

Spring 2026 English Course Descriptions

045 (010-13949) Paranoia and Conspiracy

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 9:20-10:35

Gordon

065 (010-15010) Intro to Playwriting

4

Crosslisted with (THTR 010-15009)

MW 9:20-10:35

Gabel

100 (010-12705) 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.

Required English Major Introduction Course

MW 12:10-1:25

Kramp

128 (010-15027) History of Theatre II

4

Crosslisted with (THTR 010-15020)

TTR 1:35-2:50

McGinty

142 (010-10842) 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 9:20-10:35

B. Watts

170 (010-10317) 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. Consent of department chair required.

T 12:10-1:25

B. Watts

191 (010-15016) Special Topics: Transnational Cinema**4**

Addressing the lack of diversity in the cinema industry, this course will introduce students to the history of cinema in the Caribbean and the Caribbean diaspora. Students will view films made by filmmakers of the English-, French-, Spanish-, and Dutch-speaking Caribbean as well as filmmakers of the Caribbean Diaspora who explore themes of race, class, gender, and politics through a critical lens, emphasizing the continued effects of colonialism and globalization. Students will also get a glimpse of how the region is portrayed in/by Hollywood and will gain a fuller and more in-depth perspective of regional politics and culture; how the region is in conversation with cinema of the Black diaspora, and global cinema at large. Some of the films will be paired with works of fiction from which they were adapted; the list includes *Wide Sargasso Sea*, *Sugarcane Alley (Rue Cases-Nègres)*, *The Harder They Come*, and *Heading South*. Other films include *Ava and Garcia: A Love Story*, *Ticket to Paradise (Boleto al paraíso)*, *Life and Debt*, and *One Love*.

Crosslisted with (AAS 010-15021)

TTR 10:45-12:00**Alexander****201 (010-15042) Special Topics in Writing: Writing with AI**

AI is changing how we write, and it is not going away anytime soon. This course questions the relationship between humans and machines through a genre-based approach to writing with AI. Students will participate in experiential learning with a number of AI tools. We will analyze their strengths and limitations, engineer prompts, and even train our own personal AI. Additionally, this class will grapple with ethical questions including authorship, environmental, and truth. For both the curious and skeptical, this class will help students develop critical skills to both use and talk about AI in their professional and academic lives.

Elective/Writing Intensive**TTR 1:35-2:50****Muñoz****315 (010-14158; 011-15057)****4-3****Servitje****331 (010-15055; 011-14251) Milton****Lay**

Why Milton? Why now? In this seminar, we'll ask what the literature and politics of John Milton might offer our present moment. Milton wrote during the English Civil War, Interregnum, and Restoration, a time of great political change and social unrest, and we will read his works with this context in mind. After we trace Milton's early literary and political career, we will devote approximately half of the course to *Paradise Lost*, an epic that imagines the entirety of human and divine history in a gripping narrative of pride, temptation, and faith. We'll compare Milton to a number of his predecessors and contemporaries—women who tackled the same issues but have not received the same historical recognition—and we'll pay particular attention to how these authors considered issues of religious liberty, political resistance and revolution, and gender and sexuality.

Fulfills the British to 1660 Distribution Requirement**TR 10:45-12:00****4-3**

341 (010-15227; 011-15057) Contemporary US Literature of Environmental Crises Foltz

This course addresses how contemporary US literature depicts toxic America and the environmental crises as well as the human (and other animal) tragedies that result from a variety of contemporary practices that deny connectivity to/dependence upon ecosystems. Students will engage with some of the most important novels written in the contemporary period that call readers to address human impact on the environment, to imagine alternative & less ruinous ways of being in the world, and to imagine more sustainable futures.

Crosslisted with (EVST 010-15230; 011-152310)

Fulfills the 20th/21st Century Requirement and Writing Intensive

MW 1:35-2:50

4-3

342 (010-11208; 011-11209) Advanced Poetry

B. Watts

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

MW 10:45-12:00

4-3

381 (010-15048; 011-11211) How Free Can We Be in the Modern World? Realism and Naturalism in American Literature, 1860-1940

Moglen

Realist and naturalist novelists wondered if Americans were becoming more or less free. Was moral choice possible in a market-driven society devoted to money-making? Could African Americans achieve equality or was white racism irreversible? Could women claim new forms of social, professional and sexual freedom – or was male dominance inescapable? In this course, we will read masterpieces of realist and naturalist fiction – two of the most influential traditions in modern American literature. Readings will include fiction by Rebecca Harding Davis, William Dean Howells, Frank Norris, Kate Chopin, Charles Chesnutt, Henry James, Edith Wharton, Tillie Olsen and Richard Wright. As we explore these questions of freedom and determination, we will also read essays by Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud so that we can consider the ways in which realist and naturalist modes of story-telling have influenced some of the most powerful theories of Western modernity. In your writing for this seminar, you will have an opportunity to explore the extent – and limits – of freedom in your own lives.

Fulfills the American to 1900 Distribution Requirement

TTR 1:35-2:50

4-3

391 (010-15154; 013-15156) Special Topics: Race, Gender, Slavery, Freedom in 18th Century British Literature

Dominique

The Rights of Man, Thomas Paine's classic argument in defense of the individual's right to assert freedom in the face of tyranny, was a popular late-eighteenth century refrain originating from the 1789 French Revolution. But generalized arguments about individual human rights also gave rise to specific debates concerning the rights of women and Negro slaves. What rights were these individuals denied in eighteenth-century Britain and how did the period's literature reflect their dilemmas? This course will consider these questions as a way of introducing you to the

study of race and gender in a British colonial context. But it is particularly concerned with occasions in literature where British writers combined simultaneous discourses about race and gender in ways that sometimes helped and at other times hindered the fights against tyranny that Negro slaves and female advocates fought. We will read plays, poetry, novels, short stories, travel literature, and non-fiction prose as well as recent theories about gender and racial construction in the eighteenth century to discuss representations of British men and women, and colonial Others like Negro slaves, Creoles and Jews. We will consider an assortment of issues ranging from slavery, anti-slavery, abolition, miscegenation, mimicry, ambivalence, hybridity, anti-Semitism, blackness and whiteness, to marriage, libertinism, and sexual double standards in a variety of canonical and obscure texts.

Crosslisted with AAS (010-15157; 013-05159); WGSS (010-15160; 013-15162)

Fulfills the British 1660-1900 Requirement

MW 10:45-12:00

441 (010-15002) Early Modern Literature: Shakespeare and Theory 3

This seminar offers an overview of major movements in critical theory via readings of Shakespeare. In doing so, it explores two inter-related questions. First, how has literary theory shaped the way we interpret Shakespeare? Conversely, how have Shakespeare's texts informed literary and cultural theory? We will start by using readings of Shakespeare's plays to develop a basic knowledge of key theoretical paradigms: psychoanalysis and Marxism (*Hamlet*), postcolonialism (*The Tempest*), feminist and queer theory (*Twelfth Night*), and critical race theory (*Titus Andronicus*). As we read Shakespeare through lenses offered by critical theory, we will also ask why many theorists (including Marx, Freud, Césaire and Sedgwick, among others) draw on readings of Shakespeare to stake their claims. In other words, we will explore Shakespeare's complicated status as a touchstone for critical theorists, even those who work to dismantle the centrality of the author and/or the Western canon. Assignments will include a midterm essay and either a final seminar paper or project (e.g. an integration of scholarship and creative writing, a syllabus and/or lesson plan, an annotated bibliography). Ultimately, this course aims to be 1) a "how to" guide to applying theory to literary texts; 2) an introduction to both Shakespeare's plays and key movements in literary theory; and 3) an interrogation of why Shakespeare – the archetypal Dead White Man of the Western canon – has so frequently been re-purposed as a site of resistance.

Fulfills the Graduate Pre-1830 and Graduate Theory Requirements

R 4:25-7:05

Weissbourd

443 (010-15061) Transatlantic Eighteenth-Century Literature: Encounters in the Early Americas 3

What can literary texts show us about what happened when different groups of people encountered each other in the early Americas? Christian missionaries hoped to convert non-Europeans, but did Indigenous or enslaved people transform as the missionaries believed? European settlers were often bent upon eliminating or controlling others, but did they achieve the domination they aimed at? Dominant groups failed to recognize or understand the interests

and desires of the others they encountered—and so their accounts, often all that survives, misrepresented the exchanges themselves. We will explore these issues with historical, theoretical, and literary texts, including writings by Mary Rowlandson, Olaudah Equiano, Charles Brockden Brown, and Mary Prince.

Fulfills the Graduate Pre-1830 Requirement

MW 12:10-1:25

Gordon

453 (010-15050) Public Humanities

3

An introduction to the theory and practice of the public humanities, providing students with a toolkit for sharing research with those beyond the university. Units will include: writing for broader audiences (intellectual journalism, memoir, creative nonfiction); photography; oral history; scholarship-in-performance. Learn to collaborate with artists, activists, and community organizations to enhance democracy and civic life. Training for flexible careers, inside and outside the university.

Fulfills the Graduate ?? Requirement

T 4:25-7:05

Moglen

482 (010-11407) Theories of Literature and Social Justice

3

This course introduces students to theories of literature and social justice, addressing the following broad (and frequently overlapping) questions: What is social justice? How are literary forms (and literary criticism) distinctive in the ways in which they grapple with questions of social justice? How do literary forms reinforce or challenge dominant ideologies? In what ways does literature critique social injustice and imagine new models of more perfect human flourishing?

Fulfills the Graduate ENGL 482 Requirement

W 4:25-7:05

Rollins/Servitje

484 (010-12361) Teaching Composition II: A 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.

Fulfills the Graduate ENGL 484 Requirement

T 12:10-1:25

Bauknight

491 (010-15006) Special Topics: Critical Autism Studies: Neurodiversity, Language, and Literature

3

While the DSM-5 designates autism as a neurodevelopmental “disorder,” neurodiversity advocates approach the condition as a legitimate form of identity. Seen from this perspective, neuro-differences are natural variations in the human genome, not deficits that should be corrected or eradicated. Studying both the history of ASD as a diagnosis and the rise of the neurodiversity movement, we will explore how autism is inextricably linked to issues of language, representation, and interpretation—issues with far-reaching ethical stakes. Over the

course of the semester, we will be guided by a series of key questions: What assumptions underlie the conventional rhetoric of autism advocacy, and how might these work to promote a culture of violence against autistic people? Why are autistics so trenchantly consigned to the realm of the “nonverbal” when, as Wittgenstein famously puts it, “language is a form of life?” How do autistic voices speak, and what might their “language games” look like? Why do we value characteristics like digressiveness, abstraction, and monologue in our favorite novels, poems, and plays while also pathologizing these modes of speech in autistic people? How might the varied techniques of literary texts shed light on autistic subjectivities? How might literature also reproduce dehumanizing stereotypes of autistic people?

Fulfills the Graduate Post-1830 Requirement

TR 9:20-10:35

Crassons