ENGLISH LITERATURE

Please consult the online class schedule for specific days and times of these courses.
https://sunspot.sdsu.edu/schedule/search

ENGL 600  Introduction to Graduate Study     J. Thomas

Introduction to Graduate Study is designed to familiarize you with the complex & rich world of English Studies, as well as the historical & theoretical traditions that inform it. This is not a class in bibliographic methods or practical criticism. Rather, it is a course in practical theory: we will theorize & interrogate the practices of our discipline, asking ourselves the big questions: Why read literature at all? How does that literature mean? & what counts as “literature” anyway?

ENGL 604B  Modernism           J. Pressman

Modernism was a phenomenon of creative activity and formal experimentation that crossed oceans, art forms, and disciplines in the early decades of the twentieth century. We are still reckoning its influence: postmodernism, digital modernism, and beyond. This course explores a constellation of texts that challenge categories of genre and nationality to collectively represent Anglo (British and American) Modernism. We read texts by such authors as T.S. Eliot, Ernest Hemingway, Gertrude Stein, Jean Toomer, and Virginia Woolf; we consider the impact of media, technology, and speed on the art of the period; we explore the complex interstices of race, gender, and class in emergent concepts of subject and self. We dive into Modernism and grapple with Ezra Pound’s poignant but contradictory dictum from it: “make it new.”

ENGL 696  SEMINAR: Prose/Poem Flash Fiction                        H. Jaffe

Each participant will be required to submit a minimum number (not yet established), of “flash fictions,” usually (though not always) with a specific word count (50, 100, or 250 words, for example).

I will ask for individual texts and also sequences of texts: two or three, for example, on particular subjects, and I wish to see every text you write electronically.

In addition to the assigned books, to read pleasurably and to generate your own mini- or micro-fictions, there will be occasional brief or collaborative “prompts” and films, to explore short short narrative in different contexts.

Regarding critical commentary on peers’ texts and other details, each participant will comment on six peers’ texts of his/her choosing, as well as on three of the five assigned texts.

Revised: July 10, 2017
ENGL 726  SEMINAR: Post Colonial Women Writers                       L. Edson

A study of postcolonial women’s writing produced in a wide variety of cultural contexts. The course is organized around major contemporary political, social, and cultural issues: (1) tensions between tradition and modernity; (2) postcolonialism, displacement, transnationalism; (3) contemporary voices; and (4) postcolonialism, marriage, and polygamy. Primary texts include Buchi Emecheta’s *The Joys of Motherhood* (Nigeria), Tsitsi Dangarembga’s *Nervous Conditions* (Zimbabwe), Maryse Condé’s *Desirada* (Guadeloupe), Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Purple Hibiscus* (Nigeria), Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Half of a Yellow Sun* (Nigeria), and Mariama Ba’s *So Long a Letter* (Senegal). Primary texts are read in tandem with theoretical and critical essays.

**Requirements:** Oral presentations, reading journal, mid-term and final papers.

ENGL 727  SEMINAR: Shel Silverstein                                           J. Thomas

A course in textual analysis and both literary and cultural history, *Shel Silverstein: American Iconoclast* concerns the life and work of the seemingly contradictory, ever iconoclastic Renaissance man, Shel Silverstein. We will read from his poetry, cartoons, short plays, fairy tales, parables, and travel writing, watch his screen plays, and listen to his music, all the while thinking seriously about his relation to our dominant cultural values and ideology. Considering Shel’s children’s books alongside his work for Playboy, we will investigate the tensions inherent in one producing such varied cultural work, letting his often bawdy work for adults inform our understanding of his sometimes cloying, sometimes rebellious, literature for children. [***Important: Because Shel Silverstein wrote for Playboy and produced comics, plays, poetry, and songs intended for an adult audience, please enroll in this course ONLY if you’re willing and able to engage works that some may consider pornographic in nature. In addition to works authored by Shel, we will engage, as a means of better contextualizing and understanding his life and work, Playboy magazine, including pictorials. Again, if exploring work explicitly designed to titillate, please consider another class. The amount of work in this latter category is small, but it will be present.***]

ENGL 750F  MFA SEMINAR: Fiction Writing                                 K. Farris

Bare Bones of Fiction Writing

In this course, we’ll be getting back to basics by asking, what are the most fundamentally important functions and techniques of narrative? Incorporating lecture, discussion of relevant literature, and workshop, the course is geared toward incoming first-year MFAs, but will have much to offer for all interested MFA students.
ENGL 750F  MFA SEMINAR: Fiction Writing                           S.P. Martin
ENGL 750F/ENGL 791B (6 units)

These linked classes will be focused on the development of a novella or collection of short stories (90-120 pp). The first sixty pages will be carefully developed in the Fall 2015 semester and the remainder in Spring 2016. Sample novellas and short story collections will be studied, but most of the class will involve workshop discussions and one-on-one conferences. The result, at the end of Spring 2016, will be a novella or short story collection of publishable quality. This linked two-semester class (12 total units) is required for all third-year fiction students to complete their program of study for the MFA in fiction. It will be open to second-year students with permission from Professor Martin. Students with questions should contact Professor Martin (shmartin@mail.sdsu.edu).

ENGL 750P  MFA SEMINAR: Poetry Writing                            S. Alcosser

“If there’s a book that you want to read, but it hasn’t been written yet, then you must write it.” Toni Morrison tells us. This semester, by articulating your poetics and discovering what draws you into a book and holds you there, you will shape a collection of poems or short prose pieces you wish to place in the world as your manuscript. We will read a few classics, as well as modern and contemporary poets, including:

- *Blood Lyrics*, Katie Ford
- *Lighthead*, Terrance Hayes
- *Rose*, Li-Young Lee
- *Bright Dead Things*, Ada Limon
- *Building the Barricade*, Anna Świrszczyńska

As always your individual reading list will include books by Ai, Ellen Bass, Anne Carson, Italo Calvino, Eduardo Corrall, Victoria Chang, Lucille Clifton, Matthew Dickman, Mark Doty, Nick Flynn, Vievee Francis, Jane Hirshfield, Marie Howe, Tyehimba Jess, Douglas Kearney, Rebecca Lindenberg, Patricia Lockwood, Cleopatra Mathis, Czeslaw Milosz, Malena Morling, Steve Scafidi and Homer, Ovid, Shakespeare, Dante, Rilke, Frost, Lowell, Bishop, Ritsos, Hikmet, Szymborska, Plath, Gluck et alia.

ENGL 750P  MFA SEMINAR: Poetry Writing                            I. Kaminsky

William Butler Yates wrote: “There is no singing school, but studying monuments of its own magnificence.” In this class, every student will be encouraged to ask herself: “What is my singing school, my tradition? How can I expand and change that tradition? What author’s poetry means the world to me? What can I learn about poetics from that author--and how can I expand that poetics?” Students signing up for this class should expect great many individual assignments based on their work and its potential to growth, as well as attention to their--and their classmates’--poetry on line-by-line basis.
ENGL 784  SEMINAR: Creative Non-Fiction  H. Jaffe

Let me say at the outset that “creative non-fiction “is a more pertinent genre now than ever before. This 2017 version of creative nonfiction will mostly proceed from the underside, and many of the readings and viewings will be dissident, generated by those discourses which are typically unseen, unheard, unwitnessed; in effect, subjugated discourses.

A majority of the exercises will be imaginative and generated by the readings and visuals, but other exercises will be more precisely analytical. Feel free to email me for further info.

ENGL 791A  SEMINAR: MFA Manuscript (Poetry)  S. Alcosser

“If there’s a book that you want to read, but it hasn’t been written yet, then you must write it.” Toni Morrison tells us. This semester, by articulating your poetics and discovering what draws you into a book and holds you there, you will shape a collection of poems or short prose pieces you wish to place in the world as your manuscript. We will read a few classics, as well as modern and contemporary poets, including:

- Blood Lyrics, Katie Ford
- Lighthead, Terrance Hayes
- Rose, Li-Young Lee
- Bright Dead Things, Ada Limon
- Building the Barricade, Anna Świrszczyńska

As always your individual reading list will include books by Ai, Ellen Bass, Anne Carson, Italo Calvino, Eduardo Corral, Victoria Chang, Lucille Clifton, Matthew Dickman, Mark Doty, Nick Flynn, Vievee Francis, Jane Hirshfield, Marie Howe, Tyehimba Jess, Douglas Kearney, Rebecca Lindenberg, Patricia Lockwood, Cleopatra Mathis, Czeslaw Milosz, Malena Morling, Steve Scafidi and Homer, Ovid, Shakespeare, Dante, Rilke, Frost, Lowell, Bishop, Ritsos, Hikmet, Szymborska, Plath, Gluck et alia.

ENGL 791B  SEMINAR: MFA Manuscript (Fiction)  S.P. Martin

ENGL 750F/ENGL 791B (6 units)

These linked classes will be focused on the development of a novella or collection of short stories (90-120 pp). The first sixty pages will be carefully developed in the Fall 2015 semester and the remainder in Spring 2016. Sample novellas and short story collections will be studied, but most of the class will involve workshop discussions and one-on-one conferences. The result, at the end of Spring 2016, will be a novella or short story collection of publishable quality. This linked two-semester class (12 total units) is required for all third-year fiction students to complete their program of study for the MFA in fiction. It will be open to second-year students with permission from Professor Martin. Students with questions should contact Professor Martin (shmartin@mail.sdsu.edu).

Revised: July 10, 2017
Fall 2017
Course offerings listed below are subject to change. All courses may not be listed here.

ENGL 796  Pedagogy Internship  M. Borgstrom
Description Not Available

ENGL 796  Poetry International Internship  I. Kaminsky
Description Not Available

ENGL 796  Fiction International Internship  H. Jaffe
Description Not Available