ENGLISH LITERATURE

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

ENGL 220 INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE T. ASIM

Murder on the Page

This course will examine a broad range of literature dealing with crime, justice, and death to explore human nature and the shared human condition. These works represent multiple genres (poetry, drama, short story, film and novel) and will span multiple eras to demonstrate humanity’s pervasive (and at times, perverse) fascination with criminality and murder. From Ancient Greece to Depression-era Alabama, our tour of literature is diverse. In life and literature, issues of guilt and innocence are often obscured by extenuating circumstances, subtle nuances both in and out of the courtroom, and varied voices (gendered voices, racial/ethnic voices), and we will probe the gray areas of free will and consciousness through the lens of law and crime. We will be challenged together to adopt multiple roles—not just readers, but investigators, prosecutors, defense attorneys, victims, and accused alike. At times, we will delve into psychology and philosophy to expose the nature of the multi-faceted characters we will study.

We will experience literature across the lines of culture, race, gender, age, and historical period to foster and deepen our understanding of major literary genres. We will practice interpreting, analyzing, and evaluating various texts as a means of further inhabiting and experiencing those texts and those ideas. We will confront controversial issues that make us uncomfortable as we press upon that which is difficult and distressing in our world. In this way, we will investigate our values as a society, our institutions and power constructs, and our roles within those establishments.

ENGL 220 INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE P. HERMAN

The Promise and Perils of Technology

The Promise and Perils of Technology

The purpose of this class is to introduce students to the study of literature, but to do so in a more pointed fashion that will demonstrate literature’s uncanny ability to help us think complexly about complex problems. To that end, we will be looking at how literature deals with the related problems of technology and utopias, because so often today technology is promoted as a means of achieving a utopia, meaning, a perfect society. But as we will see, neither the claims made for technology nor the sense that technology can create an ideal society, are new. We will start with the revival of the utopian genre by Thomas More, and then to texts that deal more overtly with technology. We conclude with two books, M. T. Anderson, Feed, and the very controversial novel by Dave Eggers, The Circuit, that ask us to reconsider our reliance on the web and computers as well as an episode or two of “Black Mirror” and a guest lecture on how electronic literature intersects with our theme.
ENGL 220        INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE                           M. MARSHALL
Others and Outsiders

For centuries, literature, music, and film have served as gathering places for Others and Outsiders: those who are perceived as being different in some fundamental way, deemed inferior, and judged accordingly—as Claudia Rankine asserts, those who are both “invisible and hyper-visible.” In this course we will examine and celebrate various forms of Otherness and how these forms are portrayed in novels, short stories, poetry, performance art, and music. Through deep reading, spirited discussion, and thoughtful inquiry, we will hone our critical thinking, reading, and negotiating skills.


ENGL 220        INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE                           J. MINNITI-SHIPPNEY
Literature Live!

What better way to enter the study of literature than by reading & meeting the writers of contemporary works? In this wide-ranging course, read new work by local & international writers, and then have the chance to learn from them in person! We'll study literary techniques in poetry and prose, with a special focus on how individual experience is made into art. Texts to include new work by Karla Cordero, James Matlack Raney, Christina Marie Darling, Kirsten Imani Kasai, and others. The class will consist of lectures and structured, student-led, panel discussions, as well as performances and guest lectures from our writers. Ideal for committed readers who want to learn more about the writing life!

ENGL 220        INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE                           TBA
Description Not Available

ENGL 220        INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE                           TBA
Description Not Available

ENGL 220        INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE                           TBA
Description Not Available

ENGL 220        INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE                           TBA
Description Not Available

ENGL 250B     LITERATURE OF THE U.S.                           C. COLQUITT
Description Not Available
ENGL 260B  ENGLISH LITERATURE  T. CUMMINGS

Look Back, Look Anew

In this survey of English literature from the Romantic era to the present, we will read a series of novels that attempt to understand or re-envision the past. From depictions of a supposedly idealized medieval world to considerations of political reform to recognition of England's complicity in fascism, Scott, Eliot, and Ishiguro come to terms with their histories. Alongside these novels, we will read poetry that was highly influential in its own day and continues to impact our thinking today.

Course Requirements: Read all texts, present on a topic, write two papers, participate continuously, take a midterm.

ENGL 280  INTRODUCTION TO CREATIVE WRITING  TBA

Description Not Available

ENGL 306A  CHILDREN'S LITERATURE  M. GALBRAITH

Children’s Literature (Liberal Studies majors; taken with 306W). This historical review of children’s literature covers fairy tales, novels, picture books, and graphic narratives, with an added movie or two. Weekly reading responses and group discussions. This semester's focus: nonverbal experience in children’s literature.

ENGL 306A  CHILDREN'S LITERATURE  K. SHUMATE

Description Not Available

ENGL 306W  ADVANCED COMPOSITION  M. GALBRAITH

Advanced Composition (Liberal Studies majors; taken with 306A). In this composition course, you will write papers based on the readings and lectures in 306A.

Course Requirements: In addition, you will learn-- or review-- basic sentence structure and punctuation. Grammar quizzes, editing workshops, picture book presentations, three papers.
Milk and cookies. Bert and Ernie. Moths and flames. Some things just go together. So, too, do detectives and the deviants they hunt. The figure of the detective has captivated the global cultural consciousness for centuries, but, of course, the detective’s raison d’etre is based on a fundamental—and ugly—truth: the detective does not exist without the criminal. Crime, depravity, and the sickness of society must be policed, and yet, we continually see that the lines of good and evil are often blurry. What happens when the detective becomes the deviant? From Sherlock Holmes to Batman, the figure of the detective often mirrors the very same vices he seeks to correct. And in so doing, he reveals another uncomfortable truth, perhaps best state by Nietzsche: “when you gaze long into the abyss, the abyss gazes into you.”

This class will answer all of your questions...or at least those of a literary nature. Who is Terry Eagleton, anyway? What is the M.L.A.? When do I need an apostrophe? Where can I find a “peer-reviewed” essay? Why do some essays earn higher grades than others? How can I write honestly, and even passionately, about what I stand for in life through analyzing literature? In short, there are no dumb questions in this class. In order to answer these questions and to have fun at the same time, we will read some excellent poems, essays, and novels, thinking about how different literary theories can provide useful tools for our own analysis of such work. We will also attack the nuts and bolts of academic writing, from grammar and punctuation to research and citation. There will be brief written assignments, a final research essay, a midterm, and a final exam. Generous and tolerant participation in class discussions, debates, and exercises is essential to success in the course, helping to further develop your interpersonal and public speaking skills. By the end of the semester, you will be empowered with a clearer understanding of methods of literary analysis, concepts and terminology of literary study, research techniques...and some wild ideas! Knowledge is power, so don’t leave your questions unanswered!
ENGL 401 CHILDHOOD'S LITERATURE
Social Justice and Activism in Children’s and Young Adult Literature

To what extent can youth literature help readers to imagine more democratic, egalitarian, and cooperative ways of existing in the world? Can these texts provide readers with the knowledge needed to recognize and actively fight against various forms of cruelty, injustice, and inequality? This course will explore how youth literature (children’s books, middle-grade fiction, and young adult literature) addresses and confronts dynamics of oppression, privilege, and violence present in contemporary society. We will pay close attention to the didactic frameworks that frequently saturate youth literature, and we will examine how these texts push readers to think radically and politically about the world they live in. Furthermore, we will think through the political and cultural viability of this body of literature, and question both the benefits and drawbacks of using youth literature as a platform to mobilize activist thought and social justice frameworks. Themes that will be explored include: gender and sexuality, race and class, ecology and the environment.

ENGL 409 SCIENCE FICTION

In ENGL 409 (Science Fiction), we will explore contemporary examples of the paraliterary genre of science fiction. Framed largely by the insights of Samuel Delany, we will deconstruct (that is, make “radically undecidable”) science fiction’s most traditional themes: New Worlds, The Alien, Technology, Time, Space, and Utopia/Dystopia. Our guiding insight will be that these themes are signs, each “a political marker, a place to start the analysis that dissolves the border that allows us to recognize it in the first place”; with this in mind, we will ask how “the traditional notion of theme” blinds us to what Althusser calls “the problematic” of a text, eliding gaps and silences, constructing the novels and stories we will be reading as unified and coherent and rendering us—the readers—“ideologically passive.” Plus, we will read a bunch of cutting-edge theory and super cool stories, and even discuss a handful of movies. I'd buy that for a dollar!

ENGL 498 SEM: ENGLISH HONORS THESIS

Description Not Available

ENGL 501 LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN

We will inquire into the nature of stories for children, including fairy tales, novels, picture books, and animated films. The focus will be on whether and how children’s literature can provide a childhood perspective on adults. Some planned books: The Secret Garden, Charlotte’s Web, The Watsons Go to Birmingham--1963, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Grandfather’s Journey, The Arrival.
ENGL 502 ADOLESCENCE IN LITERATURE A. MATOS

The Queer Young Adult Novel

This course will focus on representations of LGBTQ+ thought and experience in contemporary novels that are primarily written for (and marketed to) teens and young adults. Our approach to these novels will be informed primarily through the theoretical lenses of queer temporality and affect studies. We will examine the tensions that arise when authors try to implement radical queer frameworks in a genre that frequently pushes readers to embrace assimilationist and (hetero) normative values.

We will also explore the emotional dimensions of queer young adult novels, and develop our own understanding of the political, cultural, and literary viability of these texts. What cultural work is accomplished by a “sad” or “happy” queer text? What are the potential political and literary consequences of implementing traditional forms of comfort and narrative closure in these novels? Can we identify moments of happiness and optimism in queer young adult literature without succumbing to normative and neoliberal forms of reading and interpretation? To address these questions, we will explore representations of queer adolescence across various genres of young adult literature, including historical novels, graphic novels, science fiction, and fantasy.

ENGL 503 HARRY POTTER J. THOMAS

In ENGL 503 (Harry Potter) we will read and discuss the entirety of J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series. And maybe we’ll watch the movies too.

ENGL 508W WRITING OF CRITICISM E. FRAMPTON

Joys of the Keyboard

Academic writing can be a struggle. It can also be a joy. This class will provide you with some tools and strategies that will help you to share your struggles and passions through the process of writing about literature and, as a result, to be more successful. Since literary scholars today must have an understanding of “theory,” we’ll take a tour through aspects of this challenging field via British critic and theorist Terry Eagleton. Experience with techniques of research and citation is equally important to critics, and so we’ll cover that too. Also essential is a thorough command of standards of English grammar, and we’ll therefore review a few basics that often get neglected. As a part of the entire process, we’ll read some wonderful poems, essays, and two novels, applying our studies to the analysis of these. There will be brief written assignments, a final research essay, a midterm, and a final exam. Generous and tolerant participation in class discussions, debates, and exercises is an essential component of the course, helping to further develop your interpersonal and public speaking skills.

ENGL 524 LIT OF THE U.S. 1920 - 1960 C. COLQUITT

Description Not Available
ENGL 525  Literature of the U.S. 1960 - Present  Y. HOWARD

Bodies and Experiments, 1960 – Present

This course will approach late-twentieth and early-twenty-first-century American cultural studies by investigating the varying degrees of cross-pollination between bodily experiences and experimental practices. We will read, watch, and listen to a selection of written, visual, and auditory examples that focus on corporeal topographies and radical textual qualities. Responding to and reflecting contemporary politics of the body, the experiments under consideration will include (but are not limited to) William Burroughs's *The Soft Machine*, Catherine Lord's *The Summer of Her Baldness*, and David Lynch's *Mulholland Drive*. While we will approach these texts in loose chronological order, they should be thought about in terms of their affinities, conflicts, and contradictions in shaping and being shaped by contemporary gendered, racial, and sexual subjectivities.

ENGL 527  GRAPHIC NARRATIVE OF DIFFERENCE  Y. HOWARD

This course will investigate the graphic narrative, comics aesthetics, and sequential art through the lens of gender, sexual, ethnic, and experiential difference. We will explore a range of graphic texts that encounter difference through the politics of the body, dark desires, and experiments with the comics form. Texts will include (but are not limited to) Julie Doucet’s *My New York Diary*, Samuel Delany and Mia Wolff’s *Bread & Wine*, and Adrian Tomine’s *Killing and Dying*.

ENGL 527  MISERY LITERATURE  L. CHAMPION

This course will focus on misery lit, a subgenre of the memoir. Sometimes referred to as “pathography,” misery lit is a type of memoir in which authors describe their own miserable childhoods, usually filled with poverty and physical, sexual, and mental abuse. Misery lit titles usually define their own topics with subtitles that reviewers have criticized as reading like tabloid teasers. The genre burst on the literary scene in the mid-nineties with the publication of memoirs such as Dave Pelzer’s *A Child Called “It*,” Mary Karr’s *The Liar’s Club*, and Tobias Wolff’s *This Boy’s Life*, which led to later misery lit memoirs such as Jeanette Walls’s *The Glass Castle*, Augusten Burroughs’s *Running with Scissors*, and Frank McCourt’s *Angela’s Ashes*. The surge of misery lit led to the publication of even more misery lit and also inspired publishers, authors, and critics to reexamine earlier published works, both “fiction” and nonfiction, as potential representations of misery lit.

ENGL 533  SHAKESPEARE  P. HERMAN

Shakespearean Varieties

The goal of this course is to introduce students to the depth and range of Shakespeare’s achievement over the course of his career as a playwright (he also acted and made a lot of money as a share-holder of his dramatic company). We will read plays from the beginning of Shakespeare’s career (*Titus Andronicus*) and from the end (*The Tempest*), and we will be looking at a range of genres (comedy, history, tragedy, and what would much later come to be known as “romance”). We will be paying attention to how these plays arise from various early modern contexts, and to how they come alive on the stage.
ENGL 534  POLITICAL SHAKESPEARE  E. FRAMPTON

In this innovative, new experimental class culminating in a performance, we will explore Shakespeare’s work in relation to politics: the politics represented within some of his plays, the politics of his own world, and politics today. Our explorations will gravitate around a prime example of his history plays, Richard III. We’ll consider how Richard III fits into the first of Shakespeare’s two sets of four history plays known as the tetralogies. We’ll delve into the Wars of the Roses of medieval Britain on which that first tetralogy is based. We’ll ponder both the historical Richard III and the dramatic character that he became. We’ll ask questions about how the political situation in Elizabethan England prompted Shakespeare to frame his historical drama as he did. We’ll also consider a range of scholarship focused on Richard III. In conjunction with this historical inquiry, we’ll examine various productions of Richard III for audiences in different parts of the world. All of this work will prepare us for producing our own abridged version of the play, which speaks to today’s political scene, together as a class. This will be a fully memorized and staged one-hour production that we will collaboratively edit, cast, direct, choreograph, design, costume, memorize, and perform together for an invited audience.

The class is aligned with SDSU’s Area of Excellence in the Digital Humanities and Global Diversity, since class members will be digitally archiving our research done on Richard III and the final performance of the play, thereby producing an online collaborative portfolio. Generous and tolerant participation in class discussions, debates, collaborative research, rehearsals, and the performance is an essential component of the course, helping to further develop your interpersonal, political, and public speaking skills.

ENGL 540A  BRITISH FICTION: RISE OF CAFE SOCIETY  T. CUMMINGS

Starbucks has nothing on the 18th century.

As Jurgen Habermas stated, 18th century café society arose within a public sphere that reconciled society to the state and the state to society. People organized themselves to become bearers of public opinion by creating institutions that fostered interdependent webs of social development.

These writers and other practitioners of public debate thrived in an urban culture where theaters, museums, opera houses, meeting rooms, and — you guessed it — coffeehouses flourished. They created new ways to communicate with one another, including the press, publishing ventures, and libraries in order to be sociable. Habermas declared that their conversations occurred without regard to status. Nowadays, Habermas is old school. We recognize that groups actively decided who could belong and who could not. Yet, we still draw from his thinking to speak of forms of association, to describe the creation of social imaginaries, and to explore ways these groups practiced cosmopolitanism.

What we see is that these people prized reading and speaking with one another. And, one of the new forms of communication they valued was the novel. They welcomed new authors and became a public anxious to hear the contributions of those who could bring their talent to bear within a new medium.

Blame it on the caffeine.

In any case, these individuals created a public that was more inclusive than was possible before, that read, listened, watched, and wrote. Their writings and the associations they created, along with former circles of social association that anticipated the 18th century, will be the focus of our work.

Course Requirements: Read all assigned texts, research project, discussion, participation, presentation.
ENGL 541A  EARLY MODERN DRAMA: THE POLITICAL PLAY    T. CUMMINGS

Political intrigue, gender experimentation, wild hilarity, social gatherings — the early modern theater was a place where something new could be brought into the world.

In the mid to late 16th century, playwrights, players, and theater-goers created a form of art that arose from relationships that supported cooperation and original, path-breaking performances. People gathered in an area of London that existed outside the regulations and rigidity of the city. There, the theatrical community broke away from the traditional bonds of village, guild, and, to what extent it could, monarchy, to entice audiences from all social groups to enjoy performances. Is it reasonable to assume that such revolutionary forms of association would depict conservative values on stage? Perhaps, given the power of the censor and the needs of a pocketbook. However, the plays we will read engage with the political issues of the day, including the possibilities for relationships between the genders, the poisoned heritage of their fathers, the nefarious machinations of the counselor, and the evil-doings of their brothers. We will read Shakespeare and Jonson, Dekker and Webster to explore how a handful of plays depict the power and promise of relationships and, while these represent the political interests of the 16-17th century, we will see that questions regarding friendship and love, family and kingdom endure and impact our time as well.

Course Requirements: Read all assigned texts, research project, discussion, participation, presentation.

ENGL 543  TWISTED BRITISH NOVELS    M. GALBRAITH

This class is dedicated to legendary and eccentric 19th century British novels, including Frankenstein, Oliver Twist, Jane Eyre, Wuthering Heights, and Alice in Wonderland.

Course Requirements: The main activity of the class will be reading each book with care and noticing its peculiarities. Weekly writing assignments, four graded papers.

ENGL 576B  LITERARY PUBLISHING & EDITING WORKSHOP    J. MINNITI-SHIPPEY

Learn to make books! This advanced publishing workshop, a required course for the Creative Publishing & Editing certificate and minor, is designed to give motivated students the opportunity to work as editors of a professional press. Editorial boards will create thematic anthologies of literary work, design print & digital books, and work with professional programs such as InDesign and CreateSpace. We'll host several publishing industry professionals during the semester, from book designers to small press founders.

Don't miss out on this unique professional publishing opportunity!
ENGL 579  LIVING WRITERS  M. MARSHALL

Derek Walcott’s *Fortunate Traveler* asserts, “…literature is an old couch stuffed with fleas.” This course aims to counter his assertion by examining the texts of living writers who are working to maintain literature’s livelihood. Guest authors will visit the class to conduct discussions, writing workshops, and readings centered on their work and experience in the literary world. This course provides the rare opportunity to work closely with visiting authors while exploring multiple genres and mediums, including poetry, prose, and translation. Active participation and inquiry will expand your perception of literature and strengthen your ability as a writer and reader. This course promises to shake the fleas from static written word.

Writers of all experience-levels and genres are welcomed and encouraged.

ENGL 581W  THE WRITING OF FICTION  M. MARSHALL

*Shorts Forms and Story Cycles*

This course will explore a wide range of short fiction and the techniques involved from conception to revision. Through various writing exercises, guided discussions, and workshops, we will examine ways in which writers translate their impulses to invent and imagine into compelling prose that engages readers’ attention from first line to last. It is through this ancient genre that the human spirit finds its voice—during the semester we will find and develop our own voices.

Writers of all experience-levels and genres are welcomed and encouraged.

ENGL 581W  THE WRITING OF FICTION  K. SHUMATE

*Description Not Available*

ENGL 584W  WRITING INFORMAL ESSAYS  L. CHAMPION

*Description Not Available*