

Spring 2025 English Department Course Descriptions

045 (010-14709) Conspiracy and Paranoia

4

Gaslighting, paranoia, conspiracy theories: we hear a lot about these things every day. Conspiracy theories seem to be everywhere--everywhere, of course, except in our *own* heads. Why does everybody *else* seem so paranoid? Can we tell an actual conspiracy from a crazy conspiracy theory? Is social media gaslighting you? (And what *is* gaslighting?) This class will use recent literature and some films to explore why everybody resorts to conspiratorial thinking and paranoid explanations for events large and small.

MW 09:20-1035

Gordon

091 (011-14807) Environmental Imagination

4

One of the most pressing issues in the contemporary world is our relationship with nature. With increasingly powerful hurricanes and record temperatures becoming the norm, climate change has become hard to ignore. Tied to it are a wide variety of other environmental issues, such as population growth, food production, clean water and air, social justice, and consumerism in general. In this course, we will consider a wide variety of works of literature to see what they have to tell us about these issues. These works will include novels by T.C.Boyle and Ruth Ozeki, as well as essays and non-fiction, starting with excerpts from Thoreau, and working our way through Muir, Leopold, Carson, Kingsolver, and McKibben. In addition, I hope to find time for a trip along some local forest paths or to a local farm. In the end, students will have read and thought about the natural world in ways that enable us to live in harmony with the earth and the humans who inhabit it. If we are going to sustain life on this earth, these are issues we must confront.

MW 10:45-12:00

Lotto

091 (012-14863) Jane Austen Makeovers

4

250 years after her birth, we are still obsessed with Jane Austen, and our obsession shows no signs of letting up anytime soon. As one of the most appealing writers in the English language, Austen serves as a versatile, dynamic, and perhaps most importantly, unthreatening cultural resource for various people and organizations. She is one of the very few writers who remains thoroughly canonical within the academic study of literature and enjoys a vast popular following outside of the university. And she is (still) one of the hottest writers in Hollywood as well as other global sites of film production. Many of Austen's fans adore her treatments of love and romance, while others have adopted and adapted her narratives to advance specific—and divergent—political agendas, such as feminist campaigns, LGBTQ polices, white nationalist coalitions, and Black Power movements. We will study historical and recent literary, filmic, and cultural Austen adaptations that demonstrate her diverse popularity. Amongst numerous other questions, we will consider (1) how and why Austen's stories continue to fulfill the needs or satisfy the appetites of explicitly different audiences, (2) how Austen's narratives manage to remain relevant and fresh within fundamentally different historical and cultural contexts, and (3) how might we deploy Austen in the future?

MW 12:10-01:25

Kramp

- 100 (010-12924) Working with Texts** **4**
 A course to help students to become independent readers of literary and other kinds of texts; to discern and describe the process by which texts establish meaning; to gain an awareness of methods and strategies for interpreting texts; to construct and argue original interpretations; to evaluate the interpretations of other readers; and to learn to find and assimilate into their own writing appropriate information from university library resources. To be rostered as early as possible in the English major's program.
MW 01:35-02:50 **Lay**
- 119 (010-14757) Introduction to Horror Film** **4**
 Examination of the horror film from beginnings to the present, including classic horror of the 1930s, the slasher film in the 1970s, the self-reflexive horror of the 1990s, the faux-documentary horror at the end of the 20th century, and the renaissance of the genre in our contemporary world, from so-called torture porn" to the return of the "possession" film.
Cross listed with FILM 119 (14764)
TR 12:10-01:25 **Keetley**
- 128 (010-11577) History of Theatre II** **4**
 A multi-cultural survey of dramatic literature theatre and theatrical practice from the 18th century to the present day.
Cross-listed with Theatre 128 (10166)
MW 13:35-14:50 **Chory**
- 142 (010-10922) Introduction to Writing Poetry** **4**
 Instruction in the craft of writing poetry, with a focus on prosody. Practice in and classroom criticism of poems written by students taking the course.
MW 10:45-12:00 **B. Watts**
- 170 (010-10364) Amaranth** **1**
 Amaranth editorial staff. Students can earn one credit by serving as editors (literary, production, or art) of Lehigh's literary magazine. Work includes soliciting and reviewing manuscripts, planning a winter supplement and spring issue, and guiding the magazine through all phases of production. Editors attend weekly meetings with the faculty advisor.
T 12:10-13:25 **B. Watts**
- 303 (011-12843) Grimms' Fairy Tales: Folklore, Feminism, Film** **4**
 This intercultural history of the Grimms' fairy tales investigates how folktale types and gender stereotypes developed and became models for children and adults. The course covers the literary

fairy tale in Germany as well as Europe and America. Versions of "Little Red Riding Hood", "Cinderella", or "Sleeping Beauty" exist not only in the Grimms' collection but in films and many forms of world literature. Taught in English. German language students may receive a German component.

Cross-listed with FILM 303 (12845); GERM 303 (12841); MLL 303 (12842); WGSS 303 (12844)
MW 12:10-13:25 **Stegmann**

309 (010-14725; 011-14727) Critical Theory and Practice **4-3**

An introduction to literary theory from its origins in ancient Greek philosophy to its most recent iterations in post-modernism and cultural studies. By examining literature through different theoretical lenses, we see how texts perform important cultural work linked with questions of justice. The books we love to read do not simply reflect reality; rather, they shape our reality. Literary texts ask us to consider what it means to be human, informing our thinking about race, class, gender, and other issues.

TR 09:20-10:35 **Crassons**

315 (010-14936; 011-15040) Topics in Literature, Medicine, and Health **4-3**

Narratives of disaster, pandemic, and global destruction inevitably return to questions of health, including issues surrounding the frailty of human well-being, the precarity of populations, our dependence upon natural environments, and the promise of our healthy or unhealthy renewal. We will study various literary and filmic treatments of devastation from the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first century to evaluate the different functions of such narratives of destruction and demise with particular attention to illness and medicine, apocalyptic fears, and the efficacy of health. Topics will include zombies, global war, anxieties of invasion, genocide, pandemics, reproductive rights, urban apocalypse, eugenics, the last man trope, and the allure of Africa and other specific regions of the Global South as sites of human revival.

Cross-listed with HMS 315-010 (14937); HMS 315-011 (15041)

Fulfills the 20th/21st Century Distribution Requirement

MW 09:20-10:35 **Kramp**

320 (010-14838; 011-14846) Imaging Freedom **4-3**

In the face of slavery and its violent aftermath, African Americans turned their minds to the question of freedom. How could they free themselves? What would a free society look like? What forms of freedom did human beings most need in order to flourish? These imaginings of freedom are among the richest cultural legacies of the American people and they are a necessary part of any effort to understand the contradictory history of the United States. This seminar will provide an introduction to 19th-century African American literature and politics, an extraordinary tradition in which an enslaved people dreamed of justice. We will read autobiographical slave-narratives, novels and poems, protests against slavery and lynching, demands for political rights and women's equality, calls for slave rebellion and appeals for inter-racial cooperation. In addition to

less well-known works, we will read some of the most famous writings in the African American tradition. (Readings will include: David Walker, Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Jacobs, Maria Stewart, Henry Highland Garnet, Harriet Wilson, T. Thomas Fortune, Ida B. Wells, Charles Chesnutt, Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois.) By listening to spirituals and work-songs, we will also attempt to hear the aspirations of those who endured the experience of slavery and its aftermath, as they have been handed down through vernacular musical traditions. Throughout the semester, students will be encouraged to consider how these 19th -century freedom dreams are relevant to the challenges we face in 21st -century America. No prior study of African American history or culture will be required, but a willingness to engage in interdisciplinary inquiry will be expected.

Cross-listed with AAS 320-010 (14837); AAS 320-011 (14844)

Fulfills the American to 1900 requirement

Open to sophomores with Department Approval (include this information)

TR 1:35-2:50

Moglen

328 (010-14916; 011-15030) Topics in Shakespeare

4-3

Chances are you've heard of William Shakespeare. You may even have heard him referred to as "the greatest writer in the English language." But why? Does Shakespeare still matter? And how has this renaissance playwright become a fixture in Hollywood? In this class, we are going to explore why these plays written roughly 400 hundred years ago still resonate today. We'll read some of the "greatest hits" (e.g. *King Lear*, *Macbeth* and *Much Ado About Nothing*) as well as a few lesser known works, focusing first on how these texts were understood in the time they were written. We will then explore how directors from around the world (e.g. Branagh, Kurosowa, Kozintsev) have adapted these plays into the visual medium of film, and used them to address questions and concerns that are very much of our own time.

Cross-listed with THTR 328-010 (14917); THTR 328-011 (15031)

Fulfills the 20th/21st Century Distribution Requirement

TR 10:45-12:00

Weissbourd

342 (010-11313; 011-11314) Advanced Poetry Writing

4-3

An intensive writing workshop in which student poems and related literary texts receive close reading and analysis.

MW 09:20-10:35

Watts, B

344 (010-11315; 011-11316) Advanced Fiction Writing

4-3

Advanced Fiction Writing is a continuation of Intro to Fiction Writing 144 and will focus on the production and critique of narratives of various lengths. How does a beautiful piece of writing work? The answer is craft. This course is an examination of the tools of craft for fiction writers: dialogue, voice, image, metaphor, character, point of view, and structure. We will write stories, complete short exercises and scenes, read, critique and evaluate every class members' work, in addition to reading the work of established writers of fiction and

nonfiction. Our goals are to begin to demystify the process of writing and establish lasting habits to complete the work we want to do.

TR 09:20-10:35

Watts, S

368 (010-14791; 011-14883) Transatlantic Radicalism: Can We Remake the World? 4-3

In the 1790s, anything seemed possible to some writers on both sides of the Atlantic. “The earth was all before me,” Wordsworth wrote. Some novelists envisioned remaking the world, though their efforts to create new societies rarely treated all men and women equally. These progressive efforts, moreover, led other writers to struggle to hold in place a world that they felt was spiraling out of control.

Fulfills the British 1660-1900 Requirement

Writing Intensive

MW 10:45-12:00

Gordon

391 (015-14767) Contemporary Black Literature 4

Black British writers and the black literary tradition remain underrepresented in university curricula and course lists. Addressing this paucity, *Contemporary Black British Literature* will increase students’ intellectual awareness of and amplify these Black British voices as we engage the practice of decolonization and decanonization of the so-called British canon, of traditional English studies. This course will help students to gain an understanding of the history of Black people in Britain through how they are represented in literature; it will introduce students to the immigrant experience in the UK through food, music, art; specifically, we will explore the Caribbean and its diaspora, paying special attention to the Brixton and Birmingham riots, and the Windrush generation. While the course will provide students with an insight of how Blackness and Britishness are seemingly at odds, it will further explore how migration and migratory experiences have challenged/pushed the literary and geographic boundaries of Britishness. Likely texts include: Paul Gilroy, *There Ain’t No Black in the Union Jack* (accompanied by Ebony Jones’s song *No Black in the Union Jack*), Andrea Levy, *Small Island*, Caryl Phillips, *The European Tribe* and *Color Me English*, Warsan Shire, *Bless the Daughter Raised by a Voice in her Head*, Bernadine Evaristo, *Mr. Loverman*, and Nadifa Mohammed, *Black Mamba Boy*.

Likely films/videos: Steve McQueen, *Small Axe*, Horace Ové, *Pressure*.

Fulfills the 20th/21st Century Distribution Requirement

TR 10:45-12:00

Alexander

473 (010-14830) Cultures of Data in Antebellum American Literature 3

Between the excess of printed texts made available by recent advances in printing technology and the nation-making tools of census demography, the 19th-century United States had become a culture of data. Data is fundamentally a question of form, and literary theory has taught us that the process of shaping any aspect of the human experience into a recognizable form—whether the form of a sonnet or the form of a spreadsheet—is influenced by the agents

and structures of power. The literary texts that we read for this course participated in the 19th-century project of sorting and organizing an excessive amount of information, and they did so by both participating in and modifying conventional literary forms. Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick* and Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* are data-rich texts that replace conventional narrative plot and poetic form with alternative methods for arranging and displaying an overwhelming amount of information. Whitman also joined with his contemporary Emily Dickinson in structuring their poetry archives as idiosyncratic collections of biometric data. Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and William Wells Brown's *Clotel* explore how African American bodies were subjected to regimes of data quantification that included the 3/5ths compromise of the U.S. Constitution, categories of racial descent (mulatto, quadroon, octoroon, etc.), and the economic structures of plantation slavery.

Fulfills the Post 1830 Requirement

M 4:25-17:05

Whitley

482 (010-11526) Theories of Literature & Social Justice

3

This course introduces students to theories of literature and social justice. We will explore questions such as these: How does the study of literature offer distinctive ways of grappling with questions of social justice? How do literary works reinforce or challenge dominant ideologies? In what ways do literary works provide tools to map exploitative or oppressive social and political formations? How do literary works enable us to imagine freer modes of life and more just and equitable societies? Most of our attention will be focused on theoretical and critical works that provide conceptual tools for thinking about these matters. We will also read some literary texts, from varied historical contexts, in order to provide opportunities to experiment with these interpretive paradigms.

Fulfills the Theories of Literature and Social Justice for first year graduate students

R 4:25-17:05

Moglen/Dominique

484 (010-12542) Teaching Composition II: Practicum

1

Hands-on introduction to teaching research, argument, and multimodal composition at Lehigh. Usually rostered in the Spring semester to support the teaching of WRT 002. Required of all new teaching assistants in the department.

T 12:10-1:25

Bauknight

496 (015-14786) Sex, Gender and Sexuality in the Middle Ages

3

This course examines the strategies that a diverse group of medieval texts use to construct normative ideals of sex, gender, and sexuality and to imagine (and, often, simultaneously refuse) alternative possibilities. As part of the English department's ongoing discussion about literature and social justice, we will pay particular attention to the ways that representations of marriage, virginity, romantic love, sexual transgression, erotic pleasure, and the body refract

philosophical, economic, and theological reflections on race, social hierarchy, national identity, and religion.

Because debates about gender and sexuality take place across a range of social and political institutions, course readings include legal statutes and cases, penitential manuals, and theological treatises alongside narrative texts in order to offer a nuanced account of race, gender, and sexuality in the Middle Ages. Readings will include *The Life of Christina Markyate*, *Silence*, the *Legenda Aurea*, Marie de France's *Lais*, as well as selections from the *Canterbury Tales*, among others. To sharpen our understanding of what is at stake in any analysis of this historical archive, readings in feminist theory, queer theory, and critical race theory will inform our discussions.

Fulfills the Pre-1830 Requirement

Edwards

T 4:25-7:05

496 (016-14832) Queer Fictions

3

In the wake of World War II, authors invested in exploring sexuality continue the work of modernists by challenging normative depictions of sexual desire, exploring alternative kinship formations, and depicting both the struggles and pleasures of queer communities and individuals. Inspired by McCarthy era demonization of homosexuality and the intensified surveillance of queer subcultures, many authors in the post-war period use the pen to document the violence of the criminalization of homosexuality, the "psychiatrization of perverse pleasure" (Michel Foucault) and compulsory heterosexuality (Adrienne Rich). So, too, authors explore queerness in literary texts to address the overlapping forces of homophobia, transphobia, racism, sexism, and colonialism in their literary works. While authors address the challenges facing LGBTQ+ communities, they also move beyond depictions of trauma in order to voice non-normative pleasures and to explore the political and ethical possibilities of queer subcultures. In this course, we will read several texts by major authors of the post-45 period, including works by James Baldwin, John Rechy, Carson McCullers, Kathy Acker, Randall Kenan, Leslie Feinberg, Audre Lorde, Samuel R. Delany, and Ocean Vuong, to name a few. Although we primarily will focus on novels, we also will combine our literary analysis with articles by queer theorists and literary critics.

Fulfills the Post-1830 Requirement

Foltz

W 4:25-7:05

498 (010-14798) Introduction to Digital Humanities

3

This course introduces students to the emerging field of digital humanities scholarship with an emphasis on social justice-oriented projects and practices. The course will begin with a pair of foundational units that aim to define digital humanities as a field, and also to frame what's at stake. How might the advent of digital humanities methods impact how we read and interpret literary texts? How is technology reshaping the role of the Humanities in our cultural conversations more broadly? We'll also explore a series of thematic clusters, including "Race,

Digital Humanities and Digital Media,” “Resistant Networks,” “Archives, Editions, and Collections,” and “Texts as Data.” Along the way, we’ll explore specific Digital Humanities projects that exemplify those areas, and play and learn with digital tools and do some basic coding using Python and Regular Expressions. The final weeks of the course will be devoted to collaborative, student-driven projects. No programming or web development experience is necessary, but a willingness to experiment and ‘break things’ is essential to the learning process envisioned in this course.

Fulfills Theory Requirement

TR 1:35-2:50

Singh