

Spring 2026 Graduate Courses

ENG 711R / Shakespeare: Shakespeare & his Contemporaries -- Patricia Cahill

Thursdays, 10:00AM-12:45PM

Description:

This seminar invites students both within and beyond the field of early modern studies to explore English drama that stages witchcraft, cunning knowledge, and magical power. We will read these works in their historical contexts and as experiments in thinking about embodiment, race, and epistemology.

Alongside, *Macbeth*, and its iconic witches, we will likely read Middleton's - *The Witch*; Webster's - *The Duchess of Malfi*; - *The Witch of Edmonton* - by Rowley, Dekker, and Ford; Heywood and Brome's - *The Late Lancashire Witches*; Marston's - *Sophonisba*; and Lyly's - *Mother Bombie*. These plays offer a lens through which to test and refine methods that travel across literary periods and disciplines. For students whose primary fields lie elsewhere, early modern drama provides a generative archive for exploring feminist, queer, critical race, and ecocritical frameworks while cultivating skills in close reading, historical analysis, and theoretical synthesis.

We will supplement the plays with early modern witchcraft treatises, filmed performances of plays; and contemporary scholarship, especially in premodern critical race studies. Students are encouraged to bring their own research interests into dialogue with the course materials. No prior knowledge of early modern literature is expected, though active participation and sustained engagement are essential.

ENG 789 1 / Special Topics In Literature: Central Am. - Am. Lit. & Migration-- Emil' Keme

[Cross-listed with CPLT 751R 6, HIST 858 7]

Tuesdays, 1:00PM-3:45PM

Description:

This graduate seminar examines how Central American writers and artists narrate migration as a cultural, historical, political, and lived experience. Through literary texts, visual media, and performance, we will explore how creative works engage with the root causes of migration, the perilous journey across borders, and the complexities of settlement and belonging. We will analyze how narrative form, genre, and voice shape representations of displacement, trauma,

resilience, and transnational identity. The course situates these works within broader socio-political contexts, including U.S. foreign policy, neoliberalism, and the legacies of colonialism and empire in the Central American isthmus. Special attention will be given to literature and art as sites of memory, resistance, and community-building that challenge dominant migration discourses. Students will engage the literary works to interdisciplinary scholarship while developing research on the intersections of migration, aesthetics, and power.

Texts: Authors we will read include Giconda Belli, Christina Henriquez, Oscar Martinez, and Marcos Antil.

ENG 789 2/ Special Topics In Literature: Literary History of Disability -- Paul Kelleher

Wednesdays, 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 pre-twentieth-century literary texts in order to build disability knowledges and strategies for thinking beyond 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.

ENG 789 4 / Special Topics In Literature: The End(s) of Work: "Postwork Imaginaries" in Theory and Contemporary Literature -- Irving Goh

[Cross-listed with CPLT 751R 2, PHIL 789 6, WGS 730R 3]

Thursdays, 3:00PM-6:00PM

Description:

In the wake of the "Great Resignation" and "lying flat" movements during pandemic times, and in response to recent writings in Marxist feminist and cultural studies circles on "postwork imaginaries," "breaking things at work," "doing nothing," or being "counterproductive," this

seminar questions if there can ever really be an end to work. What does it take to effectuate such a radical promise or hope? Or is existence hopelessly shackled to work until retirement, if one can ever be free from such an ineluctability even then? This seminar will examine such questions through the lens of contemporary literary texts (Ottessa Moshfegh's *My Year of Rest and Relaxation*, Adelle Waldman's *Help Wanted!*, Raven Leilani's *Luster*, Ling Ma's *Severance*, Hilary Leichter's *The Temporary*, etc.) alongside critical theories of work/labor (Karl Marx, Paul Lafargue, Hannah Arendt, Roland Barthes, Giorgio Agamben, Kathi Weeks, Byung-Chul Han, Melissa Gregg, Sarah Sharma, Guy Standing, etc.).

ENG 789 5 / Special Topics In Literature: Ecocriticism & American Lit. & Environment --
Geovani Ramírez

Mondays, 1:00PM-3:45PM

Description:

In this course we will read environmental and ecocritical scholarship and study US cultural and literary expressions on ecologies to help us answer What is ecocriticism? Why did it emerge and under what conditions? How has ecocriticism contributed to environmental discourses? What can ecocriticism accomplish? What is ecocriticism's relationship to environmental literature, literary studies, environmental humanities, and environmentalism? This course offers an overview of the field by introducing participants to key texts, organizations, historical moments, and theories in ecocriticism and environmental humanities more broadly. Participants will explore a variety of ecocritical methods and consider the stakes of their employment. They will also read American literature on the environment ecocritically and reflect upon the possibilities and limitations of such interpretative approaches.