First-Year Writing Seminars Recommended for Prospective Majors

Descriptions of all First-Year Writing Seminars may be found in the John S. Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines Brochure, which is available at the following website: http://www.arts.cornell.edu/knight_institute/fws/fws.htm.

English 1270 cannot be counted towards the 40 credits required for completion of the English major.

Each seminar is limited to 18 students.

Students who have already taken a First-Year Writing Seminar, or who score 4 or 5 on the Princeton AP exam, or 700 or better on the English Composition or CEEB tests, may enroll, space permitting, in any section of Engl 1270: Writing About Literature.

1270 Seminar 101 Writing About Literature: The Powers of Narrative
3 credits.

This course explores how stories move their readers. It aims to help you respond to the narratives we read with an ever-growing intensity of perceptiveness and pleasure. We’ll begin with short fiction, carefully explored, and move on to one or two of the best romantic novels on offer, also carefully explored: Pride and Prejudice and A Room with a View are the likely choices. Throughout, your own writing will be a subject of sustained attention.

1270 Seminar 103 Writing About Literature: Doubling, Disguise, and Desire in Drama
3 credits.

Theatre is never more theatrical than when it doubles itself—in strategically paired characters, in plays about playing, in tales of vindictive intrigue, in parallel plotlines, in confusions of gender and identity, in reflections on its own dark or joyous origins. Beginning with Euripides’ The Bacchae, this course will explore such doublings and the frenzies they entail, reading comedies and tragedies by such playwrights as Shakespeare, Thomas Middleton, Oscar Wilde, Bertolt Brecht, Tom Stoppard, Jean Genet, and Suzan-Lori Parks, and viewing them, when possible, in live or filmed performance. And we’ll write a lot.

Critical Writing and Creative Nonfiction

English 2880-2890 offers guidance and an audience for students who wish to gain skill in expository writing—a common term for critical, reflective, investigative, and creative nonfiction. Each section provides a context for writing defined by a form of exposition, a disciplinary area, a practice, or a topic intimately related to the written medium. Course members will read relevant published material and write and revise their own work regularly, while reviewing and responding to one another’s. Since these seminar-sized courses depend on members’ full participation, regular attendance and submission of written work are required. Students and instructors will confer individually throughout the term. English 2880-2890 does not satisfy requirements for the English major.

http://courses.cit.cornell.edu/engl2880-2890

Each seminar limited to 18 students. Students must have completed their colleges' first-year writing requirements or have the permission of the instructor.

2880 Seminar 101 Expository Writing: Secrets, Surveillance, and You
4 credits.

Political secrets call to mind spies like James Bond or Jason Bourne. What if the protagonist of the drama of political secrets is not some fantastical secret agent, but you? Drones, hackers, and secret court hearings have become part of our infrastructure of knowledge-making and governing. This is done in your name, to keep you safe. This course will explore the relationship between political secrets, transparency, knowledge, and individuality. We will discuss literary texts like the story of Judas, In Cold Blood, and A Most Wanted Man, investigative journalism about Wikileaks and the Snowden documents, and films like Zero Dark Thirty and Imitation Game. In the end, we all have to choose which secrets to tell, which to keep.

2880 Seminar 102 Expository Writing: Creative Nonfiction: The Invented “I”
4 credits.

We are our experiences, but we’re also our reflections of those experiences. So honest reflection about our thoughts and actions allows us to constantly invent and reinvent ourselves. In this course we’ll explore the personal essay, focusing on how and why writers frame experiences as they do. As thinkers, we’ll consider the practice of critical reflection, learn to contextualize our experiences, and become more conscious of the ways in which we see the world. As writers, we’ll study narrative craft, including scene, dialogue, metaphor and character development. Our reading will feature Jamaica Kincaid, Eula Biss, James Baldwin and David Foster Wallace, among others. Through our workshops, we’ll learn how to be generous, empathetic, and constructive readers of our peers’ work.
In this course we'll draw on the everyday stuff of life. We will look at how authors such as Annie Dillard, James Baldwin, David Sedaris, John Steinbeck, and James Thurber have taken small moments, faint memories, and everyday experiences and transformed them into lasting works that speak to the human condition. Our exploration will be supplemented by works of street photographers such as Alfred Stieglitz and Henri Cartier-Bresson and cinema-verité documentarians such as Agnes Varda and Ross McElwee. In-depth discussions and writing assignments will allow students to mine the minutiae of the everyday, and workshops throughout the term help hone their writing to create clear and illuminating pieces.

Environmental crises, artificial intelligence, and the cognitive sciences urge us to abandon our human-centered mindset and adopt a post-human perspective. But how can we get outside our own heads and think like a post-human? Can we reason like machines? See the world the way a bat does? Or share consciousness with another being. In this course we'll examine the extended mind in Memento and Shakespeare's Hamlet, bio-enhancement in the television show Fringe, mindlessness in Shaun of the Dead, and intelligent environments in such video games as Portal 2. Students will extend their own thinking in essays that examine these topics from artistic, philosophical, and cultural perspectives.

The medical historian Roy Porter claims diseases are "largely of mankind's own making." If so, what is our responsibility in fighting them? This course examines literature, television, film, and radio concerning disease outbreaks in order to consider how humans manage disease on an individual and societal level. How do fictional representations of outbreaks speak to ongoing debates about international aid work, quarantine procedures, and mandated vaccinations. Course materials may include Albert Camus's The Plague, Margaret Atwood's Oryx and Crake, Siddhartha Mukherjee's The Emperor of All Maladies, episodes from House, M.D., TV mini-series Angels in America, and films from the X-Men series.

What does it take to run a successful grassroots campaign in the U.S.? This course will teach you the nuts and bolts of political campaigning for both candidates and issues. You will learn how to determine the best timing for your campaign, how to develop a campaign strategy, how to target and persuade voters, how to raise money, how to use media, how to manage people, and how to run an election-day operation. Drawing on readings from political scientists, modern campaign consultants like James Carville and Dick Morris, and classical strategists like Sun Tzu, you will discover the art and science of campaigning, while improving your research and writing by producing documents like op-eds, district profiles, and strategy memos all for the campaign of your choice.

Why have Asian Americans been held up as a model minority while African Americans have been disparaged? How do African American and Asian American experiences of race and gender inform each other? In 2013 activist Suey Park used #BlackPowerYellowPeril to promote a vision of interracial alliance going back to the great anti-slavery orator Frederick Douglass's defense of the Chinese. Taking the turn-of-the-century Yellow Peril and the mid-century Black Power movement as racialized embodiments of white American fear, this course will trace literary points of contact, conflict, and coalition across these two racial formations. Possible content includes political writings by Malcolm X and Chairman Mao, novels by Toni Morrison and Maxine Hong Kingston, movies like Enter the Dragon, and music such as the Wu-Tang Clan's.
### 2800 Seminar 101 Introduction to Creative Writing
3 credits.

An introductory course in the theory, practice, and reading of fiction, poetry, and allied forms. Both narrative and verse readings are assigned. Students will learn to savor and practice the craft of poetry and narrative writing, developing techniques that inform both. Some class meetings may feature peer review of student work, and instructors may assign writing exercises or prompts.

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<th>Seminar</th>
<th>Title</th>
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**August 13, 2015**
3820 Seminar 101 Intermediate Narrative Writing

4 credits.

Prerequisite: ENGL 2800 or ENGL 2810 and permission of instructor based on submission of a manuscript (bring manuscript to first day of class, or submit via email, depending upon instructor’s preference). ENGL 3820 or 3830 counts toward the English major, and either it or ENGL 3840 or 3850 (Intermediate Poetry Workshop) is required for the Creative Writing minor. ENGL 3820 and 3830 are the same course, the former offered in fall, the latter in spring. Limited to 15 students.

This course focuses upon the writing of fiction or related narrative forms. May include significant reading and discussion of readings, explorations of form and technique, completion of writing assignments and prompts, and peer review of student work. Many students will choose to write short stories, but excerpts from longer works will also be accepted. Students may take 3820 or 3830 more than once.

3820 Seminar 102 Intermediate Narrative Writing

4 credits.

3820 Seminar 103 Intermediate Narrative Writing

4 credits.

3840 Seminar 101 Intermediate Verse Writing

4 credits.

Prerequisite: ENGL 2800 or ENGL 2810 and permission of instructor based on submission of a manuscript (bring manuscript to first day of class, or submit via email, depending upon instructor’s preference). ENGL 3840 or 3850 counts toward the English major, and either it or ENGL 3820 or 3830 (Intermediate Fiction Workshop) is required for the Creative Writing minor. ENGL 3840 and 3850 are the same course, the former offered in fall, the latter in spring. Limited to 15 students.

This course focuses upon the writing of poetry. May include significant reading and discussion of readings, explorations of form and technique, completion of writing assignments and prompts, and peer review of student work. Students may take 3840 or 3850 more than once.

3840 Seminar 102 Intermediate Verse Writing

4 credits.

4800 Advanced Verse Writing

4 credits.

Prerequisite: permission of instructor based on submission of a manuscript (bring manuscript to first day of class, or submit via email, depending upon instructor’s preference). Prior completion of a section of ENGL 3840 or 3850 is strongly recommended. ENGL 4800 and 4810 count toward the English major, and fulfill the 4000-level writing seminar requirement of the Creative Writing minor. Limited to 15 students.

This course is intended for verse writing students who have completed ENGL 3840 or 3850 and wish to refine their writing. It may include significant reading and discussion of readings, advanced explorations of form and technique, completion of writing assignments and prompts, and peer review of student work. In addition to the instructor's assigned writing requirements, students may work on longer-form verse projects. Students may take 4800 or 4810 more than once.

4801 Advanced Narrative Writing

4 credits.

Prerequisite: permission of instructor based on submission of a manuscript (bring manuscript to first day of class, or submit via email, depending upon instructor’s preference). Prior completion of a section of ENGL 3820 or 3830 is strongly recommended. ENGL 4801 and 4811 count toward the English major, and fulfill the 4000-level writing seminar requirement of the Creative Writing minor. Limited to 15 students.

This course is intended for narrative writing students who have completed ENGL 3820 or 3830 and wish to refine their writing. It may include significant reading and discussion of readings, advanced explorations of form and technique, completion of writing assignments and prompts, and peer review of student work. In addition to the instructor's assigned writing requirements, students may work on longer-form narrative writing projects. Students may take 4801 or 4811 more than once.

2000-Level Courses

Courses at the 2000 level include foundational surveys designed to introduce English majors and minors to important areas of the curriculum, courses on major themes and topics that span historical periods, and courses intended for non-majors as well as majors and minors. No previous college-level study in English is assumed.
2010 Dragons, Green Knights and the Origins of English Literature
3-4 credits.
Non-majors may choose a 3-credit option with less writing.

This course may be used as one of the three pre-1800 courses required of English majors.

How did England, once a backwater, create some of the culture that now dominates our world? Who wrote the first poem in English, and why did Londoners believe that they were descended from exiled Trojan warriors? This course introduces you to the works that make up the foundation of what we came to call English literature, and teaches you how to read them well. Along the way, you will learn how to talk about literary works like an English major, whether you plan to be one or not. Readings include Beowulf, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, selections from Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, some of the first plays written in England as well as Shakespeare’s King Lear, Elizabethan sonnets, poems by Donne, Marvell, and Herbert, and a selection from Milton’s Paradise Lost.

2030 Introduction to American Literatures: Beginnings to the Civil War
4 credits. (Also AMST 2030)

This course may be used as one of the three pre-1800 courses required of English majors.

From a “brave new world” in European settlers’ eyes to a “house divided” by the mid-nineteenth century, “America” is seen in an assemblage of richly layered tales, poems, novels, essays, first-hand accounts, and other documents of astonishing power and strangeness, produced in or around what became the United States. In these works, trials of persecution vie with utopian schemes, prophetic fantasies run up against exploitative hoaxes, and haunted houses are as likely to be riven with family secrets as with national hatreds. Expect to encounter tough-minded thinkers, to read closely and with curiosity, to write skeptically and carefully, and to engage in informed conversation about figures such as Bradstreet, Taylor, Wheatley, Franklin, Irving, Poe, Hawthorne, Alcott, Emerson, Thoreau, Jacobs, Dickinson, Douglass, and Melville.

2045 Major Poets
4 credits.

Readings from the work of nine poets chosen to help us think about the nature and possibilities of poetry and different ways of engaging with it: Shakespeare (the sonnets), Alexander Pope, John Keats, Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Robert Frost, W. H. Auden, and A. R. Ammons. One assumption of the course is that there are other things to do with poems besides interpret them: reading aloud, writing imitations or parodies, memorizing, identifying poetic techniques, and creating anthologies of favorite poems. No previous study of poetry is presumed.

2050 Contemporary World Literature
4 credits.

This course examines contemporary world literature from the second half of the twentieth century to the present. Our readings will range across genres (including fiction, poetry, and drama) and include writers from multiple geographies— in addition to America and Britain, South Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and the Caribbean. As we define the category “world literature,” we will explore innovations in aesthetics as well as historical developments that have influenced recent literary production. In particular, our readings will compel us to investigate how ethnicity, nationalism, religion, gender, and economics have impacted the formation of world literature and its bearings on social justice. Authors may include: O’Neill, DeLillo, Plath, Kushner, Coetzee, Walcott, Danticat, and McCann.

2730 Children’s Literature
4 credits.

An historical study of children’s literature from the 17th century to the present, principally in Europe and America, which will explore changing literary forms in relation to the social history of childhood. Ranging from oral folktales to contemporary novelistic realism (with some glances at film narrative), major figures may include Perrault, Newbery, the Grimms, Andersen, Carroll, Alcott, Stevenson, Burnett, Kipling, the Disney studio, E. B. White, C. S. Lewis, Sendak, Silverstein, Mildred Taylor, Bette Greene. We'll also encounter a variety of critical models—psychoanalytic, materialist, feminist, structuralist—that scholars have employed to explain the variety and importance of children's literature. Finally, we will consider how the idea of “the child” has evolved over this period.

2740 Scottish Literature
3-4 credits. (Also MEDVL 2740)

The course may be taken for 3 or 4 credits; those choosing 4 credits will complete an additional writing project. This course may be used as one of the three pre-1800 courses required of English majors.

Although Scotland, which was long a separate nation, is now politically united with England, it preserves its distinctiveness. This course provides an introduction to Scottish literature, with special emphasis on the medieval period and the eighteenth through the twentieth centuries. The course should appeal to those who wish to learn about their Scottish heritage, and also to those who simply wish to encounter a remarkable national culture and the literature it has produced. Some of the texts will be read in Scots, but no familiarity with Scots or earlier English is presumed. We welcome readers of literature who are not English majors.
This course explores ways that literature is a form of intoxication. Poetry and fiction have long been condemned for luring readers into decadence. Consider the Republic: Socrates bans poetry from his state. “Under the excitement of poetry,” Socrates argues, citizens “neglect justice and virtue.” Yet proponents celebrate imaginative writing for its mind-altering properties. A good novel is said to change one’s thinking and even impart transcendence. In a letter, Emily Dickinson describes a potent buzz: “If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that is poetry.” We’ll read widely and closely to sample diverse literary highs and methods. We’ll also consider humanity’s complex relationship with intoxication and recent trends on college campuses.

In her memoir, Woman Warrior, Maxine Hong Kingston identifies a conundrum familiar to many US-born children of Chinese immigrants when she asks: “What is Chinese tradition and what is the movies?” What is “Chinese tradition”? Does it mean the same thing to people in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore, or to Chinese diasporic communities in North America? Is “Chineseness” something that is given and fixed, or is it something that changes across time and space? While we’ll discuss what “Chineseness” means in certain Asian contexts, this course will focus primarily on how ideas of “China” and “Chineseness” have been historically constructed by, for, and in the West—particularly in the US. Course materials include Chinese American and Chinese diasporic literature by writers such as Frank Chin, Maxine Hong Kingston, Fae Myenne Ng, David Henry Hwang, Li-Young Lee, and Ha Jin, feature and documentary films, media representations of “Chineseness,” and essays on concepts and practices of “Chineseness.”

Courses Originating in Other Departments

There is nothing more ideological than sport—there is a good reason why some critics prefer to call it ‘war by other means’”—in this course we will explore the connection among sport, ideology and literature. We will read novels, historical memoirs, short stories and, it goes without saying, works that defy categorization, in no small measure because writing on sport often defies easy generic labeling. We will wander the globe, from cricket in the Caribbean (CLR James) to football in Latin America (Eduardo Galeano, both a novelist and author of the breathtakingly beautiful, and unclassifiable work, “Soccer in Sun and Shadow”). There will be books about baseball (“The Boys of Summer,” “Underworld”) and a story about the peculiar genius of Roger Federer. Why, we will ask ourselves, do authors dedicate themselves so pathologically to sport? Because, as a famous football manager—yes, we’ll meet him too, his name is Bill Shankly—once said, “its not a matter of life or death, its much more important than that.”

The course will introduce methods for computer-assisted analysis of historical text collections. It will cover corpus curation, representing text as data, building statistical models from text, and interpreting results. Statistical and programming concepts will be introduced as needed. The class will also reflect on how computational methods fit with existing practices in the humanities, and how we can use models as complements to our own interpretations. Following the course, students will be able to assist faculty in computer-assisted scholarship. Seminar sections will meet W 12:20-1:10pm.

Courses at the 3000 level cover major literary periods, authors, traditions, and genres, as well as literary theory, cultural studies, and creative and expository writing. These courses are designed primarily for English majors and minors, though non-majors are welcome to take them. Some previous college-level study in English is assumed.

This course introduces the most exciting and cutting-edge theoretical advances of the 20th and 21st centuries. Taught by two Cornell professors active in the field, along with occasional invited guests, lectures will cover such movements as structuralism, deconstruction, trauma theory, biopolitics, human-animal studies and post-human studies. The distinctiveness of literature and the power and complexity of language in all its forms will remain a central focus in the course. Course open to all levels; no previous knowledge of theory required.

August 13, 2015
In this course, we will read and discuss some of the earliest surviving English poetry and prose. Attention will be paid to (1) learning to read the language in which this literature is written, (2) evaluating the poetry as poetry: its form, structure, style, and varieties of meaning, and (3) seeing what can be learned about the culture of Anglo-Saxon England and about the early Germanic world in general, from an examination of the Old English literary records. We will begin by reading some easy prose and will go on to consider some more challenging heroic, elegiac, and devotional poetry, including an excerpt from the masterpiece Beowulf. The course may also be used as preparation for the sequence ENGL 3120/ENGL 6120.

**3110 Old English**
4 credits. (Also ENGL 6110, MEDVL 3110, MEDVL 6110)

*This course may be used as one of the three pre-1800 courses required of English majors.*

In this course, we will read and discuss some of the earliest surviving English poetry and prose. Attention will be paid to (1) learning to read the language in which this literature is written, (2) evaluating the poetry as poetry: its form, structure, style, and varieties of meaning, and (3) seeing what can be learned about the culture of Anglo-Saxon England and about the early Germanic world in general, from an examination of the Old English literary records. We will begin by reading some easy prose and will go on to consider some more challenging heroic, elegiac, and devotional poetry, including an excerpt from the masterpiece Beowulf. The course may also be used as preparation for the sequence ENGL 3120/ENGL 6120.

**3300 Satire, Sensibility, and Sexuality in 18th Century Literature**

*This course may be used as one of the three pre-1800 courses required of English majors.*

“To my mind, the two most fascinating subjects in the universe are sex and the eighteenth century.” –Brigid Brophy. Close reading of texts in a variety of genres (poetry, fiction, drama, philosophy, autobiography, essay) will be guided by such topics as: the nature of satire, irony, and mock-forms; the politics of gender and sexuality; the authority and fallibility of human knowledge; the rhetoric of eighteenth-century verse forms; the aesthetics of the sublime and the beautiful; the Enlightenment as an intellectual movement. Works by such writers as Rochester, Behn, Dryden, Wycherley, Swift, Pope, Cleland, Johnson, Boswell, Sterne, Kant, and Cowper.

**3390 Jane Austen**
4 credits.

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a student who has read Jane Austen must be in want of excuses to continue that delicious experience. This course explores Austen’s characters, culture, and narrative art against the backdrop of films, novels, and poems which resonate with her fiction. We will investigate Austen’s importance in literary history and her continuing attraction in the twenty-first century. By immersing ourselves in her fictional world we will enrich our experience of her novels and sharpen our awareness of the pleasures of reading.

**3400 British Romanticism**
4 credits.

With the exhilarating and terrifying historical “experiments” of the French and American Revolutions in the background, English Romantic writers tackled the question of the personal and political effects of literary experimentation. They did so in dialogue with new methods of experimental science that were unsettling traditional conceptions of thinking, feeling, nature and social progress. Could new literary techniques have revolutionary or reactionary effects, or elude the very logic of cause and effect? Might poems and novels alter routines of perception or harbor lost histories and futures? Such possibilities for “experiment” will guide this survey of Romantic literature, from poetic neuroscience to the Revolution controversy and experimental writing from Blake, the Shelleys, Coleridge, Burke, Goethe, Baillie and Barbauld.

**3500 The High Modernist Tradition**
4 credits.

Critical study of major works by Joyce, Woolf, Conrad, Forster, Lawrence, Eliot, Yeats, Wilde, Hardy, Hopkins, and others, all of whom are indispensable for understanding subsequent literature. The emphasis will be on close reading of individual texts. We shall place the authors and works within the context of literary, political, cultural, and intellectual history. The course will seek to define the development of literary modernism (mostly but not exclusively in England), and relate literary modernism in England to that in Europe and America as well as to other intellectual developments. We shall be especially interested in the relationship between modern literature and modern painting and sculpture; on occasion, we shall look at slides. Within the course material, students will be able to select the topics on which they write essays.

**3580 Twentieth Century Women Writers of Color in the Americas**

*This course may be used as one of the three pre-1800 courses required of English majors.*

In this course, we’ll be reading literature—primarily novels—produced by hemispheric American women writers of the mid- to late twentieth-century. We will look at how these writings articulate concerns with language, home, mobility, and memory, and at how the work is informed by the specificities of gender, race, region, and class. Readings may include work by Leslie Marmon Silko, Sandra Cisneros, Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, Jamaica Kincaid, Gwendolyn Brooks, Ann Petry, Fae Myenne Ng, Carolivlia Herron, Helena Maria Viramontes, and Shani Mootoo.

**3604 American Romanticism**
4 credits. (Also AMST 3604)

This course features readings of central American themes and texts from the middle decades of the nineteenth century. The readings range across the genres of poetry, fiction, and nonfiction prose. Representative figures include Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Margaret Fuller, Frederick Douglass, Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Herman Melville.
Where would crime fiction be without its constitutive trouble—the corpse on the floor, the predatory femme fatale, the city steeped in corruption that only an honest sleuth can purge? And where would literary and filmic culture be without crime fiction to make trouble with—to parody, reinvent, complicate, and rejoice in? This course will review classic mystery story design in such writers as Poe, Doyle, Christie, and Hammett, and will read later fictions by such writers as Jorge Luis Borges, Thomas Pynchon, Patricia Highsmith, Michael Chabon, Sara Paretsky, China Miéville, Italo Calvino, and Mukoma Wa Ngugi, viewing films by John Huston, Roman Polanski, and Paul Thomas Anderson—and promising never to let the trouble go away.

**3765 The 21st Century Novel**

4 credits.

What innovations in form, style, genre, and subject matter have characterized the novel in the 21st century? What is the status of the novel in the wake of postmodernism, postcolonialism, poststructuralism, post-humanism, and the other “post”’s of literary theory? Are we witnessing a blurring of theory and fiction? This course will explore a number of key developments and trends in the 21st century novel, such as the rise of genre fiction (fantasy, science fiction, the Western, the “rock novel”), speculative fiction, new historical realisms, comic/graphic novels, philosophical fiction, among others trends. Our writers may include Zadie Smith, Kazuo Ishiguro, J.M. Coetzee, Percival Everett, Colson Whitehead, Toni Morrison, Cormac McCarthy, Junot Díaz, Tom McCarthy, David Mitchell, and Jennifer Egan.

**3771 The African Novel: Sex, Violence, Language and Power**

4 credits. (Also ASRC 3771)

We shall map the growth of the African novel by looking at the pursuit of sex and power through psychological, political, linguistic and sexual violence. Or to put it differently, how have different generations of African writers dealt with questions of sex, violence, language and power? The goal of the seminar is to increase your appreciation and understanding of African literature and literature in general, while at the same time sharpening your analytical, critical, oral and written skills. You will be expected to lead discussions, engage in peer critiques and, through scholarly essays, engage African literary criticism.

**3773 The Harlem Renaissance and the Black Arts Movement**

4 credits. (Also AMST 3773, ASRC 3773)

In the poem "Return of the Native," Amiri Baraka writes, "Harlem is vicious modernism. BangClash." This class will compare the "BangClash" of the 1920s and 1930s Harlem Renaissance and the 1960s and 1970s Black Arts Movement. How do visual art, theater, music, poetry, and novels come together in particular cultural movements? How does the "New Negro" movement relate to the move from "Negro" to "Black" during the Black Arts Movement? This course will open up some of the most complex and dynamic aspects of African American cultural movements. The writers and artists studied will include Langston Hughes, Amiri Baraka, Alain Locke, Zora Neale Hurston, Nikki Giovanni, Aaron Douglas, Sun Ra, Faith Ringgold, Nella Larsen, and Sonia Sanchez.

**Courses Originating in Other Departments**

**3790 Reading Nabokov**

4 credits. (Also COML 3815, RUSSL 3385)

This course offers an exciting trip to the intricate world of Nabokov’s fiction. After establishing himself in Europe as a distinguished Russian writer, Nabokov, at the outbreak of World War II, came to the United States where he reestablished himself, this time as an American writer of world renown. In our analysis of Nabokov’s fictional universe, we shall focus on his Russian corpus of works, from Mary (1926) to The Enchanter (writ. 1939), all in English translation, and then shall examine the two widely read novels which he wrote in English in Ithaca while teaching literature at Cornell: Lolita (1955) and Pnin (1957).
This course introduces students to Critical Theory, beginning with its roots in the 19th century (i.e., Kant, Hegel, Marx, and Nietzsche) and then focusing on its most prominent manifestation in the 20th century, the Frankfurt School (e.g., Kracauer, Adorno, Benjamin, Horkheimer, Marcuse), particularly in its engagement with society and literature (e.g. Brecht, Kafka, and Beckett). Established in 1920s at the Institute for Social Research, the assorted circle of scholars comprising the Frankfurt School played a pivotal role in the intellectual developments of post-war American and European political and aesthetic theory. Often known simply as "Critical Theory," their key works cover a vast array of intellectual, political, economic, and artistic concerns, from the dialectic of enlightenment to commentaries on popular culture, high art, commodity fetishism, and mass society. This introduction to the programmatic statements and eclectic reflections of various scholars will highlight the diverse historical influences, collaborative efforts, and internecine debates that shaped the intellectual tradition across continents and generations.

And after this, let no one speak to me of work--I mean the moral value of work. I am forced to accept the notion of work as a material necessity, and in this regard I strongly favor its better, that is, its fairer, division. I admit that life's grim obligations make it a necessity, but never that I should believe in its value, revere my own or that of other men [sic] . . . . There is no use being alive if one must work. The event from which each of us is entitled to expect the revelation of his own life's meaning . . . is not earned by work.

- André Breton, Nadja

Critical reflection on the refusal of work, including but not limited to: non-cooperation with routines of production and/or reproduction (among which, strikes, sexual and otherwise),the right to laziness, malingering, shirking, doggin' it, "not understanding," sabotage, pilferage, "calling in well," desertion (a.k.a. quitting) and other attempts to remain human within modernity's regime of coerced labor. We will also attempt to understand how this regime was installed, and its necessary entanglement with private property. We'll take up literature, film, historiography, and theory.

Beginning in the 1960s and the Civil Rights Movement, we will employ an interdisciplinary approach, placing theory directly into conversation with practice as we move to explore the ways in which poets and performers create work that engages with the politics of identity. How does the move from the page to the stage change the manner in which traditional life stories are told? What role does the audience play? What avenues are then further opened up through the advent of contemporary performance practices such as hip-hop theater? What is the vernacular culture productions and the performance of politics? What role, if any, does class play? How do genres such as spoken work, slam poetry, and hip-hop theater serve to make visible the life narratives of people of a particular socio-economic class?

Courses at the 4000 level are advanced seminars intended primarily for English majors and minors who have already taken courses at the 2000 and/or 3000 level. Other students may enroll in these courses, but are encouraged to consult with the instructor.

This course may be used as one of the three pre-1800 courses required of English majors.

This seminar will sample from the works of a series of poets who were major contributors to a “cult of personality” that can be seen developing from the later fourteenth century through the Renaissance: from the origins of “lives” of literary makers to Chaucer, Gower, Hoccleve, Lydgate, Charles d'Orleans, Wyatt, Sidney, and Ben Jonson. How were these self-portrayals assisted by readers and followers? How did such a focus affect the idea of “literature” in general, and “English literature” in particular? What can current ideas about life writing contribute to our understanding of this pivotal span in literary history? Two small papers and a longer one; ongoing presentations and other inquiries.
**4180 The Imaginary Jew: Roots of Antisemitism in Medieval England**
4 credits. (Also JWST 4180, MEDVL 4180, ENGL 6180, MEDVL 6180)

This course may be used as one of the three pre-1800 courses required of English majors.

When did anti-Semitism begin? The medieval period invented shocking fictions about Jews—that they killed and ate Christian babies; that they desecrated the Host; that they were the murderers of Christ. In manuscripts Jews were visually compared to beasts, devils, and perverts. By law, Jews were forced to live in ghettos, wear distinctive dress, abstain from certain professions, and suffer exile. Beginning with Shakespeare's Shylock, we will work our way back through visual and literary treatments of Jews in the Middle Ages, reading texts by Chaucer, chronicles, miracle stories, crusader romances, and mystery plays. Drawing on recent theories of the other we will also consider how medieval representations of Jews and other minorities were used to construct medieval communal, religious, and political identities.

**4252 When Women Ruled the World: Female Sovereignty in the Renaissance**
4 credits. (Also FGSS 4252)

This course may be used as one of the three pre-1800 courses required of English majors.

As a result of various dynastic accidents, in the 16th century women held power in England, Scotland, France, and the Netherlands. In this course we will interrogate the rich literature and art of the period to see how various cultures adapted to the anomaly of female rule. We will also look at the conversations the women rulers held among themselves as to their shared predicaments, aiming to revise the story of simple sexual jealousy between Mary, Queen of Scots and Elizabeth Tudor by adding the important interlocutor, Catherine de Médicis, unofficial ruler of France. We will also look at the proto-republican political theory that gathered force during the latter half of the 16th century, which the queens found it necessary to contest.

**4610 The American Short Story**
3 credits.

The course begins with the fiction of that wild man Poe, whose work has been energizing American art for almost two centuries. Then it examines the realisms, super-realisms, fantasies, and mythologies in the short fiction of later writers who might include Twain, Charles Waddell Chestnutt, Edith Wharton, Willa Cather, Nabokov, Hemingway, Flannery O'Connor, Donald Barthelme, Denis Johnson, Raymond Carver, Ursula K. Le Guin, Jhumpa Lahiri, Sandra Cisneros, Gish Jen, Julie Schumacher, Tobias Wolff, Junot Diaz, Hannah Tinti, and Martin Pousson. The stories will be juxtaposed in ways that will allow us to read contemporary work in the context of the obsessions that energized the work of the earlier writers, those who made the short story form one of the most distinctive of American art forms.

**4650 American Paranoia**
4 credits. (Also AMST 4650)

Following the lead of Richard Hofstadter's classic 1964 essay "The Paranoid Style in American Politics," this course will examine the "paranoid style" in contemporary American fiction and film. The paranoias and plots we will encounter vary considerably (personal paranoias, political conspiracies, governments turned enemy, surveillance technology run amok, apocalyptic-millennial paranoia). Yet when viewed together they seem to cohere as a distinct style within post-WWII American narrative. We will ask how paranoid style responds to the contemporary American context and how the fears dominating these narratives shape their aesthetic form. Why has paranoia arisen as such a distinctively American attitude? What is the paranoid afraid of? (Should we be paranoid, too?) Novels by Nabokov, Pynchon, Reed, Dick, DeLillo, Didion, Roth; films by Coppola, Romero, Bigelow, Baldwin.

**4667 Forms of the New: Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson**
4 credits. (Also AMST 4667)

This course gives an in-depth reading of the two greatest American poets of the nineteenth century. Some readers consider Whitman and Dickinson the two greatest American poets of any century, and one signal of that achievement is the ways in which both writers developed new kinds of poetry, opening up new possibilities for themselves and for other writers. We place both poets in the historical contexts of the nineteenth century, and we also consider the critical contexts of the century since their deaths.

**4700 Reading Joyce's Ulysses**
3 credits. (Also COML 4700)

A thorough episode-by-episode study of the art and meaning of Joyce's masterwork Ulysses, the most influential book of the twentieth century. We shall place Ulysses in the context of Joyce's canon, Irish culture, and literary modernism. We shall explore the relationship between Ulysses and other experiments in modernism—especially painting and sculpture—and show how Ulysses redefines the concepts of epic, hero, and reader. We shall examine Ulysses as a political novel—specifically, Joyce's response to Yeats and the Celtic Renaissance; Joyce's role in the debate about the direction of Irish politics after Parnell; and Joyce's response to British colonial occupation of Ireland. We shall also consider Ulysses as an urban novel in which Bloom, the marginalized Jew and outsider, is symptomatic of the kind of alienation created by urban culture. No previous experience with Joyce is required.
4910 Seminar 101 Honors Seminar I: Women, Real and Imaginary: British Romanticism

How did women writers around 1800 use and change the images of women’s sexuality and creativity found in the “major” Romantics? Gender and individuality were newly constructed in literary genres flourishing in England at the time of the Revolution in France: the novel, drama, poetry, letters, and private journals. This seminar will focus on developing the skills in interpretation and critical writing essential for writing a successful Honors thesis in your Senior year. We will read John Keats as well as Jane Austen, and some works by the generation of writers they both relied on and reacted against. We will see how in British Romantic literature, re-imagining femininity was closely tied to a new sense of time and history.

4910 Seminar 102 Honors Seminar I: Blood Politics

This course may be used as one of the three pre-1800 courses required of English majors.

Blood is everywhere. From vampire shows to video games, our culture seems to be obsessed with it. The course examines the power of “blood” in the early modern period as a figure that continues to capture our imagination, not only as a marker of racial, religious, and sexual difference and desire, but also as a dramatic player in its own right. How does a politics of blood appear on stage when populations are being expelled and colonized for reasons (mis)understood in terms of blood? In the course of trying to answer this and other questions of blood, we will read plays by Shakespeare, Webster, Kyd, Cervantes, Lope de Vega, and Calderón de la Barca. Topics include honor, revenge, purity, the body, sexuality, conversion, and death.

4930 Honors Essay Tutorial I

Students enrolling in a section of ENGL 4930 with a particular thesis advisor will automatically be enrolled in this discussion section. The discussion section, which will meet a few times throughout the semester, will give students a chance to get together with other honors students and to discuss issues pertinent to writing a thesis. Topics will include compiling a critical bibliography and writing a prospectus. Professor Lorenz, the Honors Director in English, will contact students to set up the first meeting time.

4940 Honors Essay Tutorial II

Prerequisite: ENGL 4930. Permission of director of Honors Program required. Students should take care to enroll in the correct section with their thesis advisor.

ENGL 4940 Honors Essay Tutorial II is the second of a two-part series of courses required for students pursuing a Bachelor of Arts with Honors in English. The first course in the series is ENGL 4930 Honors Essay Tutorial I.

4950 Independent Study

Independent reading course in topics not covered in regularly scheduled courses. Students select a topic in consultation with the faculty member who has agreed to supervise the course work. Permission of departmental advisor and director of undergraduate studies required. To register: obtain an independent study form from the College Registrar or from the department office, Goldwin Smith 250

Courses Originating in Other Departments

4200 Renaissance Humanism

A reading and discussion of key texts by Renaissance humanists in Italian, French, English, and other European literature from the 14th to the 17th centuries.

4960 Contemporary Poetry and Poetics

What gives contemporary poetry and poetics its resonance and value? What are its dominant features, audiences, and purposes? In an increasingly global, pervasively technological culture, what’s become of such familiar distinctions as the “traditional” and the “experimental,” the “mainstream” and the “alternative”? How does contemporary poetry situate itself among other genres, disciplines, discourses, and media? How are we to understand its evolving public spheres and its relation to the central cultural and historical developments of our time? With special attention to poetry since 9/11, this seminar will explore these and related questions in a range of works that open onto the rich interplay of contemporary poetry and poetics with issues concerning personal and collective identity, language, and culture.
The course examines how postcolonial African writers and filmmakers engage with and revise controversial images of bodies and sexuality-genital cursing, same-sex desire, HIV/AIDS, genital surgeries, etc. Our inquiry also surveys African theorists’ troubling of problematic tropes and practices such as the conception in 19th-century racist writings of the colonized as embodiment, the pathologization and hypersexualization of colonized bodies, and the precarious and yet empowering nature of the body and sexuality in the postcolonial African experience. As we focus on African artists and theorists, we also read American and European theorists, including but certainly not limited to Giorgio Agamben, Michel Foucault, Roland Barthes, and Joseph Slaughter, detecting the ways in which discourses around bodies in the African context may shape contemporary theories and vice versa.