Spring 2015 Graduate Seminars

ENGL 7006 **J. Wilcox** **12:30-3:30 F**	<u>**Fiction Writing**</u> *Prereq: admission to the MFA program or permission of instructor.* In this seminar we'll focus on the story's "uneasy bargain with the reader," as Shirley Jackson puts it. What will get a reader engaged in our fiction from the very first line? What distractions in our work may weaken the impact we intended? Do we bring assumptions that aren't always shared by our readers? How do we find our own authentic voice without being daunted by what others might think? These and other questions will be raised in the context of a workshop where you'll not only submit your own work to be discussed, but also take on the role of editor of another student's work.
ENGL 7107 **L. Glenum** **12:30-3:30 W**	<u>**Prosody and Poetic Forms: Poetry As Occult Action**</u> *Prereq: admission to the MFA program.* "The conception of poetry as magic implies an aesthetic of action," writes Octavio Paz. "Art ceases to be exclusively representation and contemplation; it becomes also an intervention in reality." This workshop will run with Paz's theory of poetry as direct action and explore unconventional ways in which poetic action can be maximized in the civic realm. To that end, we will undertake a variety of individual and collaborative projects, including mail art, twitter poems, crowd-sourced texts, pop-up print events, "haunted" video poems, radio serials, dial-a-poem projects, cabaret performances, and flash mobs. We'll also further explore Paz's alignment of poetry with magic, staging poetry rituals and other "occult" performances.
ENGL 7109 **J. Buch** **6:00-9:00N TH**	<u>**Forms of Film Writing: Non-linear Writing for Games and Apps**</u> *Prereq: permission of instructor.* Students will learn how to craft a narrative for video games, apps, and other non-linear, interactive environments where the experience is driven by the user. The course will involve the analysis of several non-linear works, including fiction, film, video games, apps, and other forms of story. It will look at new ways that people consume media and how storytelling can be applied in those environments. The course will examine concepts such as storysense and ludonarrative dissonance and debate their merits or faults. This course includes a collaborative component. Over the duration of the semester, students will form groups to craft a story for an interactive environment or game, then develop it into a prototype using a provided framework or one that they build on their own.

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ENGL 7147 **A. Nardo** **12:30-2:00 MW** *REVISED*	<u>**Milton**</u> This seminar will focus on <u>Paradise Lost</u>. We will read Milton's early poetry (e.g. "Lycidas"), controversial prose (e.g. <u>Areopagitica</u>), and later poetry (e.g. <u>Samson Agonistes</u>) in relation to the great epic in English. In this seminar, a great variety of students approaching literature and culture from different perspectives will be welcome. For example, - Students with an interest in Women's and Gender Studies will help us interrogate Samuel Johnson's famous, orientalist accusation that Milton had "a Turkish contempt of females." Or was Milton a visionary, even a proto-feminist, who reimagined human sexuality and marriage? - Students from Communication Studies and Theatre will help us stage a marathon reading of <u>Paradise Lost</u>. In collaboration with three undergraduate classes, we will read the entire poem together on two festive spring nights—with costumes, sets, music . . . perhaps even a real serpent. - Students from Education, English, and Comparative Literature will help us imagine how to teach the epic to various levels of students, from high school through university.
ENGL 7221 **C. Barrett** **3:00-6:00 T**	<u>**Topics in Critical Theory and Cultural Studies—Critical Animal Studies: Theory, Literature and Fur**</u> This seminar will explore some of the key theoretical texts and major turns in critical animal studies, especially as this multidisciplinary field inflects literary criticism and practice. We'll think about the concepts of animal and animality in a range of literary texts, primarily (though not exclusively) drawn from 20th- and 21st-century literature: Woolf's Flush, Ackerley's My Dog Tulip, Spiegelman's Maus, Coetzee's Elizabeth Costello, and more. How does the category of "animal" structure these texts? How can the literary animal, or animal literature, be theorized? What is gained for the discipline of literary study by engaging these questions? Is there a poetics of the animal? Topics in the course will vary, based on the research agendae of enrollees, but might include genre, affect, event, monstrosity, spectacle, interpretation. The course will provide the opportunity to produce conference papers and article-length work for future use.

ENGL 7541 **L. Bridwell-Bowles** **3:30-6:30 M**	**Digital Humanities and Rhetoric in a Post-Print World** *Will print survive? Can I monetize my hashtags? . . . . Is there a living to be made when editors expect to get quality, on-time copy for zero cents a word? . .* *The task is not to understand the function of this or that tool, [Heidegger] argues, but rather to examine the way technology comes to rule every aspect of existence. This **enframing**, as Heidegger calls it, which places everything within the ambit of possible use and disposal, is the real meaning of technology.* Mark Kingwell, "Beyond the Book," *Harper's*, August 2013. A number of contemporary trends converge to create the exigency for this course: the alleged decline of print and literacy, funereal encomia for the book, sharp decreases in humanities enrollments, shrinking academic job markets, **and** promises of NEW forms of digital writing and research. This seminar will examine the "enframing" of these trends by examining historical documents that put them into larger contexts. After this introduction, participants will investigate early examplars of "the digital humanities" (e.g., archives, digital communities, professional guidelines, research tools). Course projects can range from traditional papers aimed at publication to critical reviews of digital sites or designs for digital workspaces. Participants will collaboratively build a digital archival space for seminar materials. Those not familiar with historic fears about and euphoric visions for literacy technologies (e.g., Plato, Derrida, Eisenstein) may read in these areas. Those familiar with this terrain may focus on contemporary cases. All will speculate about the future of scholarship, fiction, non-fiction, etc. Some participants will have specific interests in rhetoric; but others in education; literary, media, or communication studies, etc., are welcome.
ENGL 7621 **S. Weinstein** **TBA**	**Research Methods in Composition, Literary, and Rhetorical Studies: Iberville Externship** ***This course is only available to students participating in the Iberville externship.***
ENGL 7714 **I.Shport** **2:00-3:30 MW**	**Topics in Sociolinguistics -- Examining Bilingual Discourse: The Hows and Whys** This seminar is a survey of the linguistic and socio-cultural dimensions of bilingualism, viewed from the perspectives of the individual (how and why bilinguals use their languages in discourse) and the community (how and why bilingual discourse is treated in the society). Topics will include theoretical and methodological approaches to discourse analysis; linguistic means of constructing identity in speech and writing; creativity and struggle; language and power in multilingual communities. For research projects, students will examine oral or written discourse data, either continuing to work on an ongoing project or developing a new project in the area of students' interests. For MFA students, a creative writing option representing bilingual speech will be offered.

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ENGL 7920 M. Bibler 3:00-6:00 Th	**English Seminar: Publication and Professionalization** *This course is for Ph.D. students who have passed their exams and are working on their dissertations*--in other words, students who are ABD. The course is Pass/Fail, and all assigned work must be completed to receive a Pass. The course aims to help students become more productive and efficient in writing their dissertations while also preparing for an academic career. By allowing students to present, discuss, and receive feedback on their work in progress, this course will help them maintain momentum on their dissertations while also working toward publication in a scholarly journal or equivalent. Together we will workshop at least two key pieces of writing that will help students continue working on the dissertation, prepare for publication, and learn to position themselves better within the profession: a 1-page dissertation abstract and a draft of an article-length portion of the dissertation aimed at publication. Students will also research and present on the top journals in their field with the goal of submitting their essay to one of those journals, though actual submission is not required for the course. Finally, students will also collectively explore major issues and concerns currently affecting higher education by studying publications such as Chronicle of Higher Education, InsideHigherEd, and MLA's Profession and presenting these issues to the rest of the class. Other readings will include Eric Hayot's The Elements of Academic Style: Writing for the Humanities (Columbia UP, 2014).
ENGL 7921 M. Zerba 6:30-9:30N M	**Studies in Genre—Tragedy: the Greeks through the Modernists** This course will explore a range of tragedies from antiquity, the early modern period, and the twentieth century in the context of several influential theories of tragedy. Why does dramatic tragedy flourish in only two cultural moments—fifth-century Athens and Renaissance Europe—and how do modern playwrights respond to this heritage? Why does tragedy focus on the family? How does the genre of tragedy relate to the concept of "the tragic"? What explains the hold tragedy has had on Western philosophy? Our philosophical readings will include selections from Plato's Republic and Hegel's Philosophy of Spirit, Aristotle's Poetics, and Nietzsche's Birth of Tragedy. The plays we will study are Aeschylus' Oresteian trilogy, Sophocles' Oedipus the King and Antigone, Euripides' Medea, Shakespeare's Hamlet and King Lear, Webster's The White Devil, Beckett's Endgame, Pinter's The Homecoming, and Albee's Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?. Because the discipline of poetics that Aristotle first formulated is closely related to rhetoric, students with an interest in rhetoric will have the occasion to pursue topics related to their field of study. Requirements will include three short papers and a research paper; an oral presentation; and supervision of one class discussion.
ENGL 7960 C. Rovee 3:30-6:30 W	**Topics in the Romantic Period: Digital Romanticism** British Romanticism has provided an abundance of source-material for recent computer-assisted methodologies--witness the exemplary Blake Archive--and the writings of authors as diverse as Mary Shelley and William Wordsworth contain, and offer to scholars, an embryonic theory of textuality. This class will foreground this intimate relationship between romanticism and digitization in order to explore the 'digital turn' in literary studies. We'll trace a pre-history of digital romanticism that takes into account the eighteenth-century explosion of printed matter, the romantics' obsession with the materiality of books, the centralization of a concept of 'literature' (with the correlative designation of categories like marginalia and ephemera), twentieth- and twenty-first-century protocols of close and distant reading, and recent innovations in the production and visualization of knowledge. Through a close attention to romantic texts as well as to recent criticism, the course will raise broad and fundamental questions about how we "read" (whether it's a first edition or an anthology, an original manuscript or an reproduction on a screen); about the kinds of knowledge we seek to produce when we read; and about the visualization of knowledge.

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ENGL 7972 **B. Costello** **6:00-9:00N T**	**Topics in Southern Literature: Comics and the South** This course will double as an introduction to the burgeoning academic field of comics studies and an exploration of new territory in the more thoroughly burgeoned but no less field of southern studies. In addition to investigating comics as an aesthetic form with particular properties that emerge in different ways across a variety of historical eras and publishing models, we will examine how cartoonists have utilized the unique capacities of comics to represent and interrogate the region's material realities and ideological fantasies. Writers and artists may include Kyle Baker, Steve Bissette, Al Capp, R. Crumb, Howard Cruse, Steve Dillon, Garth Ennis, Walt Kelly, Jeremy Love, Doug Marlette, Alan Moore, Josh Neufeld, Nate Powell, and others.
ENGL 7975 **I. Lavender** **6:30-9:30N W**	**Topics in African-American Literature: Afrofuturism** At its simplest, afrofuturism means speculative fiction written by black people in a global context. But such a working definition of afrofuturism elides the sheer scale of this burgeoning aesthetic movement, now in its third decade, which includes all forms of black cultural production—music, dance, art, theater, film, literature, and scholarship. Mark Dery, originator of the term, discusses it as a practice of "African-American signification that appropriates images of technology and a prosthetically-enhanced future" (736). However, afrofuturism's literary pedigree is significantly lengthier than Dery admits with its roots extending as far back as the early nineteenth century. As I see it, afrofuturism is a set of race inflected reading protocols designed to investigate the optimisms and anxieties framing the future imaginings of people of color. As a speculative concern with what was via what is via what could be, afrofuturism offers a complex challenge to remember and reconnect a past that informs the present and builds a future. Alternate histories, captivity narratives, alien encounters, and travels through time and space provide ideal ways to go b(l)ack to the future. Consequently, this course concerns the literary and critical strands of Afrofuturism, with some attention paid to music, film, and art (Sun Ra, George Clinton, OutKast, and Janelle Monáe). We will discuss a range of speculative texts, including but not limited to Kyle Baker, Steven Barnes, Octavia Butler, Martin Delany, Samuel Delany, Tananarive Due, Pauline Hopkins, Nalo Hopkinson, Nnedi Okorafor, and George Schuyler.

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ENGL 7981 J. Kronick 12:00-3:00 TH	**Topics in Modern and Contemporary Literature: Modernist Poetry and Ethics** The central tenant of modernism has been held to be the autonomy of the literary work or of literary language. The problem with such a theory when applied to these poets, who are representatives of three generations of modernists, is that it confuses the loss of the representational function of language and the loss of the self with autonomy and, to use Eliot's term, impersonality. The problem of modernist poetry is quite different and it may be said to lie in the relation of aesthetics to ideology. W. B. Yeats once wrote, "We were the last romantics," suggesting that the time when the poet could be considered a visionary spokesman was over. Yet Yeats wrote some of the greatest political poems of the period and was active in Irish politics. For him, the poet and the man of action were not incompatible. In his elegy for Yeats, Auden wrote one of the most famous lines in twentieth-century poetry: "Poetry makes nothing happen." Having begun his career as a leftist and politically active poet, Auden embraced the Anglican church and insisted that poetry was frivolous, more akin to play than to prophetic vision or political action. Yet Auden's poetry never leaves behind ethical questions, even if, as a matter of ethics, Auden saw poetry as secondary to truth. Eliot, who comes between these two, may have insisted that poetry should be impersonal, but he was the most personal of poets. The Waste Land was embraced by a generation as a major statement about the collapse of western civilization, but Eliot called it a "private" "piece of rhythmical grumbling." The seminar will address these issues: the problem of the relation of the poet to the public, the relation of poetry to history, the difficulty, if not impossibility, of representing consciousness and subjectivity, and the problem of modernity itself. In addition to reading major poems and prose works by these poets, we will read texts in theory and philosophy. Possible readings include Paul de Man, Theodor Adorno, Fredric Jameson, Jacques Derrida, Jean-Luc Nancy, Hannah Arendt, and Alain Badiou. Seminar reports and a research paper will be required.
ENGL 7983 P. Rastogi 12:00-3:00 T	**Topics in Ethnic and Postcolonial Literatures—Angloprone: Global Fiction in Local English, 1980-2015** This seminar will explore how contemporary postcolonial and "ethnic" writers, or those on whom English has been imposed by historical or personal circumstances, have refashioned the "master language" with dazzling innovations, pizzazz, and verve. We will particularly focus on the ways in which Angloprone fiction written in a local idiom—African, South Asian, Caribbean, Middle Eastern, Chinese-American etc—can reach a global audience. Think of this class then as structured around the political, aesthetic, and ideological issues that language-choice generates today rather than about language itself. We will begin by reading colonial writing and postcolonial theory related to the historical power and present dominance of the English language. These will include essays and manifestos by Thomas Babington Macaulay, Ngugi wa Thiongo, Linda Smith, and Tejaswini Niranjana as well as sections from The Empire Writes Back. Fiction will include novels, novellas, and short stories by Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy, Zadie Smith, Ivan Vladislavic, Chris Abani, Andrea Levy, V.S. Naipaul, Abraham Verghese, Caryll Phillips, Yiyun Li, Nadeem Aslam, and Suad Amiry. Requirements for class include attendance in body, mind, soul, and spirit, active class participation, one in-class group presentation, one 20-page research paper written in increments of 5, 10, 15, and 20 pages and revised after professorial and peer review of each iteration. MFA students may write a "hybrid" paper consisting of 10 pages of creative writing and 10 pages of literary analysis.