

Fall 2023 Graduate Courses

ENG 789 -1: Special Topics In Literature: Disability and Literature – Paul Kelleher

Wednesday 1:00PM – 3:45PM

Description: This seminar will pursue two interlocking questions. First, to what extent has our knowledge and experience of disability been forged through literary representation? Second, what alternative histories and ideologies are revealed when we examine literary representations of atypical minds and bodies that pre-date the scientific codification of normality and abnormality in the nineteenth century? Our task in this seminar will be to study (mostly) pre-twentieth-century literary texts in order to build disability knowledges and strategies for thinking beyond, or to the side of, the norm. We will ask: before the norm, what did literature know about atypical minds and bodies? How was difference represented, how did human variations signify, in some of the most adventurous, imaginative, and rhetorically sophisticated texts written in English? Some of the authors we will consider include William Shakespeare, John Milton, Daniel Defoe, Mary Wollstonecraft, Olaudah Equiano, Mary Shelley, and Jane Austen. Our readings will be supplemented by theoretical and critical texts, including the work of Lennard Davis, Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, Tobin Siebers, Sari Altschuler, Alison Kafer, Jasbir Puar, and Jenifer L. Barclay. Seminar participants will do one class presentation and will submit a research paper by the end of the semester.

ENG 789-2: African Literary Environments - Nathan Suhr-Sytsma Tuesday 1:00PM – 3:45PM

Description: From Rob Nixon's *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (2011) through Cajetan Iheka's *African Ecomedia: Network Forms, Planetary Politics* (2021) to even more recent work, the field of African literary and cultural studies is undergoing an environmental turn. How are anticolonial and other freedom struggles related to environmental justice? How do texts represent the entanglement of humans with their more-than-human environments? Engaging with Africanist and ecocritical scholarship, this seminar will ask questions such as these of literary and cultural texts by African writers. A likely, although not exhaustive list, includes novels by Chinua Achebe, Bessie Head, and Yvonne Vera; poetry by Niyi Osundare, Tjawangwa Dema, and Togara Muzanenhamo; a memoir by Binyavanga Wainaina; and films by Wanuri Kahiu. (This course requires prior experience with literary analysis, so graduate students in programs other than English should contact the instructor before enrolling.)

ENG 791: Composition Pedagogy -TBD

Thursday 1:00PM – 3:45PM

Description: Required seminar for graduate students preparing to teach first-year writing courses.

ENG 796: Histories, Theories Methods – Deepika Bahri

Monday 10:00AM – 12:45PM

Description: An introduction to the discipline of English. Required for all first-year graduate students. This seminar is designed to introduce first-year graduate students to key theoretical and methodological issues that shape the discipline of English. It will expose students to the historical trajectory of debates central to literary studies today (the value of literature, the particular province of aesthetics, theories of taste, art and material culture) through thinkers such as Plato, Aristotle, Hume, Kant, Adorno, Derrida, etc. Through readings and discussions, students will be introduced to a disciplinary framework designed to help them frame their interests in light of recurrent and ongoing debates and new directions in literary studies. In general, we are preparing to answer the following questions: what is our object of study? How should we study it and why? Moreover, this course will serve as an introduction to the discipline of English studies through hands-on assignments designed to help you plan your course through the doctoral program (OR to figure out versatile pathways in the humanities if your terminal degree is a Masters).