

**VCU DEPARTMENT OF  
ENGLISH**

**GRADUATE  
COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

**FALL 2006**

### **ENGL 500-003 Practicum (Teaching College English)**

A course *for graduate teaching assistants only*. The course provides training, instructional support and professional development for graduate teaching assistants. It includes practical teaching strategies, curricula development, and managerial skills for the classroom, the Writing Center, and the Computer Center. Does not count toward graduate degrees.

**Fine**

**MWF**

**1-1:50 p.m.**

**Call # 12446**

### **ENGL 501-901 Introduction to Graduate Study**

This course is an introduction to the theoretical and practical aspects of advanced English studies. The course is not designed to be exhaustive but will help to guide students into the fundamentals of successful graduate study in English and provide them with a starting point for further exploration. While much of the time will be scheduled activities and discussions, there is flexibility within the course to address any additional issues or concerns that might arise during the semester.

**Bassard**

**W**

**7-9:40 p.m.**

**Call #12447**

### **ENGL 530-902 Introduction to Scholarship in English**

Introduction to the philosophy, method, and materials for research in English studies

**Oggel**

**T**

**4-6:40 p.m.**

**Call #12448**

### **ENGL/ENED 532-901 Applied English Linguistics**

This course will focus on applying linguistic knowledge to help with a variety of issues in the classroom, from teaching reading and writing to understanding dialects and the changes the English language continues to go through.

While there are no official formal prerequisites, it is highly recommended that you have taken an introductory linguistics course such as ENGL 449 before taking this class. In order to level the field, through, I will start with a brief refresher crash course on the main linguistic tools we will be using throughout the semester.

Then, we will begin with a brief overview of the history of English and of language acquisition, move to language and culture (which includes the discussion of language variation) and then to reading and writing. During the second half of the semester, we'll get more specific in how the various areas of linguistic analysis (phonology, syntax, and semantics) can be applied in the classroom.

**Kuhn**

**R**

**7-9:40 p.m.**

**Call #16904**

### **ENGL 571-901 American Literature**

"Dollars Damn Me:" Earlier American Literature and the Emergence of Mass Culture in the United States.

Writing to Nathaniel Hawthorne in 1851, Herman Melville attempted to reconcile his belief in "unconditional democracy in all things" with a broader "dislike to all mankind-in the mass." This, for Melville, fundamental tension at the heart of American culture is only intensified when considered from his position as a commercial author: "Dollars damn me; and the malicious Devil is forever grinning in upon me, holding the door ajar . . . What I feel most moved to write, that is banned,--it will not pay. Yet, altogether, write the other way I cannot. So the product is a final hash, and all my books are botches."

This survey of earlier American literature will focus on the rise of professional authorship in the United States prior to the Civil War.

Throughout, emphasis will be given to the tension between inherited models of religious and cultural authority and the processes of political and economic expansion attending the rise of mass culture in the United States.

Authors to be covered will include Melville, Hawthorne, Fern, Sedgwick, and Franklin, among others. Assignments will include weekly reaction papers, a critical book review, and a final seminar paper. A list of required texts will be issued shortly after the close of the spring semester. For additional information please contact me via email: [lharrison@vcu.edu](mailto:lharrison@vcu.edu).

**Harrison M 7-9:40 p.m. Call #16889**

### **ENGL/ENED 601-001 Young Adult Literature**

Please contact the School of Education, 828-3382.

**Rand R 4-6:40 p.m. Call #12451**

### **MATX 601-901 Texts and Textuality**

Explores theories of texts and textuality as they relate to the study of media, the arts and discourse of any kind.

**Cornis-Pope R 4-6:40 p.m. Call #TBA**

### **MATX 602-901 History of Media Art and Text**

Examines the history of communication technologies in their social and cultural contexts. Students will explore how the interactions between communication practices and technologies are related to institutions, identity formation, cultural values, social practices and economic conditions.

**Frankel MW 5:30-6:45 p.m. Call #17220**

### **ENGL 611-901 The Writer in Her Own Time: Toni Morrison**

In this course, we will read Toni Morrison's eight novels in the literary context of postmodern narrative and in the social context of the rise of black feminism in the 1970s. While the majority of the focus will be on the novels themselves, we will also view and read interviews of Toni Morrison about her writing as well as other prose she had published including selections from *Playing in the Dark* and her Nobel prize acceptance speech. Students will be responsible for an oral report on one novel, as well as a short paper around midterm (7 pp.) and a longer seminar paper due during the final exam block (15-20 pp.).

**Bassard TR 4-5:15 p.m. Call #16914**

### **ENGL 617-901 Major Literary Modes: Euro-Modernism**

A study of avant-garde, modernist, proto-postmodernist, magic realist, and other innovative, primarily prose works by international authors of the twentieth century. The authors we consider are most likely to be Freud, Proust, Kafka, Nabokov, Gide, Breton, Dinesen, Márquez, Borges, and Kawabata.

Students will give at least one formal presentation. There will be three options for written assignments: (1) a substantial research paper of at least 20 pp; (2) two shorter research papers, one due at midterm; (3)

one 10-page research paper due at midterm, one substantial creative project due at the end of the semester.

**Cokal**

**R**

**7-9:40**

**Call #18058**

### **ENGL 620-901 Patterns in Literary Thought: Form and Theory of Poetry**

This course will address a number of key issues concerning the structure of verse and the function of poetic discourse. The course provides readers and writers of poetry and opportunity to study and practice a broad range of poetic forms and techniques, as well as to explore various genre conventions and their thematic and rhetorical significance. Students may study poems from various periods, with some focus on the contemporary, and apply to them the insights offered by major theorists of poetry and poetics. They may also write imitations, parodies, and responses examining and demonstrating poetic approaches.

**Donovan**

**M**

**7-9:40**

**Call #TBA**

### **ENGL 636-901 Teaching Composition**

This course surveys the major theoretical foundations in the teaching of writing, with primary focus on expressivism, epistemic rhetoric, cognitive process theory, social constructivism, and postmodernism. At issue in each theory is a unique conception of the writing process, a set of values about "good" writing, and distinctive roles for students and teachers to play in the classroom or writing center. Expressivists, for example, believe that writing is a personal process of generating prose close to the self; that good writing has a strong voice; and that writers learn best in a workshop setting that allows considerable freedom to experiment with form and content. Postmodernists, by contrast, contend that writing is actually a social process of intervening in discursive regimes; that good writing articulates agency within (or against) institutional practices; and that writers learn best when they resist closure. Not all of the theories we'll study are this contradictory and, in practice, many are complementary. The purpose of studying theory, then, is not to iron out inconsistencies but to become more critical of the way we conceive the writing process and come to value "good" writing. This, in turn, makes it easier to know how, why, and under what conditions we should give feedback, run conferences, use (or deliberately not use) technology, organize workshops, make assignments, and in other ways construct opportunities for students to write.

**Coogan**

**M**

**7-9:40**

**Call #12458**

### **ENG 652-902 Studies in Writing and Rhetoric: The Politics of Literacy**

A prevailing trend in Composition Studies has been the use of politics as a concept for comprehending some of the problems of education in general and the problems of literacy education in particular. Since the early 1980's, the inquiries into the politics of literacy in the United States, primarily draw upon the works of Brazilian literacy educator and cultural critic, Paulo Freire, who states that "education is politics." Those early inquiries focused on teaching and learning in socio-economic, racial, gender, political, and cultural contexts, and they greatly influenced the literacy knowledge base of the field of Composition Studies. Within the field, many of the literacy foci redefine literacy itself, as well as the role of the composition teacher, and the purpose and function of culture, society, schooling, and the composition classroom in the literacy process. This course will closely examine the work, philosophy and theories of Paulo Freire, using them as a point of departure for examining literacy perspectives of compositionists and thinkers, Walter J. Ong, Ann Berthoff, Peter Elbow, Ira Shor, James Berlin, E. D. Hirsch, and Colin Lankshear, Michele Knobel, Gunther Kress, and others. The goal of the course is to identify and comprehend connections and disconnections among these thinkers, with a view towards understanding traditional literacy, the multiple literacies of our technological age, and the politics that

influence the literacy processes of consciousness, teaching, learning, accessibility, acquisition, and development. Weblogs, informal oral presentation, and a 12-15 page academic essay are required.

**Perry**                      **MW**                      **7-8:15 p.m.**                      **Call #16891**

### **ENGL 666-901 Creative Writing: Novel**

This is the second half of a year-long workshop in which students are writing (and, this semester, probably finishing) novels.

The workshop is open only to those who completed the first semester in Spring 2006.

**Cokal**                      **T**                      **7-9:40 p.m.**                      **Call #16882**

### **ENGL 666-902 Creative Writing: Fiction**

Study of the craft of fiction writing, with the goal of producing professionally acceptable and publishable fiction. Workshop members shall produce a substantial volume of writing—short stories or a portion of a novel—and in addition will be able to evaluate and articulate the strength of their own work.

**DeHaven**                      **M**                      **4-6:40 p.m.**                      **Call #17307**

### **ENGL 667-901 Creative Writing: Poetry**

This is a graduate workshop in poetry writing, admission limited to students in the MFA program. Each student is expected to write and revise between ten and twelve poems, and to submit these poems for discussion in workshop. At semester's end, students will submit a portfolio of revisions of the semester's work. Students will also be asked to submit four short response papers to books on our reading list, and to meet with me at least twice during the semester for individual conferences. A student's final grade is determined primarily by the content of the portfolio, but I will also take into consideration the quality of the student's short essays and contribution to workshop discussions.

PROBABLE READING LIST:

Louise Gluck, AVERNO (Farrar)

Linda Gregg, IN THE MIDDLE DISTANCE (Graywolf)

Major Jackson, HOOPS (Norton)

David Rivard, SUGARTOWN (Graywolf)

**Wojahn**                      **T**                      **7-9:40 p.m.**                      **Call #12461**

### **ENGL 668-901 Creative Writing: Drama**

This class will meet in conjunction with Professor Janet Rodgers' workshop for graduate actors and directors. Together, playwrights, actors and directors will focus on developing new scripts for the stage.

**Browder**                      **W**                      **4-6:40 p.m.**                      **Call #12462**

### **ENGL 672-901 Writing Nonfiction Workshop**

The last four decades have seen the re-emergence of nonfiction prose in this country. This workshop focuses on the craft of writing literary or creative nonfiction. We will read extensively in the genre, examining its many forms

and uses both in book-length works and essays. Our readings will be drawn primarily from American

writers after 1950, but we will work to place those writers in a historical context. Workshop participants will write extensively, working on the craft of nonfiction through drafting and significant revision, and responding carefully to each other's works in progress. May be repeated for credit.

**Hodges**                      **T**                      **7-9:40 p.m.**                      **Call #12463**

**ENGL 692 Independent Study**

**001**                      **Bassard**                      **Call #12465**

**002**                      **Bassard**                      **Call #12466**

**003**                      **Bassard**                      **Call #12467**

**ENGL 694-903 Internship in Writing**

**Bassard**                      **TBA**                      **Call #12469**

**ENGL 694-003 Internship—*Blackbird***

**Donovan**                      **MWF**                      **11-11:50 a.m.**                      **Call #12468**

**ENGL 694-003 Internship**

**Staff**                      **MWF**                      **TBA**                      **Call #12469**

**ENGL 798 Thesis—MFA**

**001**                      **Wojahn**                      **Call #12470**

**002**                      **Wojahn**                      **Call #12471**

**003**                      **Wojahn**                      **Call #12472**

**ENGL 799 Thesis—MA**

**001**                      **Bassard**                      **Call #12473**

**003**                      **Bassard**                      **Call #12474**