

Course Descriptions for Undergraduate English Classes May Intersession 2014

ENGL 2413, Introductory Topics in English: Lyric Sight

Teacher: S. Dempsey

Textbooks Required:

All readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Description: This course focuses on the relationship between poetry, representation, and visibility. Topics covered will include imagery, ekphrasis, sister arts, symbolism, metamorphosis, landscape, mapping, spatial form, pattern poems, concrete poetry, etc. We will begin the session looking biblical and mythological imagery, and then explore the role visibility plays in Homer, Virgil, Ovid, Dante, and Milton, before tracing specific lines of influence through Romanticism and Transcendentalism and out towards Modernism and beyond.

Time in class will be spent unpacking specific poems, and discussing how shifts in the poetic imagination might correspond to broader cultural reconsiderations of what it means to see and be seen (both technologically and ideologically). In addition to our reading and discussion of literature, students will also encounter various works of art (images of paintings and statues, film clips, graphic novels, etc.) that complement and sometimes complicate our understanding of how poetry helps us see.

Essays, exams, and other major requirements for undergraduates: Quizzes, in-class writings, blog postings, two short analysis essays, and a final.

Essays, exams, and other major requirements for graduate students at the 5000 level: Quizzes, in-class writings, blog postings, one presentation, two short critical essays, and a final.

ENGL 3833, Topics in American Literature to 1900: *Moby-Dick*

Teacher: C. Adams

Textbook Required:

Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick* (Norton Critical Edition: ISBN 978-0393972832)

Description:

An intensive study of one of the most remarkable achievements in American literature, a novel that D.H. Lawrence called “one of the strangest and most

wonderful books in the world.” Naturally, we will read through the text of the novel with great care, but we will also consider its sources and its literary legacy, and sample the critical response to the novel from its publication in 1851 to the present.

Essays, exams, and other major requirements:

Daily short writing assignments and a final exam.

ENGL 3863: The Reel South

Teacher: L. Hinrichsen

Course Description:

In this course we will investigate how the U.S. South has been cinematically imagined and invented in ways that both construct and unsettle national narratives. In screening a wide variety of films from the early twentieth-century to more recent postmodern examples, we will analyze how cinematic representations of “the South” attest to the ways in which the region is inherently a visual and visualized space. As we discuss the relationship between the South and Hollywood, we will examine how the cinematic South speaks to national and transnational transformations, including changing modes of conceptualizing race, class, gender, and regional identity itself. How does film work to complicate or reaffirm the traditional iconic elements of “the South” (a sense of place, community, and the presence of the past)? Does cinema provide the space for a performance of place that can illuminate the transnational or hemispheric affiliations between the U.S. South and the Global South, or otherwise reveal aspects of the region’s complicated cultural hybridity and multiplicity? How do films entrench or complicate certain ways of seeing the South in relationship to the nation at large? In answering these questions and others, we will examine *Birth of a Nation* (1915), *Jezebel* (1938), *Gone with the Wind* (1939), *Streetcar Named Desire* (1951), *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962), *Deliverance* (1972), *Mississippi Burning* (1988), *Mississippi Masala* (1991), *C.S.A: The Confederate States of America* (2004), and *Django Unchained* (2012). We will examine how cinematic meaning is conditioned by specific uses of camera, editing, lightning, sound and acting; and we will explore the impact of technological developments on film production and pay special attention to issues of adaptation and genre. Through course readings, class discussions, and in-class writing exercises, you will develop the vocabulary and analytical skills that will allow you to discuss a film within its historical, cultural, textual, and technical contexts.

Required Texts:

No books required. Films will be screened in class and required readings provided on Blackboard.

Course Requirements:

Daily quizzes (25%), writing portfolio (25%), discussion section participation and class presentation (20%), cumulative final exam (30%).

DV (Meets the English Major Diversity Requirement)

ENGL 3903, Special Topics: Lyric Sight

Teacher: S. Dempsey

Textbooks Required:

All readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Description: This course focuses on the relationship between poetry, representation, and visibility. Topics covered will include imagery, ekphrasis, sister arts, symbolism, metamorphosis, landscape, mapping, spatial form, pattern poems, concrete poetry, etc. We will begin the session looking biblical and mythological imagery, and then explore the role visibility plays in Homer, Virgil, Ovid, Dante, and Milton, before tracing specific lines of influence through Romanticism and Transcendentalism and out towards Modernism and beyond.

Time in class will be spent unpacking specific poems, and discussing how shifts in the poetic imagination might correspond to broader cultural reconsiderations of what it means to see and be seen (both technologically and ideologically). In addition to our reading and discussion of literature, students will also encounter various works of art (images of paintings and statues, film clips, graphic novels, etc.) that complement and sometimes complicate our understanding of how poetry helps us see.

Essays, exams, and other major requirements for undergraduates: Quizzes, in-class writings, blog postings, two short analysis essays, and a final.

Essays, exams, and other major requirements for graduate students at the 5000 level: Quizzes, in-class writings, blog postings, one presentation, two short critical essays, and a final.

ENGL 3923H: Cool Books about Stuff that Really Happened (Creative Nonfiction)

Teacher: S. Burris

Class Topic: For one semester, we're going to read some of the coolest—the most important critical term I know—books in English. And all of these books

are about stuff that actually happened: floods, fires, hurricanes, art-fights, culture wars, movies, graduation, music, love, and death.

Class Format & Requirements: The class is discussion-based, with a mid-term, and a final creative nonfiction essay, written in the spirit—subject matter, style, perspective: your choice—of one of the authors you read during the semester. Also: three 100-word essays, designed to help you master the paragraph. Not to worry: these will be due after we've read some great paragraphs and know just what defines paragraph greatness.

Textbooks Required: The list isn't complete yet, but so far, these have made the cut (I won't add many more): *Zeitoun*, Dave Eggers; *Human Smoke*, Nicholson Baker; *Reality Hunger*, David Shields; *This is Water*, David Foster Wallace; *The Year of Magical Thinking*, Joan Didion, *On Writing Well*, William Zinsser