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.

2890 Seminar 101 Expository Writing: The Epic Western
4 credits.  
MWF 11:15 - 12:05  
Harmon, Lauren

2890 Seminar 102 Expository Writing: Legal (Science) Fictions
4 credits.  
MWF 12:20 - 1:10  
Brangan, Michaela

2890 Seminar 103 Expository Writing: Topic TBD
4 credits.  
MWF 12:20 - 1:10  
Green, Charlie

2890 Seminar 104 Expository Writing: Creative Nonfiction: Do Our Stories Matter?
4 credits.  
MWF 1:25 - 2:15  
Masum-Javed, Aurora

2890 Seminar 105 Expository Writing: Global Romance: Love and the Political
4 credits.  
TR 11:40 - 12:55  
Lee, Nicolette

2890 Seminar 106 Expository Writing: Creative Nonfiction: The Invented “I”
4 credits.  
TR 2:55 - 4:10  
Akinsiku, Lanre

3860 Philosophic Fictions
4 credits.  
MW 2:55 - 4:10  
Davis, Stuart

“Fictions” of thought and language abound in all good writing, especially in works that deliberately test and play with ideas: dialogues, satires, parables, philosophic tales, and “thought-experiments.” Students will write critically about such works and will experiment with writing in similar forms in order to argue flexibly, ridicule vice and folly, or involve readers in pleasingly or disturbingly insoluble problems. Readings may include Plato’s *Gorgias or Republic*, Swift’s “Modest Proposal” and *Gulliver's Travels*, parables by Jesus and Kafka, dystopias by Caryl Churchill and George Saunders, science fiction by Octavia Butler and the Wachowski brothers, short stories by Jorge Luis Borges and Flannery O'Connor, and essays by Richard Rorty and Terry Eagleton. Course limited to 15 students. See http://courses.cit.cornell.edu/sad4449/3860/.

3890 The Personal Voice: Nonfiction Writing
4 credits.  
MWF 10:10 - 11:00  
Faulkner, David

Writers of creative nonfiction plumb the depths of their experience and comment memorably on the passing scene. They write reflectively on themselves and journalistically on the activities and artifacts of others. The voice they seek is at once uniquely personal, objectively persuasive, and accessible to others who want relish their view of the world and learn from it. This course is for the maturely self-motivated writer (beyond the first year of college) who wants to experiment with style and voice to find new writerly personae in a workshop environment. During the semester, we’ll read enabling models of literary nonfiction, including one another’s, and work to develop a portfolio of diverse and polished writing.
Creative Writing

Students usually begin their work in Creative Writing with English 2800 or 2810, and only after completion of the First-Year Writing Seminar requirement. Please note that either English 2800 or English 2810 is the recommended prerequisite for 3000-level Creative Writing courses. English 2800 and 2810 may satisfy a distribution requirement in your college (please check with your college advisor). English 3820-3830, 3840-3850, and 4800-4810, 4801-4811 are approved for the English major. In addition, one course at each level of Creative Writing is required for the Creative Writing minor: one 2800 or 2810, one 3820, 3830, 3840 or 3850, and one 4800, 4801, 4810 or 4811.

MAJORS AND PROSPECTIVE MAJORS, PLEASE NOTE: Although recommended for prospective English majors, English 2800-2810 cannot be counted towards the 40 credits required for completion of the English major. English 2800 or English 2810 is a prerequisite for 3000-level Creative Writing courses, which count towards the major. English 2800 is not a prerequisite for English 2810.

2810 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.
Prerequisite: completion of the First-Year Writing Seminar requirement. While they cannot be counted towards the English major, ENGL 2800 or ENGL 2810 is the prerequisite for 3000-level creative writing courses, which do count toward the major. Additionally, the course can be used to fulfill distribution requirements in the humanities for Arts & Sciences and most other colleges. ENGL 2800 or ENGL 2810 is required for the Creative Writing minor. ENGL 2800 and ENGL 2810 are the same course, the former offered in fall, the latter in spring.
Attendance Policy: Pre-enrolled students are required to attend the first two meetings of the course. Those missing the first two class sessions will be removed from the list.

2810 Seminar 102 Introduction to Creative Writing
3 credits.

2810 Seminar 103 Introduction to Creative Writing
3 credits.

2810 Seminar 104 Introduction to Creative Writing
3 credits.

2810 Seminar 105 Introduction to Creative Writing
3 credits.

2810 Seminar 106 Introduction to Creative Writing
3 credits.

2810 Seminar 107 Introduction to Creative Writing
3 credits.

2810 Seminar 108 Introduction to Creative Writing
3 credits.

2810 Seminar 109 Introduction to Creative Writing
3 credits.

2810 Seminar 110 Introduction to Creative Writing
3 credits.

2810 Seminar 111 Introduction to Creative Writing
3 credits.

2810 Seminar 112 Introduction to Creative Writing
4 credits.
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<td>TR 11:15 - 12:05</td>
<td>LaRose, Richard</td>
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<td>2810 Seminar 114</td>
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<td>2810 Seminar 115</td>
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<td>2810 Seminar 116</td>
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<td>2810 Seminar 117</td>
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<td>2810 Seminar 118</td>
<td>Introduction to Creative Writing</td>
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<td>2810 Seminar 119</td>
<td>Introduction to Creative Writing</td>
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<td>3830 Seminar 101</td>
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<td>3830 Seminar 102</td>
<td>Intermediate Narrative Writing</td>
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<td>3830 Seminar 103</td>
<td>Intermediate Narrative Writing</td>
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<td>MW 12:20 - 1:10</td>
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<td>3850 Seminar 101</td>
<td>Intermediate Verse Writing</td>
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<td>MW 10:10 - 11:00</td>
<td>Mort, Valzhyna</td>
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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 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.
4810 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.

4811 Seminar 101 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 fill 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.

4811 Seminar 102 Advanced Narrative Writing
4 credits.

4850 Reading for Writers: Contemporary Poetry
4 credits.

In order to deepen our understanding of contemporary poetics, we'll read a volume of poems each week as well as essays and interviews. In class, we'll discuss content and craft in order to understand divergent aesthetics. We also will investigate each book's historical provenance: where did this poetry come from? What are its affinities? Students will write brief responses to the books; post descriptive, interpretive comments on social media sites, such as Goodreads, twitter, or blogs; and perhaps submit their best work to online literary journals. "There is then creative reading as well as creative writing. When the mind is braced by labor and invention, the page...becomes luminous with manifold allusion.” (Emerson)

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.

2020 Inventing Modern Literature
4 credits.

Does the modern drive to “make it new” mean rejecting every precedent, or sifting the archive for past fragments that glimmer under present circumstances? This course surveys 250 years of English literary innovation, from the heyday of classical imitation, through defiant Romantic “returns” to artlessness, up to modernist experiments in narrative time. What does the most recent half of the English literary tradition have to teach us about our culture's obsession with innovation and "disruption”? What has it meant to be “new”? Lectures and weekly discussions teach skills of reading and writing about literature at the collegiate level. Texts will include Swift, Keats, Brönte, Yeats, Hopkins, Woolf, Bishop and Adrienne Rich, among many others.

2040 Introduction to American Literatures: Civil War to the Present
4 credits. (Also AMST 2040)

This course will introduce students to American literature from the Civil War to the present. We will consider a wide range of authors and literary movements while paying close attention to radical shifts in American culture in the past century and a half. We will ask: What traditions do American authors inherit and what new ones do they invent? How does this writing engage central issues of modern American culture such as race, immigration, class mobility, and technology? The class will examine a variety of genres including poetry, novels, manifestos, and drama. Authors include Mark Twain, Kate Chopin, T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, William Faulkner, Felipe Alfau, Langston Hughes, Allen Ginsberg, Thomas Pynchon, Toni Morrison, and others.
### 2080 Shakespeare and the 20th and 21st Centuries

4 credits. (Also FMA 2681)

**MWF 11:15 - 12:05**  
**Davis, Stuart**

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

What can we learn about Shakespeare’s plays from their reception by late modernity? What can we learn about modern cultures from the way they appropriate these texts and the Shakespeare mystique? We will study five plays and their adaptations in film and theater and explore the uses made of Shakespeare in education, advertising, and public culture and by the Shakespeare industry itself. For spring 2017: *Richard III, Othello, Macbeth, Taming of the Shrew, and Midsummer Night’s Dream*, with films or filmed productions directed by Richard Loncraine, Trevor Nunn, Janet Suzman, George Sidney, Max Reinhardt, and Adrian Noble. For updates, see [http://courses.cit.cornell.edu/sad4449/2080/](http://courses.cit.cornell.edu/sad4449/2080/).

### 2350 Literature and Medicine

4 credits. (Also BSOC 2350, FGSS 2350, LGBT 2350)

**MWF 1:25 - 2:15**  
**Cohn, Elisha**

How does literary language depict the experience of physical suffering? Can a poem or a novel palliate pain, illness, even the possibility of death? From darkly comic narratives of black plague to the rise and fall of hysteria to depictions of the AIDS crisis, this course examines literature centered on medical practices from the early modern period through the twentieth century. Why have medical practices changed, and how do writers address their political, social, and ideological implications? Readings will include a broad range of genres, including poetry (Dickinson, Whitman, Keats), fiction (McEwan, Chekhov, Gilman, Kafka, Camus), theater (Kushner), nonfiction prose (Woolf, Freud), and critical theory (Foucault, Scarry, Canguilhem, Sontag).

### 2400 Introduction to Latino/a Literature

4 credits. (Also LSP 2400)

**TR 2:55 - 4:10**  
**Diaz, Ella**

From the radical manifestos of revolutionaries to the satirical plays of union organizers, from new, experimental novels to poetry, visual art, and music, this course examines Latino/a literature published in the United States beginning in the early nineteenth century and continuing to the present. We will pay particular attention to the historical, theoretical, and literary context for this literature. We will study memoir, poetry, essays, and cultural production. Authors include José Martí, Luisa Capetillo, Israel ‘Cachao’ López, Josefina López, Cherríe Moraga, Esmeralda Santiago, Gloria Anzaldúa, José Montoya, Carmen Tafolla, and Pedro Pietri.

### 2580 Imagining the Holocaust

4 credits. (Also COML 2580, JWST 2580)

**TR 10:10 - 11:25**  
**Schwarz, Daniel**

How is the memory of the Holocaust kept alive by means of the literary and visual imagination? Within the historical context of the Holocaust and how and why it occurred, we shall examine major and widely read Holocaust narratives that have shaped the way we understand and respond to the Holocaust. We also study ethical and psychological issues about how and why people behave in dire circumstances. We shall begin with first-person reminiscences—Wiesel’s *Night*, Levi’s *Survival at Auschwitz*, and *The Diary of Anne Frank*—before turning to realistic fictions such as Kineally’s *Schindler’s List* (and Spielberg’s film), Kertész’s *Fateless*, Kosinski’s *The Painted Bird*, and Ozick’s *The Shawl.* We shall also read the mythopoeic vision of Schwarz-Bart’s *The Last of the Just*, the illuminating distortions of Epstein’s *King of the Jews*, the Kafkaesque parable of Appelfeld’s *Badenheim 1939*, and the fantastic cartoons of Spiegelman’s *Maus* books.

### 2650 Introduction to African American Literature

4 credits. (Also ASRC 2650, AMST 2650)

**TR 11:40 - 12:55**  
**Woubshet, Dagmawi**

This course will introduce students to the African American literary tradition. Through aesthetic and contextual approaches, we will consider how African American life and culture has defined and constituted the United States of America. From slave narratives to Hip-Hop music, we will trace the range of artistic conventions and cultural movements while paying close attention to broader historical shifts in American life over the past three centuries. We will ask: How do authors create and define a tradition? What are some of the recurring themes and motifs within this tradition? Authors will include: David Walker, Frederick Douglass, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, W.E.B. DuBois, Zora Neale Hurston, Lorraine Hansberry, James Baldwin, Toni Morrison, Claudia Rankine, and Chimamanda Adichie.

### 2760 Desire

4 credits. (Also COML 2760, FGSS 2760, LGBT 2760, PMA 2680)

**MW 7:30 - 8:45**  
**Hanson, Ellis**

“Language is a skin,” the critic Roland Barthes once wrote: “I rub my language against the other. It is as if I had words instead of fingers, or fingers at the tip of my words. My language trembles with desire.” Sexual desire has a history, even a literary history, which we will examine through an introductory survey of European dramatic literature from Plato and Aristophanes to Jean Genet and Caryl Churchill, as well as a survey of classic readings in Western sexual theory from the Ancient Greeks through Sigmund Freud and Michel Foucault to recent feminist and queer theory.

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April 15, 2016  
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In democratic societies, freedom of expression is both a cultural value and protected right. And yet, governments also routinely regulate speech through a variety of mechanisms: from direct censorship, to licensing and copyright laws, to high court decisions about what qualifies as "speech." This course will survey the history of free expression and the free press from the late 16th-century to the present day through a series of case studies on authors and topics ranging from Milton and Defoe to Joyce and Rushdie; from music, intellectual property, and the parody of 2 Live Crew to corporate speech; from "seditious libel" to WikiLeaks; and from slander and hate speech to obscenity and pornography. We will consider how the categories of dangerous speech, and thresholds of toleration, have changed over time. And we will compare the different standards brought to bear on "political" versus "artistic" speech.

**2775 Censorship: Milton to Wiki-Leaks**
4 credits.
Kalas, Rayna; Saccamano, Neil

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

A "utopia" is an imaginary world, a fantastical "no-place" that conveys important truths about the real world. This course surveys the literary genre of utopia from the Renaissance to today, focusing on writers who invent new worlds through fiction. In Thomas More's *Utopia*, we explore utopia's emergence in the sixteenth century in response to European political upheaval and New World exploration, then turn to how British and American writers transform utopian visions in the following centuries. Finally, we consider how utopia is re-worked in science fiction's paradoxical emphasis on both fantasy and realism. Topics include the politics of gender and the purpose of technology in a perfect society, and the wildly inventive forms of utopian fiction by Shakespeare, Margaret Cavendish, Jonathan Swift, Aldous Huxley, Ursula LeGuin, and Philip K. Dick.

**2901 Utopia: From Thomas More to Science Fiction**
MWF 11:15 - 12:05
Mann, Jenny

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

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."

**2910 It's All Chinese to Me**
TR 11:40 - 12:55
Wong, Shelley

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.

**3000-Level Courses**

**3000 TBD**
4 credits.
Levine, Caroline

**3021 Literary Theory on the Edge**
MW 7:30 - 8:45
Caruth, Cathy; Villarejo, Amy

This course juxtaposes the exciting theoretical advances of the late 20th century, including structuralism and post-structuralism, with current developments in 21st century theory such as performance studies, media theory, digital studies, trauma theory, transgender studies, and ecocriticism. Taught by two Cornell professors active in the field, along with occasional invited guests, lectures and class discussions will pay close attention to the differences among mediatic systems in the texts we read as well as the uniqueness and complexity of language in its various forms. The course may involve presentation of performance art. Course open to all levels; no previous knowledge of theory required.
The course will offer an overview of video art, alternative documentary video, and digital installation and networked art. It will analyze four phases of video and new media: (1) the development of video from its earliest turn away from television; (2) video’s relation to art and installation; (3) video’s migration into digital art; (4) the relation of video and new media to visual theory and social movements. Screenings will include early political and feminist video (Ant Farm, Kosler, Paper Tiger TV, Jones), conceptual video of the ’80s and ’90s (Vasulkka, Lucier, Viola, Hill), gay and multicultural video of the ’90s (Muntadas, Riggs, Piper, Fung, Parmar), networked and activist new media of the 21st century (Critical Art Ensemble, Electronic Disturbance Theater, SubRosa, Preemptive Media). Secondary theoretical readings on postmodernism, video theory, multicultural theory, and digital culture will provide students with a cultural and political context for the discussion of video and new media style, dissemination, and reception.

**3120 Beowulf**
4 credits. (Also ENGL 6120, MEDVL 3120, MEDVL 6120)

*TR 11:40–12:55 Hill, Thomas*

In recent years, *Beowulf* has received renewed attention in popular culture, thanks to the production of two recent Beowulf movies and riveting new translations (eg. Seamus Heaney). The poem’s appeal lies in the complex depictions of its monsters, accounts of heroic bravery, and lavish portrayals of life in the Meadhall. Through close readings we will also explore the “dark side” of the poem: its punishing depictions of loss and exile, despairing meditations on unstable kingship and dynastic failure, and harrowing depictions of heroic defeat and the vanities of existence on the Middle-Earth. Attention to the poem’s literary heritage (in Latin and Norse) and its layered pagan and Christian perspectives reveals an amalgamated Christian heroic ethos. [Readings in Old or Modern English.]

**3260 Spenser and The Faerie Queene**
4 credits.

*TR 1:25 - 2:40 Correll, Barbara*

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

Edmund Spenser is the major Elizabethan writer other than Shakespeare who most influenced English poetry. But students often don’t know him, even though, in a way, they have already encountered him: Spenser’s grand epic poem, *The Faerie Queene*, is often seen as a major source of contemporary fantasy literature and even of the plotting of video games. As we will see in this course, it is more, much more, than that. Knights (both male and female) are tested in perilous quests and some very strange figures are encountered in this complex and intellectually challenging work, a beautifully weird, many-stranded narrative and a fascinating mind-trip through wayward desires and monstrous fears.

**3330 Fictions of Self-Invention: The 18th Century Novel**
4 credits.

*MWF 1:25 - 2:15 Saccamano, Neil*

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

If the Satanic fantasy is to believe ourselves “Self-begot, self-raised by our own quick’ning power,” as Milton says, then the early novel is diabolical. Foundlings and orphans, abandoned wives, abducted daughters, incestuous marriages, exiled or restlessly traveling sons: early fiction imagines the possibility of socially inventing ourselves by challenging and leaving behind both the family defined by birth and a place called home. We will examine the ideology of self-invention—its promotion of individual autonomy through education, culture, sex, and economics—in such novels as Defoe’s *Moll Flanders*, Haywood’s *Love in Excess*, Fielding’s *Tom Jones*, Austen’s *Emma*. We will also examine how fiction tries to invent itself by turning to forms of realism and forgetting the history of literature.

**3400 British Romanticism**
4 credits.

*MWF 12:20 - 1:10 Goldstein, Amanda*

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, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Burke, Goethe, Balzac and Barbauld.

**3530 Imagining India, Home and Diaspora**
4 credits. (Also ASIAN 3368)

*A modern country and an ancient civilization, India has been imagined through the ages in many different ways. This introductory course focuses on the 20th and 21st centuries, drawing on films (Bollywood and Hollywood), tv shows, music, novels, and political thought. Readings from Gandhi, Ambedkar, Tagore, Kipling, Forster, Premchand, Senapati, Manto, Ananthamurthy and Roy as well as such diasporic writers as Rushdie, Lahiri, and Naipaul. Students enrolled in this class may enroll in an optional one-credit course, HINDI 3316, where they will have the opportunity to discuss the course materials in Hindi.*
3550 Decadence
4 credits. (Also COML 3550, FGSS 3550, LGBT 3550)
“My existence is a scandal,” Oscar Wilde once wrote, summing up in an epigram the effect of his carefully cultivated style of perversity and paradox. Through their celebration of “art for art’s sake” and all that was considered artificial, unnatural, or obscene, the Decadent writers of the late-nineteenth century sought to free the pleasures of beauty, spirituality, and sexual desire from their more conventional ethical moorings. We will focus on the literature of the period, including works by Charles Baudelaire, Edgar Allan Poe, A. C. Swinburne, and especially Oscar Wilde, and we will also consider related developments in aesthetic philosophy, painting, music, theater, architecture, and design.

3580 Twentieth Century Women Writers of Color in the Americas
TR 2:55 - 4:10 Wong, Shelley
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, Carolivia Herron, Helena Maria Viramontes, and Shani Mootoo.

3590 Consuming Passions: Media, Space, and the Body
4 credits. (Also AAS 3580, AMST 3580, FGSS 3581)
This course examines the intersections of gender, sexuality, space, and popular culture. Ranging across media-film, literature, television, and music-the class analyzes how these different forms represent and constitute gendered and sexual bodies. How does the lifestyle channel, for example, represent itself as a woman’s space? Spike as a man’s space? Are these distinctions breaking down, resulting in more hybrid genres? How do race, ethnicity, age, and class figure in? We connect media to sites of production, distribution, and consumption, such as the theater, the home, and cyberspace with particular emphasis on the affective and often passionate realm of consumption. Questions of access are considered: which technologies have provided access to marginalized groups, and on what terms? What are the political possibilities of popular culture, and what are the intersections of politics and pleasure?

3591 Kids Rule! Children’s Popular Culture
4 credits. (Also FGSS 3590)
How is the figure of the child constructed in popular culture? When and to what degree do children participate in the construction of these representations? This course surveys a variety of contemporary media texts (television, film, and the internet) aimed at children ranging in age from pre-kindergarten to young adults. We explore how these texts seek to construct children as empowered consumers, contesting adult conformity. Our theoretical approach complicates definitions of childhood as a time of innocence and potential victimhood and challenges normative constructions of childhood as a time for establishing “proper” sexual and gender identities. Taking a cultural studies approach, the class will consider the connections between the cultural texts and the realms of advertising, toys, and gaming.

3612 Capitalism and Colonialism in Early American Literature
MW 2:55 - 4:10 Cheyfitz, Eric
The American Revolution was a war fought by European settlers against England that ended the colonial domination of these settlers in the founding of the United States. But the settlers were themselves colonizers of American Indian land and African labor, exploiting these communities within a capitalist regime. Reading Native American, African American, and Euramerican texts within a time frame that extends from 1492 to the early 19th century, the course will study the conflicts of colonial settlement that generated the United States past and present.

3660 Reading the 19th Century American Novel
MW 1:25 - 2:15 Samuels, Shirley
The course asks you to think about the role of fiction in producing a sense of history, politics, and culture in the nineteenth-century United States. In particular, we will think about the relations among stylistic concerns in fiction and the construction of identities formed by national, racial, gendered, and sexual allegiances. Authors include Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Edith Wharton, Pauline Hopkins, and Fanny Fern.

3665 Indigenous Representation in Film
4 credits.
Representations of Indigenous peoples in American cinema are based on a variety of pervasive stereotypes and themes that perpetuate national identity myths. An invented category, “The American Indian,” derives from the needs and desires of settlers in specific contexts, so the majority of portrayals of “The Indian” tell us more about the inventors than about Indigenous peoples. But, Native filmmakers use the medium to answer these misrepresentations and to critique the effects and policies of colonialism, all while making us laugh, swoon, and reflect on what it means to be human. To demonstrate, we'll gather context from readings and lectures; we'll view scenes from iconic American productions; and we'll examine the ways contemporary Indigenous filmmakers choose to represent their own perspectives and imaginations through film.
This course focuses on works that exemplify environmental consciousness—a sense that humans are not the center of the world and that to think they are may have catastrophic consequences for humans themselves. Environmental literature is not just a major strand of American literature but one of its most distinctive contributions to the literature of the world. We will be reading works mainly from the 19th and 20th centuries, both poetry and fiction, confronting the challenges of thinking and writing with an ecological consciousness in the 21st. Cornell being a rich environment in which to pursue such investigations, creative projects will be encouraged. Inspiration is assured.

"One is not born a woman, but rather becomes one," wrote Simone de Beauvoir. How does such an odd becoming happen? What can literature teach us about it? Does anyone ever achieve “being a woman” and how do we (“we”?) survive always falling short of the implicit ideal? We will think about the power afforded by receptivity, passivity, bottoming, emotionality and openness, whether or not these are enacted by people born, designated or living as female. What are some of the dimensions of femininity’s diversity, even in the United States, today? This course is intimately informed by intersectional queer, women of color and trans* perspectives, which will be at the center of our inquiry. It will cover film, literature, personal essays and gender theory.

This course will examine a variety of voices in contemporary African American poetry, focusing on works produced in the decades following the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements. We will consider how new generations of black poets are using verse to represent personal and collective history; to interrogate race and other social categories like gender and sexuality; and to ungate new perspectives for understanding the human condition. Along with verse, we will also study other forms of poetry like Hip Hop and spoken word that inform the contemporary African American lyric. Authors will include Rita Dove, Yusef Komunyakaa, Elisabeth Alexander, Natasha Trethewey, Terrance Hayes, and Lyrae Van Clief-Stefanon.

When an African and an African American meet, solidarity is presumed, but often friction is the result. In this course, we will consider how Africans and African Americans see each other through literature. What happens when two peoples suffering from double consciousness meet? We will examine the influence of historical forces including slavery, colonialism and pan-Africanism on the way writers explore the meeting between Africans and African Americans. Specifically we will look at how writers such as W.E.B DuBois, Maya Angelou, NoViolet Bulawayo, Chimamanda Adichie, Richard Wright, Eugene Robinson, Philippe Wamba, Teju Cole, and Malcolm X have understood the meeting.

This is an introduction to trauma theory in the context of the concerns of the contemporary world. We will study the unique and enigmatic notion of trauma as it arose in the beginning of the twentieth century in the work of Sigmund Freud, focusing on the temporal structure of trauma as well as the implications of deferred experience for a thinking of history. The course will emphasize the literary dimension of trauma theory but also its relevance for (and modification in light of) current concerns with nuclearism, terrorism, racism, and environmental catastrophe. Texts by Sigmund Freud, Jean Laplanche, Jacques Derrida, Shoshana Felman, Françoise Davoine, Robert Jay Lifton, among others, and some literature and film.

What can lawyers and judges learn from the study of literature? This course explores the relevance of imaginative literature (novels, drama, poetry, and film) to questions of law and social justice from a range of perspectives. We will consider debates about how literature can help to humanize legal decision-making; how storytelling has helped to give voice to oppressed populations over history; how narratives of suffering cultivate popular support for human rights; the role played by storytelling in a trial; and how literature can shed light on the limits of law and public policy.

What makes a poem’s pulse beat? How do poets shape our responses by ordering words into rhythm? How have poets and readers accounted for the essence and effects of rhythm? Is “free verse” free from rhythm? Does a poet’s choice of meter have political implications? In exploring these questions and others, we will read a variety of poems from the medieval period to the present and examine a range of accounts of how rhythm works by poets, critics, linguists, and theorists. Students will write short exercises working with poetic rhythm and other formal features of poems, as well as critical essays. Poets such as Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, Tennyson, Whitman, Dickinson, Hopkins, Williams, Plath, and Ammons. No previous study of poetic meter or rhythm is assumed.
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.

4020 Literature as Moral Inquiry
4 credits.
What can literary works, especially novels, tell us about moral issues? Should they be seen as suggesting a form of moral inquiry similar to the kind of philosophical discussion we get in, say, Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics? Can reading philosophical works in ethics together with novels that deal with similar themes help us understand these themes better? This course is an attempt to answer these questions. We will read selections from Aristotle, Kant, Marx, and Nietzsche, and use these works to help us understand the nature of moral inquiry in novels like Eliot's Middlemarch, Coetzee's Disgrace, Morrison's Beloved, Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway, Conrad's Heart of Darkness, and Achebe's Things Fall Apart. Other writers we will most probably read include Nadine Gordimer, Doris Lessing, and Kazuo Ishiguro.

4150 Piers Plowman and the Pearl Poet
4 credits. (Also ENGL 6150, MEDVL 6150, MEDVL 4150)
This course may be used as one of the three pre-1800 courses required of English majors.
In this course we will focus on two major non-Chaucerian Middle English poets, the Pearl-poet and William Langland, the author of Piers Plowman. We will focus on close, linguistically careful reading of these poets in Middle English and graduate students will be encouraged to submit a research paper on some aspect of these texts. Some experience with Old or Middle English, such as Introductory Old English or a Chaucer course, would be helpful for students who might take the course, but students who would like to use the course as an introduction to Middle English are more than welcome. These are two of the finest poets in any era of English literature. While it is important for medievalists or potential medievalists to be familiar with them, anyone of any background who enjoys poetry will find these poets rewarding.

4430 Victorian Literature and Psychology
4 credits.
This course examines a range of nineteenth-century British literature, focusing on how Victorian writers represented the workings of the human mind. In particular, we examine how novels (and a few poems) trace the development of subjectivity in a variety of genres, while also reading selections from psychological texts of the period. In these works, we study Victorian interest in the relation between the self and society as it emerges through sympathy, memory, emotion, reverie, obsession, hysteria, monomania, insanity, and double consciousness. We will also evaluate how well more recent psychological concepts like trauma can elucidate Victorian texts. Readings may include Charlotte Brontë, Villette; Robert Browning, selected poems; Wilkie Collins, The Woman in White; Mary Elizabeth Braddon, Lady Audley's Secret; George Eliot, Daniel Deronda; Elizabeth Gaskell, Mary Barton; Robert Louis Stevenson, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde; Tennyson, Maud.

4521 Gender, Memory, and History in 20th Century Fiction
4 credits. (Also AMST 4521, FGSS 4521)
This seminar will investigate the narrative uses of history and memory in US fiction, focusing particularly on the impact of gender on these representations. How do US writers use history in their fiction, and to what ends? What are the effects on drawing on received historical narratives and what are the effects of constructing one's own history to fill a void in the received historical narrative? What's the difference between history and fiction, anyway? We will start from such questions in order to explore the extent to which history—personal or public—is produced by memory and reshaped by fiction. Authors under consideration may include: Julia Alvarez, Alison Bechdel, Pat Barker, Joy Kogawa, Toni Morrison, Monique Truong, and August Wilson.

4600 Melville
4 credits. (Also AMST 4600)
Herman Melville is one of America's most trenchant social, political, and economic critics. Our study of Melville's fiction will analyze his critique of central national and international issues the effects of which are still with us. These issues are focused in the capitalist/imperialist matrix of settler colonialism with its machinery of slavery, Native American genocide, patriarchy, and poverty.

4665 Indigenous Fantasy and Futurisms
4 credits.
Radically subverting the "Vanishing Indian" myth, Indigenous authors depict Indigenous peoples thriving in many possible futures. Although Indigenous speculative fiction is nothing new, we're currently seeing a new flush of Indigenous fantasy and futurism that combines Native conceptions of the universe and non-linear space-time with Indigenous and western technologies. Through revising generic conventions, Native authors overturn the closure of western conquest narratives while drawing on ancient beliefs and practices to ensure balanced, inter-relational survival—not only of human beings, but other-than-human persons, too. We will examine how these texts, hypertexts, films, games, and multimedia projects disavow the long-established sci-fi and fantasy tropes that place Indigenous peoples in the role of the "alien" that invades domestic space, or, conversely, the "alien" objects of "discovery" and invasion.
This seminar will focus on the literature and culture of the “Jazz Age,” with a special focus on the intersections of “high” and “low” cultures, inter-ethnic and inter-racial interaction, and testing of the mores governing gender and sexuality in the period roughly from the end of World War I to the 1940s. One major theme will be the uses of improvisation across many spheres of art and action, including music, visual art, and literature. Most of the course will focus on literary texts, including a number that use or refer to jazz music, but we will also learn some things about early jazz performance itself and its musicians and clubs. This is also a course about “Modernism”—cubism, for example, and Abstract Expressionism. The course is organized by genre, and will include discussion of various kinds of modernist experimentation in the visual arts as well as fiction, drama, and poetry.

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

A study of the impact of imaginative innovation in the eighteenth-century novel—what triggers the creation of new literary genres; how is creativity shaped to convey new meanings; how does novelty enter into literary history to become convention? We will apply these questions to a varied selection of works, each of which plays a distinctive role in the “rise of the novel.” As we consider works from slave narrative to Gothic fiction, travel literature, the erotic novel, and manners fiction, we will define the distinctive incentives for innovation and consider common forms of novelty across a range of imaginative experiences. Texts include: Behn, *Oroonoko*; Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*; Richardson, *Pamela*; Fielding, *Joseph Andrews*; Lewis, *The Monk*; Cleland, *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*; and Burney, *Evelina*.

The trafficking in people and narcotics has held the attention of American writers and visual artists for more than three centuries. In this course we will read broadly to consider how various forms of trafficking and stories of captivity and treasure hunting help tell the story of contemporary culture. Drawing from decolonial studies, as well as systems and assemblage theories, this course will analyze TV series such as *Weeds* and *The Wire* as well as films, narcocorridos, novels, legal cases, and visual artworks in which the subject of traffic and trafficking play an important role. Artists and authors may include Junot Díaz, Alan Ginsberg, Sandra Cisneros, Frederick Douglass, Karen Tei Yamashita, and Faith Ringgold.

ENGL 4930 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. Students should secure a thesis advisor by the end of the junior year and should enroll in that faculty member’s section of ENGL 4930.

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.

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.