ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Undergraduate
Course Descriptions
Summer 2020

Session I: May 28 – July 6    Extended Session: May 28 – July 19
Session II: July 8 – August 17

SUMMER SESSION I

EGL 112.30 GLO, HUM  World Literature: Modern/Contemporary
This course will examine the fluidity of globalization and its often disastrous effects on local populations and ecologies. Together we will read texts from the the Caribbean, the Middle East, Africa, and the Indian Subcontinent to consider the ways in which the human species is intricately connected by the world’s water systems. Through reading literary representations of water, we will think thematically about survival, equality, contamination, and even love.

   SESSION I:      FLEX (ONLINE)      S. PALLAS

EGL 130.30 CER, STAS  Literature, Science & Technology
This course offers an entry point for students interested in the cognitive theory and its application in the humanities. Throughout the course, we will be pairing scientific and theoretical texts that focus on the human mind, with an emphasis on 4e cognition, with neuroscience fiction, literary and genre works that focus on issues of consciousness, the mind, the brain the body, and the self. We will ask ourselves what representing cognition that is embedded, extended, embodied, and enacted might look like. How is cognition represented in literature? What can fiction teach us, through its form and content, about how our minds and the minds of others function? How does literature engage with issues of emotions while evoking our emotional responses? Why do we identify with characters, developing parasocial relationships with them, and how and why does reading literature help us to develop empathy? Where are the intersections of empathy, ethics, and literature?

   SESSION I:      FLEX (ONLINE)      J HAUTSCH

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EGL 309.30- HFA+  
**Interdisciplinary Study of Literature**

*Activism and American Drama*

In this course, we will explore how American playwrights from the early twentieth century to the present respond to, engage with, and critique the reform movements and controversies of their times. The course will be divided into four thematic units that will help us to focus our investigations and allow us to see connections across more than a century of American life: The Race Question; The Immigrant Question; The Woman Question; The Queer Question. As the course progresses, the divisions between these units will blur, ultimately giving us a more comprehensive--and interdisciplinary--look at American culture. Throughout the semester, we will strive to make connections between the primary texts (the plays), the historical moments from which they emerged, and today's headlines. Some of the playwrights we will consider include: Susan Glaspell, Eugene O’Neill, Sophie Treadwell, Tennessee Williams, Lorraine Hansberry, Arthur Miller, August Wilson, Edward Albee, Terrence McNally, Paula Vogel, and Lynn Nottage. The primary texts will be supplemented with secondary readings including excerpts from other plays/playwrights, literary theory and criticism, historical scholarship, gender and queer theory, theater criticism, and print/audio/video interviews with theater practitioners. Most weeks, students will be expected to read two plays per week in addition to completing required writing assignments.

Requirements: active engagement with course lectures; discussion board responses; short papers; final paper/project.

**SESSION I  FLEX (ONLINE)  B HARTWIG**

EGL 320.30- G, HFA+  
**Modern and Contemporary Literature**

*The Literature of War*

This course focuses on the way that war and trauma have been written about in a variety of narrative forms including fiction, poetry, short stories, memoirs, and essays. Throughout history, the experience of war has fundamentally shaped the ways that people think about themselves, their relationship to those around them, and the meanings of national citizenship. War has also posed challenges of representation, both for those who fought as well as those who did not. This course examines how writers have attempted to convey the stories of modern war in literature and interpret them in terms of changing ideas about national identity. Accompanying our readings about war will be critical essays on trauma theory, as one cannot discuss the horrors of war without attention to the traumas, both individual and collective, that it inflicts upon those who experience it- both directly

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Assignments will include a midterm and final paper, as well as regular participation in our course discussion forums.

**EXTENDED SUMMER SESSION:**

*May 28 – July 19*

**EGL 205.30-I, HFA+ British Literature I**
This course offers a comprehensive introduction to and survey of British Literature from *Beowulf* to *Paradise Lost*. My particular approach to this material will combine online lectures covering the literary history of each period we are discussing with assignments consisting of weekly short responses to the readings as well as longer, close readings of key passages from primary texts. Our ultimate goal is to achieve an understanding of the development of British literature, culture, and society by tracing its evolution from the Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods through the Renaissance and up to the Restoration.

**EGL 226.30-K, HUM, USA 20th Century American Literature**
This online version of EGL 226: Twentieth-Century American Literature will provide a survey of major works reflecting the regional, ethnic, and traditional interests of American writers, with emphasis on the post-1945 period. We will examine the literature of the twentieth-century alongside its history, moving from an exploration of the literary tradition of modernism in Harlem Renaissance and “lost generation” literature, to the rise of postmodernism against the dual backdrop of the Cold War and the development of late capitalism. Particular attention will be paid to what American Studies scholars would call “coefficients of identity”: gender, race, nationality, class, sexuality, and religion. This survey will highlight texts that respond to and reveal some of these epistemological crises. The texts we study will take various mediums and forms, including short stories, poetry, plays, and a graphic novel. Course requirements include participation in weekly discussion board and Voicethread forums on Blackboard, two 3-2-1-0 write-ups, and one analytical paper. A reliable internet connection and familiarity with online interfaces (such as Blackboard, video conferencing, Google Drive, etc.) are required.

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EGL 276.30-B, HUM, DIV  
**Feminism: Literature & Cultural Context**

Queer Studies: Lit. & Culture

This course serves as an entrypoint to queer studies, providing a historical survey of the field as it emerged out of earlier feminist works. Through an examination of literature by or about queer folks, homing in on concepts of gender and sexuality in drama, poetry, and fiction, our course will consider how intersectional representations of queer identity have changed over time, impacted by a network of social, economic, and political influences. Students will study queer themes and issues (beginning with queer studies’ emergence in the Academy), including queer studies and feminism, queer identities, queer history, queer futurity, queerness and race, queer representation, and more. Students will read a wide range of literature by queer authors and queer theorists, including Alison Bechdel, Jack Halberstam, Samuel R. Delany, Larry Kramer, José Esteban Muñoz, Maggie Nelson, and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick. Assessments for the course will occur through a number of forms: discussion thread participation, quizzes, blog posts, reading-response papers, and podcast presentations.

**EXTENDED SESSION: FLEX (ONLINE) J. HEGGESTAD.**

**Session II: July 8 – August 17**

EGL 111.30 GLO, HUM  
**Masterpieces/World Lit: Ancient**

This course will delve deep into Greek literature and dabble in secondary sources on its historical contexts. We will read across genres including epic, lyric poetry, tragedy, comedy, and philosophy. Secondary sources will focus on the social and historical changes that allowed for such an unprecedentedly rich production of literature and other art forms.

**SESSION II: FLEX (ONLINE) R. WEITZER**

EGL 192.30-B, HUM  
**Fiction: The Art of the Story**

Graphic Memoirs concerning politics of war, race, gender, sexuality (and of late, climate change!) have seen a steady rise in the last couple of decades, following the colossal success of Art Spiegelman’s *Maus* (1991) amongst both academic and non-academic audiences. Recently, comics are also being used to present explicitly auto/ethnographic research as seen in Ebony Flowers’s *Hot Comb* (2019) or Thi Bui’s *The Best We Could Do* (2017). This course will consider the dual potential of the comic medium: comics as method, as well as comics as literatures of resistance. We will study how comics display an openness to difference, and how this potential of the medium can

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be used to build tolerance and empathy amongst people from different backgrounds—across ethnic, cultural, gendered borders. We will read a range of comics from different genres, such as queer comics, transnational comics, and disability comics, to expand our understanding of contemporary literature’s role in social justice and in extracting marginalized bodies from the fear of Otherness. Assignments will include a guided comics making virtual workshop. Some of the texts we shall cover are: Alison Bechdel’s *Are You My Mother*, Marjane Satrapi’s *Persepolis*, Thi Bui’s *The Best We Could Do*, Malik Sajad’s *A Boy from Kashmir*, David Small’s *Stitches*.

**SESSION II: FLEX (ONLINE)  K. SOHINI**

**EGL 194.30-B, GLO, HUM  Film: Mastering The Movies**

*Lights, Camera, Action: Reading Into A Film*

How do you read a film? This question is one that will follow us throughout the semester as we gain familiarity with film analysis techniques. The course will begin with the Golden Age of Hollywood (1913-1969) and will move into the present. As we travel through the decades, we will learn about different film genres including the noir, historical drama, musical, horror, comedy, and documentary. Along our journey we will learn film terminology to help us critically view and write about film. A few films we will watch include: *Sunset Boulevard, 12 Years a Slave, Fiddler on the Roof, Get Out, Clue, Parasite,* and *Tiger King*. There will be Voice Thread forums for discussions, Zoom small group meetings, two short film analysis papers, and a final research paper.

**SESSION II: FLEX (ONLINE)  A. RIMBY**

**EGL 220.30, ARTS, HUM:  Critical Approaches: Cinema:**

*Production: Reality vs. Appearance*

The course topic is “Production: Reality vs. Appearance.” This class is primarily about understanding our world through the lens of film by utilizing methods from Cultural Studies (theoretical, historical, empirical, ethnographic, aesthetic, etc.) Particular attention is paid to the power dynamics of contemporary culture, its historical foundations, aesthetics, and objects. Cultural practices and objects (such as art, media, literature, recreation, fashion, architecture, etc.) are assessed in conjunction with various social phenomena, such as ideology, politics, socioeconomic class, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, and sexual orientation.

Rather than focusing on cinema as a cultural object per se, this course focuses on using film and other screened media as a means for analyzing culture, particularly mainstream U.S. culture, and how visual media, as part of a cultural industry of production, has shaped postmodern society. We will use films to examine how reality is reflected, distorted, and constructed through mediated images. To perform this investigation, we will focus on the following:

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• Psychoanalytic and critical theories as methods for understanding character motivation, ideology, and spectatorship.
• The public relations industry, advertising, art, and politics portrayed in and through film.
• The prevalence of screened media in our society. How does visual media help produce constructions of ourselves, others, reality, and values?

COURSE CATALOG DESIGNATION
Analysis of film content and style through screenings and substantial readings in film history and theory. Considers social issues, cultural artifacts, and forms of artistic expression. Students learn how to recognize, read, and analyze visual media. Formerly offered as CCS 101; not for credit in addition to CCS 101.

SESSION II: FLEX (ONLINE)  E. GILLCRIST

EGL 389.30 H, CER, STAS  Science Fiction
Brains, Bots, Being Human: Old and New Representations of Artificial Intelligence
This course seeks to explore literary and film representations of artificial intelligence in its embodied and disembodied forms. Thinking through the distinctions between the android, the cyborg, and the immaterial virtual AI, bodies whose ambiguous identities as both human-like and human-made challenge the boundaries between human and nonhuman life, we will look at the way in which the intertwining of science, technology and notions of embodiment works to destabilize our traditional understanding of the human as a unified biological and political subject, and of the border between the human and the nonhuman as fixed and impenetrable. Through a close analysis of literary texts by sci-fi authors such as Isaac Asimov, Philip K. Dick and James Tiptree, Jr., and recent film and television such as the Terminator series, Ex Machina and Battlestar Galactica, we will examine the evolution of AI in western fiction as a space for the negotiation of identity, specifically of the ways in which the increasing blurring of the boundaries between organic/artificial, real/simulated works to destabilize what it means to be human. Throughout this course, we will seek to answer the following questions: Who or what counts as human? In what ways does artificial intelligence allow us to conceive of alternative forms of nonhuman subjectivity? But most importantly, is your toaster plotting to kill you?

SESSION II  FLEX (ONLINE)  S SANTOS

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