

## ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

### Graduate Course Descriptions

Spring 2008

#### Master's Level

##### EGL 501.01 STUDIES IN CHAUCER

We will do close readings of Chaucer's major works (and a few minor ones) within the cultural, political, and religious contexts of his time and against the scholarship of major Chaucerian critics. Students will be expected to read the works in the original Middle English. Requirements include class presentations, three papers, some quizzes, and a reading log

Tues. 3:50 to 6:40 pm

P. Belanoff

##### EGL 509.01 STUDIES IN LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTIC

What is the nature and structure of language? How do languages arise and change over time? How is Linguistics connected to the discipline of English? We will seek answers to these questions through reading primary texts in theoretical and applied linguistics. Readings will present a range of approaches to language study from antiquity through to the present day. Requirements will include a research paper and presentation on a choice of topics in linguistics, short response and analytical essays, a midterm and final examinations.

Mon. 3:50 to 6:40 pm

S. Crane

##### EGL 520.01 STUDIES IN RENAISSANCE

This course is designed as a transition between undergraduate coverage of English Renaissance literature and doctoral seminar work. The reading will cover of some major genres (epic, lyric poetry, prose). Students may be asked to give oral reports on supplementary reading; they will be required to submit weekly response papers at all class meetings except first and last; and will prepare a term project, typically a term paper. In addition to English writers, this semester will include some Continental writers who were influential in England (Boccaccio, Petrarch, Castiglione).

Tues. 6:50 to 9:40 pm

C. Huffman

##### EGL 547.01 19<sup>th</sup> CENTURY LITERATURE: Oscar Wilde

A study of the writer who said of himself, "I awoke the imagination of my century so that it created myth and legend around me; I summed up all systems in a phrase and all existence in an epigram." Readings will be drawn from Wilde's aphorisms and parables, short and long fiction, plays, critical essays and dialogues, poetry, and letters, as well as accounts of what he called his "improbable life." Required work: two short papers, a mid-term exam and a final exam.

Mon. and Wed. 5:20 to 6:40 pm

B. Bashford

EGL 584.01 TOPICS IN GENRE STUDIES: Modern Drama: Performing Tragedy  
The focus of this course will be modern and post-modern drama and the twin phantoms of the contemporary theater: the tragic impulse and the tragic response. Reading will include theoretical works by Eagleton, Fergusson, Styan, and Williams. Playwrights to be considered include Strindberg, Yeats, Synge, Chekhov, Beckett, O'Neill, Stoppard, Shepard, McDonagh and Churchill. Emphasis will be on the shape and effect of plays onstage.

Wed. 3:50 to 6:40 pm

C Rosen

EGL 586/WST 610 TOPICS IN GENDER STUDIES: Mothering, Race, and Gender  
Good mothers, bad mothers, inept mothers, evil mothers, clone mothers, and surrogate mothers –this course will examine a wide variety of cultural and racial constructions of motherhood and mother/daughter relationships in feminist theory, literature and film. We will begin by looking at contemporary theoretical and critical essays on mothering and race, mothering and medicine, mother/daughter relationships, and “performances” of good and bad motherhood; next, we will examine constructions of mothering in contemporary novels and literature. Films to be viewed will include: *Stella Dallas*, *Imitation of Life* (one and two), *Alien*, and *Kramer Vs. Kramer*. Literature to be read will include: *Woman on the Edge of Time*, *The Fifth Child*, *Clone Mother*, *Beloved*, *Breath, Eyes, Memory*, *Waiting in the Wings*, and *Handmaid's Tale*.

Wed. 3:50 to 6:40 pm

H. Hutner and R. Calvin

EGL 587.01 TOPICS IN RACE, ETHNIC OR DIASPORA STUDIES; BLACK BRITISH CULTURAL STUDIES

Until recently Black British Literature referred to works by people who lived in Britain but whose origins lay in the Caribbean, Africa, India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. That is, either these writers or their families originated from countries which Britain had once colonized as part of its vast Empire. Recently, however, the different cultural situations of those African, Caribbean, and South Asian origins proved the term “Black British,” while once a useful political and activist category, to be problematic. In this course, we will read literature and watch films which address the diverse nature of Black British cultural producers. I will select readings from some of the following: Abdulrazak Gurnah, Hanif Kureishi, Zadie Smith, Jackie Kay, Meera Syal, Caryl Phillips, Fred D'Aguiar, David Dabydeen, and Bernadine Evaristo. Writing requirements: a series of 1-2 page responses to readings, and two 5-6 page papers or a 10-12 page paper.

Tues. 3:50 to 6:40 pm

H. Cooper

EGL 598 THESIS RESEARCH

Students following the new MA curriculum (Plan B) enroll for 1-3 credits of EGL 598 while writing a master's thesis of 30-40 pages under the guidance thesis advisor. Instructor permission and Graduate Director approval required. See the Graduate Coordinator for the necessary form.

Staff

## EGL 599 INDEPENDENT STUDY

Requests for independent studies must be submitted to the Graduate Director by **November 19**. Please see the Graduate Coordinator for the form. Independent Study is **BY PERMISSION ONLY**.

Staff

### Doctoral Level

#### EGL 603.03 PROBLEMS IN LITERARY THEORY & CRITICISM: Postcolonialism and the New Comparative Literature

The course brings together recent debates in Comparative Literature (Casanova, Spivak) and an emphasis on the literature of migration, envisaging fifteen sessions on such issues as the heterogeneity of orality to itself (Luise White, Heidegger), popular memory (Shahid Amin), 'broken English' (the excellent recent anthology edited by Dohra Ahmad), fetish (Pietz, Seigel), cultures of silence (de Certeau, Agamben), negative theology (Derrida), 'race' (Mamdani), the languages of slavery (Saidiya Hartman's *Lose Your Mother*), indigeneity in millennial time (Devi's *Chotti Munda*), the question of the epic, and so on. We will seek to bear in mind the problem of the ethics of literary reading (Auerbach on the secular, late de Man on parabasis, Derrida on the animal) and the seminal insights of Weimar criticism (Benjamin, Krakauer) on the relation between words and figuration.

Mon. 3:50 to 6:40 pm

M. Wakankar.

#### EGL 606.02 PERIOD AND TRADITION: The Career of William Wordsworth in Context

This seminar will track the range of Wordsworth's career from the 1790s through to the 1840s, setting his work against selected contemporaries—poems by Scott and Byron, reviews by Jeffrey, Hazlitt, and others, perhaps some of the *Biographia Literaria*. There will be some texts for purchase, such as the Routledge edition of *Lyrical Ballads* and the Norton Critical edition of the *Prelude*, but much of the reading is out of print, and assignments will depend heavily on reserve books or Internet downloads. For convenience students interested in the course should get a copy of the old Oxford Standard Authors listed at ABEBooks at moderate prices. Stephen Gill's *William Wordsworth: A Life* is also recommended. Course mechanics: participation in discussion, a 20 page essay at the end that can be worked up to with shorter papers during the term.

Wed. 3:50 to 6:40 pm

P. Manning

#### EGL 606.02 PERIOD AND TRADITION: Contemporary Fiction, Popular Culture, Nation

This course explores the work of contemporary writers who study the role that popular culture has played in the creation of nation-states. The first part of the course will examine the role played by popular culture in the creation of the American Century, the

casting, in effect, of the United States as the century's preeminent (or central) power. By focusing on the works of three authors—Gore Vidal, John Updike, and Larry Beinhart—that collectively span the years 1898 (and the Spanish-American War) through 1991 (and the Persian Gulf War), this part of the course will investigate the degree to which America's imperial rise to power in the twentieth century has functioned through the mass media: William Randolph Hearst's yellow press, silent films, Walt Disney's enterprise, and finally, television. The second part of the course will focus on literature written by non-American authors—Dennis Potter, Manuel Puig, and Murakami, three writers from provincial areas who grew up obsessed with American popular culture—to consider the degree to which they exported American popular culture functions as a form of cultural imperialism. Finally, the third section will focus on the contemporary media spectacle and the representative figure as potential sources of national consolidation in the wake of those 5.6 seconds in Dallas that, in Don DeLillo's "broke the back of the American Century in 1963". By examining Robert Coover's depiction of the Rosenberg Trial in *The Public Burning*, Don DeLillo's portrayal of the Kennedy assassination in *Libra*, and Diana Trilling's portrayal of the Scarsdale Diet doctor murder in *Mrs. Harris*, this part of the course will interrogate how much the spectacle that Toni Morrison once described as "the best means by which an official story formed" continues to serve as a superior mechanism for guaranteeing its longevity," how much it conforms to Guy Debord's notion of the "pseudo-event" that is quickly forgotten "thanks for the precipitation with which the spectacle's pulsing machinery replaces one by the next," and how much it signifies an "even strike" of the kind Jean Baudrillard defines by a "refusal to signify anything whatever." Two short oral presentations and a research paper of 20-25 pages will be required of each student. (NOTE: Because some of the texts assigned for the course are long ones, and because obtaining others may be difficult due to the rapidity with which texts go in and out of print, interested students should check the instructor's office door, Humanities 2080, after Thanksgiving for a final reading list.)

Thurs. 12:50 to 3:40 pm

S. Olster

#### EGL 606.03 PERIOD AND TRADITION: European Renaissance

As an introduction to the European Renaissance, we analyze closely ten humanist and humanism-influenced books ranging chronologically from the *trecento* (Petrarch's *Letters*) to the late sixteenth century (Montaigne's *Essays*). While each of these books has turned out to be in some way foundational to its respective genre or discipline, each was highly experimental in its time. One of our central concerns will be to recover in each case this sense of historical innovation by examining the ways these authors used traditional kinds of writing (dialogue, forensic oration, fable, historical narrative, grammatical exegesis, political treatise, familiar letter, story, *techne*, and conduct manual) to reinterpret such fundamental literary and educational concerns as the ethics of reading and writing, the relationship of imitation to invention, the epistemology of the example, the social roles of truth and fiction, the psychology of learning, the value of the past to the present, and the contest between the academic disciplines. We focus also on the formal continuities between these texts, especially their shared indebtedness to the resources of the classical rhetorical tradition. As a way to place this shared methodology in historical relief, we begin and end the term with the strongest methodological alternatives to Renaissance humanism at the beginning and at the end of its roughly 250

year long career: the scholasticism of Thomas Aquinas and the “new science” of Francis Bacon. Besides those already named, authors include Pico, Valla, Alberti, Castiglione, Machiavelli, More, Sidney, and Erasmus. Seminar requirements include an in-class presentation, a book review, and a final 25-page paper.

Tues. 3:50 to 6:40 pm

D. Pfeiffer

EGL 611.01/CLT 601 CRITICAL THEORY: Seminar in Literary Theory

The archive has long been understood as foundational to the study of history. In recent years, the concept of the archive has emerged as a powerful site, both literal and symbolic, for the production and articulation of knowledge in the humanities. In the wake of a heavy emphasis on abstract (often philosophical) theory, there has been a call from some humanities scholars to return to the archive. At the same time, theoretical investigations have opened up questions regarding the status of the archive itself as something constructed, mediated, fragmentary, and highly political. This course participates in this moment of re-evaluation by exploring, from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, the theories and practices of the archive.

We will begin by interrogating various definitions of the archive –as history, as memory, as affect, to name just a few. We will proceed to question the role of forgetting in relation to the archive. Is there such a thing as an “impossible archive”? What histories are erased, not archived? Can silences be made to speak meaningfully? Other questions we will consider include: How does the archive maintain or disrupt power relations? What is the nature and foundation of the representational and symbolic power of the archive? How might an “archive of the future” be conceived?

Readings will include works by: Michel Foucault, Carolyn Steedman, Ann Stoler, Edward Casey, Cathy Caruth, Dori Laub, Ann Cvetkovich, Roland Barthes, Susan Sontag, Jacques Derrida. In addition we will read articles from issues of *History of the Human Sciences* and *English Language Notes* devoted to theorizing the archive, and selections from an anthology, *Refiguring the Archive*.

Students will be expected to participate fully in seminar discussion, to write a seminar paper applying the concepts and theories explored in the course to a particular project grounded in an “archive” from their particular fields of study, and to present to the class a portion of their own work in progress.

Tues. 12:50 to 3:40 pm

S. Scheckel and A. Kaplan

EGL 611.02/WST 610 CRITICAL THEORY: Fashion: In Theory/In Film

Fashion has been one of the most influential phenomena in Western civilization since the early modern period. With its introduction in the modern period, film has arguable been the most influential among the media. This course considers fashion theory along side some films about fashion and some film figures who have become fashion icons.

Drawing from a range of disciplines, sociology, cultural studies, material culture, philosophy, media studies, we will read a range of theorists such as Roland Barthes, Pierre Bourdieu, Giles Lipovetsky, John Berger, Thorstein Veblen, Joanne Entwistle, Joan Dejean and others. The course is intended as an opportunity to theorize about the interconnections between cinema and fashion, with films as case studies and opportunities for original work. In conjunction with the course, there will be a one-day

symposium on film and fashion on February 23, featuring outstanding scholars in the intersections of film and fashion.

Students are expected to give short seminar reports, attend the fashion symposium, and prepare a researched seminar project, written, visual, or a combination, based on the knowledge gained from the seminar.

Thurs. 3:50 to 6:40 pm

A. Munich

#### EGL 690 DIRECTED READINGS

Taken by G4 students studying for exams

Staff

#### EGL 695.01 METHODS OF TEACHING ENGLISH

For first-year and continuing TAs in English

S. Scheckel

#### EGL 697.01 PRACTICUM IN TEACHING ENGLISH LITERATURE

For students teaching 190s

S. Scheckel

#### EGL 699 DISSERTATION RESEARCH ON CAMPUS

For students who have advanced to candidacy

Staff

#### EGL 700 DISSERTATION RESEARCH OFF CAMPUS, DOMESTIC

Staff

#### EGL 701 DISSERTATION RESEARCH OFF CAMPUS, INTERNATIONAL

Staff

**NOTE:** Enroll in these courses under the section number of your advisor. If your advisor is on leave, use the section number of another committee member **in the English department** or the section number of the graduate director (and notify her)

#### **SUMMER REGISTRATION**

**Students** who are on TA line or graduating **during the summer** should enroll for zero credits of EGL 800 to maintain full-time status.