

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH & PHILOSOPHY
Summer 2015 Course Descriptions
Upper-Division English Classes

NOTE: Courses are subject to change depending on enrollment and faculty teaching assignments. Please check BANWEB for more current information on the availability of all courses. English 1101 and 1102 are prerequisites for all courses from ENGL 2110 through 4386.

XIDS 2100-02: The Horror Film, Dr. Erin Lee Mock

MTWRF 1:00 pm-4:25 pm, TLC 1200 Session I.

Description: This course will examine the history, aesthetics, and issues of global cinema in the horror genre.

Texts: David Skal, *The Monster Show*; Alain Silver, *Horror Reader*

Requirements: Final presentation, informal in-class writing, exam

XIDS 2100-03 Intro to Gender and Sexuality Studies, Dr. Laura Miller

MTWRF 9:00 am-12:25 pm, PAF 308 Session I.

This is also the gateway class for the minor in Gender and Sexuality Studies at UWG.

Description: To study gender and sexuality is to study issues that affect all people, whether one faces the pressure to conform to a particular definition of masculinity or femininity, or confronts the definition of certain kinds of sexuality as normative. This class will explore topics related to gender and sexuality through the viewing of films and the reading of critical texts, fictional works, and autobiographical essays. We will explore queer cinema made during a period of censorship, representations of bisexuality, race and gender, sadomasochism in literature and film, and transgender identities. The works we will encounter in this class have been chosen for several reasons: because they are engagingly written and provocative, because they are culturally significant (*Fifty Shades of Grey*), and because they will help you write about topics related to gender and sexuality in future classes. I hope that this class leaves you with a sense of the diverse ways gender and sexuality can be approached and analyzed.

Texts: E.L. James, *Fifty Shades of Grey*; James Baldwin, *Giovanni's Room*; Donald E. Hall, *Queer Theories*; Kate Bornstein and S. Bear Bergman, *Gender Outlaws: The Next Generation*.

Requirements: There will be two written assignments (an analytical essay and a gender autobiography) and a final exam.

XIDS 2100-04: The Power of Comedy: Liberating Humor, Dr. Lori Snaitth

TR 11:00 am-1:30 pm, PAF 102 Session II.

The funniest, noblest comedy has always been rooted in hostility to oppression. We will spend June and July (well, parts of it, anyway) exploring the ways in which our favorite comedians—and their literary/artistic forebears—wage a never-ending war of laughter in the face of political and social tyranny.

Theoretical Readings (course pack) excerpts from: • Critchley, Simon. *On Comedy*. • Morreall, John. "Humor in the Holocaust: Its Critical, Cohesive, and Coping Functions." 27th Annual Scholars' Conference on the Holocaust and the Churches. • Zelvys, V. I. "Obscene Humor: What the Hell?" *Journal of Humor* 3:3, 1990. • Excerpts from Arthur Koestler, *Act of Creation*, Michel Foucault "Transgression," and Julia Kristeva, "The Abject."

Primary Texts (the good stuff): • Course pack of comedic short stories, essays, and plays, including Euripides, Woody Allen, Mark Twain. • Films and television shows, such as: *The Marx Brothers*; *Dr. Strangelove*; *The Interview*; *South Park*; • Stand-up Comedy: Mitch Hedberg; Sarah Silverman; Louis CK; Ricky Gervais; Chris Rock, and student-chosen selections

Assessment: Three brief response papers, student comedy presentations, class participation and preparedness, and final project.

ENGL 3405-01W: Professional & Technical Writing, Prof. Crystal Shelnett

MTWRF 12:30 pm-2:45 pm, TLC 1109 Session III.

DSW course. May be taken to fulfill the following Major requirement: Writing & Language.

Description: English 3405 will introduce students to basic ethical and rhetorical concepts that govern a multitude of professional and technical situations.

Highlighting the importance of the writing process, this course will concentrate on the fundamentals within professional writing communities in order to train students in effective and persuasive communication.

Students will gain intensive practice in composing powerful audience-driven documents such as letters, memos, and job application materials, as well as instructions and formal reports. Covering a wide range of business principles—from gathering data through primary and secondary research to the planning and organizing of workplace genre sets—this course provides practical advice regarding the professional standards that students will encounter in their future careers.

Moreover, students will learn to craft effective presentations supported with appropriate documentary and visual aids as they collaborate on technical research and reporting projects with peers.

Texts: *The Business Writer's Handbook*, 10th ed. (Bedford St. Martins) & *A Strategic Guide to Technical Communication*, 2nd ed. (Broadview Press)

Requirements: Oral presentation, portfolio of business-related documents, formal recommendation report, & daily quizzes and in-class team assignments.

ENGL 4106-01W: Studies in Genre: Gothic Dr. Lisa Crafton

Bodies/Abodes of Horror: Gothic Literature, Film, and Music

TR 2:00 pm-4:30 pm, PAF 308 Session II.

DSW course. May be taken to fulfill the following Major requirement: Genre & Theory.

Description: The excessive motifs of Gothic plots—haunted houses, trembling virgins, cruel aristocrats, family curses, madness and sexual transgression—continue to fascinate readers. The collision of vampires and virgins suggests the centrality of the body in Gothic texts. How do bodies—pursued, imprisoned, threatened—reveal the cultural anxieties of the time; that is, how is gothic a subversive genre that takes on “real” terrors in the paradigm of imagined ones? This course explores how notions of perversion, desire, criminality and monstrosity pervade gothic texts. We will begin with 18th century origins of gothic, Stoker's *Dracula* and Coleridge's lesbian vampire poem *Christabel*. Along the way we will consider urban gothic in *Fight Club*, the uncanny in *The Haunting of Hill House* as well as postmodern gothic in fiction of Angela Carter. Students will work in groups to collect theories of gothic as well as explore gothic in pop culture (films and music) Texts: *Dracula*, *Fight Club (film)* *The Haunting of Hill House*, *The Bloody Chamber* and online texts ays.

Requirements: Class discussion, group oral reports, response papers, research project.

ENGL 4188-01W: Individual Authors: Langston Hughes, Dr. Stacy Boyd

MTWRF 10:00 am-12:15 pm, PAF 306 Session III.

DSW course. Satisfies the following Major requirement: American Lit II. May be taken to satisfy the Individual Authors Major requirement.

Description: Described as the “Poet Laureate of the Negro Race” and “Harlem's Shakespeare,” Langston Hughes is one of the most important African-American writers in the twentieth century because of his use of black vernacular traditions in his blues-inspired poetry and his celebration of “the folk.” Although most students know of Hughes from his often anthologized poems, it is important to know that he also produced notable novels, short stories, plays, and political commentary. In this seminar, we will have a close look at his works, paying particular attention to context of the various phases in Hughes' artistic career. A prime focus will be on the period of the Harlem Renaissance in which Hughes emerged as an influential innovator of significant trends in twentieth-century African-American literature and culture. We will also consider the role of the artist and art in American culture.

Texts: May include *Not Without Laughter* by Hughes, *The Best of Sempé* by Hughes, and *The Collected Works of Langston Hughes* edited Arnold Rampersad.

Requirements: short response papers, oral presentation, 8-10 page research paper (with proposal), active participation in discussions. Requirements for graduate students: Short response paper, annotated bibliography, oral presentation, 12-15 page research paper (with proposal), active participation in discussions.

ENGL 6110-01: Seminar in American Lit I, Dr. David Newton

Edgar Allan Poe and the Development of Genre Fiction

MW 10:00 am-12:30 pm, TLC 1204 Session II.

Registration requires permission of the Director of Graduate Studies.

Description: This course will provide a broad textual and scholarly introduction to Edgar Allan Poe's life and writings and then move toward a consideration of Poe's wide-ranging influence on contemporary genre fiction. Along the way, we will ask ourselves why this nineteenth-century writer continues to captivate the critical and creative imaginations of academics, fiction writers, cultural theorists, and American popular culture at large.

While we will read a few of poems, like “The Raven,” our primary focus will be on Poe's fiction and nonfiction essays. We will read selections from David Reynolds (*Beneath the American Renaissance*) and several other scholars of nineteenth century American literature and culture to contextualize Poe's writing as part of broader popular and intellectual currents

in the nineteenth century. But we will also consider Poe in the context of “writing ahead,” as a precursor to some important developments in genre fiction and cultural/literary theory. Among these, we will focus primarily on science fiction and horror, reading some twentieth century and more contemporary writers who have been influenced by Poe. For example, along with reading Poe’s truly wondrous and strange novel, *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*, we will read H.P. Lovecraft’s *At the Mountains of Madness* and Mat Johnson’s more recent *Pym: A Novel* (2011), a really cool, funny, satirical, thought-provoking revision of Poe’s original novel that takes aim at contemporary popular culture in America. We will read as well some writers like Michael Chabon and Joyce Carol Oates whose work in genre fiction bears Poe’s distinctive *imprintur*.

As part of this course, we will also want to consider how contemporary literary theory provides a useful lens for understanding Poe (and vice versa). Among others, we will utilize Julia Kristeva’s groundbreaking work on horror, including her influential study on abjection. The course will not presume any prior knowledge of theory or theorists, many of whom can be difficult to navigate the first time through. We will work on learning to read them together. Indeed, the purpose of including them is first to introduce them to graduate students who have an interest in theory and to show what practical applications such theories might have to a writer like Poe.

Texts: Poe, *Selected Works* (Norton Anthology); Silverman, Poe: *Mournful and Never-ending Remembrance*; Lovecraft, “At the Mountains of Madness” Johnson, *Pym: A Novel*; Kristeva, *The Powers of Horror*. Other readings will be available via CourseDen.

Requirements: Two class presentations, one on a primary text and another on a critical or theoretical study; two short analytical essays (4-5 pages); and a final research essay (15-18 pages), which will include a formal prospectus and an annotated bibliography or critical review.

ENGL 6385-01D Seminar in Special Topics: YA Lit, Dr. Angela Insenga

Adolescence, Alliteracy, and the Culture of the Kid: Making Friends with Young Adult Literature

Session II. 50-94% Online Partial Distance course.

Three face-to-face meetings will be required. Days/time TBA. Registration requires permission of the Director of Graduate Studies.

Description: In a June 2014 condemnatory editorial entitled “Against YA,” *The Slate* writer Ruth Graham writes:

A 2012 survey by a market research firm found that 55 percent of [YA] books [are] bought by people older than 18. . . . The largest group of buyers in that survey—accounting for a whopping 28 percent of all YA sales—are between ages 30 and 44. That’s my demographic, which might be why I wasn’t surprised to hear this news. I’m surrounded by YA-loving adults, both in real life and online. Today’s YA, we are constantly reminded, is worldly and adult-worthy. That has kept me bashful about expressing my own fuddy-duddy opinion: Adults should feel embarrassed about reading literature written for children.

She goes on to rebuke adults who have developed a vested interest in YA, and, though she refers to the difficulty of defining the parameters of the genre, she becomes part of the problem, using only a small utterance from Jen Doll’s multifaceted definitional article to argue reductively that “At its heart, YA aims to be pleasurable.” Such criticism of the genre and its readers is not limited to Ms. Graham’s, and, certainly, the “fuddy-duddiness” that defines her piece is not limited to the confines of *The Slate* editors’ offices. After all, Graham’s two-page piece sparked over 85,000 Facebook “likes” and over 3,200 comments in numerous virtual arenas. Amongst these online comments exists a discernible thread: it is patently irresponsible to judge the genre or its proponents if your only exposure to it is *purposely* limited and visceral instead of comprehensive and critical.

As thinkers actively engaged in the literacy-building work of the academy, you and I are called to identify high-quality literature written for adolescents through organized scholarly and cultural investigation. Then—and only then—are we equipped to dole out judgments regarding who should—or should not—read YA and how these folks should feel if they happen to enjoy a text written for a tween.

This summer’s predominantly online YA graduate seminar will involve students in the scholarly, educational, and political conversation surrounding the genre. Our tasks will involve reading primary and secondary material; analytical writing and speaking about our readings; and investigation of the largely alliterate target audience’s cognitive and moral development and resultant academic and social needs.

Come, join in, and let us be “embarrassed” together!

Contact Dr. Insenga with any questions: ainsenga@westga.edu or 678 8394864.

Required Texts: Bushman and Haas, *Using Young Adult Literature in the English Classroom*; Anna Sewell, *Black Beauty*; Ruta Sepetys, *Between Shades of Gray*; J.D. Salinger, *Catcher in the Rye*; Judy Blume, *Are You There, God? It’s Me, Margaret*; Robert Cormier, *The Chocolate War*; M.T. Anderson, *Feed*; Sherman Alexie, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*; Laurie Halse Anderson, *Speak*; James Dashner, *Maze Runner*; Dir. by Majid Majidi, *Children of Heaven*; Kwame Alexander, *The Crossover*; Gary Paulsen, *Hatchet*.

Required Assignments/Equipment: Students will be expected to obtain computer equipment and minimum OS and internet connectivity requirements found on the distance learning site; Students will meet face-to-face from 5:30-8:00 p.m.

2 or 3 times during summer session II. Dates and location TBA; Students will participate in three online colloquies, in line with assignment sheet parameters; Students will participate twice weekly in online discussion boards, in line with assignment parameters; Students will complete a social media project focusing on YA and post it for their peers to critique and discuss, all in line with assignment parameters; Students will complete one conference paper or complete a justification, depending on program (MAT or MA) and will participate in scholarly research, peer review, and optional virtual or face-to-face conferencing with Dr. Insenga and/or peer workgroups, all in line with assignment parameters; Students will make use of various online teaching and learning tools including, but not limited to, Glogster; SpicyNodes; Google Groups; Google Docs; Blogster; Twitter; Instagram; Pinterest; EdModo; YouTube; etc. Professor will provide direction when/if students are called to utilize these tools for synchronous or asynchronous class work.
