

VCU
English Department

Course Descriptions

Summer 2006

**English Department
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Credit Distribution**

For Undergraduate English Requirements established in Fall 1996:

Writing: 303, 304, 305, 385, 437

Linguistics: 449, 450

Literature pre-1700: 401

Literature 1700-1900: 372, 373

Diversity: 384

Note: Upper-level courses not listed above count as English Elective credit.

**These distributions are current as of 3/15/06.
If instructor or class times change, check with your advisor
to make sure distribution has not changed.**

Summer 2005 Course Descriptions

Prerequisite for all 300- and 400-level courses is 3 credits in 200-level literature courses (or equivalent).

Prerequisite for all 300- and 400-level writing courses is ENGL 200 and 3 credits in 200-level literature courses (or equivalent).

ENGL 204-001—British Literature II **May 22-June 9**
Latané **M-F 9-12** **Call # 12216**
An introduction to the literature of the British Isles from the late 18th century to the present emphasizing connections among representative works.

ENGL 205-001—American Literature I **July 24-August 11**
Newland **M-F 9-11:50** **Call # 10635**
An introduction to the literature of the United States from its origins through the 1860s, emphasizing connections among representative works.

ENGL 206—American Literature II
-001 Kinney **M-F 9-12** **May 22-June 9**
Call # 10636

-002 Ashworth **TR 6-8:40** **May 23-July 13**
Call # 10637

-003 Fine **M-F 9-12** **July 24-August 11**
Call #12212
An introduction to the literature of the United States from the 1860s to the present, emphasizing connections among representative works.

ENGL 291-001—Topics: Science Fiction **Call #10643**
Danvers **M-F 10:30-12:20** **June 12-July 12**

This course will be a broad survey of largely American science fiction novels and films from the 1950s to the present, exploring the narrative strategies of science fiction and its place in literature. We'll also explore the differences between print and film science fiction and their influences upon each other. Written work includes short response papers to each of the novels, a critical review of a science fiction film, and a final exam. We will read the following novels: Alfred Bester, *The Stars My Destination*; Philip K. Dick, *Do Androids Dream Of Electric Sheep?*; Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Lathe of Heaven*; William Gibson, *Neuromancer*; Robert Charles Wilson, *Blind Lake*. Possible films include *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956), *Dr. Strangelove* (1964), *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1978), *Brother from Another Planet* (1984), and *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (2004).

ENGL 291-002 --Topics: Urban Fantasy **Call #12407**
Danvers **M-F** **10:30-12:20** **July 13-August 11**

While most fantasy is set in an idealized past or in an alternative non-technological world, this sub-genre of fantasy takes place in a recognizably modern world with fantastic elements. This course will explore how the fantastic functions in such works and their place in the fantastic tradition. Written work includes short response papers to each of the novels, a critical review of a fantasy film, and a final exam. We will read the following novels: Neil Gaiman, *Neverwhere*; Tim Powers, *Expiration Date*; China Miéville, *Perdido Street Station*; Jonathan Carroll, *The Wooden Sea*; Sean Stewart, *Perfect Circle*. Possible films include *The Rapture* (1991), *Being John Malkovich* (1999), *Edward Scissorhands* (1990), *Groundhog Day* (1993).

ENGL 303—Writing in the Workplace (WI) Computer Assisted
-901 Herbert **MW** **3–5:40 pm** **June 12-Aug 2**
Call # 10645

-902 Staff **TR** **6-8:40 pm** **June 13-Aug 3**
Call #10646

-903 Herbert **MW** **6–8:40 pm** **June 12-Aug 2**
Call #10647

-904 Ferrara **TR** **3-5:40 pm** **June 13-Aug 3**
Call #10648

Advance study and practice of writing in fields such as technology, science, administration and government, including visual rhetoric in both print and electronic forms. May not be used to satisfy the literature requirement of the College of Humanities and Sciences. Writing Intensive.

ENGL 304-901—Advanced Writing(WI) **Call #10649**
Smith **MW** **6-8:40 pm** **May 22-July 12**

An advanced study of the writing of non-fiction prose. In addition to writing, students will consider representative samples of a variety of non-fiction forms -with a particular emphasis on the essay. Class time will be devoted to discussion of assigned reading and peer workshops of student work. Other requirements will include a short analytical paper. Writing Intensive.

ENGL 305—Creative Writing
(001) Keller/Poetry **M-R** **1-2:40** **June 12-July 20**
Call # 10650

Through reading, writing assignments, and peer workshops, students will develop their skills as poets and critics over this six-week course. Students will complete weekly writing assignments—which include a sampling of poetic forms—as they work toward a 5-7 page portfolio of revised work. We will spend most of our in-class time

around a table talking face to face, but students will post outside critiques of poems to a discussion board on Blackboard, an electronic "course delivery" system. (A valid VCU email account is required to access Blackboard.) We will also have at hand in-class computers; access to the Web allows us, from time to time, to look at a rich variety of electronic resources now available to readers and writers of poetry.

(002) Staff/Fiction M-R 10:30-12:10 June 12-July 20
Call # 12408

A workshop primarily for students who have not produced a portfolio of finished creative work. Students will present a collection of their work at the end of the course. May not be used to satisfy the literature requirement for the College of Humanities and Sciences.

(003) Smith/Fiction M-R 1-3:15 May 22-June 22
Call # 10651

A workshop primarily for the student who has not produced a portfolio of finished creative work. The course will introduce students to the elements of fiction from the writer's perspective and require the student to apply those elements in his or her own work. Attendance is required, as is thoughtful and constructive participation in class discussion. The workshop will be supplemented with readings of work by established writers.

(904) Comba/Fiction MW 3-5:40 pm May 22-July 12
Call # 10652

Course Objective: This course grounds students in the fundamental elements of fiction (plot, character, setting, point-of-view, symbol, and theme), and the techniques that attenuate discovery of these elements in their own work. This course has as its base that the story chooses the writer, and that it is through the manipulation of these elements that stories develop. The class will center on these elements as they present themselves in selected short stories, as well as on the development of the writer and his/her own work.

Course Work: Students will draft one short story, and then work through a series of exercises toward developing plot, character, setting, etc. Reading assignments will help students understand the fundamental elements of fiction, while writing assignments will help students first generate material, and then develop that material into well-crafted pieces of fiction. Completed drafts of stories will be workshopped at the end of the semester.

ENGL 313-001—Southern Literature
Powell M-R 10:30-12:45 June 12-July 12
Call #12362

Southern literature of the past and present contributes in interesting ways to regional and national dialogue, and studying it not just as excellent American literature, but as the output of a particular regional tradition and set of circumstances, is useful to readers from all different backgrounds who are interested in how literature is created and its relationship to the society in which it is written, published, and read. With these assumptions, this course introduces key characteristics, phases, and issues in southern literature through a systematic survey of selected major authors from Thomas Jefferson to Yusef Komunyakaa. A variety of topics are explored, including the relationship between literature and regional

identity, the potential connection between literature and political action, the intersection of biography and creative output, and changing writing styles. Students write several short essays, participate in and lead class discussions, and demonstrate mastery through a final exam. Expect regular in-class writing, groupwork, and discussion.

ENGL 351-001—Children’s Literature

Call # 10654

Harris MW 6-8:40 pm

May 22-June 9

Contact the Department of Teacher Education, 828-1305, for more information.

ENGL 372-001—American Literature: Romanticism

Call # 12217

Harrison M-R 10:30-12:45

May 22-June 22

A study of the writings of the American romantics in the 19th century, with attention to such authors as Poe, Emerson, Thoreau, Fuller, Hawthorne, Melville, Dickinson and Whitman.

Please contact the instructor via email for more information: hlharrison@vcu.edu.

ENGL 373-001—Am. Literature: Realism & Naturalism

Call # 10655

Lucas M-F 9-12

May 22-June 09

A survey of representative works of American realism, naturalism, regionalism, and local color produced during the time of profound change between Lee’s 1865 surrender at Appomattox, ending the Civil War, and the 1919 signing of the Treaty of Versailles, ending World War I. George W. Cable, Willa Cather, Kate Chopin, Stephen Crane, Theodore Dreiser, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, William Dean Howells, Henry James, Jack London, Frank Norris, and Mark Twain are among the authors whose work, primarily short fiction, will be studied. Class meetings will be devoted to lecture and discussion (with an emphasis on the latter), as well as occasional in-class writing and group activities. Course requirements include a reading journal, weekly tests (including objective questions as well as short essay prompts), and an annotated bibliography.

ENGL 381-001—Fiction Into Film

Call # 10656

Fine M-F 9-12

May 22-June 9

The cultural environment of Southern California has long fascinated American writers. Literally hundreds of writers have lived and worked in the region since the American film industry moved its production facilities to the Los Angeles basin shortly after World War I. Thus it comes as no surprise that dozens of novelists and playwrights have employed Hollywood as both setting and subject of their fictions. The word "Hollywood" itself connotes for writers far more than the popular images of wealth, glamour and film stardom. Indeed, it is one of the most resonant words in the twentieth-century writer’s vocabulary, and suggests issues and conflicts of basic importance within American culture as a whole. Nowhere else but in Hollywood were the paradoxes of American cultural values--success and failure, wealth and poverty, art and commerce--so starkly opposed. And Hollywood, ever narcissistic, has frequently adapted such fiction for the screen, as well as produced dozens of other

films about itself. We will examine both fiction and films which employ the movie industry, or Los Angeles, or both, as setting and subject. We will read F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Last Tycoon*, Nathanael West's *Day of the Locust*, Evelyn Waugh's *The Loved One*, and Michael Tolkin's *The Player*, as well as view filmed adaptations of these works. We will also watch several other films of interest--Sunset Boulevard, Good Morning, Babylon, Chinatown and Barton Fink--all of which deal with Los Angeles, Hollywood, and/or the filmmaking process. Assignments include short reading quizzes, several short response papers and a final exam.

ENGL 384-001—Women Writers
Canfield M-F 9-11:50

Call #12214
July 24-Aug 11

Women Writers: Gender and the Body

This course will explore how 19th, 20th, and 21st century women writers and theorists navigate cultural perceptions of selfhood and the body. We will read and analyze a number of texts, canonical and subcultural, to discuss and write about how race, class, sexuality, gender, and "ability" contribute to cultural perceptions of women's bodies through recent history. Students will write short seminar papers and participate in a final project that includes a longer analytical paper as well as a short oral presentation. Writers featured include: Jeanette Winterson, Toni Morrison, Virginia Woolf, Gertrude Stein, Michelle Tea, Nomy Lamm, and Kate Bornstein. Please contact Instructor for more details.

ENGL 385-001/ENVS 385—Nature Writing (WI)
Shiel M-R 8:30-10:10 am

Call #10657
June 12-July 20

Most of our study will focus on contemporary American nature writing. We'll read selections from *The Norton Book of Nature Writing* (college edition), a packet of poems and essays provided by the instructor, and Terry Tempest Williams' *Refuge*. Aside from being reading intensive, the class is a writing workshop; students will write, workshop, and revise one 6-8 page essay. Other assignments include written critiques, a detailed writer's notebook, and two in-class essays. Pre-requisites: successful completion of English 101, English 200, and a 200-level literature course.

ENGL 401-001—Shakespeare: The Later Works
Brinegar M-R 1-3:15 pm

Call #10659
May 22-June 22

This course deals with Shakespeare's later works: the "problem plays," his major tragedies, and the romances. We'll read and discuss plays from all three of these groups. I plan to include Hamlet, Troilus and Cressida, King Lear, Othello, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, and The Tempest, but these plans may change. We may also read Shakespeare's late poem The Phoenix and The Turtle.

The main goals of this course are:

- to explore some of the major themes of Shakespeare's works in a 16th-century context.
- to develop and improve your ability to understand Shakespeare's English.
- to exercise and develop your critical faculties in reading and writing.

Course requirements include two papers (approx. 4 pages each), quizzes, a midterm exam and a final exam.

Required Text: The Complete Works of Shakespeare, ed. David Bevington (5th ed.)
Note: You must have an edition of Shakespeare's works; I greatly prefer that it be this one.

If you use another, you may encounter significant textual differences.

ENGL 437-902—Advanced Fiction Writing *Call # 10660*
Staff **TR** **6-8:40 pm** **June 13-Aug 3**

Study the craft of fiction writing, with instruction and guidance toward constructive self-criticism. Workshop members will be expected to produce a substantial volume of quality work and to become proficient in critical analysis in order to evaluate and articulate the strength of their own poetry. May not be used to satisfy the literature requirement of the College of Humanities and Sciences.

ENGL 449-001—Introduction to Linguistics *Call # 10661*
Kuhn **TR** **3-5:40 pm** **June 13-Aug 3**

In this hands-on, problem-solving oriented introduction to the field of linguistics, you will learn basic techniques that linguists use to analyze languages as rule-governed systems (including sounds and sound systems, words and how they are composed, as well as how words combine to form grammatical sentences).

Among the things you will learn are the following: We will analyze and discuss how and why groups of people speak differently and how that affects their lives. You will learn something about how the English language evolved to where it is today, and how it continues to change. You will also learn how advertising and the media can manipulate gullible readers by skillful use of sentence structure and word choices—and how to beat them at their own game. You will also learn strategies that make learning foreign languages easier.

ENGL450-901—Modern Grammar *Call # 12213*
Griffin **MW** **6-8:40 pm** **June 12-Aug 2**

Study of modern English grammar and usage with some attention to linguistic theory. Recommended for teachers at all levels. May not be used to satisfy the literature requirement of the College of Humanities and Sciences.