

FALL 2018 ENGLISH UNDERGRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

This list includes courses with a special emphasis. Go to the LSU catalog for general course descriptions not listed here. See schedule booklet or web page for last minute updates.

| Course/Sect. | Course Title | Course Description |
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| 1001-41, 60, 99 Christina Armistead 1001-36 Josef Horacek | English Composition <i>Cultural Exchanges</i> | <i>Includes a Service-Learning component.</i> You will research and compose arguments about issues with a global impact and will consider how understanding cultural context can help us solve them in a manner that respects the multiple national interests involved. To help you do this effectively, you will participate in a service-learning partnership that asks you to engage one-on-one with an international student. Through one-hour meetings each week, you will help your partner improve his/her spoken English and you will sharpen your ability to engage with and understand cultural perspectives beyond your own. |
| 2000-6, 7 36 Rachel Stevens | English Composition <i>Food Literacies and Cultures</i> | <i>Includes a Service-Learning component.</i> What can we learn from how we eat? This service-learning composition class chews on that question—and others—through studying food-based issues and discovering connections between food, culture, and identity. As we explore these different connections, we will also address issues of food inequity in the LSU student community and serve the needs of the community by volunteering with the LSU Food Pantry. Along the way, we will reflect on these issues, needs, and connections through writing about our service work and crafting persuasive arguments about how food shapes us. Bon appetit! |
| 2000-35 Sharon Andrews | English Composition <i>Writing for Community Action & Advocacy</i> | <i>Includes a Service-Learning component.</i> This is a special emphasis course with a focus on the use of language, especially written language, as a tool for empowerment within the community and includes a Service-Learning requirement. Students will be challenged to think about their role in the community and the use of writing to inspire and affect change. In addition to traditional assignments, students will do field research with a community partner throughout the semester and will work collaboratively. Students will maintain a Reflection Journal, and actively participate in class workshops and activities. |
| 2000-8, 11, 12, 14 Jean Rohloff | English Composition <i>Music and Culture</i> | Students will explore and write about the intersection of music and culture. The major assignments will move the students from focusing on their own experiences as “consumers” of music to broader considerations of the interplay between music and race, gender, sexuality, law, economics, etc. |
| 2000-24, 31, 40 Keel Geheber | English Composition <i>Food for Thought: Argumentative Writing About Food</i> | Food is at once life-sustaining, culturally symbolic, and, best of all, tasty. But are we aware of the many issues surrounding how our food gets to our plates? Where does our food come from? Who produces it? And is it good for us? This course examines such questions using food studies as a lens to advance students’ writing skills in a variety of academic, professional, and public genres, with an emphasis on research and argumentation. Writing assignments will range from the technical, a recipe, to the public, a restaurant review, to a well-researched argument about a current food-related issue. |
| 2000-10, 19, 39 June Pulliam | English Composition <i>Style Code: The Meanings Behind How We Fashion Ourselves</i> | The choices that we make about how to display ourselves are not neutral decisions, but part of a code that communicates how we see ourselves and where we stand in an elaborate social hierarchy. Fashion and style are categories including more than clothing; hair, grooming, tattoos, and piercings are also elements of style, as is the condition of a person’s skin, nails, and teeth. Others can “read” a person’s style for information about someone’s gender, class, race, religion, profession, and affiliation with social groups. Students in Style Code will explore the visual rhetoric of style while also exploring the pre- and post-consumer impact of fashion on the world economy and environment. Students in any major can find topics of interest to them in this class. |

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| 2000-23, 26, 33 Lisa Nohner | English Composition <i>The Language of Horror</i> | Do you like scary movies? We will explore America's longest standing love affair: the horror genre. Students will study an array of both classic and contemporary horror texts, identifying and analyzing their use of rhetorical strategies and appeals. Through studying arguments found within horror advertisements, literature, film, and critical theory, students will develop a critical lens they can apply to their own analytical discussions and arguments. While students can expect to learn a great deal about the horror genre, this course is primarily concerned with the study of rhetoric, which is essentially the study of how we argue and what makes an argument effective. Students will gain effective reading, writing, research, and analysis strategies for the college environment. Students will practice various kinds of analytical and persuasive writing, from poster analysis and television reviews, to a final argumentative essay about a horror film. |
| 2000-18, 21, 28 Laurie Drummond | English Composition <i>Animal Welfare & the Natural World</i> | <i>Includes a Service-Learning component.</i> Dogs and Cats and Pigs--Oh My! Students will explore how writing can be a tool to convince, persuade, inspire, and create change in the community. Our service-learning partners are the local "open intake" animal shelter, Companion Animal Alliance and the local rescue Friends of the Animals. Students will help promote adoptable animals and create various materials for our community partners in addition to writing a research paper on an issue of their choice related to the course emphasis. |
| 2000-43 Josh Myers | English Composition <i>Environmental Dynamics and Disasters</i> | We will explore how environmental and cultural issues intersect in various social debates and discourses that are informed by the surrounding world. Topics include issues of ecology, flora/fauna, pollution/waste management, chemical/nuclear anxieties, conservation/preservation, and climate change. We will further examine the impact (direct and indirect) that language has on these issues to learn effective and responsible ways to write about them. By doing so, we will acquire the ability to think and write (eco) critically, observing the global importance of writing about the world and our role in it. |
| 2000-46 Kieran Lyons | English Composition <i>Unnatural Writing</i> | This course questions the assumptions that lie beneath the idea of "writing naturally." To that end, we will engage in a variety of "unnatural" approaches to composition that will give students the tools to become more versatile, resourceful writers. Students will discover that chaotic writing processes can lead to polished pieces which would please the strongest stickler for topic sentences, while rigid adherence to rules can produce lyrical prose and surprising, fleet-footed arguments. Reading and writing assignments will also question our assumptions about nature. What is nature, anyway, and what is our relationship to it? What's so bad about artificiality? Is there anything left that's untouched by human influence? Does nature still exist? Has it ever existed? Students will work through these questions and more with a diverse range of writing and reading assignments which ask them to take part in global conversations about the relationship between humans and our world. |
| 2000-17 Lauren Rackley | English Composition <i>Gender and Media</i> | Our daily lives have become saturated by the media, which has ultimately influenced the ways we conceptualize the construction of gender and the intersections of gender with race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, ability, and nation. This course asks you to consider and engage with the ways rhetoric and writing influence and construct our understanding of gender. By focusing on gender in the media, this class encourages you to critically consider the ways the media makes arguments in order to advance your own ability to compose and argue effectively. This class aims to improve your writing skills in various genres that range from the academic and professional to the public and popular. Writing assignments will range from a tweet analysis to a well-researched argument about an issue concerning gender and the media. This class gives you the space to explore topics that interest you while also encouraging the development of your research, composition, and argumentative skills. |
| 2004-001 Jason Christian | Introduction to Writing Non-fiction | What is "creative nonfiction?" Author Phillip Lopate writes, "Adding the word 'creative' before 'nonfiction' . . . is tantamount to saying 'good poetry'—for who would set out to write 'uncreative nonfiction'?" But we have to call it something, and there are other terms still: literary nonfiction, the personal essay, memoir, narrative nonfiction, etc. Each means the same thing: true stories told in interesting ways. We will read exciting examples from the genre, and write true stories of our own and share them with our peers. Let's take reality and make it art. |

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| 2005-3 Monterica Neil | Introduction to Writing Short Stories | The short story can take a number of forms, and this course aims to introduce students to a diverse variety with an emphasis on what makes them work: why do some stories stick with us long after we've read the last line? Students will study stories by both established and emerging authors, and engage in weekly exercises to develop their own writing voices. Each writer will workshop and revise at least one short story, and learn how to deliver thoughtful, constructive criticism to their peers. |
| 2012-1 Jeff Smith | Practical Grammar/Usage | Practical Grammar focuses on gaining a deeper understanding of the rules of English, its usage and punctuation; making effective word choices and sentences; eliminating common errors; and introducing current language controversies and regional/social variations. |
| 2025-2 Rachel Stevens | Fiction <i>Young Adult Literature</i> | What is YA? Since its rise in popularity, YA's definition--and literary value--has sparked debate and discussion among scholars, critics, and fans of the genre. This class will attempt to answer that same question through close examination of a diverse cross-section of YA novels, including dystopian, fantasy, and proto-YA works. We will also explore literary criticisms, as well as the genre's historical and cultural contexts in order to see how YA novels both influence and reflect their times. As Time magazine recently put it, we are in "a golden age of young-adult literature." Let's find out why. |
| 2025-4 Brodrick Hampton | Fiction <i>Heroes in Classic and Modern Media</i> | A survey of "the hero" throughout the history of literature and media—from Perseus to Superman to HALO's Master Chief. Topics include classic and modern definitions of the hero in relation to current-day, real-world concepts of heroism; the heroic journey; common themes across stories and genres; antiheroes and villains; and the psychological, social, and moral context surrounding our depictions of heroes...and how we respond to those depictions! |
| 2025-5 Trey Strecker | Fiction <i>Fictions of Mind</i> | This course will explore the intersection of psychology, neuroscience, and literary studies. We will study fictional works and contemporaneous theories of mind in order to consider how fictional texts represent consciousness and the self. Students will read a wide range of fiction alongside brief selections from neurologists and psychologists that allow us to address the following questions: How does fiction challenge scientific conceptions of the self? How does contemporary neuro-rhetoric address the wealth of experience that was once the novel's uncontested domain? What implications does the intersection of neuroscience and narrative carry for fiction's traditional building blocks (character motivation, plot structures, narrative architecture)? How has fiction absorbed or contested the influence of neuroscientific thought? |
| 2027-3 Sharon Andrews | Poetry <i>Social Issues and Poetry of Witness</i> | <i>Includes a Service-Learning component and is Communication-Intensive.</i> This course is a study of selected poets, poems, and poetry movements as "poetry of witness" with a dominant focus on specific social issues including poverty, race and class, violence, gender, family and relationships. We will also look at the current movement in performance poetry and discuss the distinction between "personal" and "political" poetry. |
| 2029-3, 4 Eric Mayer-Garcia | Drama | Students are introduced to dramatic literature through a survey of twelve texts from varying historical and cultural contexts. We analyze canonical texts from Ancient Greece, Medieval China, the Spanish Golden Age, and seventeenth-century England, alongside contemporary adaptations of these works by Caribbean, Latin American, and Latinx playwrights. Students study the dramatic canon through key themes, critical perspectives, and aesthetics seen in the work of Latinx dramatists. Some plays are multilingual plays written for English-language audiences, featuring Spanglish, and/or short passages in Nahuatl, Quiché, Lucumí, and Yoruba. Students learn how to write dramatic criticism and complete an ongoing research project to interpret one of the texts studied for a stage production. |
| 2085-1 Isiah Lavender | Science Fiction Studies <i>Cyberpunk</i> | Cyberpunk explores the near-future; loosely articulated, it wrestles with computing questions such as networking, hacking, virtual reality, and AI as well as cyborgs, representing the human/machine periphery and the emergence of the post-human. These high tech notions represent the cyber half of the definition. The punk half signifies street life, dealers and addicts, the working poor and have-nots with no material benefits, sometimes quite literally people living in the streets homeless, far down the socio-economic scale on the other side of the digital divide, hustling to survive. This course explores the cyberpunk sub-genre of science fiction. |

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| 2123-1 Michael Bibler | Studies in Literary Traditions and Themes <i>"Woke" Southern Literature</i> | Discovery, Understanding, Awareness... Freedom? This course examines a counter-tradition of radical southern literary works that call out and resist dominant systems of oppression and exclusion. Focusing on exciting texts about slave rebellions, civil rights protests, labor strikes, struggles over women's rights, LGBTQ activism, and more, we may never see "the South" the same way again. |
| 2123-2 Laurie Drummond | Studies in Literary Traditions and Themes <i>Memoir & Narrative</i> | From cave paintings to comics, we've been telling true stories about our lives by exploring our experiences, thoughts, concerns, and ultimately, our humanity. We will analyze literature with diverse perspectives about the human experience, grounded in an author's individual experience, thoughts, and beliefs. We will read both short and long works—from Seneca and Sei Shonagon to Baldwin and Didion to the graphic memoirs of Satrapi and Bechdel—and investigate films adapted from memoirs. |
| 2148-1-5 Chris Barrett | Shakespeare | What do Beyonce, the Chainsmokers, and Adele have in common? SHAKESPEARE. "Top 40 Shakespeare" surveys some of Shakespeare's best-known, weirdest, and most compelling plays and poetry, with a focus on how today's pop musicians rely on the language tricks and strategies that make Shakespeare's work so haunting and surprising. Along the way, we'll talk about playwrights who were spies, bloodsports in the theater, Queen Elizabeth's fungus, and the secret truth about how the Globe burned to the ground. Assignments prioritize the most in-demand employment skills: writing, communication, and analytical skills. Lectures will include puppets, wigs, Lady Gaga, much music, dancing. |
| 2148-7 Leroy Percy | Shakespeare | Shakespeare In/On Love: Romance in the sonnets and plays |
| 2202-1 Emily O'Dell | Introduction to World Literary Traditions | The course focuses on contemporary short stories from Western and non-Western traditions. The emphasis will be on reading and writing about short fiction from a variety of cultural traditions, which we will discuss in the context of World Literature. This course will begin with an introduction to World Literature and to the evolution of the short story genre before exploring more modern examples that may be read as representative of different cultures and regions. |
| 2220-2 Malcolm Richardson | Major British Authors <i>The Literature of London</i> | London has dominated the British literary scene like it's dominated the British social and economic scene – and for over 600 years. This course covers old and new classics of literature and film showing London not as an unchanging tourist monument but as a city always changing, with its "golden age" just out of reach in the past. This is the town of Shakespeare's Globe, of Pepys' scandalous diary, of Dickens' Scrooge, of Sherlock Holmes, of the Blitz, of the glittering Bight Young People of the 1920s, and of today's dazzling multicultural mix of writers like Zadie Smith. |
| 2220-4 Kathryn Will | Major British Authors <i>Anxiety and Aspiration</i> | Britain hasn't always been an attractive destination, much less an impressive cultural force. For centuries the island was seen as a primitive backwater; it was repeatedly conquered before it became an empire, and its history is marked by violent internal and external conflicts ranging from civil war to colonization. Despite its eventual imperial dominance, Britain's literature reveals a range of insecurities about the nation's relationship to continental Europe, the rest of the world, and even the divine hereafter. By reading drama, prose, and poetry from Anglo-Saxon writers to Ishiguro, we'll explore Britain's existential anxieties and aspirations from early history through the Brexit vote. |
| 2231-2 Lisa Nohner | Reading Film <i>Monsters—Gender & Horror</i> | This course examines how femininity, masculinity and fear intersect in contemporary horror films. We will examine how the genre articulates cultural anxieties and crises during specific historical moments. Students will explore these anxieties and crises as they relate to issues of gender and sexuality. We'll pay close attention to the ways horror films represent and reconfigure notions of sexuality and gender and the ways they reinforce and/or challenge social norms. Key questions at the heart of the course include: How have women and men been imagined and visualized within these texts? What kinds of social expectations and ideologies of gender and sexuality do they reflect? What "cultural work" has this genre done with regard to gender, and what does it continue to do? As the semester progresses, you will have the opportunity to further shape these and many more questions. |

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| 2270-2 Christina Rothenbeck | Major American Authors <i>American Myth</i> | At its base, a myth is a shared narrative that explains a cultural belief; in other words, the American Myth is the story we tell about America as a country and a culture. American literature is often concerned with this narrative and its crucial questions: What is America? What does it mean to be American? This course will trace the ways authors attempt to answer these questions by reading a range of American writing, from documents that predate the nation to works written in the 21st century, from writers who shape our cultural ideology to writers who challenge these beliefs. |
| 2593-2 Laura Mullen | Images of Women: An Introduction | An immersion in work that enlarges our understanding of what we mean by “women,” and an introduction to critical perspectives that suggest new modes of thinking about art—and life. We will explore the writing of a selection of mostly contemporary women writers working in a variety of genres and forms while giving students a working knowledge of relevant theoretical approaches from feminist scholarship. There will be various assigned exercises and an in-class group presentation, two short papers and a final essay exam will be required. Our reading list includes works by Roxane Gay, Jenny Boylan, Kadijah Queen, and Kathy Acker. |
| 3020-1 Chris Barrett | British Literature 1 | A whirlwind tour of one thousand years of English literary experiments, innovations, and adventures, from the medieval period through the eighteenth century. We'll cover some of the most famous/thrilling/bizarre works in literature, with attention to the often surprising historical context of these texts and authors. (Who was a playwright by day and spy by night? What exactly was the deal with Queen Elizabeth I's fungus? How did Shakespeare's Globe Theater really burn down? And how many dragons can you squeeze into one poem?) Emphasis on developing the communication and analytical skills employers look for in new hires. |
| 3101-1 Nicholas Alexandre | Legal Writing <i>Writing for Legal and Professional Communications</i> | Students will explore contemporary legal “hot topics” while being introduced to the writing situations they will encounter in legal and professional fields. Discussions and assignments are tailored to forms of writing common in legal studies. However, the course emphasizes clear, effective, and precise prose and focuses on objective and interpretive analytical skills instrumental for students considering numerous professions both inside and outside the field of law. |
| 3716-1 Jeff Smith | Dialects of English | Dialects of American English is a course in which differences in the pronunciation, vocabulary, and syntax of major dialect areas are studied. |
| 3820-1 Emily King | Honors Seminar <i>Aversion in Renaissance Drama</i> | Putrefying wounds. Rotting corpses. Greasy kitchens. Bathroom humor. What does disgust do to us? How does aversion function in the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries? Plays include Titus Andronicus, King Lear, Hamlet, The Spanish Tragedy, Coriolanus, Bartholomew Fair, Edward II, The Revenger's Tragedy, and 'Tis Pity She's a Whore. To access and extend the ideas we locate in 16th- and 17th-century Shakespearean drama, we will make use of large-group discussions, small-group work, debates, performances, archival research, and film adaptations. |
| 3930-TBA TBA | Internship in English | <i>Permission of instructor and department. Various faculty by individual agreement.</i> Work, learn, and earn 1-3 hours course credit in a position related to writing and critical analysis, such as editing, publishing, film production, grant writing, youth poetry program development, and community literacy education. Includes program of study, research project, book discussion, conferences with faculty mentor, and permission of department. Normally open only to juniors and seniors. |
| 4007-1 Laura Mullen | Writing Poetry | We'll be making poetry movies, sound installations, maps, and exploring other hybrid, inter-disciplinary possibilities. No previous multi-media experience is necessary: this class will build on skills you already have and readily available technology. We'll explore procedures and explode received forms—and have fun becoming stronger and feeling more free as artists. This is a chance to bring everything you are to poetry—and let poetry open that territory up. |
| 4030-1 Rick Godden | Studies in the Middle Ages | Love, betrayal, war, giants, fairy queens, Christmas games, magic, the search for the divine: just a few of the elements that make up the story of Arthur, his queen Guinevere, the sorcerer Merlin, and knights like Lancelot, Gawain, Galahad, and Percival. We will explore the Celtic roots of the Arthur myth, and we will read widely in the French and English traditions, with detours in |

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| | | Icelandic, Hebrew, and Modern re-imaginings! Most works will be in English translation; no previous experience in medieval lit required, and like the knights on the Grail Quest, you will always have help! |
| 4120-1 Jacob Berman | Studies in Major Authors <i>Poe and His Influences</i> | This course will cover the work of Edgar Allan Poe, as well as the work of authors who inspired him or were inspired by him. |
| 4173-1 Michael Bibler | Studies in Southern Literature <i>Southern Sexualities</i> | "Have you ever been Down South? If not you'd better go. It's a nation of a queer place, day and night a show!" A poet wrote that in 1829, and maybe things ain't changed much since then. We'll study all kinds of literature, theater, and film to ask what's queer ABOUT the South and what it's like to be queer IN the South--from the 1800s to today. |
| 4236-1 Delbert Burkett | Studies in Literature and Religion <i>Apocalyptic Literature</i> | <i>Cross-listed with REL 4236.</i> Apocalyptic literature deals with conceptions about the time of the end, whether the end of the age or the world. We will consider examples of apocalyptic literature from ancient times to the present. These include the "Book of Daniel" in the Hebrew Bible, the "Book of Revelation" in the New Testament, and modern predictions, about the rise of the Antichrist and the return of Jesus, based on these books. We will also examine some classic works of fiction that envision the end of the world, including <i>Cat's Cradle</i> by Kurt Vonnegut Jr. and <i>Childhood's End</i> by Arthur C. Clarke. |
| 4310-1 Al Camp | Studies in Language <i>English Based Pidgin and Creole Languages</i> | When people with very different languages are forced to live and work together, sometimes their languages merge to form a new one. What sounds like "broken" or "improper" English is sometimes actually a completely different language, an English-based creole. The first half of this course deals with theories of pidginization, and creolization. We look at the linguistic aspects that unite or distinguish new Pidgin and Creole languages. The second half turns to student presentations of the history, linguistic structure, and a text in individual English-based creole languages. |
| 4480-1 Solimar Otero | Literature and Folklore | This course explores the connections between folklore and literature. We analyze how mythology, fairy tales, proverbs, legends, oral tradition, ritual, and custom influence literary storytelling traditions globally. We will also think about how virtual storytelling creates new avenues for extending vernacular narratives of the self and community-making. |
| 4674-1 Isiah Lavender | Studies in African-American Literature <i>Afropunk</i> | This course applies critical race theory to the cyberpunk mindset (high tech low life) not normally associated with Black SF. Aside from telling wonderful stories, Black SF writers create their own realities to explore racism, recognizing how oppression fluctuates between groups, structurally determined by advantages/benefits that the dominant race feels entitled to take/receive in various social situations, and to deconstruct racial fallacies within the subgenre. That's keeping it real. That's making it black. That's finding its use in cyberpunk and alchemizing it into Afropunk. That is to say, we will explore a black version of cyberpunk. |