ENGLISH Course Descriptions

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 201: Poetry
Cookson
English major 200-level course; Advanced Writing intensive attribute; Field 3

This course is designed as a broad-based and culturally deep introduction to poetry for college students. Broad-based because it covers a wide range of historical periods, culturally deep because it includes poetry by diverse voices writing in English, and some poems in translation as well. The range of writing assignments may include, in addition to critical analysis of poems, students’ own poems in response to class readings, and oral presentations. Mid-term and final exams.

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 218: Literature and Medicine
Fisher, Jane
English major 200-level course; Advanced Writing Intensive attribute

Sigmund Freud once observed that humans were the only animals who knew they were going to die. Our common understanding of our illnesses and diseases shapes our lives both through our denial of them as well as our desire to know more about them. This course will survey a range of Western cultural literary representations of health and disease, emphasizing the different power positions occupied by patient, caretaker, and doctor. We will also consider religion’s role in relation to disease. Course readings will include Oedipus Rex by Sophocles, Ghosts by Henrik Ibsen, The Plague by Albert Camus, The Doctor Stories by William Carlos Williams, poetry by Walt Whitman and fiction by Katherine Anne Porter, Lorrie Moore, and Abraham Verghese. Since this is an Advanced Writing Intensive Course, we will also have a
number of in-class Writing Workshops which will focus on strengthening foundational writing skills. Assignments will include frequent shorter portfolio essays, three longer graded essays, one oral research report and a take-home final exam.

**ENG 224: Journey in World Literature**

*Wolf*

*English major 200-level course; Global Awareness attribute; Advanced Writing Intensive attribute; Field 3*

This class will explore the concept of the journey in international literature from a number of cultural and intellectual perspectives, beginning with Homer’s *Odyssey* (the quintessential journey in Western literature) and fairy tales from around the world, and ending with several contemporary texts that experiment with the genre and often take it to absurd and magical conclusions. 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, using the theme of the journey as a mode for developing writing, thinking, and communication skills.

**ENG 225: Journey in American Literature**

*Hodin*

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

The making of a diverse, multicultural United States has always required travel. Through immigration, migration, or exploration, for opportunity or safety, into the mainstream or away from it, Americans must often leave home to find a more fulfilling place to live or think. Therefore, it should not be surprising that so much of our nation’s great literature takes as its theme—and structure—the journey. Our reading list will include a range of 19th and 20th-century poetry, drama, essays, and narrative fiction, including work by Henry David Thoreau, Frederick Douglass, Anzia Yezierska, Nella Larsen, James Baldwin, Elizabeth Bishop, and Tony Kushner. This is a writing intensive class.

**ENG 285: Writing and Animal Studies: Representations in Film and Literature**

*Capezzi*

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

This advanced writing-intensive course enables students to explore and evaluate representations of animals, as well as how those representations signify human uses and understandings of animals, in a range of literary texts and films.

Some central inquiry includes: How are animals portrayed, especially in relation to humans? What purposes are served and what audiences are addressed by representing animals in particular ways? What can be learned from comparing literary representations of animals to actual scientifically determined animal behavior? What can be learned about humans from the ways we portray our interaction with animals? Students will write a series of short descriptive and analytical papers in the first part of the semester. In the later part of the semester, we will analyze various popular, literary criticism, and scientific publications addressing animal behavior and animal studies, with the aim to emulate one of the styles in a research project addressing some aspect of animal representation that emerged from analysis of course readings. Some knowledge of or interest in animal behavior strongly recommended.

**ENG 294: Introduction to Creative Writing**

*McNally*

*Creative Writing major requirement; English major Writing course or 200-level 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.

ENG 299: Introduction to English Studies

*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 306: 18th Century British Literature

*Pre-1800 British Literature, Women & Gender Studies course*

The eighteenth century in Britain has been called the Enlightenment, the Neoclassical Era, and the Age of Reason, but none of these labels completely captures the diversity of writing of the "long" eighteenth century, the period roughly from 1660 to 1800. It was a time of elegance and savagery, propriety and scandal. This period marked the emergence of the literary marketplace and women as professional writers. And writers, both male and female, were prolific, crossing genres frequently. It wasn't unusual for a literary figure to write satire, newspaper articles, travel narratives, poetry, drama, and fiction. More than anything else, this period is marked by *dialogue*, writers talking to each other and to the public through literature. For this reason, the course will not be organized strictly chronologically, but rather in large thematic categories within which some of these conversations occurred. We will look at writing about London, the battle of the sexes, masquerade and transgression, utopias and dystopias, and the return to the pastoral, among other themes. We will try to immerse ourselves in some of the battles—of wit, of literary prowess, of sexual politics, of satire and slander—with which the writers of the Restoration and eighteenth century were engaged. Three longer papers and six homework papers. Class discussion emphasized.

ENG 308: 19th Century British Literature

*English major 300-level elective course*

This new course seeks to provide a bridge between the department's existing studies of Eighteenth-Century and Modern and Contemporary British Literature. Rather than solely examining romanticism and Victorianism, this course will take a decade-by-decade approach, with a significant amount of consideration given to the literature's historical context and the development of ideas around five subjects: *religion* (in general, the contest between evangelical and high-church Anglicanism, but also the contributions of Catholics, Jews, and skeptics); *historical consciousness* and notions of *progress* and *development* (most notably, Darwin and Newman, but also Malthus, Bentham, and Mill); *women's rights and roles* (e.g., Mary Wollstonecraft, Queen Victoria, and Charlotte Brontë); *industrialization* and *urbanization* (e.g. Blake, Wordsworth, Dickens, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning); and *empire* (Tennyson and Kipling, but also a host of Irish writers who shed light on the underside of imperialism). For the first half of the semester, students will focus on creative writing and short essays on the five previously named topics. In the latter weeks they will compose a research paper.
A British critic in 1819 asked, “Who in the four corners of the globe reads an American book?” His comment was meant to deride the young American literary culture—a literary culture that was on the verge of experiencing a renaissance. The period between 1820 and 1865 is typically known as “The American Renaissance,” a time of rapid growth and accomplishment in the literary arts. This time period witnessed the transcendental philosophies of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Margaret Fuller; the slaves narratives of Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs; the “golden age” of American magazines and the contributions by Edgar Allan Poe and Nathaniel Hawthorne; the sentimentalism of Harriet Beecher Stowe and Fanny Fern; the first African American novels by William Wells Brown and Harriet Wilson; and the efforts to represent the violence of the Civil War by Herman Melville and Walt Whitman. We will study the period’s various literary movements, from romanticism to the gothic; read a number of different genres, from the slave narrative to the domestic novel; and learn to appreciate the vast number of authors writing at one of the most critical times in our nation’s history.

ENG 323: Shakespeare II

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 350: The Theater Experience

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 365A: Core Capstone: Dante's Inferno and Purgatorio

This capstone will use selected cantos from Dante's Divine Comedy, particularly cantos chosen from Inferno and Paradiso as well as other selected texts to form the basis of our discussion of topics related to the subject areas of the core curriculum. A literary examination of visions of Hell in selected works will lead us to thinking about how those visions are reflected in the important subject areas of justice, ethics, global
and diversity (broadly defined). The course will be structured as a seminar, with some introduction followed by student oral presentations and extended written versions of the presentations.

We will strive to create a climate of openness and respect as we deeply think about and discuss the issues that arise from the readings and presentations. The topic for the presentations will be drawn from concepts found in a close reading of the texts. In this way we will address the oral communication facet of the course. The writing component will consist of short papers and a longer final paper.

**ENG 365B: 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, Religious Studies, and Women & Gender 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 369: Contemporary American Fiction**

*McNally*

*English major 300-level elective course*

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 388: Literary Publishing**

*Cochrane*

*Creative Writing elective course; English major elective course*

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 or 300-level English major elective; 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 392: Advanced Creative Writing: Poetry**  
*Gansworth*  
*Prerequisite: Introduction to Creative Writing*

Advanced Creative Writing: Poetry continues with many of the foundational aspects of writing poetry engaged in the Introduction to Creative Writing course. We will concentrate on a variety of facets within the genre, spending equal time on examples from established contemporary poets and the work of class members. We will use focused reading, discussion, exercises, and workshop activities designed to allow beginning writers to practice versatility in order to begin cultivating individual voices. Before a writer makes an explicit decision to embrace or reject the principles of a given form, the writer should have a meaningful relationship with and an understanding of the opportunities the form offers. We may use the work of established writers as stepping off points to begin conversations about the directions you, as beginning writers, will take. It is true that anyone can write poetry, but in order to write poetry well, for an audience other than oneself, a writer must make a serious commitment to the study of the form. This course offers both directed study and room to cultivate and nurture one’s voice in a supportive environment.

**ENG 396V: Cities and Crime in Literature**  
*Capezzi*  
*English Honors seminar; English major 300-level elective course*

In this seminar, we will address how film and literature critique the functioning of civic institutions, specifically those organizing urban life, which, paradoxically, create the conditions of crime. Through study of Charles Dickens' *Bleak House*, Rohinton Misty's *A Fine Balance*, and HBO's *The Wire*, we will analyze the relationships between institutions (such as courts, police, and schools) and definitions of criminal activity which are both conceived by the law and perpetrated through institutional practices understood to function within the law. We will analyze as well the ways that these definitions either call into question or enable human moral agency. Our study will be guided by the work of Walter Benjamin, especially of his analysis of Charles Baudelaire’s figure of the *flaneur*. 
**ENG 450: Globalization and Literature**  
*Gregorek*

*English Capstone Seminar*

**ENG 450 is required for all English majors graduating in 2015 and after.**

Artists, novelists, and filmmakers from the former 'third world' continue to produce inspired accounts of how the processes of globalization – the condition of heightened connectivity and the increased mobility of people, commodities, and capital around the globe – impact their communities. This course uses examples from world literature and film to consider the impact of the complex ongoing phenomenon of globalization. In this Senior Seminar, we will build on students' writing from other English courses and students will design their own original research project.

**ENG 490: Creative Writing Capstone**  
*Gansworth*

*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