

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS ENGLISH DEPARTMENT: Spring 2021

NOTE: If you have any questions about how a course 'counts' in the major, please see your English Major Faculty Advisor. If you do not have a Faculty Advisor, please contact Acting Chair, Prof. Matt Miller matt.w.miller@gmail.com

Media Exit Project: Enroll in English 4002 with the name of your Track Co-ordinator: Mintz, Brown, or Gewirtz and contact that person to get the directions and deadlines.

CW Portfolio: You complete this requirement in ENGLISH 1900 if you have not done so already. If you are graduating this spring or next fall and have not done the exit project, you should enroll in this course this term to complete it.

Internships: *Must be approved for academic credit before being started.* Fill out the form <https://www.yu.edu/registrar/forms> and give description of the internship duties to your faculty advisor or your media advisor.

MEDIA AND CREATIVE WRITING COURSES

ENGL 1502 Feature Writing

Wed. 5:30-8:00

Chavie Lieber

All great storytelling shares the same narrative principles — captivating incidents, enthralling characters, a narrative arc — and these all help turn interesting anecdotes into features. This course will help you master those skills. Together, we will study and analyze the different formats of features in journalism, moving from publications like *The New Yorker* to *GQ* to *Jezebel*. By analyzing great works, students will be able to recognize a story's structure, sourcing, and formatting, and will leave the class understanding how reporters create moving prose.

We will analyze different strategies, from "the write-around" to "reconstruction," and will also learn from guest speakers who've mastered the skills themselves within the world of journalism. Students should expect to read 3-4 weekly features, in addition to completing two written assignments: the midterm, one short feature (800 words), and the final, one long-form story (2-3K words). Both assignments will be workshoped in class.

Required for Journalism track; Elective for other Media tracks and for Creative Writing; counts towards Writing minor. Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H or FYWR 1020

ENGL 1721 Topics Media: Photojournalism; Cross-list with STUDIO ART 3970

T/Th 1:45-3:00

Kat Shannon

How can photography act as a witness? How can an image empower change? In this course we will consider these questions and more as we examine core ideas for understanding the creation, gathering, and dissemination of information via journalistic photography. Through various lectures, discussions, assignments, and critiques, students will fine tune skills of editing and composition as they advance their photographic practice. In addition to developing a nuanced

understanding of the values and purpose of photojournalism, special attention will be given to increasing students' visual literacy and covering the ethics of documentary photography.

This course is an elective for Media Studies tracks. Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H or FYWR 1020

ENGL 1610 Advanced Advertising Copywriting

Pre-req is ENGL 1600 Advertising Copywriting at SCW or Syms MAR 3323 Creative Advertising

Tuesday, 5:30-8:00

Erik Mintz

What does it take to get a job as a copywriter in the advertising business? A good book, for sure. The “book” means your portfolio, the spec ads that you’ll need to show to a prospective employer. This course will be an intensive workshop devoted to further exploring what it takes to get your print, TV, and digital/new media ideas whipped into shape and building upon principles learned and discussed in ENGL1600. Creative case studies will be analyzed and discussed in both oral and written form with hopes that these will inform students’ ongoing work. *Note: For portfolio to be in presentation shape, student should be prepared to work on the “art” side of the ad as well, doing a semi-professional job in Photoshop (or some other graphics software), with her own hand-drawn artistic ability, or by enlisting the art talents of a fellow student.*

Required for the Advertising Track. Prerequisites: 1100 or 1200H or FYWR 1020 and ENGL 1600 Introduction to Advertising Copywriting **or** by permission of the Instructor. Cross list MAR 3324 (pre-Reqs for Syms students are MAR 3323; MAR 1001)

ENGL 1651 Developing Effective Messages

Mon. 5:00-7:30

Deb Brown

Do you ever wonder why some brands’ messages resonate with you while others don’t make any impact? Developing effective messages that break through the clutter and get your attention is a key component of public relations. The course will include individual papers, workshops, and a team project that focus on developing effective messages and influencing audiences. For the project, you will develop and launch a new product in a crowded marketplace. You will learn how to create compelling messages for your new product and each team will present to a panel of judges who are professionals in the industry. Your final project can be used as a portfolio piece for internship or job interviews!

Required for the PR track; elective for other Media Studies tracks. Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H or FYWR 1020

ENGL 1900 Advanced Creative Writing

M/W 3:10-4:25; 3:35-4:50

Prof. Matt Miller

This advanced creative writing course will allow students to further develop their skills in whatever genre of creative writing interests them, including both poetry and prose, fiction and nonfiction. Students will explore what makes each of these modes of writing unique, as well as

how they overlap, complicate, and enrich one another. Your workload will be comprised of both reading and writing with an emphasis on your own creative work. You will be expected to produce a substantial, revised, and well-polished portfolio of your creative writing. In addition, you will be learning terms and concepts important to these genres, and you will respond to several outstanding examples of poetry, stories, and creative nonfiction from established writers. You will share your writing with your professor and your fellow students, and we will spend most of the class in “workshop” discussions of your submitted work. You do not need to feel “advanced” in your writing to take this course, but the course does assume students taking the course will have at least some natural interest in and experience with creative writing.

Required for CW track. Pre-requisite: English 1800 or another CW or CW x-list course. It counts towards the Writing Minor. Note that English 1900 does not count for Interpreting Literature and the Arts requirement.

ENGL 2000 Ways of Reading Required for all English majors and minors
M/W 10:25-11:40 Prof. Seamus O’Malley

Who decides what texts mean? Are some interpretations better than others? Does the author’s intention matter? How does language work? In this foundational course, we will study texts of the culture around us, as well as literature, as we consider the major debates about meaning and interpretation that have emerged throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. This course is more about how we read than what we read. The goal is to show how meaning is created through critical reading and to help you learn to read and interpret works contextually and closely. To this end, our course has several objectives: students should leave this course with a clear sense of the variety of theoretical approaches available to them as readers of texts; have a sense of why these approaches matter in apprehending all different kinds of texts; and be able to manifest their ability to read texts in different ways through verbal and written modes of communication. You may find that the issues and texts – and the language in some of the readings – difficult at first. But the course will help you gain some of the skills you’ll need to read and write critically about all kinds of texts, not just literary ones. We will read poems, novels, short stories and plays. Each section of the course takes up a number of major issues of concern in literary and cultural studies, issues like authorship, language, reading, subjectivity, ideology, aesthetics, and history. The requirements are three essays, short responses, and a final exam. Class participation will be a large percentage of the final grade.

Required for English majors and minors. Students are encouraged to take it as early as possible in their time at SCW. This is an introductory-level “Language, Texts and Interpretation” course in English designed to pose questions: Why read? Why write? It fulfills Interpreting Literature and the Arts. Pre-Requisite: English 1100 or 1200, FYWR 1020. This course is capped at 18.

II (Survey) COURSES

ENGL 2003 Survey of British Literature I. II A Intro
M/W 9:00-10:15 Prof. Stephen Spencer

Sacred and Secular Love in Medieval and Renaissance Literature

In this survey of the first ten centuries (!) of literature written in English, we will thematically focus on the intersection between sacred and secular love. A common narrative about the years 600–1660 CE is that increased literacy, scientific advancements, the global spread of capitalism, and other developments led to a world emphasizing “secular” or “worldly” pursuits—money, power, romance—beyond traditional religious observance. Though this narrative will guide our tour of the earliest English literature, we will also question it by defining literature as both of this world and not: as displaying love for the world in which it was created while also trying to transcend that world. In this course, “love” will be a capacious term, describing relations between humans and other humans (romantic, familial, friendly), the divine realm, and nature that are not always positive. The first half of the course will focus on literature from the medieval period (~600–1400 CE). In this unit, we will read the oldest recorded song of praise in English to the Creator, Arthurian stories of knightly chivalry, and several of Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*, which satirize hypocrites and forecast gender equity in equal measure. In the second half of the course, we will focus on literature from the Renaissance (~1400–1660). We will look at sonnets written by men and women (for men, women, and God), a play about a doctor who sells his soul to a demon for unlimited knowledge, and the poetry of John Donne, a man with split personalities oriented towards heaven and earth.

This course is a “Traditions” course in English designed to pose questions about how texts, interpretive communities and reading practices generate histories. It is an Introductory-level course. It fulfills a II A requirement for the English major. It fulfills Interpreting Literature and the Arts. Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H or FYWR 1020

ENGL 2007 Survey of American Literature II. II C Intro.
Peters
Tues/Th 3:15-4:30

Prof. Ann

American Literature II is an introductory survey of the period between the end of the Civil War and the present. We’ll read a wide variety of works over a broad sweep of time and learn about some of the literary movements of the time, starting with the realist tradition and ending with postmodernism. We’ll consider literature in its context and look at how literature responds to changes in the culture at large. Fiction will include works by Sherwood Anderson, James Baldwin, Abraham Cahan, Stephen Crane, Kate Chopin, Theodore Dreiser, William Faulkner, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, William Dean Howells, Sarah Orne Jewett, Maxine Hong Kingston, Flannery O’Connor, Bernard Malamud, Grace Paley, and Mark Twain. Poetry will include (but not be limited to) works by Elizabeth Bishop, Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, Allen Ginsberg, Langston Hughes, Sylvia Plath, Wallace Stevens, Natasha Tretheway, and William Carlos Williams. We’ll also read a play, August Wilson’s *Fences*. You’ll write two reading response letters, respond to four peer discussion forums, and give a short presentation. There will be a midterm and a final exam.

This course is a “Traditions” course in English designed to pose questions about how texts, interpretive communities and reading practices generate histories. It is an Introductory-level course. It fulfills a II C requirement for the English major. It fulfills Interpreting Literature and the Arts. It counts for Minor in Am. Literature. Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H or FYWR 1020

III Topics INTRO. COURSES

ENGL 2750 The Graphic Novel III B Intro.

M/W 11:55-1:10

Prof. Seamus O'Malley

For most of the twentieth century, comic books were considered a low form of popular entertainment, suitable only for young boys. Around the 1980s, comics grew up and became graphic novels. Will Eisner gave us the first graphic novel, *A Contract with God* (1978), a fragmented memoir of his childhood in the Jewish Lower East Side; Frank Miller transformed the superhero comic Batman into a fable of paranoia in *The Dark Knight Returns* (1986); Alan Moore exploited the dark side of superhero comics for political commentary in *V for Vendetta* (1985) and *The Watchmen* (1986); and, most importantly for reaching a new audience, art Spiegelman's *Maus* (1991), a narrative of his father's memory of the Holocaust, won the Pulitzer Prize.

Subsequent experiments in comic frames, color, texture, and perspective soon followed. The comic book format, invented for action and adventure, proved adept at constructing memoirs, as evidenced by authors like Chester Brown, Seth, and Joe Matt. Comics became not just for little boys, but for grown men as well.

Along the way, however, pioneering female graphic novelists like Linda Barry, Vanessa Davis, Lauren Weinstein, Miriam Libicki and Alison Bechdel launched major contributions to the graphic novel world, Bechdel's *Fun Home* (2007) being hailed by many as the greatest example of the genre to date. Comics are now for women.

This course will explore many aspects of graphic novels, but its primary aim will be to analyze what makes them a unique art form. Not quite literature, not quite art, they have their own set of conventions and readerly assumptions that require a set of critical interpretive practices that borrow from, but cannot imitate, literary or art criticism.

Course requirements include 5 quizzes, reading responses, a 5-page essay and a final exam.

This is a "Forms, Identities, Reading Practices" course in English, designed to pose questions about who writes and reads for whom, in what ways, and why does it matter? It fulfills a III B Intro. requirement for the English Major. It fulfills Interpreting Literature and the Arts. Prerequisite: English 1100 or 1200H or FYWR 1020

ENGL 2792 Comedy and Satire III B Intro

T/Th 1:45-3

Prof. Nora Nachumi

This class is about the relationship between humor—what makes us laugh and why we do so—and two distinct genres: comedy and satire. We will begin by thinking about humor – why it is that we laugh when we do. From there we will move on to theories and examples of comedy and satire, ranging from ancient Greece to the present. In addition to plays and short works of fiction, material may include sitcoms like *I Love Lucy*, *The Simpsons* and *Seinfeld*, classic and contemporary films like *The Great Dictator* and *Shakespeare in Love*, sketch comedy by troupes

like Monty Python and Key and Peele, and shows focused on political humor like *The Daily Show*, *The Colbert Report* and *Last Week Tonight*. Assignments include regular participation, a group presentation with a significant individual component; short writing assignments, a midterm and a final essay.

This is a “Forms, Identities, Reading Practices” course in English, designed to pose questions about who writes and reads for whom, in what ways, and why does it matter? It fulfills a III B Intro. requirement for the English Major. It fulfills Interpreting Literature and the Arts. Prerequisite: English 1100 or 1200H or FYWR 1020

ENGL 2810H Harlem Renaissance III C Intro., Honors
T/Th 10:30-11:45

Prof. Ann Peters

In the 1920s and 1930s, between World War I and the Great Depression, African American culture experienced a flourishing both in literature and the arts known as the Harlem Renaissance. The goal of the course is give you a broad overview of Harlem Renaissance writing and to situate the works in their literary and political contexts, focusing on the ways in which literature represents, responds to, and shapes intellectual and political change.

The course examines literature alongside art and music of the period and introduces you to some of the events and people that helped create the Harlem Renaissance. We’ll learn, for instance, about The Great Migration, the role of literary magazines in early 20th Century American literary life, the impact of W.E.B. Dubois, the significance of white patronage in Harlem, and the importance of Harlem as a cultural center. Readings will include fiction, essays and poetry by Countee Cullen, W.E.B. Dubois, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, James Weldon Johnson, Nella Larsen, Alain Locke, Claude McKay, Jean Toomer, and George Schuyler. Along with our reading, we’ll watch two documentaries about the period. We’ll also read selections from Isabel Wilkerson’s book on the Great Migration, *The Warmth of Other Suns*.

Requirements for the course include four discussion forums (15% of your grade), five reading response letters (25%), a 5-7 page comparison paper (25%), and a final exam (20%). Participation counts for 15% of your grade.

This is a “Forms, Identities, Reading Practices” course in English, designed to pose questions about who writes and reads for whom, in what ways, and why does it matter? It fulfills a III C Intro. requirement for the English Major. It fulfills Interpreting Literature and the Arts. Prerequisite: English 1100 or 1200H or FYWR 1020. As an Honors course, it requires a 3.5 average or membership in the Honors program.

ENGL 2835 Shakespeare: Histories and Comedies III C Intro.
M/W 10:25-11:40

Prof. Gina Grimaldi

Derided in 1592 as an “upstart crow”-- an arrogant literary hack from nowhere-- William Shakespeare spent his early professional years in London writing histories and comedies for the stage, eventually establishing his celebrity status. This course covers five remarkable plays from the first half of Shakespeare’s theatrical career: *Richard II* and *Henry V*, histories from his

tetralogy about medieval English monarchical drama, and *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and *Twelfth Night*, comedies that indulge in shenanigans of love and intrigue.

We will discuss the texts in depth, focusing on genre, character, structure, language, and theme, and we will explore the Elizabethan era, Renaissance theater culture, Shakespeare's legacy, and stage and film adaptations of the plays.

Class sessions will involve seminar-style discussions, lectures, and video viewings. Requirements will be: two at-home essays, a short presentation, and a final research project.

This is a "Forms, Identities, Reading Practices" course in English, designed to pose questions about who writes and reads for whom, in what ways, and why does it matter? It fulfills a III C Intro. requirement for the English Major. It fulfills Interpreting Literature and the Arts. Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H or FYWR 1020

ENGL 2901/WMNS 1020 Intro. to Women's Studies: Theory and Practice III D Intro
T/Th 3:15-4:30 **Prof. Nora Nachumi**

This course introduces students to Women's Studies, an interdisciplinary field that grew out of the twentieth-century women's movement. In its early years, those in the field concentrated on the "absence" of women (from literature, history, science, etc) and worked to add them to the curriculum. Today, Women's Studies is a vast and still growing field of study that draws on many different disciplines in the humanities and the sciences in its efforts to describe, understand and – in many cases – improve women's lives.

This particular course is organized around diverse representations of female experience. Drawing on a variety of sources--including essays, short fiction and visual media--we will ask how different categories of identity (i.e. race, class, gender, age, ability, etc.) impact each other. We will theorize and articulate our own positions regarding the issues we discuss and engage with positions that differ from our own. Students do not have to define themselves as feminists—or even be sympathetic to feminism as they currently define it—in order to take this course. Like all good conversations, the ones in this class generally benefit from a variety of reasoned opinions. In addition to participation in class discussion, course requirements include reading quizzes, entries to a class forum, a presentation (oral and written) in lieu of a midterm, several short writing assignments and two papers (one with research).

This course is a "Forms, Identities, Reading Practices" course in English designed to pose questions about who reads for whom, in what ways, and why does it matter? It is an introductory-level course that fulfills a III D for the English major. It fulfills a requirement in the SCW core curriculum, "Interpreting Literature and the Arts." Pre-requisites: English 1100 or 1200 H or FYWR1020. It is required for students pursuing Women's Studies Minor.

ENGL 2923 Topics: American Countercultures III C Intro.
M/W D1 1:25-2:40 **Prof. Matt Miller**

The word "counter-culture" probably first calls to mind the counter-cultures of one's own

generation, usually music-related, whether hipster DIY culture, goth, hip-hop, or, if one is a bit older, grunge, punk, or even hippies and beatniks. Counter-cultures, however, have existed for as long as there have been groups of people unhappy with their present society. They have attracted musicians, artists, activists, poets, philosophers, rebels, and young people. Together, they have created alternate forms of culture that have profoundly affected both their own movements and the mainstream societies they rebelled against.

This course focuses on the literature and counter-cultural expressions of Americans from the nineteenth century to the present. We will explore different formulations of cultural rebelliousness and redefinition: whether from the “proto-goth” of Edgar Allen Poe or today’s techno-horror and “steampunk” culture, from free-thinking, transcendentalist radicals like Henry David Thoreau and Walt Whitman to the beatniks and hippies of the 50s and 60s, or from the jazz countercultures of the 1920-40s to the cultural redefinitions of rap and hip-hop. Students in this course will examine and analyze the ways Americans have both rebelled and, what’s harder, created alternate forms of society and the culture that shapes it.

This is a “Forms, Identities, Reading Practices” course in English, designed to pose questions about who writes and reads for whom, in what ways, and why does it matter? It fulfills a III C Intro. requirement for the English Major. It fulfills Interpreting Literature and the Arts. Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H or FYWR 1020. This course counts toward the American Studies Minor.

III (Topics) ADVANCED COURSES

(Pre-Requisite for either is an Introductory Literature Course or flat A in 1200H or 1100 or FYWR1020 to be shown to teacher on transcript)

ENGL 3525 Transcendentalism III B Advanced
M/W 4:40-5:55; 5:00-6:15

Prof. Matt Miller

Between the 1830s and 1860s this country's most talented writers forged a distinctively American literature and philosophical outlook on the world known as Transcendentalism. What is our best self? What is our relationship to nature? to the universe? to each other? These are just a few of the key questions Transcendentalists addressed in stories, poems, and essays. A time of rebirth, this literary movement has been called "the American Renaissance" (F.O. Matthiessen, 1968). It features some of the most memorable literature of the last two centuries.

The course will begin with our discussion of influential essays of Ralph Waldo Emerson, such as "Self-Reliance" about one's relationship with nature and G-d. We'll read excerpts of Henry David Thoreau's famous meditation on the natural world, Walden. We'll examine the journalism, as well as the feminist and abolitionist writings of women such as Margaret Fuller. We'll study Walt Whitman, both his poetry and prose, and examine how this singularly original American transformed Transcendentalism into something bolder, shaggier, and more in touch with ordinary Americans. We'll also take a look at the darker, almost gothic side of Transcendentalism as embodied by the stories of Nathaniel Hawthorne and the gem-like precision of the poetry of Emily Dickinson. Finally, we'll consider how the Transcendentalists are still relevant for us

today, as we ask ourselves what Emerson called “the practical question of the conduct of life: How shall I live?”

This is a “Forms, Identities, Reading Practices” course in English, designed to pose questions about who writes and reads for whom, in what ways, and why does it matter? It fulfills a III C Advanced requirement for the English Major. It fulfills Interpreting Literature and the Arts. It counts towards the American Studies Minor. Pre-requisite: one Introductory Literature class or a flat A in English 1100 or 1200H or FYWR 1020.

ENGL 3792 American Autobiography III B Advanced
T/Th 12-1:15

Prof. Ann Peters

This course will examine the development of American autobiography from the early captivity narratives written in the colonial period to the graphic memoirs of twenty-first century writers. We’ll begin by reading some theoretical works on life writing and then focus on a few early examples of the autobiographical tradition in America: the captivity narrative (Mary Rowlandson), the bootstrap narrative (Benjamin Franklin), the slave narrative (Frederick Douglass,) and the immigrant story (Mary Antin). We’ll finish this unit by reading some letters written by men and women from the American frontier. In the second unit of the course, we’ll read personal essays and excerpted chapters from autobiographies written in the 20th century by writers like Gertrude Stein, James Baldwin, Vivian Gornick, Maxine Hong Kingston, Richard Rodriguez and Art Spiegelman. We end the course reading three more contemporary memoirs: Jesmyn Ward’s *Men We Reaped*, Bob Dylan’s *Chronicles*, and Alison Bechdel’s *Fun Home*. Our goal is to study the different forms that an autobiography can take and learn about the tradition of life writing from colonial days to the present. Along the way, we’ll ask whether American autobiographies share certain characteristics, consider the problem of memory and the distortions of truth that can occur in telling a life story, and explore the important ways that family, community, gender, class, race, and ethnicity shape identity. The course will be reading and writing intensive with four short reading responses, a research paper (10-12 pages), regular discussion forums, and a short autobiographical essay.

This course is a “Forms, Identities, Reading Practices” course designed to pose questions about who writes and reads for whom, in what ways, and why it matters. It fulfills a III B Advanced requirement for the English Major. It fulfills "Interpreting Literature and the Arts." It counts towards Am. Studies Minor. Pre-requisites: an introductory-level literature course or a straight “A” in ENGL 1100 or 1200H or FYWR 1020 on transcript that you show to the instructor.