

English Department Course Descriptions

Fall 2021

60 **Dramatic Action** **(4)**
(40101)

How plays are put together; how they work and what they accomplish. Examination of how plot, character, aural and visual elements of production combine to form a unified work across genre, styles and periods. **Cross-listed with Theater 60 (40282)**

MW 10:45-12:00

Ripa

96 **Dirty Words; Filthy Texts: Satire in Fiction, Film and Art** **(4)**
(42305)

“I think it's the duty of the comedian to find out where the line is drawn and cross it deliberately.”
George Carlin

This course requires that you bring a keen eye and a foul mouth to class on a weekly basis. We'll be discussing satirical humor using a very specific lens: the dirty words and filthy texts written by British and American satirists working in fiction, film and art. Writers such as Geoffrey Chaucer, Henry Fielding and Mark Twain, publications like *The Onion* and *The New Yorker*, comedians Dave Chapelle and Lenny Bruce, artists William Hogarth and Banksy and film/TV shows like *The Boondocks*, *Victor/Victoria* and *Blazing Saddles* are all deliberately using outrageous language as well as crafting extreme images and scenes to generate biting social commentary. But how effective are they at doing this, especially when they descend into low-brow, potty-mouthed humor? Together, we'll assess whether some of these texts succeed either in challenging rigid obscenity laws and customs or in undermining social ills like sexism, racism, transphobia, homophobia and classism, and whether they sometimes fail in these endeavors by crossing that invisible line into the offensive and unfunny. We'll also investigate how and when artists and writers cultivate outrage as a rhetorical tool not simply to draw attention to their incendiary work, but also to deliberately display Art's power and purpose beyond providing aesthetic delight. So, if you're intrigued by the whiff of satirical scandal as well as the prospect of sniffing-out some serious social commentaries surrounding George Carlin's "Seven Words You Can Never Say on Television," Chris Ofilli's religious artwork using elephant dung or Jonathan Swift's tasteful scenes of public urination, then bring your keen eyes, foul mouths (and, perhaps, nose plugs) to a delightfully lurid semester of mining the meanings behind dirty words and filthy texts. Who knows, by the end, you may gain enough fresh cultural outlooks and insights about satire to confidently craft your own.

MW 10:45-12:00

Dominique

97 **Visions of Justice in American Culture** **(4)**
(44259)

Can literature help create a more just society? In this course, we will ask fundamental questions about what justice entails and how various visions of justice operate in contemporary American culture. Students will clarify and complicate their conceptions of revenge, retribution, and restorative justice in particular, through a series of novels, short stories, nonfiction texts and multimedia clips. Furthermore, the class will explore alternatives to the criminal justice system and imagine what other possibilities could look like. In doing so, we will explore the unique literary and ethical dimensions that the humanities can offer to this discussion. Texts may include: Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give*, Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, and Ernest Gaines' *A Lesson Before Dying*, among others. Films may include: *12 Angry Men*, *Just Mercy*, and *13th*.

TR 12:10-1:25

Heidebrink-Bruno, S

100 **Working with Texts** **(4)**
(40102)

A course to help students to become, through intense practice, independent readers of literary and other kinds of texts; to discern and describe the devices and process by which texts establish meaning; to gain an awareness of the various methods and strategies for reading and interpreting texts; to construct and argue original interpretations; to examine and judge the interpretations of other readers; to write the interpretive essay that supports a distinct position on some literary topic of importance; 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.

TR 10:45-12:00

Lay

105 **Intro To Latinx Literature and Culture** **(4)**
(44195)

This course provides an overview of the literary history and criticism of Latinx literature and media. Through a combination of critical and literary theory, we will focus on Latinx-centered texts including poetry, prose, film, and television which portray issues of migration/immigration, colonialism, history, race, and gender. We will also examine the role of literature in the development of Latinx Studies. Authors and scholars featured in the course include José Martí, Pura Belpré, Pedro Pietri, the Young Lords Party, Julia Alvarez, and Gloria Anzaldúa. Some questions that will inform our readings of these texts: 1) How do Latinx writers incorporate and revise U.S. and Latin American literary traditions? 2) How does the organization of Latin@ literature present challenges to U.S. canon formation?

The course readings will consist of a combination of popular articles, speeches, poetry, fiction, and scholarly works. The readings are meant to guide students through a foundation of theory and research into areas of practice, and also raise issues regarding the "canon" and the "counter-canon." Assignments include a short written analysis of a

text (5 pages) and a longer, research project (8-10 pages) which can take the form of a research paper, teaching plan, or multimedia video. Student will also keep a service-learning journal from our interactions with local community organizations. The interactive format (lecture, small group discussion, in-class writing) of this course will also require students active participation. **Cross-listed with LAS 105-10 (44196). Fulfills 20th & 21st c requirement.**

MW 9:20-10:35

Jiménez García

115 Critical Cultures: Health, Medicine, and Popular Culture (4) (45011)

Can a movie sway a bioethical debate? Can a Tiktok trend help to center marginalized patient voices? Can new kinds of storytelling necessitated by COVID-19 restrictions help us navigate the pandemic? In this class we will consider questions like these and explore how a range of popular cultural products (including but not limited to movies, TV, news, literature, podcasts, graphic novels, and online media) both reveal and shape the way we think about health and medicine. Students will learn how to critically analyze elements of narrative, form, and genre to investigate what the stories we discuss reveal about our shared cultural fears, desires and assumptions surrounding health. Topics will include bioethics, enhancement, contagious disease/COVID-19, social justice in healthcare, patient voices, and mental health. Armed with the tools to understand how these narratives are constructed and to interpret their meanings, students will also consider the potential material consequences of popular culture upon both medicine as a practice and health humanities as a field of inquiry. Ultimately, by asking questions like the opening ones here we will explore not only what various media can show us about health, but also what popular culture can do to influence the theory and practice of biomedicine. **Cross-listed with HMS 115 (45012)**

TR 12:10-1:25

Andrews

125 British Literature 1: Heroes and Wierdos (4) (40103)

Since its beginnings, English literature has grappled with questions of national identity and belonging. What does it mean to belong to a particular culture? Who gets to be part of an “us,” and who gets labeled as an outsider? In this course, we will explore how some of the “heroes” of British literature (e.g. Shakespeare, Milton, Behn, Blake) use both exemplary and oddball characters to define (and sometimes push the boundaries of) an idealized national identity – alongside some “weirdo” lesser-known texts that may completely up-end your expectations of early British literature. Throughout, we’ll pay attention to the relevance of these earlier texts to our present-day understandings of culture, belonging and national identities. **Fulfills British to 1660 or British 1660-1900 requirements.**

TR 1:35-2:50

Weissbourd

196 Sexbots and Terminators: Cinematic Fantasies of the Intelligent Machine (4) (44255)

This course explores film and television dramas that imagine human relationships with robots and artificial intelligence. These speculative fictions imagine not just what humans might do with sentient machines, but what we might want from them: will we want our machines not merely to obey, but to love us? If their “feelings” are simulated, will we care? Why do films so often represent female robots as sexual partners? And why, in so many stories, are the robots trying to kill us? Ultimately, we will be asking what fictional robots reveal about human relationships: love, sex, exploitation and domination. This course will also ask you to examine your own relationships with artificially intelligent machines and virtual versions of self and others. Finally, as we examine these stories, we will be asking how they use the audio-visual language of film to build speculative worlds. Films and TV shows may include *The Matrix*, *Blade Runner*, *Ex Machina*, *Her*, *Black Mirror* and *Westworld*. Works by Sigmund Freud, Sherry Turkle, and Jessica Benjamin, and other writings about technology and contemporary society, will help to illuminate our uneasy relationship with ever more intelligent machines. **Cross-listed with Film 196(44256) and WGSS 196(44257)**

TR 3:00-4:15

Handler

**367 Listening to/for Indigenous Voices (4-3)
10(44790) 11(44791)**

In this course, we will explore writing by and about Native Americans on both sides of the eighteenth-century Atlantic. We will discuss topics such as settler colonialism, indigenous agency, the “Vanishing American” or “Last of ...” trope, religion, and violence. Texts will include captivity narratives, early novels, memoirs, political writing, and other literary forms produced from the 1680s to the 1830s. **Writing Intensive. Department Approval Required. English majors only. Fulfills American to 1900 and British 1660 to 1900 requirements.**

MW 10:45-12:00

Gordon

**369 Jane Austen, Storyteller (4-3)
10(44780) 11(44781)**

Shonda Rhimes's Netflix production, *Bridgerton* drew international attention for its ability to update, transform, and deploy Regency-era culture in new ways--including material drawn from the novels of Jane Austen. While creating modern adaptations or permutations of Austen is nothing new, of course, Rhimes changed the dynamics of mere adaptation, showing how we could use material from her narratives, accentuate racial diversity and sexual pleasure, and modernize elements of the mise-en-scène to tell new stories. While the position of Austen within the established patriarchal canon of British Literature remains stable, the cultural function of her stories continues to evolve; in particular, how and why we turn to her stories is changing. This course will explore Austen as a storyteller whose stories have cultural appeal, capital, and utility. We will read her novels and consider how portions of her tales have and could be used to

achieve specific political, economic, and social ends, including ends that may appear quite contrary to the presumed priorities of Austen. **Fulfills British 1660 to 1900 requirement.**

TR 9:20-10:35

Kramp

**391 Visions of Evil: Four Fantasy Epics for our Time (4-3)
10(44782) 11(44784)**

The *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, the *Harry Potter* series, *The Dark Materials* (*The Golden Compass*, *The Subtle Knife*, and *The Amber Spyglass*) and the *Game of Thrones* series all present realms in which evil threatens to destroy the world. What do these stories tell us about our fears and desires? What do the different visions of evil tell us about the world we live in and the different ways in which we define the other in our society? How have our visions of evil changed from the time the *LOTR* was written to now? We will read all of *LOTR* and selected books from the other three to come to an understanding of their popularity in our time. How do they shape our understanding of the problems in our own world while being shaped by these same problems? What does their popularity say about us? **Fulfills 20th & 21st c requirement.**

MW 1:35-2:50

Lotto

**397 AfroLatinx Stories. AfroLatinxs: Youth at the Frontlines of Justice (4-3)
10(45268) 11(45269)**

This course examines the historical role, critical frameworks, and narrative portrayal of AfroLatinxs in the US and Latin America and Caribbean and the challenges and enrichment this community provides for our understanding of race, Blackness, and anti-Blackness in Latinx history and culture. We will emphasize works about youth and writers for young people. Authors and theorists include Miriam Jimenez Roman and Juan Flores, Arturo Schomburg, Piri Thomas, Eric Velazquez, and Elizabeth Acevedo. Assignments: Short, midterm paper (5-7 pages) and Final Research Project (8-10 pages). **Cross-listed with LAS 397(45270) and AAS 397 (45271) Fulfills 20th & 21st c requirement.**

MW 12:10-1:25

Jiménez García

**439 Shakespeare and Literary Theory (3)
(44931)**

This seminar offers an overview of major movements in literary 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 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

447 Novel prescriptions and pathologies in Victorian Studies (3)
(44902)

Why did the realist and social problem novel coincide with medical, scientific developments such as evolution, objectivity, and epidemiology? How did literature navigate the uneven developments and contradictions manifested by medicine's relationship with liberalism, imperialism, and industrialization? How did the mode, genres, forms, and specific instances literature drew from and shape medical science? Who became normal, who became deviations, standard or exceptional in and through fiction?

In this seminar, we will investigate how the novel and medicine—broadly defined as the surgical, pharmacological, and social practice and study of producing health and resisting death/disease—co-produced medicine as a “system of thought” during the nineteenth century. We will consider the way medicine increased its jurisdiction into varied aspects of daily life and became a technology of marking and enforcing difference.

Central to our discussions and knowledge production is the past development and current undisciplining of the Victorian Studies, and its interest in differential and normal knowledge/power of health.

We will read fiction, along with medical, periodical, and prose texts of the period, in conversation with current criticism and histories of them and their era. Primary readings will include recognizable texts such as Eliot's *Middlemarch*, Dickens's *Bleak House*, Olive Schreiner's *The Story of an African Farm*, Stoker's *Dracula* others. Additionally, we will look to prose, including work by Charles Darwin and Mary Seacole. Our secondary texts will be comprised of the fundamental and most recent, radical work in Victorian studies, along with theoretical readings that will be productive and applicable to students working outside of the nineteenth century, medical history, and health humanities: such as Sharpe, Puar, Foucault, Agamben. In these readings, we will consider how literature both challenged and reinforced the social injustices wrought by medico-scientific advances.

The seminar will require active participation, 1 class facilitation, and 1 seminar paper.

If you are ready to dive into a world of hysteria, cholera, detritus, eugenics, and not-so-great expectations—a world of drawing rooms, of toast and tea, with the raw material of racialized, classed, colonized, gendered, and disabled bodies, the infrastructures of draining human excrement, and their literal and metaphorical anodynes, ask your DGS if Novel Prescriptions and Pathologies is right for you.

W 4:25-7:05

Servitje

479

Postcolonial Ecocriticism

(3)

(44779)

It's no secret that nations in the Global South are on the front lines of climate change, especially with respect to issues relating to access to food and clean water, exposure to dangerous storms and flooding, and the threat of associated civil unrest. Existing inequities between rich and poor countries are likely to exacerbate the damage produced by climate change in ways that are only just beginning to be understood. These topics are being discussed by a growing range of critics, some described as postcolonial critics and theorists, others primarily associated with ecocriticism, including Amitav Ghosh, Elizabeth DeLoughery, Rob Nixon, Dipesh Chakravarty, and others. Alongside these critical and theoretical interventions, we'll explore a range of works of fiction from Anglophone Africa and South Asia in particular, by writer-activists like Arundhati Roy, Ken Saro-Wiwa, Wangari Maathai, Mohsin Hamid, and Indra Sinha. Along the way, we'll engage in a fair amount of intellectual scaffolding; this course is designed to serve as an introduction to key concepts and terms in Postcolonial Theory and Ecocriticism in their own rights, as well as the prospects for bringing these two fields together to develop a necessary critique of rich countries' dangerous inaction on climate change.

TR 10:45-12:00

Singh

485

Introduction to Writing Theory

(2)

(40104)

The purpose of this course is to provide you with a theoretical, historical, and disciplinary introduction to important issues in the teaching of college composition, and its goal is to support both your immediate and long-term development as a teacher/scholar. Together we'll explore some of the myriad ways that writing can be taught, learned, and practiced while learning about the historical development, theoretical underpinnings, and ethical implications of these approaches. Some of our specific topics will include the history and development of the first-year composition course, the process and post-process movements, rhetorical approaches to teaching writing, teaching writing in the digital age, as well as cognitive, expressive, social constructionist, and social justice writing pedagogies. You'll also have the opportunity to focus on your own professionalization: By the end of the semester, you should be able to place your individual pedagogical practices in the context of the larger debates that constitute composition studies, and you will begin to introduce your teaching philosophy and practice to potential and future colleagues.

M 1:35-2:50

Rollins

486 Teaching Comp: Practicum (1)
(40105)

An introduction to teaching writing at Lehigh, this course includes bi-weekly discussion of practical issues and problems in the teaching of freshman composition. It is required of all new Teaching Fellows in the department.

WF 1:35-2:50

Rollins

495-31 Gloria Naylor in the Archives (3)
(44844)

Gloria Naylor's visionary writing explores the impact of socio-economic injustice, institutionalized racism, and sexism on Black women in the twentieth-century United States. This seminar considers the novels of Gloria Naylor in the context of her archive, which is on loan to Lehigh University. Our guiding question will be: how does the archive inform our understanding of Naylor's novels and, conversely, how do Naylor's novels inform an ethical approach to the archive?

Through a sustained focus on Naylor's novels, seminar participants will reflect broadly on key issues in twentieth-century African-American literature and criticism: Black aesthetic, religious, and philosophical traditions; transnational literary networks; the violence of academic epistemologies; and the enduring legacies of enslavement. In addition to Naylor's *The Women of Brewster Place*, *Linden Hills*, *Mama Day*, and *Bailey's Cafe*, we will explore literary influences on her work, Naylor's unpublished manuscripts and correspondence, and critical responses to her novels. Our reading list for the course will be guided, in part, by the materials in the archive, including the extensive historical and literary research Naylor undertook for each of her novels.

Our engagement with the archive will be rooted in a consideration of how archives and records "serve as tools of oppression and liberation," in the words of Michelle Caswell, Ricardo Punzalan, and T-Kay Sangwand. Through discussions of recent scholarly work and existing literary archives as well as hands-on projects, we will engage feminist and anti-racist methodologies in critical archive studies in order to reflect creatively on the archival practices that best serve Naylor's political, intellectual, and aesthetic vision.

Cross-listed with WGSS 495-10 (44845)

R 4:25-7:05

Edwards