

## ENGLISH Course Descriptions

Spring 2014

### ENG 148: Acting II

Dugan

*Theater minor; English major elective, Oral Communication attribute*

This class is designed to give students an introduction to the craft of acting. Through exercises, improvisations, theatre games, monologue and scene study, students will learn and apply the tools of the actors' trade. We will look at characterization, text analysis, acting styles, and the collaborative nature of the theatre. Students will finish the course better able to participate in the theatrical experience---as performers, audience members, or technicians; and with a greater understanding of the actors' contribution to the stage.

No previous acting experience is necessary.

### ENG 202: Drama

Stephenson

*200-level English course; Advanced Writing Intensive attribute, Field 3*

This course centers on a particular literary "type" or genre: Drama. Our purpose will be to develop your ability to read, view, analyze, and appreciate works in this particular genre from a variety of periods and places. Some attention will be paid to the historical development of the genre itself, some to the historical forces reflected in its various aspects. Moreover, the overall shape of the course will be historical and chronological, rather than formal or thematic. But the most important thing to know about the course is that we will read lots plays...lots and lots of plays. We will look at various kinds of plays (tragedies and comedies, for example); and we'll investigate some of the technical issues involved in putting plays before audiences. While we will begin with the Greeks, most of the course readings will be drawn from works produced during the past two hundred years or so. Along the way we'll study the fundamental "performance" quality of drama—its public, experiential nature. To that end, we will incorporate films and videos to supplement written texts. Students will be expected to attend and respond to at least two live productions during the course of the semester.

### ENG 205: Varieties of the Essay

Reber

*English major 200-level course; Writing minor; Advanced Writing Intensive attribute, Field 3. Non-majors are welcome*

This course will focus on the production of various kinds of essays by the students. Readings will include models of essays focusing on personal issues, cultural issues, political issues, nature and the environment, and perhaps travel and food. Much attention will be given to the writing style of both the model essays and the essays produced by the members of the class, but many other aspects of writing will be explored, including the situation and audience of the respective essays, as well as different methods of organizing texts.

Students will produce 4-5 polished essays, at least half of which will be written in stages, with a draft turned in for critiquing by the students and/or the instructor before the final version is produced. In addition, homework assignments will probably include brief critical pieces (250-400 words or so) analyzing some of the model essays. There will also be a final exam that will consist mostly or entirely of an essay or essays.

**ENG 208: Novel****Wolf***English major 200-level course; Advanced Writing Intensive attribute*

In this class, we will examine novels from different time periods and nations in order to think about the novel genre: Where and when did novels begin? What is a novel? How do we read novels differently than we read other genres? What are our expectations for what a novel will be? We will read novels from the eighteenth through the twenty-first century. In addition, because this is a writing-intensive course, you will be expected to invest intellectual energy (and considerable class time) into writing, revising, peer responding, and researching. Writing requirements include short homework assignments (1-2 pages each), three literary analysis essays (5-6 pages each), and one longer research paper (6-8 pages).

**ENG 222: Vampires in Literature & Culture****Greenberg***English major 200-level course, Advanced Writing Intensive attribute, Field 3*

This course will examine the figure of the vampire in English and American literature over a broad historical period. We will focus particularly on the vampire's literary roots and traditions, as well as on the various cultural meanings we tend to associate with vampires and which continue to evolve. Indeed, the vampire has proven to be an especially adaptable and therefore persistent figure in literature, television, and film, and thus, a reliable gauge of a range of cultural anxieties, ranging from deviant sexualities to xenophobia to HIV/AIDS, to name just a few. In reading the vampire through a range of cultural metaphors, the course will provide a partial history of the vampire in literature, while also considering the place of vampires in literature and culture today.

**ENG 223: Images of Women in Film & Literature****Fisher***English major 200-level course; Advanced Writing Intensive attribute, Field 3; Women & Gender Studies course*

In this course, we will survey representations of women that originated historically in the oral traditions of folk and fairy tales and then were later translated to literature and film. We will first read a range of critical viewpoints to understand the importance of different oral traditions, especially for women audiences and writers. Later, we will shift our focus to mythology and goddesses, asking questions about early female-based religions and the power granted to women to societies centered on such religions. The figure of Mary will receive special attention. Your writing assignments will range from personal response essays to film viewing questions to more traditional persuasive essays. Your writing will be organized in portfolios using Angel. Everyone will be asked to participate in a group oral research project at some point in the semester. A final take home essay exam will complete the semester's writing.

**ENG 294: Introduction to Creative Writing****McNally***Creative Writing major requirement, English major Writing course, Advanced Writing Intensive attribute, Field 3*

This course will allow students to explore the fundamental skills of fiction and poetry writing, and is designed around the belief that one must read widely and closely in order to write well. This is an intensive writing course, meant for students who are dedicated readers and serious about the process of writing. We will examine the works of both established and emerging writers in hopes of discerning and emulating the qualities of good poetry and fiction. Frequent writing exercises will provide the opportunity to practice, to imitate, and to experiment. Class members will work together

to create a welcoming and productive workshop, including extensive in-class discussion of both published writers and student work.

**English 299: Introduction to English Studies**

**Cookson**

*English major requirement*

ENG 299 is a gateway to 300-level courses and required of all English majors. This course introduces students to the essentials of literary analysis and interpretation. Focusing on the rigorous analysis of poetry, prose narrative and drama chosen from different historical periods, the course will stress writing with critical awareness about literature.

**ENG 312: Contemporary American Women Poets: Reading & Writing**

**Cookson**

*English major Writing requirement, Field 3, Women & Gender Studies course*

This course serves a dual purpose. It examines women's poetry from the later twentieth century to the present, through reading, analysis, and practice in both writing about the published poems in the anthology and writing original poems in response to the readings. Students will keep a journal of the readings and class discussions, and will practice constructive critical readings of their own poems and those of their classmates in workshop sessions. COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Written assignments will include critical response essays on the readings, two portfolios (a mid-term and a final) of students' own poems, attendance at and a review of a live reading by a woman poet, and a substantial oral presentation on a woman poet from the anthology (text: *When She Named Fire*, ed. Andrea Budy. Pub. Autumn House Press, 2009.)

**ENG 319B: Captivity Narratives**

**Desiderio**

*Pre-1900 American Literature or English major elective, Diversity attribute, Women & Gender Studies course*

This course will explore the connections between captivity, slavery, and American fiction. In the first half of the course, we will read captivity narratives written by colonial entrepreneurs, Puritan women, African slaves, Native American girls, and ministers. We will explore the vexed relationships between captive and captor, and gender and race, and how this uniquely American genre creates various cultural myths. Closely tied to the captivity narrative is the slave narrative and we will interrogate the differences between "slave" and "captive." The second half of the course will consider how slave and captivity narratives influence eighteenth- and nineteenth-century fiction as American authors borrow tropes from these genres and create tales of seduced women, women trapped in Arab harems, and Native Americans accused of witchcraft. In addition, we will read contemporary short stories, graphic novels, and novels, such as Deborah Larsen's *A White* and Toni Morrison's *Mercy*, to see how the captivity tradition functions as a genre today.

**ENG 323: Shakespeare II**

**Greenberg**

*English major Shakespeare requirement*

The course will serve as an introduction to a fairly broad range of Shakespeare's plays, and we will study the plays through different genres, as well as with reference to the many cultural issues and historical events that shaped Shakespeare as a playwright. However, the course will primarily be organized around the theme of "difference" or "otherness," that is, we will look at how Shakespeare's plays address questions of "difference" in identity, whether this means race, gender, class, nationality, disability, religion, etc., as well as how these differences tend to

intersect. Readings may include: *Titus Andronicus*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Othello*, *Richard III*, *Cymbeline*, and *The Tempest*. The course requires active participation, several short papers, a presentation, and either a final paper or a final exam.

**ENG 347: English Novel I**

**Wolf**

*English major Pre-1800 British literature requirement or English major elective*

Historians of the English novel have tended to study the novel's "rise" or how it "flourishes" in the Victorian era. In these narratives, the history of the novel before the Victorian era is viewed as merely a sort of warm-up for its ultimate development. In this course, we will look beyond those ways of thinking and read a range of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century novels on their own terms, in their own contexts, trying to see them not merely as precursors to Dickens' and Austen's works, but as part of a complicated, fascinating, and important moment in their own right. We will read travel narratives and marriage plots, experimental works, and traditional domestic tales—the best of the early English novel. The course will require a great deal of reading of rather long novels, five short (2 page) homework papers, two longer (4-6 page) papers, and a long final paper instead of a final exam.

**ENG 350: The Theater Experience**

**Dugan**

*Theater minor elective, English major elective, Oral Communication attribute*

This course is intended to give students the opportunity to see how a play goes "from the page to the stage". We will examine scripts for clues to how a production comes from them--what actors, directors and designers contribute, and what a playwright envisioned. We will meet with professionals who work in various aspects of the theatre, and learn about their education, tools, and process. Students will work on design projects, and participate in acting and directing activities. In addition, each student will see a total of four theatrical productions, and write a brief analysis of each. For one production, students will examine a design element in detail.

**ENG 365: Core Capstone: Post-Colonial Studies**

**Gregorek**

*English majors may count one core capstone as an English major elective course*

*This course should be of interest to students of Literature, History, International Relations, Political Science, and Religious Studies*

One of the most dramatic world-historical shifts in the twentieth century has been the political liberation of three-fourths of the planet from European domination. The new 'interdiscipline' of postcolonial studies examines this shift, the complexities of the process of decolonization, and the hybrid culture of peoples and places emerging from European colonial rule.

This course seeks to introduce students to the field of postcolonial studies, drawing primarily on examples from the Islamic world of North Africa and the Middle East. Through the study of literature, film, and history, as well as of current events, we will investigate encounters between the West and the Middle East, including ways in which twentieth-century European artists and writers have represented these lands, as well as how some Middle Eastern artists and writers have responded to these representations. Reading and viewing works from North Africa, Afghanistan and Pakistan, we will consider some important postcolonial themes: the paradoxes of assimilated or hybrid identities; the place of tradition; the public role of women; debates around revolutionary violence; healing the scars of war; the possibilities for cross-cultural understanding; what modernity

looks like outside of the West. This course should be of interest to students of Literature, History, International Relations, Political Science, and Religious Studies.

**ENG 368: Native American Literature**

**Gansworth**

*English major elective, Creative Writing contemporary literature, Diversity attribute, Field 3*

This course is designed as a survey of contemporary Native American Literature. We will be covering major authors as well as some lesser known authors, tracing origins of traditions, both thematic and structural. The shorter works we will read in the first part of the semester illustrate many of these traditions and we will eventually examine landmark larger works to explore these relationships more fully. Grading will be based on formal critical essays, exams and participation.

**ENG 369: Contemporary American Fiction**

**Cochrane**

*English major elective*

The purpose of this course is to acquaint students with important contemporary novels and short stories and to improve their ability to read, analyze, interpret, and enjoy serious works of fiction. Through close reading, large- and small-group discussion, and written exercises, we will seek to understand each book on its own terms—the unique demands it places on readers, how it works, the implications—aesthetic, philosophical, political—of its author's artistic choices. In addition, we will pay particular attention to how these fictions reflect and respond to particular contemporary realities: the traumas of war and revolution, cultural upheaval and dislocation, racial tension, and spiritual crisis. This semester we'll focus in various ways on American dreams and American nightmares, and the notion of the Other - how Americans define and respond to those who are different.

**ENG 383: Research Writing: Process & Product**

**Reber**

*English major elective, Advanced Writing Intensive attribute; Writing minor, non-majors are welcome*

This course will offer students intensive practice in the research process, an activity in which everyone in a college environment engages, no matter what their area of study or level of experience. Students will conduct research that will lead to a written research paper of 12-15 pages. Stages of the research process will include: choosing a research topic, brainstorming approaches to the topic, defining the purpose and audience for their paper, finding appropriate credible sources, composing an annotated bibliography of about 10-15 sources, planning and drafting the research paper, and writing and delivering an oral presentation of approx. 20-30 minutes on the topic researched.

The students will also complete several informal writing assignments to help them to master these various stages of the research process. Much of the class time will be spent in a workshop environment, with members of the class doing tasks individually but seeking help from each other and the instructor.

The students will also do some basic career research, writing a "Job-Seeker's Profile," which will include a self-analysis of their strengths for their intended career, a brief study of that career, and a resume and letter of application for a job. Students in all majors--from English to the sciences--are encouraged to sign up for the course

**ENG 388: Literary Publishing**

Cochrane

*Creative Writing elective course; English major elective*

The theoretical component of the course will involve a study of the history of the literary magazine from the founding of *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* in 1912 to the present time. We'll attempt to understand both the function of the magazine as a literary force and the interaction of design and text. Readings will be supplemented by guest speakers—professional editors, publishers, designers, writers, and a bookseller—who will add their perspective. The practical component of the course will focus on editing *The Quadrangle*, the Canisius College literary and visual arts magazine. The work will include soliciting and selecting material, copy-editing and proofreading, design, layout, printing, publicity, and distribution. You do not have to take the course in order to work on the literary magazine, but you do have to work in a significant role on the magazine in order to take the course.

**ENG 389: Business Communication**

Hammer

*English major Writing requirement; Advanced Writing Intensive attribute*

ENG 389 is taught as a practical introduction to a wide variety of communication methods that students will find present in their future work environments. Students are asked to produce short (letters, memos) and lengthy (business plan) pieces of writing, many of which mimic workplace requirements that they'll encounter in their professional lives. Discussion moves from how to find a job to corporate culture, management styles to marketing plans, all in the context of a pseudo-business environment. ENG 389 is a communication primer for the student who will soon be entering an American workplace where employees must "communicate or die!"

**ENG 391: Advanced Creative Writing: Fiction Workshop**

Gansworth

*Prerequisite: Introduction to Creative Writing*

This course builds on the foundations established in the Introduction to Creative Writing course, with a concentration solely on fiction. Throughout the semester, we will explore, through exercises, discussion and workshop, further techniques of fiction writing and sophisticated use of those techniques. Our goals concern the composition of short stories that inherently feature the hallmarks of contemporary literary fiction, including subtlety, nuance. These stories will be much more concerned with realistic characters portrayed with depth, and not stories constructed of unlikely plot elements and surprise endings. Students will produce at least two major works concerning the same sets of characters and a third that may involve different subjects and revise to their satisfaction, taking workshop feedback into consideration. Intensive workshop is complemented by the study of established writers, in exploration of appropriate contemporary techniques and approaches used in the field. At semester's end, students will also compose a reflective narrative, expressing their awareness and use of the ideas and experiences they've had through the semester.

**ENG 396-U: James Joyce's *Ulysses***

Pribek

*English Honors seminar; English major elective*

Much could be said about the prominence of James Joyce's *Ulysses*: it is consistently rated among the most influential works of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and scholars have written more about its author than about Shakespeare. Though Joyce's work may correspond loosely to Homer's *Odyssey*, it belongs to no clear genre, form, or movement. It is less a literary work, traditional or modern, as it is an

attempt to record one day on paper, using words, music, symbols, and sensations. Do not expect a plot: there is none. What the book features is a wonderful place—Dublin—and three extraordinarily compelling main characters whose minds and souls we enter in a direct way. In doing so, we see their chance encounters prove momentous. But we also observe and experience much of what it means to be human: to love, to grieve, to feel remorse, to philosophize, to fantasize, to argue, to age, and ultimately to say “yes” to life, in all its poverty and grandeur. Not many human deeds, from the most disgusting to the most exalted, do not find their way into this book. If you love a place and people—if you love words—if you love life, chances are good that you will love this book! Join a lively group for weekly discussion and occasional writing, as Joyce’s *Ulysses* fosters humanity and builds community.

**ENG 490: Creative Writing Capstone**

**McNally**

*Creative Writing major requirement*

The goal of this course is to teach students to do all the things that working writers do: prepare, submit, and present work consistent with professional standards; understand and articulate how their work fits into larger literary traditions; and show a practical knowledge of the particular professional lives of writers, what they do and how they prepare themselves to do that work. In this course, students will produce a polished, accomplished portfolio of creative work in a genre of their choice; they will research markets for their work and prepare their own professional-quality submissions; and they will also learn to present their work publicly, concentrating on the selection and delivery of their creative work for a live audience, and as part of the course, participate in a formal, public reading. They will, in addition, prepare an artistic statement, reflecting on their influences, aesthetic values, and goals as writers, and, finally, research and explore career options and opportunities. We will use work of established writers as a basis for examining the fruition of specific stylistic choices in the development of sustained work.

*Prerequisite: Senior Standing, ENG 294 (or ENG 394) or permission of instructor*