Graduate Course Descriptions – Summer/Fall 2009

**Maymester**

**ENGL 566M TOPIC/The Mating Game in Classic Hollywood Movies**
(crosslisted FILM 566M-001)
MTWThF 8-10:45 & MTW 3-5  Rhu

This course studies comedies and melodramas from the first three decades of the sound era. Films will be analyzed in terms of features that define them as these kinds of films and in terms of their preoccupation with relations between the sexes. In light of these American "talkies," what constitutes a genuine marriage or makes such an alliance impossible? Do such questions require public and/or private responses? Films will include *It Happened One Night, The Lady Eve, His Girl Friday, The Philadelphia Story, Adam's Rib, Stella Dallas, Gaslight, Now, Voyager, Letter from an Unknown Woman, Vertigo,* and *North by Northwest.* Some films will be analyzed in tandem with literary texts and film criticism. Grades will be based on regular journal entries and a final exam. Graduate students will be expected to read additional theoretical essays and to write a longer and more substantive final research paper.

**ENGL 795M Teaching of Business & Technical Writing**
MTWTHF 11:00-1:45  Rivers

The purpose of this course is to introduce you (as future composition teachers) to the special demands placed on language and writers in the worlds of work and science and to help you prepare to teach these courses at the college level. The course will include a careful and critical examination of the principles of business writing, the effectiveness of various rhetorical strategies and language patterns in writing, the relationship of ethics and language in the business world, and the bibliographical tools and information sources available for research in technical and scientific disciplines.

**Fall**

**ENGL 566Q Depression Era Cinema**
(crosslisted FILM 566Q)
TTh 12:30-1:45  Cooper

This course considers how U.S. musicals, thrillers, and documentaries make sense of three periods of economic depression: the Great Depression of the 1930s, the decade-long sequence of recessions inaugurated by the stock market crash of 1973, and our present crisis. Two hypotheses about cinema in such times of crisis may come to mind. According to the distraction thesis, cinema exists to take our minds off our troubles. Alternatively, the ideological manipulation thesis posits that movies aim to maintain our faith in order, containing and channeling the potentially disruptive energies unleashed by our despair. In contrast to both views—which are less different than they may at first appear—a number of scholars have described films from such periods as unusually capable of provoking audiences to reimagine their circumstances. We will evaluate these positions with the aid of key films and selected criticism. Students will produce research papers on films of their choosing.

**ENGL 566W Cowboy Nation**
(crosslisted FILM 566W and WGST 430G)
TTh 2:00-3:15  Courtney

Screenings  M 4:00-6:30

The Western has long been understood as one of popular culture’s favorite ways to imagine, question, and reimagine what it means to be “American.” And this kind of cultural work—imagining who is “us” and who is “them,” what the possibilities and limits of our nation have been, how our collective past and futures intersect, and more—routinely pivots on the image of the cowboy. Outlaw, defender of innocents, ruthless killer; the manliest of men and a man who prefers the company of men; a social ideal and an anti-social loner, the cowboy is a curious national hero, indeed. Studying a broad range of examples from 1903 to the present, this course queries the endurance and plasticity of a popular genre that perpetually imagines particular fantasies and conflicts of the nation in and through particular fantasies and conflicts of masculinity. We’ll consider John Ford “classics” and “revisionist” Westerns of the 1960s, but also Dime Novels, singing cowboys (white and black), TV Westerns past and present (e.g., *Bonanza, Deadwood, Firefly,*...
global and transnational Westerns (e.g. the Spaghetti Western, the Curry Western), and the circulation of the genre beyond the screen into a range of everyday practices like advertising (the Marlboro Man), home décor, and contemporary rhetoric of Homeland Security.

**ENGL 610  Reading & Writing the Novel (or book-length manuscript)**  Th  3:30-6:00  Hospital
In this course, students begin or continue work on a book-length manuscript (a novel, a memoir, or a tightly interconnected set of stories) in an atmosphere designed to be both rigorous and nurturing. The course involves a number of assigned readings which will be analyzed in class. Special attention will be paid to techniques of structure, narrative voice, tone, characterization, plot pacing, and style. Students will be guided in blocking out an outline of the projected book, and will submit 30 revised and polished pages of the manuscript at the end of term. Two chapters of the manuscript will be workshopped in class. Students are also trained in close reading of the work of their peers, and extensive written critiques of the work of peers are required. Course requirements include proof of submission of work to journals and contests. This course may be taken more than once in order to continue work on a book-length manuscript. Each session consists of both beginners and advanced students.

**ENGL 611  Writing the Longer Nonfiction Project**  MW  2:30-3:45  Barilla
This course is an intensive workshop in the writing of the creative nonfiction essay. We will explore the boundaries, aesthetics and traditions of the genre, beginning with memoir and building toward experiments in structure and content as the course progresses. As this is a workshop, the bulk of our time in class will be spent discussing student writing, but the course will also include exercises in craft and the close examination of interesting work in the field.

**ENGL 650P  The Politics of Children’s Literature**  M  4:00-6:30  Schwebel
This course introduces students to children’s literature—a term encompassing a vast array of texts—and children’s literature criticism by juxtaposing recent scholarship with a selection of the most widely-read (and widely-taught) texts in the United States today. Because some of the most intriguing criticism of classic children’s literature has appeared in the form of revisionist novels, we will also study a number of contemporary children’s books that critique, through their re-envisioning, classic children’s texts. Among the questions considered in this seminar are: what leads to the canonization of children’s books? How—if at all—have schools’ multicultural initiatives challenged or changed this process? Are classic texts, at times doggedly entrenched in the curriculum and passed down from parent to child, “salvageable” in light of problematic images of what their creators perceived as “other”? Students will have the opportunity to explore individual interests by researching and writing an article-length paper or completing a pre-approved final project on a topic of their choice. Scholarship includes works by Mickenberg, Kohl, Trites, Lyon, Bosmajian, and Latham. Authors include: Dr. Seuss, Crockett Johnson, Wilder, Twain, Burnett, Dahl, Forbes, Bruchac, O’Dell, Speare, Mildred Taylor, Lowry, Laurie Halse Anderson, and J.K. Rowling.

**ENGL 700  Intro to Graduate Study in English**  TTh  12:30-1:45  Jackson
Daunted by graduate study in English? Don't be! Engl 700 offers an introduction to the skills and theories necessary to negotiate your program of study effectively. Topics include: the dominant models of literary theory and literary history; the history and sociology of English as a discipline; research skills and methodologies; the art of professionalization; and the major genres you will need to master, such as the seminar presentation, research essay, conference paper, book review, thesis abstract, dissertation, and bibliography. A series of theoretical, historical, and interdisciplinary readings will be combined with literary case studies and practical exercises designed to introduce graduate students to the field and prepare them for coursework, research, and, eventually, a successful academic appointment.

**ENGL 701A  Teaching of Composition in College**  TTh  9:30-10:45  Crocker
Unlike the practicum courses offered in many graduate programs, this is a regular course that carries three full hours of graduate credit. Accordingly, it has a strong academic component in addition to its practical focus. During the semester, we'll explore some of the best current theories, research, and teaching practices in composition and rhetoric. We'll also bring in experienced professionals in the field to discuss approaches that work well for them and to help you assess and apply their ideas. But just as important, we'll use part of each class to discuss the day-to-day challenges you face in your own classrooms. By the end of the term, you will have built a solid academic background in writing pedagogy and developed an assortment of practical teaching strategies that can inform your future work in the classroom.
ENGL 715 English Non Dramatic Lit Earlier 17th Century  
MW 1:45-3:00 Richey
In the first part of the course we will read the poetry of men and women writing in the Early Seventeenth Century (Ben Jonson, Aemilia Lanyer, John Donne, George Herbert, Lady Mary Wroth, John Milton) over against the lyric poetry of others writing during and after the English Civil War (Robert Herrick, Richard Lovelace, Katherine Phillips, Henry Vaughan, Andrew Marvell, and John Milton). We will analyze how figurations of gender, read in terms of power relations, subjectivity, and spirituality, can be seen to illuminate the sociopolitical and religious position of each writer. We will also consider Renaissance ventriloquism—how writers of the first half of the Seventeenth Century are appropriated and transformed by writers of the second half.

In the second part of the course, we will read the prose of men and women (among these Lancelot Andrewes, Frances Bacon, Margaret Hoby, Eleanor Davies, Ann Clifford, Bathsua Makken, John Milton, Robert Burton, Thomas Browne, and Thomas Hobbes), evaluating how they articulate their attitudes toward the new science, education, religion, politics, and the nature of the self.

Requirements: Commonplace Books, Short presentations on material from Early Books on Line, one researched critical paper, 10-15 pages, midterm, final exam).

ENGL 718 English Literature Late 18th Century: What is Enlightenment?  
MW 9:05-10:20 Jarrells
“[T]he obstacles to general enlightenment,” Kant wrote in 1784, “are generally diminishing. In this regard, this is the age of enlightenment.” In order to better understand the contours of this “age,” we will 1. Inquire into the various obstacles to which Kant alludes (while perhaps questioning their continued existence in the present); 2. Attend to those features, things, processes, etc. that for Kant diminished such obstacles: printed books; new genres like the novel, the newspaper, and political economy; debate; experiment; commerce; coffee. The Enlightenment category of literature was capacious – much more so than what it became after the Romantics got a hold of it. In this course, we are going to keep it that way. We’ll read novels (by Samuel Richardson, Sarah Scott, William Godwin, and Mary Wollstonecraft), travel writing (by Jonathan Swift and Olaudah Equiano), letters (by Montesquieu, Voltaire, Mary Wortley Montagu, and Alexander Pope), political economy (by Adam Smith, David Hume, and Thomas Malthus), and critique (by Kant, Foucault, Habermas, Michael McKeon, Mary Poovey, and Clifford Siskin). Although the course is designed to provide graduate students with a broad survey of eighteenth-century literature (especially from the second half of the century – Kant’s “age”), it will also offer opportunities to explore - in some depth – questions such as the following: What role did fictional genres play in Enlightenment? How did writers of the period engage global issues like the slave trade, colonization, and empire? And finally, why is it that Enlightenment, generally regarded as a progressive movement in the eighteenth century, comes in for so much criticism today? Are we no longer living in an age of Enlightenment? Is ours what Kant hoped for: an enlightened age?

ENGL 733 Classics of Western Literary Theory  
TTh 2:00-3:15 Shifflett
(crosslisted CPLT 701)
Careful study of the following works: Plato, Ion and Republic; Aristotle, Poetics; Longinus, On the Sublime; Cinthio, On the Composition of Romances; Tasso, Discourses on the Heroic Poem; Sidney, Apology for Poetry; Davenant, Preface to Gondibert; and Addison, Pleasures of the Imagination. Parallel readings are likely to include Sophocles, Antigone; Vergil, Aeneid; Ariosto, Orlando Furioso; Milton, Paradise Lost; Dryden, Conquest of Granada; and Gay, The Beggar’s Opera.
Requirements are likely to include two class presentations, one 1000-word book review, and one 4000-word essay.

ENGL 742 American Colonial & Federal Literature  
MW 10:30-11:45 Shields

ENGL 759 Southern Literature After 1900  
TTh 11:00-12:15 Powell
This course will draw on major works of fiction, poetry, and nonfiction by southern writers to illustrate the twentieth century’s evolution of ideas about the study of southern literature as a distinct category. Our emphasis will be on developing a critical framework for understanding contemporary scholarship on southern literature by exploring some of the ways in which scholars have talked about this region’s literature since 1900, including but not limited to the Southern Renascence, the New South, the postmodern South, and the “New Southern Studies.” A sampling of creative writers from whom our course could draw might include Thomas Wolfe, William Faulkner, Robert Penn Warren, Richard Wright, James Still, Flannery O’Connor, Walker Percy, Fred Chappell, James Dickey, Lee Smith, Randall Kenan, and
Natasha Trethaway. Students will read the equivalent of approximately one book per week, prepare a significant presentation with an accompanying handout, write a short essay in lieu of a midterm and a substantial research paper in lieu of a final exam, and participate in class discussion.

**ENGL 790 Survey of Composition Studies**
MW 2:30-3:45 Holcomb
This course introduces you to the major trends, theories, and methods that make up the field of composition studies. We’ll start with a history of the field, tracing its beginnings from the formation of English departments in the nineteenth century to its emergence as its own area of academic study in the 1960’s and 1970’s. We’ll then devote the bulk of the semester to what we might call the “era of specialization”—roughly 1980 to the present. Here we’ll explore how institutional pressures and the seemingly incessant need for composition studies to establish its own legitimacy shaped research and teaching practices within the field. Finally (and perhaps a tad predictably), we’ll look to the future, focusing in particular on recent developments in visual rhetoric and digital media. Here we’ll consider the challenges and responsibilities of writing instruction at a time when (by many accounts) the nature of writing itself is undergoing a fundamental change. **Required Texts:** Susan Miller (ed.), *The Norton Book of Composition Studies*; additional readings supplied via Blackboard. **Required Assignments:** research proposal (5-7 pp.); research paper (15-20 pp.).

**ENGL 791 Intro to Research on Written Composition**
W 5:30-8:00 Doxtader
(meets with SPCH 700 Issues & Methods in Speech Comm Research)

**ENGL 825G Postmodern Pages: A New Poetics of the Book Since 1950**
Th 5:30-8:00 Vanderborg
What will books look like in the 21st century and what new functions will they serve? This course examines an international selection of postmodern texts that have redefined the concept and the material format of the book. These texts experiment with innovations in typography, page layout, narrative sequence, and illustration, and they offer new perspectives on the relationship between print book and electronic text. We will explore genres such as artists’ books, palimpsests, graphic novels, and hypertexts, as well as new critical directions in history of the book scholarship.

**ENGL 843G Modernist Masculinities**
MW 12:30-1:35 Forter
This course approaches American modernism as a trenchant exploration of the meanings of modern manhood. We will situate modernist literature in the context of transformations in the sex/gender and racial systems that took place around the turn of the twentieth century. In doing so, we will also emphasize how modernist works developed new **forms** for mediating and “working over” these historical conditions. Central to the course’s concerns will be how the transformations in gender and race were engaged quite differently depending on one’s social location. Canonical authors, for example, experienced modern manhood as a problematic and internally riven formation: they were torn between, on one hand, embracing the “feminine” as repository of expressive capacities that the modern world disparaged, and on the other, identification with the manhood that engaged in that disparagement. Since this conflictedness emerged in response to an experience of modernity as **rupture**, we shall be especially concerned with how these works map masculinity onto loss, mourning and melancholia, and trauma. **African American**, women, and queer authors, in contrast, tended to be less threatened by the historical transformations to which their works responded, less concerned as they were to consolidate a beleaguered sense of privilege. The course will explore this latter proposition by emphasizing the variety of modernist formal experiments, the intimate relation between some of these experiments and marginalized subject positions, and the alternative (often racialized) masculinities constructed from these modernist margins.


**ENGL 890G Reinventing Excellence in the Corporate University:**
T 4:30-7:00 Smith
**Toward a New Humanities**
This course will begin with a brief overview of the emergence and history of the modern university in the U.S., attending to broader, contemporaneous political, economic, and cultural dynamics related to the “birth” and growth of the university. We’ll then move on to reading and engaging an array of writings selected from a body of literature whose general contention is that American Universities today are problematically connected to and operate increasingly like
capitalist corporations. In other words, we’ll be engaging texts that attempt to diagnose and critique what many people today refer to as “The Corporate University,” an institution in which instrumentalist, market-based logics of operation are said to dominate. It’s claimed these capitalist logics excessively foster and privilege commercial-economic modes of operation and concomitant modes and measures of value and productivity. Consequently, the university, with its dedication to excellence, both emulates corporate capitalism in its operations and contributes to its perpetuation by educating populations—undergraduates, administrators, faculty and graduate students—to perform competently as its producers and consumers.

Put differently, this institutional state of affairs is said to generate, among other things, conditions that encourage modes of subjectivity, possibilities for action, forms of knowledge, compositions of desire, and habits of valuation that reinforce capitalism’s contingent existence. One of the more provocative claims made by some of the scholars we’ll engage is that among the numerous modes of subjectivity capitalism fosters and uses to contribute to its continued existence are subjects dedicated to moving beyond capitalism by working to negate its existence through antagonistic and oppositional practices—among teacher-scholars one of the most popular is the practice of critique. The remainder of the course will involve reading and engaging work that focuses on how the humanities and its idea of liberal education might be “reinvented” to effectively contribute to changing how “The Corporate University” works as an institution. The hope of this work is that such institutional change will alter the larger social role the university plays in the U.S. and abroad, making it more likely to and capable of cultivating, proliferating, and supporting alternatives to the status quo. As we shall learn (and discuss) the idea of what counts as “genuine” or “authentic” ways of bringing about such change among teacher-scholars is by no means consistent. It’s the source of heated debate and divisiveness and is itself worthy of our attention and analysis.