VCU
Department of English
Course Descriptions
Summer 2013
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Credit Distribution

Writing....................... 303, 304, 305, 307, 389
Linguistics.................... 390, 450
Criticism...................... 311
Literature Prior to 1700...... 361
Literature 1700-1900......... 371, 372
Diversity...................... 353

**Note:** Upper level classes not listed above count as English elective credit.

These distributions are current as of 4/24/13. If instructor or class times change, check with your advisor to make sure the distribution has not changed.
Summer 2013 Classes

UNIV 111 and 112 or the equivalent is a prerequisite for all 200-level literature courses; a maximum of three credits of 200-level literature may count toward the 36 credits for the major.

ENGL 215-001  Textual Analysis
This class will explore how humans have understood their individual and social identities through the stories that they tell. This exploration of how we use narrative to understand ourselves will imply a social value for literary study that we will also examine throughout the semester. A key dilemma guiding our class will concern who has the authority to tell the stories that define us. Are we the stories that we tell ourselves or the stories that others tell about us? Can a person have a fulfilling identity that leaves him or her alienated from the society in which the person lives? How do the ways in which we represent ourselves to ourselves and others enable or restrict what we can be or become? To open this study, we will examine Northrop Frye’s argument that all works of literature adhere to an archetypal pattern about such a quest for identity and explanation of some basic literary conventions that readers expect in the works they study. We will then interrogate the adequacy of Frye’s theory as we read selected works of literature and consider what identities they suggest for the individuals and societies that they represent.
Wells  May 20-June 7  MTWRF 9:00am-12:00pm  Call #: 31827

ENGL 215-002  Textual Analysis
Please contact the instructor for course details at fopricha@vcu.edu.
Prichard  July 22- Aug 9  MTWRF 9:00-11:50am  Call #: 31826

ENGL 215-901  Textual Analysis
This course is an inquiry into literary texts, emphasizing critical thinking, close reading and various other modes of reading and analysis. Our course will focus on texts from American literature centered on issues and images of the country and the city in American life. When Thomas Jefferson bought the Louisiana territory in 1803, he imagined the nation as one large garden of citizen farmers. This idea, of course, never quite came to pass, yet Americans’ engagement with the land and the issues and problems that arise between the country and the city are a constant reminder of Jefferson’s vision. However, if the country often represents freedom and independence in American thought, the city represents a place where big money and big business can make dreams come true – however dark, mysterious and potentially dangerous the city is sometimes painted. This
course will investigate these ideas through various works of fiction, poetry and drama.

Possible Course Texts:
Bernard Malamud, The Natural
Frederick Douglass, Narrative of the Life
Robert Frost, A Boy’s Will & North of Boston
Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Blithedale Romance
Sam Shepard, Buried Child
Lorraine Hansberry, A Raisin in the Sun
F. Scott Fitzgerald, Bernice Bobs Her Hair and Other Stories
Thomas Pynchon, The Crying of Lot 49

Glenn May 20-July 10 MW 3:00-5:40pm Call #: 32049

ENGL 295-901 Reading & Writing of Fiction & Poetry
An introduction to the basic elements of writing poetry and fiction, using published examples of contemporary fiction and verse as guides in the study of literary form and the production of original creative writing. Students will be offered a practitioner's perspective on genre conventions and the process of revision.
Perry May 21-July 11 TR 6:00-8:40pm Call #: 31822

ENGL 303-001 Writing for Stage &/or Screen
A study of the craft of screenwriting. Students will be required to produce a pitch, outline, treatment, and three acts of a screenplay. Class will be run in workshop format, with each student having his or her work critiqued by the class.
McCown May 20-June 20 MTWR 1:00-3:15pm Call #: 34720

ENGL 304-901 Advanced Writing
This course will be advanced composition focusing on visual rhetoric and electronic texts. The first part of the course will explore sensory details and narrative, as well as visual language. Readings for this section will include Roland Barthes, Mark Doty, John Berger, and others. We will then move to a short historical overview of electronic literature that uses links and lexias as means to convey ideas, characterization, and connections before introducing new media poetry and literature that employs movement and image to express meaning and metaphor. Authors such as Michael Joyce and theorists such as Marshall McLuhan will provide contextual support for analyses of electronic literature as well as foundation for final writing projects using various
technologies. Other papers and projects include an ekphrastic essay (art narrative), visual group assignment, literature analysis, and reading response assignments.

White       June 11- Aug 1       TR 3:00-5:40pm       Call #: 31116

ENGL 305-001   Writing Poetry
English 305 is a creative writing workshop; students will write drafts of poems--some in response to assignments--and will bring copies for discussion and critique. The class also includes a thorough reading component of mostly contemporary poems, as well as essays about poetry. The final grade is based on a portfolio of revised poems, as well as studio work such as freewrites, written critiques, imitations, image lists, notebook entries and possibly one short essay. Required texts: The Poet’s Companion by Addonizo and Laux and The Open Door: 100 Poems, 100 Years of Poetry Magazine, edited by Share and Wiman.

Shiel        May 20-June 20      MTWR 10:30-12:45pm      Call #: 34715

ENGL 307-001   Writing Fiction
In this course, we will explore what a story is, how to discover and develop the stories you want to tell, and the narrative techniques to create and shape them and make them wonderful. You will read and discuss published stories as models, write exercises designed to develop your narrative skills, as well as write original stories. Much of the class will be conducted as a workshop. This means that you provide the audience for each other's work, reading and commenting in class and in written critiques.

Danvers      May 20- July 10     MW 6:00-8:40pm       Call #: 34718

ENGL 307-002   Writing Fiction
A fiction workshop primarily for students who have not produced a portfolio of finished creative work. Students will present a collection of their work at the end of each course.

Lodge        June 10-July 31     MW 3:00-5:40pm       Call #: 34846

ENGL 311-001   Intro to Literary Theory
This class will familiarize you with the theoretical terms and critical methodologies employed in discussing and writing about literature. The course will give you the opportunity to explore some of the most important theoretical and critical movements that have influenced the study of literature—from reader-oriented criticism, to new criticism, psychoanalytic and archetypal interpretation, structuralism, poststructuralism and deconstruction, feminism, new historicism, and cultural studies (including race and gender issues). A few
of these interpretive methods have a long history, going back to the debate between Plato and Aristotle concerning the concept of reality and the psychology of interpretation; others have been developed beginning at the end of the nineteenth century when literary studies were articulated as a discipline.

We will examine these critical theories and approaches in terms of their ability to address major components of the literary process (author, text, reader, history, culture). We will also test them on short literary selections from William Shakespeare, Andrew Marvell, John Milton, William Blake, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Emily Dickinson, William Butler Yeats, W. C. Williams, Ernest Hemingway, John Cheever, Alice Walker, and John Barth. We will be engaged in various stages of critical analysis (first reading notes, rereading response, and critical interpretation) in order to render our interpretive activities conscious. Using periodically BLACKBOARD, we will participate in group discussions, trade comments and post papers or rewrites for class response. This approach will allow us to achieve a form of collaboration difficult to accomplish in an ordinary classroom structure.

Cornis-Pope  May 20- June 20       MTWR 1:00-3:15pm        Call #: 34467

ENGL 341-001        British Literature & Culture After 1945
“To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric,” Theodor Adorno declared in his apparent disallowance of aesthetics following the Second World War. Poets, Playwrights, and novelists continued to explore how they might compose legitimate works (or anti-works), just as Adorno (who’d planned to devote his final volume on aesthetics to Samuel Beckett) later insisted his claim implied they must. This class will explore how postwar British authors confronted the atrocities executed during that war and Britain’s postcolonial position in a world now dominated by cold war politics and American hegemony.
Wells  June 10- July 18       MTWR 10:30-12:10pm       Call #: 34719

ENGL 345-001        Contemporary Poetry
Course Aims: English 318 is a survey of contemporary poetry, which for our purposes will be seen as beginning about 1950 and continuing into the present. We examine contemporary poetry’s major figures and movements, mainly North American writers, but also a small group of writers from Ireland and the United Kingdom. By the semester’s end, you should have a good working knowledge of our subject, and will be prepared to read more widely in it. There are many significant poets we will not have time to examine, but the aim of the course is to make it as comprehensive a survey within the time we are allotted.
You will be asked to write two short papers (of about 4-6 pages or more pages). In addition, you will be asked to complete an in-class mid-term and final exam. Each paper will count as 20% of your final grade. The midterm and final will also each count for 20%. The remaining 20% of your grade will be determined by class participation and unannounced in-class quizzes that I will give you from time to time.


Wojahn       May 20- June 7     MTWRF 9:00-12:00pm    Call #: 34465

ENGL/WMNS 353-001  Modernist Women Writers
Prerequisites: Three credits in a 200-level literature course (or equivalent). In this course, we will explore the central question of what it meant to be an Anglo-American female modernist writer. We will examine issues of style, subject matter, and genre in poetry, short fiction, short novels, and the essay through the lenses of gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, and sexuality. Writers studied may include Charlotte Mew, Michael Field, Anna Wickham, Edith Sitwell, H.D., Elizabeth Bowen, Katherine Mansfield, Nella Larsen, Djuna Barnes, Gertrude Stein, Vivien Eliot, Rebecca West, Mina Loy, Radclyffe Hall, Katherine Mansfield, and, of course, Virginia Woolf.

Johnson       June 10- July 18    MTWR 1:00-2:40pm    Call #: 34716

ENGL 361-001    The Bible as Literature
In this course, students will gain understanding of different genres of Biblical literature as well as a sense of the literature’s historical development and context. Attention will be paid to the differences between reading the Bible as a sacred text versus a literary text, the significant influence Biblical literature has had (and continues to have) on non-Biblical literature, and the types of literary criticism both religious and non-religious scholars often apply to Biblical texts. Through class lectures and discussions, the reading of Biblical, non-Biblical, and critical literature, and the writing of papers in which literary criticism will be applied to Biblical texts, students will become familiar not only with key Biblical texts and themes, but possible interpretations of them.

Smith        June 24-July 25     MTWR 10:30am-12:45pm   Call #: 33604

ENGL 366-001    Writing & Social Change: Crime Fiction
Fiction has a long history of influencing social change through powerful
depictions of real-world issues such as slavery, corporate corruption, poverty, and government abuse of power. In this class, VCU students and residents of the Richmond City Jail will come together to explore the potential for change in individuals and society through reading and writing crime fiction. Students will generate a portfolio of work that is enriched by a deeper understanding of the criminal justice system and the people involved in it.

Professor Crawford is a published crime writer and a private investigator.

This course is a part of OPEN MINDS, a partnership between the Richmond City Sheriff’s Office and Virginia Commonwealth University offering dual enrollment classes held at the Richmond City Jail. These classes challenge all students, incarcerated and free, to think critically about the social problems surrounding crime. All students learn to dialogue respectfully and imaginatively about their shared humanity; to write creatively and analytically in search of common ground; and to link the liberal arts to personal experience and ethical ways of living.

Students must apply in writing to be considered for this course and (if selected) meet with the course instructor, Professor Crawford, and the program co-directors, Dr. Coogan (English department, VCU) and Mr. Dooley (Education Department, Richmond City Jail) as a part of the application process. Permission of the instructor is required to enroll in this course. All OPEN MINDS students must pass a background check and comply with the rules and expectations outlined by the Richmond City Sheriff’s Office. See www.openminds.vcu.edu for more details. To apply, send Professor Crawford an e-mail explaining why you want to join the class and what you hope to learn. Direct any questions about the program to Dr. Coogan at dcoogan@vcu.edu.

Crawford     May 21- July 11 TR 1:00-3:40pm   Call #: 34776

ENGL 372-001    U.S. Literature: 1820-1865
This course will cover the early nineteenth century in American literature, commonly called the "American Renaissance.” Our focus will be an in-depth examination of a broad selection of works by a few major authors, supported by other materials: writings of contemporaries on related subjects, reviews and other registers of the reception of these authors’ works, and work in related genres, both from the nineteenth century and the present day. We will consider the formal and stylistic features of these authors’ works, the relevant historical and cultural contexts, and the lives of our writers to gain the fullest possible
ENGL 373-001  U.S. Literature: 1865-1913
This course examines the literature of the United States from the end of the Civil War to the beginning of World War I. Writers representative of the period such as Howells, James, Twain, Crane, Chesnutt, Robinson, Freeman and Chopin will be studied. The course will be conducted by the lecture/discussion method. Students are expected to take part in discussions. There will be a midterm, a paper (9-10 pages, critical or research), unannounced quizzes if necessary, and a comprehensive final exam.

ENGL 390-001  Introduction to Linguistics
This course is a general introduction to the field of linguistics, the scientific study of language. It will introduce you to the biological, cognitive and social basis for human language and communication with an emphasis on basic, formal methods of linguistic description. Basic areas covered under formal linguistics includes phonetics (the properties of speech sounds), phonology (the systematic sound patterns of language), morphology (the grammatical structure of words), syntax (the structure of phrases and sentences), and semantics/pragmatics (the meaning and use of words and sentences). This course will also cover areas such as historical linguistics (language change and language relationships), language acquisition (how languages are acquired in children vs. adults) and physiological basis of language (language and the brain). This course is designed to give you a brief but broad overview of the methods used in linguistic description and analysis and to familiarize you with the main areas of inquiry within the field of linguistics.

Topics and issues covered include:
• The biological basis and evolutionary origins of human language
• Relations of language to cognition, communication, and social organization
• Sounds, forms and meanings of words, phrases, and sentences
• The reconstruction of linguistic history and the “family tree” of languages
• Dialect variation and language standardization
• Language learning by children and adults
• Brain structures and language functions

Griffin  June 24- July 25  MTWR 1:00-3:15pm  Call #: 34463
ENGL 391-001  Topics: Prison Writing
The course engages the most enduring dilemmas facing prisoners globally in 20th century; it will survey people whose lives are interrupted by incarceration as a result of political upheaval. Our course will question how they overcome the isolation and injustice in order to write and publish. We will explore what their writings can teach us about the individual’s relationship to the community once they have been ostracized from that group. Our readings may include selections from the works of Reinaldo Arenas, Leonard Peltier, Nawal El Saadawi, Jean Genet, Evgenia Ginzburg, Wole Soyinka, and Liu Xiaobo.

Reed  May 20- July 10  MW 1:00-3:40pm  Call #: 34721

ENGL 391-901  Topics: Tolkien & the Chivalric Code
In this course, we will examine several medieval texts to develop a working definition of the ideal knight/hero and his code of conduct as set forth on the literary level – in other words, the psychological code by which the hero operates. The texts are: Beowulf, Marie de France’s Lanval, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Chretien de Troyes’s Perceval, selections from Malory’s Morte D’Arthur. We will then examine four first person accounts of the Crusades to discover how the code worked in the reality of war. Following this, we will examine The Lord of the Rings to determine how Tolkien expresses, re-expresses, or even re-inscribes the chivalric code into a broader social morality/psychology, applicable to our own time. There will be two tests, two papers, and a final exam.

Kustesky  June 11-Aug 1  TR 6:00-8:40pm  Call #: 34777

ENGL/LING 450-901  Modern Grammar
This course is an introduction to the study of grammar, focusing on the nature and structure of human language (syntax) from the perspective of the Minimalist Program, the current version of the Principles and Parameters approach within Generative linguistic theory. This course will focus primarily on the grammar of Standard American English but other dialects of English and other languages will also be examined. This course is designed to give you a brief but broad overview of the issues and analytical methods in current grammatical theory and a comprehensive understanding of the basic structure of English and human languages more generally. No prior coursework in linguistics is required.

Griffin  June 10- July 31  MW 6:00-8:40pm  Call #: 10718

HUMS 250-001  Reading Film
This course aims to introduce you to some of the formal elements of film—the building blocks of motion pictures—that are necessary to understand for a close or detailed analysis of cinema. As such the course aims to increase your “visual”
literacy and make you more savvy consumers of visual images more generally. You should also gain a more well-developed technical and critical vocabulary with which to talk and write about the films and other visual media you watch. We will watch and analyze scenes (and a few full-length films) drawn from both the American and world cinemas. Overall, this course should help you think, talk and write more effectively about your viewing and make you a more confident and knowledgeable “consumer” of the moving image in all its forms and media. The class itself will present you with a lot of information about these film elements, and given the short term in summer session, attendance is really necessary. Although most of the time we will be analyzing short clips from films, we will watch at least three feature-length films (including one or more of the following: *Citizen Kane, The Godfather, Amélie, Chinatown, Grand Illusion*).

There will be 20-30 pages of reading most nights, six short written tests, and a final exam that will include a take-home essay.

**Fine**
May 20-June 7  
MTWF 9:00am-12:00pm  
Call# 31306

**HUMS 250-002**  
Reading Film
Develops students’ visual literacy by exploring and analyzing the various elements of film (cinematography, lighting, editing, art direction, acting and sound, among others). Examples will be drawn from both U.S. and world cinema and from all eras of filmmaking. For course details, please contact instructor at rashworth@vcu.edu.

**Ashworth**
July 22- Aug 9  
MTWF 9:00-11:50am  
Call #: 32794