

# Course Descriptions Spring 2020

## M.A. in Literature

## M.A. in Composition and Literature

### ENGL 632: Composition Theory and Practice

Tuesdays/Thursdays 12:30-1:45pm

A study of current theories of composition and ways those theories might be enacted and practiced. Time in the course will be spent on discussion of theoretical texts and practice in composing in multiple genres and forms. The course will include an historical overview of the discipline, focusing on process and post process theories that emerged in the late twentieth and early twenty first centuries. After this introduction to basic composition theory of the twentieth century, we will extend our study to include more recent advances in postprocess considerations of identity, materiality, embodiment, environment, trans/multilingualism, and trans/multimodality.

### ENGL 676: Critical Approaches to Literature and Composition

Dr. Michael T. Williamson Tuesday 6:00-8:30pm

Whether we are working from a positive mindset or a negative mindset, literature and composition help us to ask the important questions, “How did we get here?” and “What are our alternatives?” Our central focus this semester will be on “composure,” which we will define as the process of asking these questions in ways that prompt a renewed curiosity towards and engagement with thousands of years of human creativity. **Unit One** will consider significant changes to the way the sacred was approached through reading and writing. We will explore rhetorical shifts in address during the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries in Britain, but we will also explore major shifts in the working of metaphor and symbol in modernist French, Spanish, Eastern European and American literature. Our main objective for this first unit will be to recover modes of thinking that have been obscured by interwar (1918-1933), wartime (1933-1948), and post-World War Two critical approaches to literature. **Unit Two** will focus on some critical approaches that have contributed to what one critic has called the influence of “crepuscular [or twilight] modernism” in our profession. Richard E. Miller’s *Writing at the End of the World* provides an introduction to a cultural studies (rather than literary studies) approach to composition. The roots of cultural studies in psychoanalytic, existentialist, and Marxist thinking can be found in novels such as Andre Malraux’s *Man’s Fate* (Malraux was the French Minister of Culture during the mid-1900s). To what extent, we will ask, do dreams of the future depend on the creation of a present shaped by the shadows of disaster? The psychoanalytic theories of D.W. Winnicott will help us work out some ideas about creativity and compliance in the development of the gendered human imagination. **Unit Three** will explore feminist critical approaches to the first two units. Kathleen Norris’s *Dakota* explores radically new ways of reading the sacred in the modern world. N.K. Jemisin’s *Broken Earth Trilogy* offers a literary feminist approach to the questions about the future that Miller poses.

### Required Texts:

1. Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry* Basic Books 978-0465022564
2. Byron, George Gordon, *Selected Poems* Penguin 978-0140424508
3. N.K. Jemisin, *The Broken Earth Trilogy* 978-0316527194
4. Andre Malraux, *Man’s Fate* Vintage 978-0679725749
5. Richard Miller, *Writing at the End of the World* 978-0822958864
6. Kathleen Norris, *Dakota: A Spiritual Geography* 978-0618127245
7. Edmund Wilson, *Axel’s Castle: A Study of the Imaginative Literature of 1870-1930* 978-0374529277

8. D.W. Winnicott, *Playing and Reality* 978-0415345460
9. William Wordsworth, *Major Works* Oxford Classics 978-0199536863

### **ENGL 742 (842): Cross Cultural Communication**

**Thursdays, 3:30-6:00pm**

Students will learn about major trends, issues, research, and exploration in cross-cultural communication. They will be introduced to a conceptual framework for understanding cross-cultural communication in and out of the classroom.

Participants in this class will:

- Become aware of the basic concepts regarding cross-cultural communication
- Learn about specific issues in cross-cultural communication
- Juxtapose approaches to the presentation and analysis of cross-cultural communication issues
- Apply theoretical assumptions and research findings in analyzing specific cross-cultural contexts and conversation excerpts
- Do classroom research using relevant cross-cultural communication and conversation analysis sources
- Use web-based and multimedia technology in the design of academic/professional projects
- Prepare for professional events
- Present before peers and other professionals

### **ENGL 762/862 Topics in American Literature after 1870**

#### **Black Mountain Poetry - The Poetics, Politics, and Pedagogy of a Movement**

Dr. Kenneth Sherwood

M 3:00-5:30 pm

We may encounter isolated poems in anthologies, immerse ourselves fully in the corpus of a favorite poet, or perhaps encounter poems within the context of a "movement." But what is a movement, how is it constituted, and how does it shape or mis-shape our appreciation and understanding of poets and their poems? In exploring these questions, we'll think about the role communities of readers perform for emerging writers and how this effects reception, inclusion, exclusion, and visibility. We'll also think about the values that are framed through the discourse of movement/group/school, and finally consider how the practical networks of journals, poetry readings, and reviews help to fertilize poetic production.

The seminar will focus on writers associated with the Black Mountain school, such as Charles Olson, Robert Creeley, Denise Levertov, Robert Duncan, M.C. Richards, Hilda Morley, Ed Dorn, Paul Blackburn, and Joel Oppenheimer. In the case of Black Mountain poetry, the association with "school" is quite literal -- as the nexus of this movement is the experimental Black Mountain College (1933-1957) where many of the associated poets studied or taught. The scope of Black Mountain poetry is larger, however, as the literary journal "Black Mountain Review" became a crucial publication for many kindred writers who never visited North Carolina. This will give us a chance to think about editing and publication networks. And, finally, we'll also consider broader context for poetry and its influences by drawing connections between the poetry and some of the other influential work by Black Mountain teachers/students, including musician John Cage, choreographer Merce Cunningham, architect Buckminster Fuller, and artists including Annie Albers, Franz Kline, and Cy Twombly. Finally, we will circle back and consider how the experimental and interdisciplinary pedagogies associated with Black Mountain inform the writing and reading of poetry.

Course work will include critical writing (in the form of a conference-length essay), creative pedagogical/performative mini-projects, close reading and close-listening (to available poetry audio recordings).

Some primary texts:

The New American Poetry. Ed. Donald Allen. Grove Press, 1960. Black Mountain Poems. Ed. John Creasy. New Directions, 2019.

Some secondary texts:

Understanding The Black Mountain Poets. Ed Foster. U South Carolina, 1994.  
The Experimenters: Chance and Design at Black Mountain College. Eva Diaz. Chicago, 2014.  
Black Mountain College: Experiment in Art. Vincent Katz. MIT, 2013.  
Black Mountain: An Exploration in Community. Martin Duberman. Northwester, 2009.  
The Black Mountain Book. Fielding Dawson. NC Wesleyan, 1991.  
Black Mountain Days. Michael Rummaker. Spuyten Duyvil, 2012.  
The Arts at Black Mountain College. Mary Emma Harris. MIT, 2002.  
Beyond Maximus: The Construction of Public Voice in Black Mountain Poetry. Anne Day Dewey. Stanford, 2007.

### **ENGL 764/864 Topics in British Literature after 1660**

#### **The Gothic**

Dr. Melanie Holm

Th 6:00-8:30 pm

This course examines foundational texts of the early gothic literary mood. These texts are teeming with heroes, villains, and antiheroes; naive innocents, cunning Machiavels, and confused bourgeois; decaying castles, sublime mountain ranges, and deep, dark dungeons; dogmatic rectitude, fanatical zeal, and skeptical doubt. While the Gothic is well-known for stock conventions, the genre maintains a dialectical self-consciousness about its categories, using them inventively to bulwark social, philosophical, and literary critiques on topics such as the value of belief, naive empiricism, domesticity and the ideology of separate spheres, imperialism, and the meaning and value morality or “virtue.” We will explore the relationships between narrative and critique, as well as the recurrent themes of gender and sex, sin and redemption, the family romance, politics of the state, and the nature of “nature.” In dialogue with leading literary scholars and historians of the period, we will pose further questions about the nature of belief, violence, psychology, and the roles of gender, race, status/class, and sexuality.

This course is designed to meet the following objectives:

- Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of both the narrative structure and critical reflections of the founding texts of the gothic genre;
- Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the historical contexts of the works of these periods and the relationship between history and the gothic genre form
- Students will be able to express critical opinions about the themes and developments in the literature through written work and classroom discussion.

### **ENGL 765/865 Topics in Literature as Genre**

#### **Film From Inside Ourselves**

Dr. Thomas Slater

W 3:00-5:30 pm

Over the past thirty years, major theorists such as Steven Shaviro, Vivian Sobschack, Thomas Elsaesser, and Linda Williams have emphasized the idea that film addresses viewers primarily through the emotions, producing physical reactions (laughing, crying, tension) prior to any cognitive response.

Other scholars who have followed this path include Charles Burnett. We'll use his *Improving Passions: Sentimental Aesthetics and American Film* for the first half of the course. In it, Burnett examines "eighteenth-century 'moral sense' philosophy as a neglected but still important intellectual area for film theory." We'll use films by Charlie Chaplin, Steven Spielberg, Quentin Tarantino and others as case studies for this approach to understanding our inner responses to film.

At the same time, Paul Schrader's *Transcendental Style in Film: Ozu, Bresson, Dreyer* first published in 1971, has received fresh attention with a new edition that came out last year. "Unlike the style of psychological realism [...], the transcendental style expresses a spiritual state by means of austere camerawork, acting devoid of self-consciousness, and editing that avoids editorial comment." This is film, in other words, that shares qualities with the sentimental and looks for viewers to find the spiritually transcendent perspectives it offers. Besides the filmmakers named in his title, we may include Schrader's own highly acclaimed *Reformed* from last year. These two books will be the required texts for the course. Students will also contribute short informal responses, three short essays, and a research essay.

### **ENGL 766/866 Topics in Comparative Literature**

#### **Postcolonial Ecologies: Literature, Culture and Environmental Justice**

Dr. Susan Comfort

M 6:00-8:30 pm

In this course, we will explore selected twentieth century and contemporary postcolonial literature in English and in translation, with a focus on issues and themes related to environmental justice in regions of Africa, the Caribbean, the Middle East and South Asia. One of our main goals will be to analyze this literature in order to gain better understanding of environmental catastrophe and globalized inequality today. Toward that end, we will consider literary representations of the devastating changes to forest, farming and fishing cultures under colonialism, and, more generally, the changing relationships to place and non-human nature wrought by colonial extraction, dispossession and displacement. At the same time, we will examine this literature's insights into related changes to identity and community, especially as constructed by gender, race, ethnicity and class. In this vein, our discussions will also focus on literary depictions of the ecologies of urban life and migration to understand new forms of cultural survival and resistance emerging to contest environmental forms of precarity. As we do so, climate change and mass extinction will be a constant concern for us, especially as we explore dramatizations of structural and "slow" violence that disproportionately impact the current world-system's peripheries. Finally, our discussions will explore how this literature may be read to reimagine socio-ecological relations toward just and sustainable 'postcolonial ecologies' in our anthropocentric age. From the study of this literature, it is my hope that this course will offer the opportunity to think through and debate paradigms of sustainable development, just transition, ecofeminist and queer ecologies, and global environmental justice in a postcolonial world.

#### **Course Texts:**

Mahasweta Devi, *Imaginary Maps* (India, 1994)

Nuruddin Farah, *Crossbones* (Somalia, 2012)

Amitav Ghosh, *Gun Island, A Novel* (India, 2019)

Barbara Gowdy, *White Bone* (Canada, 1998)

Helon Habila, *Oil on Water* (Nigeria, 2011)

Ghassan Kanafani, *Men in the Sun* (Palestine, 1963)

Wangari Maathai, *Unbowed* (Kenya, 2006)

Shani Mootoo, *Cereus Blooms at Night* (Trinidad, 2009)

Abdelrahman Munif, *Cities of Salt* (Saudi Arabia, 1984)

Chinelo Okparanta, *Happiness, Like Water* (Nigeria, 2013)

Context Readings--Culture, Theory, History:

Elizabeth Ammons & Modhumita Roy, *Sharing the Earth: An International Environmental Justice Reader* (2015); Ramachandra Guha, *Environmentalism: A Global History* (1999)

Context Readings on D2L:

Since we will be working with cultural contexts, theory and history as we read the literature, I will make available, or recommend, various readings on the course D2L website, likely including selections from Julian Agyeman, *Just Sustainabilities*; Rob Nixon *Slow Violence and Environmentalism of the Poor*; Arundhati Roy, *Walking with the Comrades*; Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands, *Queer Ecologies*; and more.

### **ENGL 781/881: Online & Hybrid Writing Pedagogy (evening section)**

**Thursday, 5:30-8:00 pm Dr. Sanchez-Martin**

This course introduces students to the theory and practice of technology-mediated teaching and learning with a focus on college-level writing instruction in hybrid and online environments. Students will be introduced to the OWI (online writing instruction) scholarly community, will engage with theories that ground online instructional design, and will explore multiple modalities for facilitating student-instructor and student-student interaction. Students will also design a full unit in an online course site, including interactive activities, instructional materials, and plans for response and evaluation, and will compose a philosophy of technology-mediated teaching and learning. In this course, you will:

- Reflect on the relationship between technology, teaching, and learning
- Engage with theories and best practices for online instructional design
- Engage with theories and best practices for developing community online
- Engage with theories and best practices that define the role of the online instructor
- Design interactive activities and instructional materials in an online course site
- Develop a philosophy of technology-mediated teaching and learning

### **ENGL 781/881: Online & Hybrid Writing Pedagogy (2nd section)**

**Mondays, 2:30-5:00pm Dr. Weinstein**

This course introduces students to the theory and practice of technology-mediated teaching and learning with a focus on college-level writing instruction in hybrid and online environments. Students will be introduced to the OWI (online writing instruction) scholarly community, will engage with theories that ground online instructional design, and will explore multiple modalities for facilitating student-instructor and student-student interaction. Students will also design a full unit in an online course site, including interactive activities, instructional materials, and plans for response and evaluation, and will compose a philosophy of technology-mediated teaching and learning. In this course, you will:

- Reflect on the relationship between technology, teaching, and learning
- Engage with theories and best practices for online instructional design
- Engage with theories and best practices for developing community online
- Engage with theories and best practices that define the role of the online instructor
- Design interactive activities and instructional materials in an online course site
- Develop a philosophy of technology-mediated teaching and learning

### **ENGL 797/897 Independent Seminar**

**Areas of Expertise and Interest**

*Dr. Melanie Holm*

17th-century British Literature, 18th-Century British Literature, British and European Romanticism, Rise of the Novel, Genre Theory, Aesthetics, Epistemology, Enlightenment Philosophy, Women Writers, Psychoanalysis, Gothic Literature, Mythology and Folklore

*Dr. Mike Sell*

Game studies of all sorts, including videogames, boardgames, roleplaying games, and gamified pedagogy; twentieth- and twenty-first-century Black American literature and performance; twentieth- and twenty-first-century drama, theatre, and performance.