

Fall 2015

Fall 2015 English Program Course Offerings

For all registration dates and deadlines, see the [GC academic calendar](#).

To view detailed course descriptions [click here](#) or click on the faculty name in the grid below.

For the Practicum for English Program students teaching for CUNY [click here](#).

For Dissertation Supervision [click here](#).

Course listings and room numbers subject to change.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
11:45AM-1:45PM	Chuh Intro Doc Stu Room 4433	Brownstein Char & Caric Room 3306	Pease Mod & Conscious Room 4433 Reynolds Am Renaissance Room 3306	Mohamed Lit Pet Rights to Bill Rights Room 4419	
2:00PM-4:00PM	Steel Small Things Room 4433	Reid-Pharr Black Lives Room 3306 Israel Lit's Wake Room 4433 Koestenbaum Trance Room 9116	Josephs Digital Caribbean Room 3310A Lott Diss Wkshp Room 3308	Richardson Am Aesthetics Room 7395 Yousef Enlightenment Room 3308	
4:15PM-6:15PM	Kelly Myst of Poe Room 3305 Sargent Textual Issues Room 3310B	Vardy Deserted Villages Room 3306 Richter Contemp Narratives Room 3209	Miller Exp Selves, Graphic Subs Room 3209 Hitchcock Poco/Postr/PoMarx Room 6107	Wan Lit Transnat Context Room 3306 Pollard Erly Mod Tragic Wmn Room 3310A Agathocleaous World Vic Stu	

				Room 3308	
6:30PM-8:30PM	Hintz Child & YA Lit Room 5383 Watts Lit Stu: Hum Cult Room 4422	Wallace Toni Morrison Room 4422	Shor Speaking T to P Room 3306	Alcalay CANCELED Occupied Am Room 3310B	

Course descriptions in alphabetical order by faculty name.

ENGL 84500. [Tanya Agathocleous](#). “Worlding Victorian Studies”. Thursdays 4:15PM-6:15PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28533]

Victorian Studies, the only literary field still identified with a British ruler, has recently shifted in scope, expanding beyond its national emphasis in a range of ways. This course examines the theoretical, methodological and formal implications of this shift. For example: in what ways does thinking about literature in terms of “things,” “networks,” or “affects” change the scope of the field and the kinds of questions we ask of it? What would a surface reading of imperial culture look like? How might we close read texts in translation? After analyzing the range of “worlds” constructed within in the field—variously labeled imperial, oceanic (Black Atlantic, Indian Ocean, transatlantic), international, cosmopolitan, transnational and geopolitical—we will discuss the research methodologies that best serve these different approaches and apply them to literary case studies (texts may include *Jane Eyre*, *The Moonstone*, *The Way We Live Now*, and *Sea of Poppies*, as well as essays, poems and periodicals). Finally, we will think about the historical as well as geographic parameters of the field by investigating the ways eighteenth-century and modernist scholars have used non-national paradigms. Alongside literary-critical works focused on specific texts, theoretical readings are likely to include works by Anderson, Apter, Bhabha, Berlant, Chakrabarty, Foucault, Gilroy, Harvey, Jameson, Latour, Marx, Moretti, Said, and Sedgwick.

Canceled ENGL 85410. [Ammiel Alcalay](#). “Occupied America: History, Method, Poetics”. Thursdays 6:30PM-8:30PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28534] canceled

Nothing could be more central to American reality than the relationships between Americans and American Indians, yet those relationships are of course the most invisible and the most lied

about. The lies are not simply a denial; they constitute a new world, the world in which American culture is located.

Jimmie Durham

In this course we will work from the recent present and the distant past to familiarize ourselves with pre-colonial “America,” that is, before colonization, drastically shifting the balance and burden of power backwards in order to relocate culture and politics. We will use these soundings to establish a different chronology for the study of human habitation, the relationship of peoples, and the interpretation of diverse cultures on the lands that come to be called the Americas.

At the same time, we will push back at the past through a range of contemporary materials—prose, poetry, investigative poetics, art—that can inform, support, interrogate, and perforate the wide array of methodological approaches and disciplines—geography, linguistics, anthropology, history, etc.—through which our understanding of the complexities of political life and cultural formation will emerge.

At the heart of our inquiry will be a willingness to dwell on singular form or instance and use it as a means to rethink methodological hierarchies and historical categories that, in fact, shift allegiances and suppress open approaches to inquiry and singular forms of expression. The course aims to begin familiarizing ourselves with the vast parameters of Native American studies, and how some understanding of this terrain necessarily complicates English and American Studies, Postcolonial Studies, and a host of other sub-fields and concerns.

As the class reads a range of representative texts in common, each student will embark on an individual course of research and be expected to inform the class regularly on their thought and findings; these trajectories can go in myriad chronological and disciplinary directions, while paying attention to incorporating critiques of historical, political, ideological, theoretical and formal assumptions that often govern disciplinary structures.

Readings may include:

The Book of the Fourth World; Gordon Brotherston

Hero, Hawk, and Open Hand, Richard F. Townsend

American Indian Languages: Cultural & Social Contexts, Shirley Silver, Wick R. Miller

Changes in the Land, William Cronon

Selected writings of Carl O. Sauer

Africans and Native Americans, Jack Forbes

Native People of Southern New England 1500-1650, Kathleen Bragdon

Women’s Indian Captivity Narratives, Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola

Wisdom Sits in Places, Keith Basso

Selected writings of Jaime de Angulo

The Mayan Letters, Charles Olson

The Shoshoneans (and other selected writings), Edward Dorn

Waiting to be Interrupted (and other selected writings and works), Jimmie Durham

Almanac of the Dead, Leslie Marmon Silko

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith: An American Modernist, Carolyn Kastner

Selected works, Edgar Heap of Birds

Native North American Art, Janet Catherine Berlo & Ruth B. Phillips

Like a Hurricane: The Indian Movement from Alcatraz to Wounded Knee, Paul Chaat Smith & Robert Allen Warrior

ENGL 87100. [Rachel Brownstein](#). “Character and Caricature: Minor Characters in Novels from Burney to Wharton”. Tuesdays 11:45AM-1:45PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28535] (Cross listed with WSCP 81000)

We will read and discuss seven or eight novels, pursuing the pleasures offered by these texts and also trying to discern and define the terms of the reader’s engagement with minor (often comic) characters. We will look at some pictures (portraits and caricatures) and read some critical works (by, e.g., E.M. Forster, D.W. Harding, Deidre Lynch, D.A. Miller, and Alex Woloch). The novels are: Frances Burney, *Evelina* (1788); Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (1813); Jane Austen, *Emma* (1816); William Makepeace Thackeray, *Vanity Fair* (1847-48); Anthony Trollope, *Barchester Towers* (1857) ;George Meredith, *The Egoist* (1879) ;Henry James, *The Portrait of a Lady* (1880-81); Edith Wharton, *The Custom of the Country* (1913)

[TOP](#)

ENGL 70000. [Kandice Chuh](#). “Introduction to Doctoral Studies in English”. Mondays 11:45AM-1:45PM. 4 credits. *Restricted to Ph.D. Program in English students*. [CRN 28536]

This course will seek to address four aspects of graduate studies in English: 1) English studies as a field and discipline; 2) research questions and practices; 3) connections to intellectual communities and networks (i.e. professionalization); and 4) the function of the university. Theoretically, we will examine the boundaries and objects of interest for the field, discussing how they intersect with but also remain distinct from other areas and approaches, and how various theories and methods (formalist, historicist, activist, etc.) define, in sometimes contradictory ways, English studies. Practically, we will discuss how to define objects of inquiry (“texts” and “contexts”) within the field, how to research such objects, how to identify the main debates currently circulating around them, and how to develop new knowledge and innovative ideas and approaches. Four short essays responding to assigned readings will constitute the written requirement for this course. The first will require situating your own current research interests in relation to contemporary issues in English studies and university education. The second will identify and analyze a current critical essay in terms of its argument, audience and evidence while explaining its objectives and methods. The third will propose a research question and annotated bibliography explain how you plan to use your research and define your own distinctive approach; this paper offers an opportunity to rehearse and reflect on seminar papers for another course. Your fourth essay will propose two or three of the texts assigned in this course that you consider essential for the field along with one or two additional ones not included that are particularly important to your research and teaching, explaining their importance.

ENGL 80600. [Carrie Hintz](#). “Children’s and Young Adult Literature: Reflections on Theory and Method”. Mondays 6:30PM-8:30PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28537]

The course will explore secondary and theoretical texts in the field of Children’s and Young Adult literature to explore how scholars develop their research—and their methodological and theoretical underpinnings as they do so.

After looking at a couple of formative texts (Beverly Lyons Clark and Jacqueline Rose), we will focus on books and articles published over the last 5-10 years, selectively reading relevant primary texts. A number of the books and articles we cover will be those honored with prizes by the Children’s Literature Association—but not all of them.

Critical methods explored will include, but not be limited to: historicism, critical race theory, feminist theory, object-oriented-ontology, psychoanalysis, visual and sound studies, the new formalism, affect theory, postcolonial theory, popular culture theory and criticism (esp. film and television), genre theory, material culture approaches, and childhood studies approaches.

The course will be useful not only to those who seek to incorporate children's and YA into their own scholarship, but also to students who would like to examine theoretical methodologies within the field of English studies more generally (and good for those working on their Passport essay).

ENGL 86600. [Peter Hitchcock](#). "Postcolonialism/Poststructuralism/Postmarxism: Theoretical Postings From the Present". Wednesdays 4:15PM-6:15PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28538]

We are so used to "post"ing theory that understanding its nuance is already lost to generalization and conflation of differing forms of "post" in its articulation. There is also a deadening presentism prevalent in the politics of post that must, at any cost, announce a fetishistic timeliness by post-dating any current theoretical position (this is basically academic Snapchat). Thirdly, one cannot discount the power of posting theory because a politics of "after" is after the idea theory is often a luxurious and elitist alibi for the real foundations evident in otherwise relatively simple truths. This course will argue for a somewhat more conflictual, reflexive, and situated understanding of theory in the era of the post-it. On the one hand it will serve as a polemical introduction to some of the more prominent figures and theories associated with my troublesome trio; on the other, the course will advance a critical paradigm in the service of a practical cross-talk in their otherwise disparate concerns. This does not mean the politics of continued decolonization, rigorous anti-structuralism, and Marxist exceptionalism are the same. Far from it. Nevertheless, I hope to clarify the notion that theoretical difference has a politics of alignment and the obfuscation of this possibility principally girds the will-to-post in contemporary theorization and its discontents. We will attempt to avoid the supermarket approach to theory ("better reference this Italian, French or "other" somewhere") and a new passion for dismissing theory as some hermeneutical fib. If we take theory more seriously we might better appreciate its ability to conceptualize radically our research agendas, even if this might mean suspending the pretensions of post in such endeavor (seen, for instance, in some forms of eco-criticism), or subjecting its matter-of-factness to committed reevaluation (approaches that can extend to a variety of posts, like postfeminism, postnationalism, postcommunism, and, most awkwardly, post-postcolonialism, etc.). The course will conclude with a view to the future of "posts," and theories most likely to inform or supercede it.

Readings will be drawn from Spivak, Mbembe, Brown, Foucault, Derrida, Baudrillard, Butler, Jameson, Foster, Balibar, Ranciere, Zizek, Negri, Agamben and Badiou, but not exclusively. Pre-posts will include Spinoza, Marx, and Fanon. While prior knowledge of such theory would be greatly appreciated it will not be assumed. The basis of our discussions will be critical curiosity not estimable fluency. A class presentation and essay will be required in consultation with the instructor.

[TOP](#)

ENGL 76000. [Nico Israel](#). “Literature’s Wake”. Tuesdays 2:00PM-4:00PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28539]

James Joyce reportedly said that it took him seventeen years to write his final novel, *Finnegans Wake*, so he didn’t see why the book shouldn’t take seventeen years to read. In this seminar we’ll read his 672-page, self-styled “book of the night”--Ulysses was the “book of the day”--in a mere thirteen weeks. We’ll explore different scholarly approaches to the book (mythic, narratological, queer, postcolonial, global: *Wake* scholarship has attracted adherents of every major interpretive movement) as well as engaging various internet tools set up by the novel’s non-academic admirers. (Like *Ulysses*, *Finnegans Wake* has a special, proleptic affinity for the the web.) As is often the case with a funereal wake, Joyce’s 1939 novel is both terminal and germinal; it puts something (what used to be called the “Western Literary Tradition”) to rest and marks an awakening of something radically new. Our seminar will focus on this pivot point.

Requirements include regular attendance, a seven-to-eight page midterm paper, a 15-20 page final paper, and one or two oral presentations. If you have any question about this course, feel free to email Professor Israel (nicoisrael@gmail.com). Don’t be put off by the book’s purported difficulty; we are likely to spend much of our Tuesday afternoons together laughing.

ENGL 85800. [Kelly Josephs](#). “The Digital Caribbean”. Wednesdays 2:00PM-4:00PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28540]

In its rhizomatic structure and development, the internet is analogous to Caribbean culture: born out of disparate pieces and peoples; always already predicated on an elsewhere as home or authority; always already working to ignore geography and physical space as barriers to connection. This seminar probes the various epistemological, political and strategic ways in which cyberspace intersects with the formation and conceptualization of the Caribbean. What constitutes the Caribbean is, of course, not a new question. As we explore the digital media productions that continue to reconfigure the social and geographic contours of the region, we will build on familiar debates surrounding study of the Caribbean. Issues to be addressed include: *Geography*: What challenge, if any, might cyberspace pose to our geo-centered conceptualization of Caribbean cultures? *Community*: In what ways do online spaces that claim (or are claimed by) the Caribbean struggle, together or individually, to articulate a cohesive culture? *Archival history and voice*: Does the ephemerality of online life and the economics of access endanger or enable what we may call the Caribbean subject? *Identity and representation*: What indeed comprises “the Caribbean subject”? How do questions of authenticity get deployed in crucial moments of tension involving diasporic subjects, particularly in the sped-up world of digital production? These questions, framed by Caribbean Studies, will be our primary focus, but they will be articulated with questions and theories from new digital media studies about knowledge production and circulation, digital boundaries and the democracy of access and usage.

Taking the concept of articulation (primarily as it was developed by Stuart Hall in the Cultural Studies context) as a starting point, this course begins by suggesting how Caribbean culture online can be mapped along select nodes of articulation, which carry within them registers of identity formation as well as resistances to structures of dominance. For example, what spaces serve as joints between academic, social, cultural, institutional and pedagogical sites? How, across these spaces and intersections, does cyberspace create the Caribbean? That is, we have long looked at film and literature to think the epistemology of this ever-shifting geo-cultural site,

but how does a turn to the transtextual internet and the usage thereof affect what we think we know about the region and its diaspora? As the majority of graduate students are both scholars and future teachers, we will continuously consider the pedagogical and professional aspects of working with not only digital texts, but specifically those produced to represent a minority culture, particularly given the increasing digitization of academic work. **Texts:** This course melds theories of Caribbean culture with those of digital culture to conduct critical study of online spaces. In addition to examining primary digital sources, we will read articles from writers including: Stuart Hall, Kamau Brathwaite, Edouard Glissant, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, David Scott, Annie Paul, Curwen Best, Lisa Paravisini-Gebert, Anna Everett, Karim H. Karim, Lisa Makamura, Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, Jennifer Brinkerhoff and others. **Requirements:** Oral presentation, blog and in-class participation, and a term paper (15-20 pages) or digital project.

ENGL 75000. [William Kelly](#). “The Mysteries of Edgar Poe: Death and Life in Antebellum America”. Mondays 4:15PM-6:15PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28541]

When The American literary canon was formulated in the 1930s, Edgar Poe was an outlier: too dark, too southern, too urban, too weird. But like many of his characters, Poe has refused to stay dead. Despite the best efforts of the Brahmin elite to consign him to the shadows, Poe emerges, again and again, as the spirit of his age, its representative man. The return of the repressed has been insistent. But despite renewed attention to Poe, his relation to his context remains opaque. This seminar will investigate that nexus, attempting both to locate Poe more precisely and to deploy his writing as an aperture, a lens through which to view the structures of thought and feeling operant in his America. The points at which we might assess Poe’s engagement with the preoccupations of antebellum culture are many. A short list would include: slavery, race, and imperialism; globalization, capital formation and inequality; democracy and its discontents; the fluidities of gender; the relation of adventure and venture capital; immigration, urbanization and poverty; the transformative rise of magazine and newspaper culture; literary nationalism, commercial patronage, and the changing nature of authorship. And then there are the more abstract chords that Poe sounds: the pervasive melancholia of the age, a strange preoccupation with death at odds with American optimism; the attraction to anti-rationalist epistemologies; the simultaneous celebration of scientific discovery and the subversion of its methodologies and totalizing claims. We’ll read a wide swath of Poe’s fiction, criticism, and poetry and place that work into conversation with other writing from Poe’s age and from our own. We’ll conclude the semester by considering the long shadow Poe has cast across popular and high culture. The organization of the seminar will be negotiated by its members.

[TOP](#)

ENGL 80200. [Wayne Koestenbaum](#). “Trance”. Tuesdays 2:00PM-4:00PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28542] (Cross listed with WSCP 81000)

Dickinson called it “Circumference.” Tennyson called it “mystic gleams.” Walter Benjamin called it “concentration.” (Elsewhere, he called it “hashish.”) In this seminar, we will conduct a spirited investigation of trance—as metaphor and method—in literary experience. Trance, for our curious purposes, can include any extreme state of consciousness, any condition of automatism, exaltation, possession, inspiration, or acute receptivity. We won’t seek to confirm or deny the truth of trance; instead, we will trace its role as imagined catalyst for rhapsodic flights, for somatic and ontological experiment, and for oneiric (and quasi-somnambulistic?)

departures from customary behavior. Our adventure may begin with Marcel Mauss's *A General Theory of Magic*, Gertrude Stein's *Lucy Church Amiably*, stories by Robert Walser, and essays by Walter Benjamin. We will then read some visionary poets, including Antonin Artaud, Vicente Huidobro, Aimé Césaire, H.D., and Alice Notley. Next on our itinerary will be errant prose: Clarice Lispector's *Água Viva*, Jane Bowles's *Two Serious Ladies*, Henri Michaux's mescaline writings (*Thousand Times Broken: Three Books*), and Pierre Guyotat's *In the Deep*. We might end the semester by reading selections from Jerome Rothenberg's epochal anthology, *Technicians of the Sacred: A Range of Poetries from Africa, America, Asia, Europe & Oceania*. Requirements: in-class presentation and a final project.

ENGL 91000. [Eric Lott](#). "Dissertation Workshop". Wednesdays 2:00PM-4:00PM. 0 credits. Restricted to Level 2 & 3 Ph.D. Program in English Students. [CRN 28543]

This seminar will give participants the opportunity to develop and complete their dissertation prospectus and/or draft dissertation chapters. It will be conducted as a workshop with members reading and commenting on one another's work under the professor's guidance. We will discuss the dissertation as an always-evolving genre as well as practical issues of writing and revision, research and research methods, documentation, presentation, and more. We will also talk about professionalizing matters including engagement with current scholarly conversations and theoretical discourses, creating conference presentations and scholarly articles as part of the dissertation writing process, and thinking about the dissertation as a draft of a first monograph.

ENGL 87500. [Nancy K. Miller](#). "Experimental Selves, Graphic Subjects".

Wednesdays 4:15PM-6:15PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28545] (Cross listed with WSCP 81000)

"I do not know how far I differ from other people," Virginia Woolf remarks in "A Sketch of the Past," neatly summarizing the memoirist's dilemma. In this course we will explore the process of self-representation in the works of twentieth and twenty-first century writers and artists for whom questions of identity have led to experiments in form.

Writers include: Roland Barthes, Lynda Barry, Alison Bechdel, Leslie Feinberg, Zora Neale Hurston, Maxine Hong Kingston, Adrienne Rich, Marjane Satrapi, Gertrude Stein, Virginia Woolf.

Work for the course: in class presentations and a final paper.

[TOP](#)

ENGL 82100. [Feisal Mohamed](#). "Literature from the Petition of Right to the Bill of Rights." Thursdays 11:45AM-1:45PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28546]

It is often said that England has an unwritten constitution. That is both true and untrue. The tumults of England's seventeenth century are in many respects constitutional struggles over the location of political sovereignty, the validity of the royal prerogative, the powers of the lords temporal and spiritual, and the extension of suffrage in the 'commons'. The two documents bracketing this course draw attention to legislative attempts to settle such issues: Sir Edward Coke and John Selden's Petition of Right in 1628, which sought to stem the autocratic impulses of King Charles I; and the Bill of Rights of 1689, which solidified the power exercised by Parliament in the Glorious Revolution. We will also look at the most comprehensive attempts to codify the English constitution, the Instrument of Government and Humble Petition and Advice passed under Oliver Cromwell's Protectorate.

As we might expect, these legislative measures are a faint reflection of the period's very lively debates on political liberties, which include calls for greater democracy, debates on censorship, sustained dialogue on religious freedom, and interrogations of the subjugation of women. We shall read such radical voices as those of the Levellers and Diggers—who call for universal suffrage and implement early communism, respectively. We shall see in the chaotic twenty months following the death of Cromwell an explosion of recommendations on settling an English republic: from the Machiavellian republican tradition that finds English expression in the work of Sir James Harrington, to the meritocratic oligarchy of the younger Sir Henry Vane, to the Presbyterian theocracy of Richard Baxter. These run against the still-current patriarchal theory of political order, which we will see in Sir Robert Filmer, and the strident claims for the sovereign authority of Thomas Hobbes' influential *Leviathan*. These concerns of seventeenth-century political theory will be read in light of current interpretations of sovereignty, constitutionalism, and political theology.

Such political concerns register themselves in this course's literary figures, all of whom occupy positions very near the heart of political power: Sir William Davenant, the court playwright struggling to make work for himself in the Interregnum; John Donne, who as a prominent preacher in the national church promoted its position on civil obedience; John Milton, the first English thinker to defend the execution of Charles I and the new regime's most important propagandist; and Andrew Marvell, recently and persuasively described as a 'chameleon' blending into his political background, whether as Milton's colleague in Cromwell's government or as a Member of Parliament in the Restoration. These writers reveal how political unrest changes the business of cultural production, and also how in this period political crises are also and necessarily literary crises.

ENGL 76000. [Allison Pease](#). "Modernity and Consciousness". Wednesdays 11:45AM-1:45PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28547]

The search for subjectivity, for authentic self-presence, is the subject of some of the most provocative and exciting, if challenging, literature and theory of the twentieth century. What does it mean to be a self, and can meaning emanate from the self alone? In this course we will read theories of modernity and consciousness alongside novels, plays, and stories from the twentieth century in search of answers to these questions. Writers and thinkers on the reading list may include Rene Descartes, Mathew Arnold, Walter Pater, Jurgen Habermas, W.E.B. DuBois, Sigmund Freud, Paul Gilroy, Henry James, William James, May Sinclair, Virginia Woolf, Nella Larsen, James Joyce, Joseph Conrad, Dorothy Richardson, and Samuel Beckett.

ENGL 81500. [Tanya Pollard](#). "Early Modern Tragic Women and their Classical Models". Thursdays 4:15PM-6:15PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28548] (Cross listed with WSCP 81000)

Early moderns identified tragedy explicitly with its origins in the ancient Greek world, and the Greek plays most frequently printed, translated, and staged in the period all featured female protagonists: especially bereaved mothers and self-sacrificing virgins. This course will explore the way these female tragic icons haunted the early modern stage. We will read classical tragedies popular in the period, and consider their resonances in early modern plays that engage them directly or indirectly. Readings will include Euripides' *Hecuba*, *Iphigenia*, *Alcestis*, and *Medea*; Seneca's *Troades* and *Medea*; Lumley's *Iphigenia*, Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, Shakespeare and Peele's *Titus Andronicus*, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Winter's Tale*, and Webster's *Duchess*

of Malfi.

[TOP](#)

ENGL 85500. [Robert Reid-Pharr](#). “Black Lives”. Tuesdays 2:00PM-4:00PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28549] (Cross listed with WSCP 81000)

We will begin with the assumption that the very idea of a socially alive blackness continues to be intensely contested both philosophically and socially. The field of Black Studies is designed in part to address this situation. In most instances, however, the fundamental belief of scholars of black identity and culture has been that if the humanities and social sciences could only be weaned from the most vulgar forms of white supremacy they might yet provide key locations for the articulation of truly inclusive universalist ideals. In this course we will ask simply if this assumption is true. We will read both life writing and key works addressing questions of black subjectivity. These include: Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin/White Masks*; Alexander G. Welheliye, *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human*. Selections from Katherine McKittrick, ed. Sylvia Wynter: *On Being Human as Praxis*; Fred Moten and Stefano Harvey, *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study*; Nahum Chandler, “Of Exorbitance: The Problem of the Negro as a Problem of Thought.” *Criticism* 50:3 (2008): 345 – 410; Stuart Hall, “Race, Articulation, and Societies Structured in Dominance.” In *Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism*, Paris: UNESCO, 1980; Sylvia Wynter, “On How We Mistook the Map for the Territory and Re-imprisoned Ourselves in our Unbearable Wrongness of Being, of Désêtre: Black Studies Toward the Human Project,” in Lewis Gordon and Jane Gordon, eds. *Not Only the Master’s Tools: African American Studies in Theory and Practice*; Frank B. Wilderson, *Incognegro: A Memoir of Exile and Apartheid*; Lucille Clifton, *Good Woman: Poems and a Memoir*; Richard Wright, *Black Boy: A Record of Childhood and Youth*; James Baldwin, *Notes of a Native Son*; Samuel Delany, *The Motion of Light in Water*; M. Nourbese Philip, *Zong*; Gary Fisher, *Gary in Your Pocket: Stories and Notebooks of Gary Fisher*. Students will be responsible for two in class presentations and a final paper.

ENGL 80200. [David Reynolds](#). “American Renaissance”. Wednesdays 11:45AM-1:45PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28550]

Known as the American Renaissance, the four decades leading up to the Civil War saw landmark meditations on race and slavery by Martin Delany, William Wells Brown, Frederick Douglass, and Harriet Jacobs; innovations in rhetoric and philosophy on the part of Emerson and Thoreau; the metaphysical depth and cultural breadth represented by the novels of Melville and Hawthorne; the poetic experimentation of Whitman and Dickinson; and the psychological and artistic achievement of Edgar Allan Poe. Urban life and class conflict were dramatized in fiction by George Lippard, and women’s issues in novels by Sara Parton and others. In addition to reading central works of American literature—among them *Blake*, *Clotel*, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, *Moby-Dick*, “Bartleby,” *The Scarlet Letter*, *Leaves of Grass*, *Walden*, Poe’s tales, Emerson’s essays, Dickinson’s poems, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, and *Ruth Hall*--we shall discuss current approaches to literary theory, criticism, and American Studies.

ENGL 75100. [Joan Richardson](#). “American Aesthetics: ‘. . . a feeling of if’”. Thursdays 2:00PM-4:00PM. [CRN 28551]

We will begin the term slow reading “The Stream of Thought” chapter from William James’s

The Principles of Psychology (1890)—the source of “...a feeling of *if*...”—and radiate out from there to other selections from James as well as to referencing others he brings to mind. Some of the usual suspects will be included: Jonathan Edwards, Emerson, Emily Dickinson, Charles Sanders Peirce, Wallace Stevens, Stanley Cavell, Susan Howe. But there will also be surprises. We recall that John Winthrop’s 1630 lay sermon “A Model of Christian Charity,” delivered aboard the *Arbella* as the ship pitched and rolled in a howling storm threatening to break it up as it approached the rocky coast of Massachusetts, was premised on an *if*. *If* the voyagers with him, on their way to found a community “as a city upon a hill,” promised *x, y, z* and then reached safety, it would mean that God had formed a compact, a covenant, with them in which they were providentially enjoined to honor that compact, act their words. Winthrop’s gambit can be seen as the first move in the language game that would come to be called “pragmatism”: that is, the projection of a belief convincing enough to serve as a platform for action.

After carefully navigating “The Stream of Thought,” we will settle for a while into James’s 1909 *The Meaning of Truth: A Sequel to Pragmatism* that he described in the Preface as “all the work of my pen that bears directly on the truth-question.” Simply reading through the chapter titles—finding, for example, “The Tigers in India,” “The Relation Between Knower and Known,” “The Existence of Julius Caesar” —gives a taste of what will be on the table for our delectation. Walking through James’s pages we come upon phrases and sentences such as: “the feeling’s *dream*”; “A feeling feels as a gun shoots”; “directly intuited tigers”; “The paper is in the mind and the mind is around the paper...” We will also consider sections from another chapter of *The Principles of Psychology*, “Necessary Truths and the Effects of Experience,” noting particularly, among other passages: “What makes the assumption [of Nature’s intelligibility] ‘scientific,’ and not merely poetic, what makes a Helmholtz and his kin *discoverers* [James’s emphasis] is that the things of Nature turn out to act *as if* [my emphasis] they *were* [James’s emphasis] of the kind assumed.”

A term paper or equivalent project is required of those registered for 4 credits. Active participation around the table is required of all registered for credit.

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ENGL 80600. [David Richter](#). “Contemporary Narrative Theory”. Tuesdays 4:15PM-6:15PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28552]

After a brief but respectful glance at early twentieth century narrative theory (Henry James's *The Art of Fiction*; E.M. Forster's *Aspects of the Novel*; M.M. Bakhtin's *Discourse in the Novel*), the course will move to the two most fertile sources of contemporary narratology, Wayne C. Booth's *The Rhetoric of Fiction* and Gérard Genette's *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*.

In the main part of the course, we will be reading theoretical and applied texts by scholars from the four principal branches of contemporary narrative theory: (1) rhetorical narratology, including Seymour Chatman, James Phelan, Peter Rabinowitz, and me; (2) cognitive narratology, including David Herman, Alan Palmer, Marie-Laure Ryan, and Lisa Zunshine; (3) "unnatural" narratology, adapting narrative theory to experimental, minimally mimetic or anti-mimetic texts, including Jan Alber, Henrik Skov Nielsen, and Brian Richardson; and (4) identity narratology (my shorthand term for theories that view gender/race/national markings as central rather than peripheral to the reading of narratives), including Susan Lanser, Gerald Prince, and Robyn Warhol.

We will be discussing the controversies that arise from these approaches over topics that will

include (1) authors, narrators, characters; (2) plot, progression, time; (3) narrative worlds: space, setting, perspective; (4) reception and the reader; (5) ethical values and aesthetic values. Special topics late in the term may include adaptation of narrative across media; graphic media and music (how paintings and musical composition tell stories), and (3) unreliability in film narration.

Students will work on individual projects that they will present to the class.

ENGL 89500. [Michael Sargent](#). “Textual Issues: from Manuscript to Print in the Late Medieval and Early Modern Period”. Mondays 4:15PM-6:15PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28553]

In this course, we will explore the change in *mentalité* — in attitudes toward textuality, textual variability, uniformity, and authority — in the period from Chaucer to Shakespeare. At the beginning of this period, “publication” meant giving a book that you wrote personally or had someone copy out for you to other people so that they could make their own handwritten copies from it, with little or no control from you over what those copies might look like. At the end, “publication” meant that a printer got hold of a copy of your book, registered it in his own name in the Stationers’ Register, hired workers to set it up, and printed a number of (supposedly) identical copies, with the profit, in proper capitalist fashion, accruing to the owner of the means of production. And what had been known simply as “publication” in the age before print is now called “coterie publication”.

Critical and theoretical readings for this course will range from Ivan Illich and Bernard Cerquiglini through Elizabeth Eisenstein and William Kuskin to Jennifer Summit, David Greetham and Roger Chartier. Texts under consideration will include, e.g., Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*, the Sarum rite and the Book of Common Prayer, the *Golden Legend* and Foxe’s Book of Martyrs, as well as texts that course participants want to bring in as relevant case studies.

ENGL 79010. [Ira Shor](#). “Speaking Truth to Power: Rhetorics of Domination and Resistance”. Wednesdays 6:30PM-8:30PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28554]

Vast wealth and power afford the billionaire class obvious hegemony in all domains, including the circulation of discourses in society. But, like rust, opposition never sleeps. Discourses of resistance are called into being by the very status quo silencing them. Most often in the margins, resistance sometimes fills the central squares of great cities with historic effect.

The global conflict now between armed oligarchy and unarmed democracy also takes place with linguistic weapons from rhetoric and discourse. Democratic forces advance by mass activism, what Negri and Hardt called “multitudes” and which they and David Harvey propose as a new rhetoric of the communal public sphere. A mass counter-weight to great wealth can consolidate through discourses which inspire subordinated people to demand public goods against plutocratic looting of national wealth. A key terrain of this ongoing conflict is a rhetorical contest between discourses of domination and discourses of opposition.

Discourses are signifying acts or texts which orient receivers or audiences to understand their conditions and experiences in certain ways (named “terministic screens” by Kenneth Burke and “frames” of perception by George Lakoff). Pierre Bourdieu called this effect “habitus” or the social construction of the self through the experiential discourses of everyday life from which we internalize ways of knowing and doing. For Bourdieu and for Michel Foucault, such structuring discourses give us ways of being that develop habits, preferences, perceptions, allegiances, and orientations. The discourses of daily life thus shape development because all signifying practices

are inherently “suasive” (according to Burke, Foucault, and Jerome Bruner, among others). Discourses or signifying practices, then, are material forces through which human subjects are socially produced.

In this social construction of human subjects, *ideology* is the component of discourse which politically shapes people, processes, and sites, through a process called “interpellation” by Louis Althusser. Ideology in discourse achieves its formative impact by representing to us what is good, what is possible, and what exists (as Goran Therborn explains this effect).

Rhetoric emerged as a persuasive practice 2500 years ago in the “civic assembly” or *agora* of ancient Athens, a “town hall” open only to the male citizens of that city-state. Rhetoric still functions as a tool-kit of techniques for composing discourses to effect our intentions and to affect our listeners and environs. One kind of rhetoric, “speaking truth to power,” appeared in ancient Athens as “parrhesia” (“fearless speech” according to Foucault, or “speaking truth to power” or “truth-telling”).

This seminar will examine rhetoric and discourse vis a vis power relations in society. How does rhetoric direct the composition of discourses and how does discourse achieve the composition of human subjects and society? Dominant rhetorics deploy discourses which produce busy and compliant human subjects; dissident rhetorics guide opposition discourses for developing critical human subjects. When Kenyan playwright Ngugi Wa’Thiongo pondered Europe’s disastrous conquest of Africa, he wrote that “the night of the sword was followed by the morning of the chalkboard”—guns defeated the natives and created imperial possibilities which were then consolidated by rhetoric and discourse (in this case metropolitan education, dispossession of local wealth and culture, and the primacy of European languages over native ones).

Readings: Foucault(*Society Must Be Defended; Discipline and Punish; Fearless Speech*), Bourdieu(*Distinction; Language as Symbolic Action*), Scott(*Domination and the Arts of Resistance; Thinking Like a State*), Pratt(“Arts of the Contact Zone”), Therborn(*The Ideology of Power*); Hardt/Negri (*Declaration*); Chomsky(*Understanding Power*); Ngugi Wa’Thiongo, *Decolonizing the Mind*; Harvey, *Rebel Cities* plus other sources.

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ENGL 80700. [Karl Steel](#). “Small Things”. Mondays 2:00PM-4:00PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28556]

Critical animal theory has tended to focus on larger animals, while ecocriticism has tended to focus on systems. What, however, of small, only seemingly inconsequential things? This course will range from Lucretius to Muffet, Hooke and Cavendish to study swarming animals like worms, insects, and other vermin, the basic building materials of existence, and little people, some real, and some legendary (the pygmies of Plinian writings and the Green Children of Woolpit). The course will focus on medieval texts, but will frequently range into early modern material, particularly in its final weeks.

ENGL 84200. [Alan Vardy](#). “Deserted Villages: Enclosure, Nostalgia, and Slow Violence”. Tuesdays 4:15PM-6:15PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28558]

"Deserted Villages": Enclosure, Nostalgia, and 'Slow Violence' will look at the complete upheaval of the British countryside from ca. 1770 to 1835 via Goldsmith's "The Deserted Village," Cowper's "The Yardley Oak," Wordsworth's "The Ruined Cottage," "Michael" and "The Solitary Reaper," Dorothy Wordsworth's "Tour of Scotland, 1802," Robert Bloomfield's

“The Farmer’s Boy,” Cobbett’s “Cottage Economy,” and Clare’s “The Village Minstrel.” We will employ a variety of critical approaches including Raymond Williams’ classic *The Country and the City*, the last 20 years of ecocriticism, Rob Nixon’s *Slow Violence*, other theories of social trauma, etc. One goal of the course will be a reevaluation of the political valences of Romantic nostalgia.

ENGL 85700. [Michele Wallace](#). “Toni Morrison”. Tuesdays 6:30PM-8:30PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28559] (Cross listed with WSCP 81000)

In this course we will read and discuss six of Toni Morrison's eleven novels--The Bluest Eye, Song of Solomon, Beloved, Jazz, A Mercy and Home, paying close attention to interlocking and continuing themes, as well as supplementary materials taken from photography, visual art and the many interviews and lectures available of Morrison discussing her work in some detail. Morrison is the most celebrated and the most widely read African American writer alive today. Her work focuses on issues of race, identity, gender and sexuality in a manner that evokes feminist concerns without, itself, being particularly feminist in its convictions. She also focuses intensively on African American culture with a magisterial finesse, from the 17th century in a time before slavery was identified with race (A Mercy) through 1963 (Song of Solomon), the year both Medgar Evers and John Kennedy were murdered, and the official onset of the modern Civil Rights Movement. Requirements for this course are reading, thinking and writing one final paper.

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ENGL 79010. [Amy Wan](#). “Literacy in Transnational Contexts”. Thursdays 4:15PM-6:15PM. [CRN 28560]

In his critique of the “literacy myth,” Harvey Graff describes literacy as “profoundly misunderstood” and argues that literacy research must learn “to embrace...literacy’s simultaneous capabilities for hegemony and control, and for individual and collective realization of potential and actions, sometimes of a transcending nature.” Following Graff, contemporary literacy studies have worked to dismantle the literacy myth by examining the acquisition of literate skill in its social, cultural, historical, political and economic contexts. The first half of the course will examine foundational texts and chart contemporary movements in scholarship in New Literacy Studies, beginning with the break from the oral/written divide (Scribner and Cole, Street) and the social turn. The second half of the course will focus on how transnationalism and multilingualism might affect the questions and methods in literacy and writing studies with an eye toward world Englishes, pedagogy, citizenship, and literacy and language policies. Possible texts include: Deborah Brandt, *Literacy in American Lives*; Suresh Canagarajah, *Translingual Practice: Global Englishes and Cosmopolitan Relations*; David Crystal, *English as a Global Language*; Ellen Cushman, Eugene Kintgen, Barry Kroll, and Mike Rose, eds. *Literacy: A Critical Sourcebook*; Harvey Graff, *The Literacy Myth*; Bruce Horner, Min-Zhan Lu, and Paul Kei Matsuda, *Cross-Language Relations in Composition*; Jay Jordan, *Redesigning Composition for Multilingual Realities*; Susan V. Meyer, *Del Otro Lado: Literacy and Migration across the US-Mexico Border*; Catherine Prendergast, *Buying into English*; Brian Street, *Literacy in Theory and Practice*; Xiaoye You, *Writing in the Devil’s Tongue: A History of English Composition in China*.

**ENGL 80600. [Jerry Watts](#). “Literary Studies, the Humanities and the Idea of Culture”.
Mondays 6:30PM-8:30PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28738]**

Ideas of culture are central to contemporary intellectual discourse. Concepts of culture are far too numerous and contradictory to study in a one semester course (or even a year- long course for that matter). As such, this class will focus on eclectic employments of the idea of culture within the humanities, particularly literary studies. (I hope to offer a companion course in regards to the ideas of culture within the social sciences.) Despite the contemporary flourishing of “cultural studies;” and the increasingly porous boundaries between academic disciplines, there remain dominant ideas of culture within the humanities that are conceptually distinct from dominant ideas of culture within the social sciences. This class will attempt to trace the uses of ideas of culture within the humanities. Is culture primarily invoked to legitimate hierarchies of peoples or creativity? Is the idea of culture an analytical grab-bag of last resort that is invoked to mask the absence of a true argument/explanation? Among other works, we will read Hartman’s *The Fateful Question of Culture*; Williams’s *Culture and Society: 1780-1950*; Eagleton’s *The Idea of Culture*; and Brenkman’s *Culture and Domination*.

**ENGL 83500. [Nancy Yousef](#). “Enlightenment: Readings in Literature and Philosophy”.
Thursdays 2PM-4PM. 2/4 credits. [CRN 28561]**

Often associated with restricting, even damaging, forms of rationalism, the period known as “the enlightenment” has become a familiar object of critique at the same time as it has become an increasingly rare subject of study. This course will offer an opportunity to engage with central texts in eighteenth century philosophy and literature and thereby to develop a nuanced sense of an intellectual and cultural history that extends to, and has shaped, modern forms of social criticism. Our focus will be the problem of knowing and being known by others as it emerges in philosophy of mind, ethics, and social contract theory, and as it is explored in key novels of the period. Readings will cluster around three figures from the early, middle, and late parts of the century: Locke, Rousseau, and Kant (with supplementary shorter selections from Hobbes, Hume, Diderot, Smith and Burke). Novelists to be studied include Heywood, Richardson, Radcliffe, and Austen.

ENGL 79000. Teaching College English: Practicum

Baruch [CRN 28562]: Thursdays 2:30PM-4:30PM, Cheryl Smith

John Jay [CRN 28544]: Wednesdays 3:00PM-5:00PM, Tim McCormack

Queens [CRN 28557]: Tuesdays 10:05AM-11:55AM, Jason Tougaw

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Dissertation Supervision

CRN Instructor

29335 Agathocleous Tanya

00401 Alcalay Ammiel

00719 Alexander Meena

00078 Bonaparte Felicia

00299 Bowen Barbara

00243 Brenkman John

00148 Brownstein Rachel

00402 Burger Glenn
00137 Caws Mary Ann
13028 Chuh Kandice
01030 Dawson Ashley
00080 Dickstein Morris
00571 DiGangi Mario
10945 Di Iorio Lyn
00758 Dolan Marc
00403 Elsky Martin
01032 Faherty Duncan
25820 Gold Matthew
00890 Hintz Carrie
00581 Hitchcock Peter
01031 Hoeller Hildegard
01088 Israel Nico
00618 Joseph Gerhard
00893 Kaye Richard
00147 Kelly William
00378 Koestenbaum Wayne
00287 Kruger Steven
27972 Lott Eric
00182 Marcus Jane Connor
18187 McBeth Mark
00167 McCoy Richard
00063 Miller Nancy
29683 Mohamed Feisal
00330 Otte George
00591 Perl Sondra
11199 Pollard Tanya
00577 Reid-Pharr Robert
29333 Reitz Caroline
00221 Reynolds David
00146 Richardson Joan
00388 Richter David
00406 Sargent Michael
00407 Savran David
00408 Schaffer Talia
29400 Schlutz Alexander
00274 Shor Ira
29334 Steel Karl
00782 Suggs Jon-Christian
00135 Tolchin Neal
00889 Vardy Alan
00751 Wallace Michele
00409 Watts Jerry
00325 Webb Barbara

00688 Wilner Joshua
19628 Yood Jessica
00891 Yousef Nancy