

# FALL 2021

Course offerings listed below are subject to change.

## ENGLISH LITERATURE

Please consult the online class schedule for specific days and times of these courses.

<https://sunspot.sdsu.edu/schedule/search>

### **ENGL 600.01 Introduction to Graduate Study**

**Y. Howard**

This seminar has two goals. First, it will provide an introduction to the history of literary and cultural theory. We will read and discuss influential theoretical writings and become acquainted with some of the major movements in critical thought related to literature, film, art, music, aesthetics, identity, and the politics of representation. Ideally, students will become familiar with the methodological and epistemological underpinnings of Postmodernism, Poststructuralism, Psychoanalysis, Cultural Studies, Feminism, Queer Studies, Disability Studies, and Critical Race and Ethnic Studies. Second, the seminar will emphasize the skills and practices associated with being a professional intellectual.

### **ENGL 604A.01 American 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 modernism, specifically American Modernism. We read texts by such authors as T.S. Eliot, Ernest Hemingway, Gertrude Stein, Jean Toomer, and more; 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 about it: "make it new."

### **ENGL 604B.01 Victorian Thrillers: Sensation Fiction**

**J. Shumaker**

Although Gothic novels arose in eighteenth-century England, the Victorians developed the thriller novel in the 1860s, during a period of social change. These best-selling "sensation novels" triggered the growth of other types of fiction, including horror, detective, New Woman, political, and fantasy. In this course, we will read and discuss examples of these intertwined genres of popular fiction that remain popular today.

During this course, you may write one twenty-page essay or two ten-page essays. You will give a twenty-thirty-minute talk on a novel the rest of the class has not been assigned. In addition, you will write, each week, at least three hundred words of questions and comments about the assigned reading that will be the focus of our class discussion.

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## **ENGL 604B.01 Victorian Thrillers: Sensation Fiction**

**J. Shumaker**

(continued)

Dickens, *Great Expectations*  
Braddon, Mary. *Lady Audley's Secret*  
Collins, Wilkie. *Armadale*  
LeFanu, Sheridan. *Carmilla*  
Voynich, EL. *The Gadfly*  
Stoker, Bram. *Dracula*  
Haggard, Rider. *She*

### **Poems to be posted on Canvas:**

Browning, Robert. "Porphyria's Lover"  
Browning, Robert. "My Last Duchess"

## **ENGL 604D.01 Children's Literature Frog & Toad and Friends**

**J. Thomas**

This seminar explores the work of queer children's author Arnold Lobel, who wrote and illustrated scores of much-loved picture books, among them the Frog and Toad series, Mouse Soup, Owl at Home, and Fables, the latter of which was awarded the 1981 Caldecott Medal for best-illustrated U.S. picture book. In this course we will read widely in Lobel's oeuvre, examining his work and the work of his contemporaries. Students will give one presentation, write a short analytical paper at midterm, and produce a longer seminar paper due at the end of the semester.

## **ENGL 626.01 The Black Radical Imagination**

**D. Leong**

In response to the systemic conditions of antiblackness that structure the modern world, Black communities have developed traditions of radicalism that are committed to expansive visions of freedom and justice. These revolutionary impulses have not only generated important strategies for social, political, and economic organizing, but also inspired cultural productions that (re)imagine how and why these strategies might be applied to the unfinished projects of abolitionism. This course will examine how Black creative intellectuals take up, revise, and pursue the traditions of Black radicalism across a variety of genres (e.g., memoir, horror, speculative fiction, satire), mediums (e.g., literature, film, art), and philosophical and aesthetic lenses (e.g., Afropessimism, Afrofuturism, Afro-Surrealism). In doing so, we will gain a better understanding of how the Black radical imagination has shaped and continues to shape our theorization and pursuit of emancipatory politics. Author/Artists/Filmmakers may include: Octavia Butler, Paul Beatty, Colson Whitehead, Nalo Hopkinson, Dionne Brand, Jesmyn Ward, Kara Walker, Jean-Michael Basquiat, Boots Riley, and Jordan Peele.

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## ENGL 630.01 Form and Theory of Poetry

B. Falconer

In this class, we'll be playing with "formal poetry," from its roots in such traditional forms as the sonnet and sestina, to contemporary forms, like the duplex and the golden shovel. Of course, whether poets are working in more "traditional" modes or more contemporary hybrid forms, all poetry is based on the idea of working within (and against) limitations. More important than knowing and following the various "rules" of a form is being sensitive to the ways in which the formal elements (i.e., meter, repetition, stanza, turns) work with and/or against a poem's subject. *An Exaltation of Forms* (Finch and Varnes) will be our primary resource, but we will turn to multiple texts for supplemental materials.

## ENGL 725.01 Queer Studies

Y. Howard

This seminar will examine the broad field of queer studies by engaging with a body of scholarship and some of the most path-breaking critical work in the field that seeks to understand queerness as a disruption of sexual, gender, and artistic norms. In considering historical developments of non-heteronormative sexualities and gender non-conformity alongside contemporary understandings of queer thought, we will explore the politics of queer sexuality, queer of color critique, trans studies, and related visual, auditory, and corporeal forms.

## ENGL 750F.03 MFA SEMINAR: Fiction Writing Workshop Writing the Young Protagonist

M. de la Pena

Though this class will function predominantly as a writing workshop (in which all types of original creative work will be welcome) we will also explore published work as a way of considering various fiction-writing components in the context of constructing the young protagonist (from birth to age 21). With this in mind we will study works with a wide array of intended audiences, from books written for young people through books targeting adult readers. I will bring in literature from various genres to help spark in-class discussions and generative writing exercises. You will be asked to participate in craft conversations as well as explore various fiction techniques and strategies. You will also be required to offer both written and oral feedback to your classmates during workshop. Our focus in this class will be writing and revising original works of fiction, but there will also be some discussion of the marketplace and the business side of the writing life.

## ENGL 750F MFA SEMINAR: Fiction Writing Workshop Sections 1 and 2 Short Story

A. Wilder

I used to think a fiction workshop was a straightforward enterprise. Write, distribute, assess. Over time, this formula—the workshop as fix-it shop—began to feel rote and unambitious: keep this, cut that, more of this, *next!* Then one semester I took a workshop that opened the sky for me. No longer were we mere mechanics or editors, but great discoverers of the worlds our peers were bringing into being. I saw that our fellow-conjurers, if working in good faith, enveloped in the flames and chaos of creation, need help seeing what is rising from the smoke. Shifting the emphasis to discovery

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reinvigorated the work for me. Workshop again became a theater of magic, and this class will aim for that high ideal. You will write two separate short stories for a total combined length of 5,000-10,000 words and revise one at the end of the semester. You will be expected to read and re-read your peers' work with extreme care while at the same time risking original critical insight. There will be periodic readings and 1-2 page style imitations assigned.

**\*\*MFA Fiction students taking ENGL 750F.01 (taught Monday afternoons), will also need to register for ENGL 791B.01 both taught by Professor Wilder this semester.\*\***

**\*\*Other MFA Fiction students may take ENGL 750F.02 (taught Tuesday afternoons).**

## **ENGL 750P.03/ MFA SEMINAR: Preparation of Poetry/Prose Manuscript S. Alcosser ENGL 791A.01**

ENGL 750P (3 graded units) **OR** ENGL791A (3 units CR/NC)

Create a collection of haibun in the manner of Issa's nineteenth-century *The Year of My Life*, or 33 sonnets for 33 years of life a la Julia Alvarez's *Homecoming*, or a history of a region akin to Eduardo Galeano's trilogy, *Memory of Fire*, or perhaps a collection of micro memoirs like Claudia Rankine's *Citizen*. This semester the manuscript seminar will focus on memory. From lullaby to elegy, how does a collection of cells encapsulate our past and how do we bring that past to the page? Our seminar will help you assemble a chapbook or book, discover how to place it in the world, and even more challenging, make a life as a working writer. It will provide a welcoming and constructive place for poets and prose writers to give shape to a poetry, prose poetry or manuscript of micro memoirs. You will have a series of private conferences to discuss the shape and arc of your manuscript and individual pieces within that manuscript. Together we will design an individual reading list to accompany your journey. We will discuss -- and you will research -- publication opportunities, as well as a professional path for your writer's life after graduation. *All MFAs with a poetry/prose manuscript will be allowed to take the workshop.*

## **ENGL 750P.01 MFA SEMINAR: Poetry Writing Workshop B. Falconer**

When I was a graduate student years ago, Edward Hirsch urged our class to think of the various poetic devices and elements as keys on a piano. The more practiced we became, he said, working across the entire keyboard, the greater repertoire of songs we could perform. With this analogy in mind, this argument against complacency and mannerisms, we will examine our own impulses, where we are most comfortable, and with a strong appreciation of the poetic foundations, explore those areas that we have neglected. Generating new work, we will consider various poetic theory. By the end of the semester, we will have built upon what we already know while challenging ourselves to write the foreign, the unfamiliar, with the hope of ultimately expanding the range of what we can say and how we say it.

**Note:** This semester we will look at canonical and contemporary poems, paying special attention to poetic modes, such as the lyric, the elegy, the ode, the documentary poem, the epistle, the ekphrastic poem, and the dramatic monologue.

**\*\*Only MFA poets will be allowed to enroll in this course.\*\***

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**ENGL 791B.01 SEMINAR: MFA Manuscript (Fiction)**  
(CR/NC course)

**A. Wilder**

This two-semester class is required for all third-year fiction students to complete their MFA program of study. In this class you will develop and refine your final writing project here at SDSU, a short novel, or novella or collection of short stories (90-150 pp). The class will consist of one-on-one conferences, bi-weekly “live” workshops, and either partner/team developmental work or the addition of a reading component.

*\*\*MFA Fiction students taking ENGL 750F.01 (taught Monday afternoons), will also need to register for ENGL 791B.01 both taught by Professor Wilder this semester.\*\**

**ENGL 796 Poetry International**  
(3 units CR/NC)

**S. Alcosser**

Learn how great literature is made by joining *Poetry International*. This semester is a fabulous time to become a *PI* intern because we will be selecting and publishing the best poems that have appeared in the journal over the last twenty-five years. As an intern you will help us celebrate by sharing poems via social media, producing an on-line quarterly and participating in virtual readings.

*Poetry International* welcomes MFA, MA and undergraduate students to serve as interns. For MFA students, it is possible for an internship to fulfill three to nine units of your literature course requirements. A three-credit internship also satisfies requirements within the Undergraduate Creative Writing Minor / Certificate, and the Creative Publishing & Editing Minor /Certificate.

As an intern you are required to spend a minimum of four hours per week working as part of your team and one hour in a Virtual Round Table every Wednesday from 2-3 pm. You will read poems, chapbooks, reviews, and conversations by recipients of the Nobel Prize, Pulitzer Prize, National Book Award, as well as many new and innovative poets.

For questions about registration or course work, contact the editor-in-chief: [alcosser@sdsu.edu](mailto:alcosser@sdsu.edu).

**ENGL 796/495 Fiction International**  
(3 units CR/NC)

**P. Serrato**