

Spring 2018 Graduate Courses

ENG 599R: Masters Thesis - Nickerson

ENG 711R: Shakespearean Ecologies and Affects - Cahill

Tuesdays 1-4

In this seminar we'll examine a broad selection of Shakespearean sonnets and dramas, looking at these texts through the lens of recent affect theory as well as of eco-critical scholarship—i.e, work in such disparate fields as animal studies; plant studies; blue (ocean) studies; and object studies. Together we will explore how and why specific Shakespearean texts link affect (whether conceived as passions, emotions, sensations or intensities) to such "natural" phenomena as trees, earth, flowers, water, and animals. In addition to engaging in lots of close reading, seminar members can expect to watch some filmed performances; consult digital and MARBL resources; and have many opportunities to produce and share their own critical work.

ENG 732R: The Victorian Novel - Otis

Mondays 4-7

This course will offer students the chance to study five rich, complex Victorian literary works from diverse critical perspectives. It is designed not so much for future Victorianists--although they are most welcome--as for emerging literary scholars in diverse fields who seek a background in Victorian literature to inspire their research. No extensive knowledge of Victorian literature or culture will be presumed. The novels have been selected to show five canonical writers creating literature at their mature best, but in works not widely known to scholars outside of Victorian Studies: Charlotte Brontë's *Villette* (1853), Anthony Trollope's *The Warden* (1855), Charles Dickens's *Our Mutual Friend* (1865), George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* (1876), and Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886). The course will provide an overview of each novelist's work in the context of nineteenth-century British social and cultural history, but it will be anything but canonical in the criticism it pairs with the novels and the assignments it requires of students. Each novel will be read in conversation with "classic" studies of Victorian literature, such as those of Nancy Armstrong, J. Hillis Miller, and Catherine Gallagher, as well as with recent, cutting-edge criticism chosen by students for class presentations. All theoretical perspectives are welcome: The methods of socio-historical, psychoanalytic, and post-structuralist criticism will be considered, as well as those of eco-criticism, animal studies, disability studies, queer theory, and cognitive and neuroscientific approaches to literature. The course will pay particular attention to the ways that Victorian novelists represent sensory experience, but it aims to guide and inspire teachers of all kinds of literature, with all critical outlooks. Two eight-page conference-length papers will be required rather than a standard seminar paper, and students will be required to prepare abstracts of their conference presentations, workshop them in class, and submit at least one of them to an actual academic conference. As an alternative to traditional "read" conference papers, students are welcome to prepare multi-media conference presentations.

ENG 751: Disability and American Literature Before Eugenics - Reiss

Mondays 10-1

In the long nineteenth century, the social condition of those with physical, sensory, psychiatric, and cognitive disabilities became a central problem of American life. This period witnessed the creation of asylums and other specialized institutions for people identified as insane, blind, deaf, and otherwise unable to work; the problem of disabled veterans of the Civil War; and the earliest formations of eugenic policies mandating the quarantine and/or sterilization of mental and physical "defectives." Through a range of primary readings (novels, poems, memoirs, institutional records, promotional materials for entertainments, investigative reports) and historical and theoretical readings on disability, this course will explore the construction and representation of distinctly "disabled" identities. We will also consider disability studies as a lens through which to view literary and cultural studies more broadly.

ENG 789: Theorizing the Black and African Diaspora - Wright

Wednesdays 1-4

Even with its definitional ambivalence and active detractors, the concept of diaspora as an organizing principle for marginalized or minoritized collectives remains alive and well—if a bit battered. If nothing else, Black and African Diaspora studies is an excellent way to get at the heart of debates on Blackness, identity, and minoritarian difference, not to mention the ways in which gender and sexual politics operate in Black studies.

This course will focus on the politics and culture of Black and African diaspora studies in the academy, making this an excellent seminar both for graduate students whose focus is squarely within this field as well as graduate students who are interested in learning more, but who are not specialists.

Our primary engagement will be with epistemological concerns: that is, how concepts of diaspora are organized and presented in different texts, as well as what is at stake in current debates on collective and individual identity formation in Black and African diasporas. More specifically, we will be looking how gender, sexuality, class, nationality and religion implicitly and explicitly shape our knowledge and understanding of diasporic formations.

We begin from the argument that the concept of the diaspora is a theoretical construction that must always already be defined and specified in order to avoid further marginalizing and/or erasing those forms of Blackness and/or Black communities that lack traditional representation.

The majority of our reading will be from theoretical texts from across the disciplines, most especially anthropology, cultural studies, gender and sexuality studies, history, literary studies, political science, psychology, and sociology. While we will put these texts into conversation with one another, we will also discuss how and why disciplinary differences (i.e., methodology) will produce different types of Black and African diasporas.

Reading will include but not be limited to scholarship from the following writers: Ama Ata Aidoo, Jafari Allen, Tina Campt, Brent Edwards, Fatima El-Tayeb, Philomena Essed, Simon Gikandi, Paul Gilroy, Saidiya Hartman, Leila Kamali, Nancy P. Nenno, Isidore Okpewho, Colin Palmer, Peggy Piesche, Samantha Pinto, Jean Muteba Rahier, Ron Segal, Tracy Denean Sharpley-Whiting, Michelle Stephens, Hortense Spillers, and Gloria Wekker.

ENG 789 - Irish and Postcolonial Poetry - N. Suhr-Sytsma

Tuesdays 10-1

The field of poetry and poetics has been reenergized over the past dozen years by debates about whether to theorize “lyric” as a historically shifting category or transhistorical genre, yet these debates have largely taken for granted a set of canonical American and European poets. A number of other critics, meanwhile, have begun vigorously rethinking poetics from perspectives variously identified as postcolonial, transnational, diasporic, and global. This seminar will approach such theoretical concerns through the work of Irish and postcolonial poets writing primarily in English—and at least one Irish-language poet in translation—from the mid-twentieth century to the present; it will also ask to what extent the terms “Irish” and “postcolonial” are adequate for the twenty-first century. Drawing on the Danowski Poetry Library and the archival holdings of the Rose Library whenever possible, the seminar will emphasize not only critical debates, but also poets’ inventive refashioning of form, material media, and even the very terms of debate. We will likely read, among others, Christopher Okigbo, Kamau Brathwaite, Derek Walcott, Agha Shahid Ali, Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill, Tsitsi Jaji, and Sinéad Morrissey, who will visit Emory in April.

ENG 789: Pedagogy of Literature - Goodstein

Thursdays 1-4

Content: REQUIRED FOR ALL 4th-YEAR ENG STUDENTS

This colloquium focuses on helping graduate students prepare to teach successful literature and cultural studies classes. Building on your experiences teaching composition and argumentation, we will address the full range of issues surrounding teaching undergraduate language and literature classes, from developing syllabi and assessing the effectiveness of pedagogical strategies to coping with the pragmatic challenges that arise in practice. We will read and discuss pedagogical theories, become acquainted with contemporary empirical work on teaching effectiveness, and work together to develop strategies for success. This course will also help you prepare for the next steps in your career by providing support as you develop multiple syllabi, draft statements of teaching philosophy, work on your web presences, and begin to put together your teaching portfolios.

ENG 799R: Dissertation Hours - Nickerson