not with *development* and *progress* (qualities we associate with modern novels) but that exhibit, rather, a ruling thematic and structural concern with *recovery* and *return*. We will begin by reading in translation a French prose fiction that was wildly popular in England throughout the century; we will consider its status as a *vexed masterplot* for the English novels that will be our focus for the rest of the term as we think about the matter of gender and genre.

This will be, by necessity, a *reading-intensive* class. Major requirements: participation in class discussion; weekly Blackboard postings; a presentation with a distributed bibliography as well as a more focused handout; and a 10-12 page final paper preceded by an abstract and workshopped at both abstract stage and paper draft stage. Likely authors (in addition to François Fénelon’s *The Adventures of Telemachus, the Son of Ulysses*) will include: Jane Barker, Delariviere Manley, Penelope Aubin, Eliza Haywood, Mary Davys, Charlotte Lennox, Frances Burney, Ann Radcliffe, and perhaps Jane Austen.

Swenson

W 7:00-9:40pm

Call #: 26933

ENGL 614-902

Slavery in the African American Literary Imagination:

“[T]he very choice of history as subject is determined by authors’ experience of the recent past and the present. But the connection is primarily indirect and metaphoric.” Keith Byerman, *Remembering The Past*

This course will attempt to grapple with the problem of representing slavery in literary texts by exploring the genres of the slave narrative and the historical novel. Our study of the slave narrative will include emphasis on its generic structure as well as issues of authentication and archival research. We will visit both print (*The Classic Slave Narratives*) and electronic texts (North American slave narratives collection at Documenting the American South) and discuss the impact of this material on literary study. The majority of the course will focus on twentieth and twenty-first century revisions of the slave narrative form as post-modern writers reinterpret the meaning of slavery in contemporary times.

Questions we will consider: Why has slavery been such an enduring subject for African American fiction writers? How might these writers be writing “in the

gaps" of nineteenth-century narratives? How are they using slavery as a cultural discourse to comment on contemporary times? Novels and short fiction will include Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (1987) and *A Mercy* (2008); Sherley Anne Williams, *Dessa Rose* (1987); Charles Johnson, *Middle Passage* (1990); Edward P. Jones, *The Known World* (2003); and James McBride, *Song Yet Sung* (2008).

Bassard

W 4:00-6:40pm

Call #: 28303

ENGL 630-901

Form and Theory of Fiction

Is English 630 a course in creative writing, in theory, or in literature? she asked rhetorically. And you may answer: It's all of these. This class will focus on narrative of the last hundred years, examining the historical, social, and intellectual forces that gave rise to major aesthetic movements such as modernism and postmodernism, as well as modes such as magic realism and steampunk. You will be expected to work both as a creative artist and as a scholar, though the amount of activity in each area may depend to an extent on individual choice. We will read and discuss theoretical texts, short stories, and novels; some of the literary works may fit more than one of the categories we study. Short (300-600 word) assignments will be imitations of the modes under discussion *or* mini-papers analyzing that mode. We will workshop these assignments. The final project (3,000-4,000 words) may be a complete short narrative set in a theoretical framework, or it may be a more traditional paper combining theory with an examination of primary texts.

Cokal

MW 4:00-5:15pm

Call #: 27885

ENGL 638-901

Studies in Writing and Rhetoric: Responding to Writing

Amongst all else it is, the act of responding to a draft is one of the most important conversations teachers have with their students. It is also one of the most difficult to engage in successfully. Professionally and personally, written response is the most important part of the conversation I have with my students. The conversation begins in class when we focus on assignments and whatever goes into fulfilling them, but in the end, the comments in the margins and at the ends of essay are what most matter. Ideally, even if a given text will, itself, go no further, receive no further work, a teacher's comments should span the semester, establishing for both teacher and student an increasingly clear inventory of what strengths and weaknesses an individual needs to be aware of as a writer. This course will explore what scholars in writing studies have to say about responding to student writing and how it fits into writing courses and the ongoing discussion of traits of good writing. The discussion will consider, also, what differences might exist in responses to published writers and student

writers and rationales for those differences. Participants will also examine their own experience as givers and receivers of response.

Hodges

MW 5:30-6:45pm

Call #: 28222

ENGL 661-901

Themes: Orality, Literacy, and the Digital

This course will open the questions of what we mean by core terms like "language," "speaking," and "communication," particularly when applied to the world of the digital, by carefully setting the terms in their historical and philosophical contexts. We will take our inspiration from (some of) the issues raised in Walter Ong (in his *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* as well as other works), along with other writers like Harold Innis, Jack Goody, and even Marshall McLuhan, one of Ong's teachers. Ong argues that the "transition" to writing was also a backgrounding/stigmatizing of "orality," that much that we think of as "oral" or "non-literate" is not just valuable but vital to human being, and is wrongly dismissed in whatever we call "modernity." What might such a perspective contribute to the attempt to define apparently new forms of "digital communication," including forms we blithely refer to as "social media," as if pre-digital forms were neither social nor media (and/or both)? Might the advent of "the digital," seen from such a perspective, entail the stigmatization of both orality and literacy? Readings will cover the history of orality and literacy via writers like Ong, Innis, Goody, McLuhan, David Olson, Steven Roger Fischer, and others; theorists of writing such as I. J. Gelb, Jacques Derrida, David Olson, Paul Saenger, and Elizabeth Eisenstein; and theorists of digital technology and textuality including Naomi Baron, Clay Shirky, Cass Sunstein, James Gleick, and David Crystal. Student work will include brief response papers, a final seminar paper (or project of equal length and substance) on a subject related to the class, and an in-class presentation.

Columbia

M 7:00pm-9:40pm

Call #: 27949

ENGL 666-001

Creative Writing: Fiction: Novel

Restricted to second- and third-year MFA students. A two-semester graduate fiction workshop in which participating writers will read and analyze the structure of novels in all genres while they draft novels of their own. Not for the faint of heart...since each member of the workshop will be expected to complete at least a book-length first draft by the end of the spring semester. Graduate writers planning to enroll should not enroll in other writing workshops.

De Haven

F 2:00-4:40pm

Call #: 27884

ENGL 666-901

Creative Writing: Short Fiction

This workshop course is for graduate students in the MFA program. We will

focus on the building blocks and stylistic flourishes that make for distinctive stories. Each participant will present three substantial stories as well as exercises and a final portfolio including a substantial revision. Since this is a workshop class, regular and prompt attendance is mandatory; you are expected to comment constructively and tactfully on colleagues' work, both in writing and in discussion. You will also bring in a story that inspired/s you and present a close reading of its craft, and you will read and report on one of this year's First Novelist Award submissions. Required for first-semester MFA fiction students; open to some other students with permission of the instructor.

Cokal

T 7:00-9:40pm

Call #: 16882

ENGL 667-901

Creative Writing: Poetry

This is a graduate workshop in poetry writing, admission limited to students in the MFA program. Each student is expected to write and revise between ten and twelve poems, and to submit these poems for discussion in workshop. At semester's end, students will submit a portfolio of revisions of the semester's work. Students will also be asked to submit four short response papers to books on our reading list, and to meet with me at least twice during the semester for individual conferences. A student's final grade is determined primarily by the content of the portfolio, but I will also take into consideration the quality of the student's short essays and contribution to workshop discussions. Probable texts include Paige Ackerson-Kiely's *My Love is a Dead Arctic Explorer* (Ashata), Osip Mandelstam's *Stolen Air: Selected Poems of Osip Mandelstam* (Ecco), Matthew Dickman's *Mayakovsky's Revolver: Poems* (Norton), Jorie Graham's *Place*, and the winner of 2012 Larry Levis reading Prize, TBA.

Wojahn

M 7:00-9:40pm

Call #: 12461

ENGL 672-901

Writing Nonfiction

May be repeated for credit. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor.

Study and practice of writing one or more modes of nonfiction on the professional or preprofessional level, under critical supervision. Emphasis will be placed on such matters as organization, style, revision, and adaptation to particular audiences and publications. Possible kinds of writing could include reports; writing based on statistics; writing textbooks; writing separate chapters of books, and writing reviews, criticism, and advocacy materials.

TBA

W 7:00-9:40pm

Call #: 12463

ENGL 673-001

Teaching Creative Writing

This course will be a sort of symposium or working group for exchanging ideas and techniques for teaching our dual-genre course, ENGL 295. It is intended to

offer support and inspiration as you transition into a perhaps new type of teaching. While it's primarily intended toward those in their first year of 295, other MFA teachers may also join as speakers or discussants.

Cokal

MW 2:00-3:15pm

Call#: 12464

MATX 601-901

Texts and Textuality

This course, a core requirement for the interdisciplinary PhD in Media, Art and Text, explores theories of texts and textuality as they relate to the study of various media and fields (English, arts, mass communications). Co-taught by Dr. Marcel Cornis-Pope (Department of English) with Dr. Noreen Barnes (School of the Arts) and Will Sims (School of Mass Communications), this course will engage theoretically and analytically a range of texts in various media (poems, fictions, word sculptures, paintings, illustrations, films, TV, video and sound-works), asking questions such as: (1) What is a text? (2) What features are common to all texts, irrespective of their medium, what features distinguish texts in particular media? (3) How are the meanings of texts produced and negotiated? (4) How do texts translate from medium to medium? We will combine several disciplinary perspectives (English and cultural studies, art history and aesthetics, and theories of communication) to study textual forms in their complex dynamic, as they move across historical periods and media or stretch the boundaries of a particular genre. We will utilize multimedia computer technology to understand past and contemporary textual forms as they engage our senses, as well as our interpretive minds.

Cornis-Pope

R 4:00-6:40pm

Call #: 17827

MATX 602-901

History of Media, Art, and Text

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Examines the history of communication technologies in their social and cultural contexts. Students will explore how the interactions between communication practices and technologies are related to institutions, identity formation, cultural values, social practices and economic conditions. Please contact instructor for more details.

Soderlund

MW 4:00-5:15pm

Call #: 17220

MATX 690-901

Seminar: Exception and its Representation

Graduate-level research and reading centered on interdisciplinary study.

TBA

W 7:00-9:40pm

Call #: 20501