

**LIST OF ENGLISH GRADUATE COURSES FOR 2014 – 2015**  
**[updated 1-29-15]**

**FALL 2014**

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200	Approaches to Literary Research	Prof. Lee
201C	Developments and Issues in Modern Critical Thought	Prof. Nersessian
211	Old English	Prof. Minkova
250	Restoration and 18th-Century Literature	Prof. Deutsch
252	Victorian Literature	Prof. Bristow
254	American Literature to 1900	Prof. Colacurcio
255	Contemporary American Literature	Prof. Seltzer
265	Postcolonial Literatures	Prof. Behdad, DeLoughrey, & Sharpe

**WINTER 2015**

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245	Chaucer	Prof. Chism
247	Shakespeare	Prof. Little
250	Restoration and 18th-Century Literature	Prof. Nussbaum
251	Romantic Writers	Prof. Makdisi
254	American Literature to 1900	Prof. Looby
257	Studies in Poetry	Prof. Cohen
259*	Studies in Criticism	Prof. Reinhard
260	Studies in Literature and Its Relationship to Arts and Sciences	Prof. Carruth
265	Postcolonial Literatures	Prof. Goyal

\* The first half of the Experimental Critical Theory (ECT) seminar. The second half of the ECT seminar will be offered as Comp Lit 290 in the spring. Enrollment by permission of instructor only. Pre-Enrollment not permitted.

**SPRING 2015**

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201C	Developments and Issues in Modern Critical Thought	Prof. Grossman
248	Earlier 17th-Century Literature	Prof. Shuger
251	Romantic Writers	Prof. Maniquis
255	Contemporary American Literature	Prof. Allmendinger
258	Studies in the Novel	Prof. North
259	Studies in Criticism	Prof. Kareem
M261	Studies in Chicana/Chicano Literature	Prof. Lopez
M262	Studies in Afro-American Literature	Prof. Yarborough

## FALL 2014 SEMINAR DESCRIPTIONS

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English 200                      **Proseminar: Introduction to Graduate Study for Ph.D. Students**                      Prof. Lee  
Approaches to Literary Research

The goal of this course is to introduce entering Ph.D. students to basic methodological approaches to the study of literature in English, as well as to some of the major areas of faculty research represented at UCLA. Through a series of conversations with guest faculty members, we will also pay special attention to the question of “theory,” how to do it, what it means, and how it relates to what we do as literary scholars.

English 201C                      **Formalisms**                      Prof. Nersessian  
Developments and Issues in Modern Critical Thought

This class examines the history of formalism from Russian Formalism in the early twentieth-century to some recent and emerging paradigms of so-called new formalism: reparative reading, surface reading, distant reading, book history, and the descriptive turn. We will be guided by the hypothesis that form is a process rather than a thing (though some of the authors on our syllabus may disagree), and consequently ask not “what is form?” but rather “*how* is form?” In other words, how do critical texts represent both the aesthetic activity of formalization and the practice of formally-engaged reading? Other core topics will include the ways in which formalist perspectives variously enable or impede insight into the historically-inflected categories of politics, race, environment and ecology, gender, and sexuality; the tendency of some formalist literary criticism to align itself with modes of amateurism, e.g. reading for pleasure or “just reading”; the differences between form and related terms like structure, shape, and genre; the relationship between form and style, in particular the style of the critic; and what it means to be interested in form in the midst of a much-vaunted crisis in the humanities.

English 211                      **Introduction to Old English**                      Prof. Minkova  
Old English

The course offers a basic linguistic introduction to Old English with particular emphasis on the structural differences between the older language and Modern English. It is designed for students unfamiliar with the earlier stages of the language and provides a basis for further study of the cultural and literary heritage of English. Each philological topic will be discussed within the context of relevant exemplary texts. Class time will be split evenly between description of the various features of Old English (Instructor’s job) and discussion/translation of Old English texts (students’ job). The last two weeks will be dedicated to Anglo-Saxon verse: its structure, diction, and longevity.

English 250                      **Jonathan Swift: Writing, Life, and Afterlife**                      Prof. Deutsch  
Restoration and 18th-Century Literature

In this course we will immerse ourselves in the prose and (much-neglected) poetry of Jonathan Swift, ranging from the satiric pyrotechnics of *Tale of a Tub* to the revolutionary rhetoric of the *Drapier’s Letters*, to the playfully serious intimacy of the *Journal to Stella* and the Stella poems and beyond. Edward Said’s characterization of Swift as a writer proleptically aware of himself as “a problem for the future” will be our inspiration and guide, leading us to consider Swift’s legacy as it informs his biographical metamorphoses (he was better known throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century for his infamously scatological and “deviant” psyche, manifested in his mysterious relationships with women, than for his satire) and literary heirs (William Butler Yeats, James Joyce, Samuel Beckett, and Said himself are some obvious choices, Virginia Woolf and Edith Sitwell are equally interesting alternatives). The history of Swift criticism provides a lens through which to view the history of our profession: secondary readings will therefore strike a balance between the relatively recent and the classic/canonical. Depending on individual interests, we might also find ourselves turning to a variety of critical approaches, including feminist, queer, postcolonial and aesthetic theory, to elucidate the relationship between Swift’s private life and public activism as an Anglo-Irish patriot and exile tormented by “savage indignation.” This course will appeal to students of irony and satire from any period, to those interested in the question of minority literature (in particular Irish literature), to historians of gender and sexuality, and to all who believe in the enlivening power of literary form. Requirements: oral presentation, posts on the class website, longer final paper.

## FALL 2014 SEMINAR DESCRIPTIONS

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English 252

***The Wilde Archive***  
Victorian Literature

Prof. Bristow

This graduate seminar aims to introduce students to advanced methods in humanities research by exploring the vast archive of Oscar Wilde materials held at UCLA's William Andrews Clark Memorial Library. This class—which focuses on searching for, identifying, and then assessing items held in this large collection—provide opportunities for understanding several areas of critical study that are not usually covered in syllabi dedicated solely to critical readings of literary texts. Archival research offers the chance to evaluate such topics as the history of the book, the development of a work from notes through manuscript to published copy, and the role that so-called ephemera can play in our understanding of a literary career. The Clark Library is based in the Adams District, which is ten miles from Westwood campus. If a sufficient number of students enroll, the Center for 17th- and 18th-Century Studies (which overassess all of the scholarly activities at the Clark) may be able to provide a shuttle from the main campus.

English 254

***Puritanism and American Literature***  
American Literature to 1900

Prof. Colacurcio

Nineteenth-century American literature enjoys as many contexts or analogues as you please: Romantic, if you think Coleridge a necessary aid to American reflection; Victorian, if you value dedication without full conviction; proto-post-modern, if you declare *The Confidence Man* an epitome. Less imaginatively, it is post-revolutionary, for a while, until it finishes with the *Sepulchers of the Fathers*; Jacksonian for a nano-second, until you learn it's more about Indian Removal than Democracy, at which time it becomes furiously ante-bellum; and then—with, well, fewer competing concepts—an age of realism and cynical suspicion. But is it not also, very much of it, post-Puritan? Somewhere between the pious hope that Enlightenment will everywhere trump Awakening and the disturbing claim that everything ever written in America is somehow a Jeremiad, there must be, if not a continuous story of theme and form, at least a set of revealing instances: the uncanny echoes of Edwards in Poe; Timothy Dwight's pre-writing of Hawthorne's *Celestial Railroad*, Hawthorne's own inability, ever, to get over the seventeenth-century Ancestors; Melville's recognition of and contribution to this thematics of depravity; Stowe's determination to live down the neo-Edwardsian theology of Samuel Hopkins; DeForest's using the Civil War to teach a Puritanic Yankee that the Presbyterian conscience is less than a universal endowment; Oliver Wendell Holmes' re-writing of Rappaccini's *Daughter* into an explicit parable about Calvinism; the resistant, reprobate psychology in much of Emily Dickinson; the theological gloom that in the end overcame the will to comedy in Twain. Not to mention the fact that Perry Miller thought Emerson looked more like a Puritan Antinomian—or like Edwards—than like Swedenborg. And what if there's just a touch of what they used to call weaned affections in James' famous cases of resignation? More than enough, in any case. Enough that a fair knowledge of Puritanism "itself" will be presumed.

English 255

***Realism***  
Contemporary American Literature

Prof. Seltzer

What does it mean to understand "reality" as a genre? Or a world? What forms of literature, from the later nineteenth-century on, have informed modern and contemporary conceptions of (to borrow a phrase from an eighteenth-century novel) "real life"? How do new forms of suspense and excitement, new senses of mobility and violence, new practices of documentation and administration, and new ego-technic media enter into the reality, and aesthetics, of these genres and worlds? We will look at novels, and perhaps some films and photography, in sampling realism from (for example) Zola (c. 1880) to Kazuo Ishiguro or Tom McCarthy (c.2005), looking in between at the work of writers such as Henry James, William Dean Howells, Theodore Dreiser, Agatha Christie, Patricia Highsmith, J. G. Ballard, Cormac McCarthy, and W. G. Sebald. Additional readings in critical theory, media studies, systems theory, art history, speculative realism, science studies (names on the secondary literature list may include Kracauer, Adorno, Kittler, Luhmann, Latour, Meillassoux).

## FALL 2014 SEMINAR DESCRIPTIONS

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English 265

***Postcolonial Theory***  
Postcolonial Literatures

Prof. Behdad  
Prof. DeLoughrey  
Prof. Sharpe

Postcolonialism is not a unified field of theoretical inquiry. This seminar, therefore, does not offer a linear narrative of the topic, but takes instead an *episodic* approach that focuses on the works of some of the most prominent theoreticians for the field, including Franz Fanon, Edward Said, and Gayatri Spivak. It provides a framework for thinking about the theoretical and political implications of using "postcolonialism" as an umbrella term to designate the ensemble of writings by those subjects whose identities and histories have been shaped by the colonial encounter. This class will be co-taught by Ali Behdad, Jenny Sharpe and Liz DeLoughrey and will cover topics such as the politics of representation; postcolonial feminisms; nationalism and national allegory; literary form (modernism, realism, postmodernism, magical realism); and explore intersections between postcolonial and globalization studies.

## WINTER 2015 SEMINAR DESCRIPTIONS

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English 245

**Chaucer**

Prof. Chism

Thursdays, 9-11:50am

Although Geoffrey Chaucer has often been constructed as a humanist father to English poetry, recent explorations have brought forth a far less comfortable, more interrogatory figure, traversing a medieval landscape not of serene hierarchy but of unprecedented social mobility, opportunity, and danger. From his earliest works in the more courtly traditions to the social ventriloquy of The Canterbury Tales, the intimacy of Chaucer's analysis and his continual refusal of closure make his work unusual and often heterodox in regard to the most pressing social and literary questions of his day. This class focuses upon two of Chaucer's most canonical works, Troilus and Criseyde and The Canterbury Tales. It will explore the developing trajectory of Chaucer's works, the ways they rework disparate literary, scholarly, and religious traditions, and how they reflect and reshape late fourteenth-century social debates. It will introduce students to critical trends in Chaucer scholarship, both historical and contemporary, focusing on such current topics in Chaucer studies as gender, sexuality, nationalism, and postcolonialism. Texts may include Troilus and Criseyde and certain of the Canterbury Tales as well as critical articles on different aspects of Chaucer's writing

Requirements: weekly 1-2 pp. response paper, a short presentation, and a choice of either one seminar paper (20-25 pp.) or two conference-length papers (10-12 pp).

Readings may include excerpts from:

Benson: *The Riverside Chaucer*

Glenn Burger, *Chaucer's Queer Nation*

Carolyn Dinshaw, *Chaucer's Sexual Poetics*

L. O. Aranye Fradenburg, *Sacrifice Your Love*

Lee Patterson, *Chaucer and the Subject of History*

Paul Strohm, *Social Chaucer*

David Wallace, *Chaucerian Polity*

Jill Mann, *Feminizing Chaucer*

English 247

**Shakespeare, Race, and the Diaspora**

Prof. Little

Shakespeare

Tuesdays, 12-2:50pm

This seminar contextualizes Shakespeare's "raced" plays—*Titus Andronicus*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Othello*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *The Tempest*—by reading them in relation to travel narratives and non-Shakespearean early modern dramatic representations of "raced" others (e.g., Moors, Jews, and Turks) and by tracking the extension of (some of) these texts into 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century "raced" and diasporic literatures, including Vishal Bhardwaj's *Omkara* (film, 2006), Aime Cesaire's *A Tempest* (1969), Toni Morrison's *Desdemona* (2012), Caryl Philips's *The Nature of Blood* (1998), and Wulf Sachs's *Black Hamlet* (1937). In sum, this seminar seeks to study Shakespeare in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries as an emergent (not necessarily anticipatory) figure of more contemporary explorations, exploitations, and critiques of race and diaspora. Contributions to the seminar will include a presentation, a response to a presentation, and a final research paper of at least 15 pages.

## WINTER 2015 SEMINAR DESCRIPTIONS

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English 250

***Thinking About Literature and Time, 1660-1800***  
Restoration and 18th-Century Literature

Prof. Nussbaum

Tuesdays, 9-11:50am

This course will consider concepts of time as they are imagined and represented during the long eighteenth century. The focus will be on emergent forms of literature, especially the novel, the periodical, and autobiography. Yoking notions of time with literary texts, criticism, and theory, we will think about, for example, “punctual” time, performative time, providential time, neoclassical time, work and time-discipline, and geological time. Readings will likely include the following: *The Spectator* (selections), Defoe’s *Journal of the Plague Year* and *Robinson Crusoe*, Richardson’s *Pamela*, Lillo’s *London Merchant*, Gay’s *Beggar’s Opera* and *Polly*, Boswell’s *London Journal*, Sterne’s *Tristram Shandy*, and F. Sheridan’s *History of Nourjahad*. Critical texts may include Rita Felski, Stuart Sherman, Michael Warner, E.P. Thompson, Johannes Fabian, Walter Benjamin, and others.

Written work includes one tiny paper (250-500 words), one or two short presentations, and a seminar paper (15-17 pages). Students are very welcome to consult with me about the course.

English 251

***The Romantic Essay***  
Romantic Writers

Prof. Makdisi

Thursdays, 12-2:50pm

This seminar will explore the proliferation and development of the essay form in the Romantic period, which has long been overshadowed by the novels and especially the poetry of the period. Our readings will center on the *London Magazine* and the three greatest essayists of the period—Thomas De Quincey, Charles Lamb, and William Hazlitt—whose work overlapped in one way or another in that venue. But we will move beyond as well to consider the prose work of Anna Barbauld, Sydney Owenson, Leigh Hunt and others.

English 254

***The Queer American Nineteenth Century***  
American Literature to 1900

Prof. Looby

Wednesdays, 9-11:50am

The late literary scholar Robert K. Martin was once asked to edit an anthology of gay nineteenth-century American literature, but he declined to do so because, he said, it already existed: the *Norton Anthology of American Literature*. He had a point. This course will investigate the queerness of nineteenth-century American literature, and indeed ask what we mean by “queer” today. The syllabus will be organized around several rubrics, including “queer places,” “queer genders,” “queer attachments,” and “queer things.” We’ll read some canonical novels: Melville’s *Typee* (1846), Hawthorne’s *Blithedale Romance* (1852). Some non-canonical: Margaret J. M. Sweat’s *Ethel’s Love-Life* (1859), Theodore Winthrop’s *Cecil Dreeme* (1861). And a good many short stories by Louisa May Alcott, Ambrose Bierce, Willa Cather, Charles Chesnut, Kate Chopin, Sui Sin Far, Mary Wilkins Freeman, Bret Harte, Sadakichi Hartman, Sarah Orne Jewett, Samuel L. Knapp, Charles Warren Stoddard, Elizabeth Stoddard, Bayard Taylor, Octave Thanet, Mark Twain, Walt Whitman, Constance Fenimore Woolson, and others. Of subordinate but real interest: what is the relationship of the minor genre of the short story to the major form of the novel? Is one more available for queer expression than the other? A practical research exercise will be involved: a search of digitized print resources for additions to the queer archive.

## WINTER 2015 SEMINAR DESCRIPTIONS

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English 257

**Reading Poetry**  
Studies in Poetry

Prof. Cohen

Wednesdays, 3-5:50pm

What do you do when you read a poem? Since the 1920s, reading poems has most often meant interpreting or explaining them, usually in school. Poems were central to the new critical paradigm of “close reading,” and while new criticism has gone through several generations of critique, many of its assumptions about reading and interpretation remain unchallenged, the most fundamental being that reading is what you are supposed to do with literature. This class will challenge those assumptions about poetry and reading by thinking about other uses of poetry, in order to recover alternate histories but also to gain a sharper theoretical understanding of “reading” as a critical act. To those ends we will follow two paths, one material (history of the book and the historiography of reading), the other theoretical (media studies, genre theory, and “the new lyrical studies”). Each week will offer a different case study in the history and theory of reading, which will range across literary fields and periods, from the medieval to the present.

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Assignments will include a formal in-class presentation, and a final project on a topic of the student’s own design.

Required texts: Carlo Ginzburg, [The Cheese and the Worms](#); David Henkin, [City Reading](#); Robert Darnton, [Poetry and the Police](#); Virginia Jackson and Yopie Prins, [The Lyric Theory Reader](#).

English 259

**Truth and Knowledge**  
Studies in Criticism

Prof. Reinhard

Thursdays, 5-7:50pm

This seminar is the first of a 2-quarter series offered by the UCLA Program in Experimental Critical Theory. **Students may not pre-enroll for this seminar.** Enrollment is by permission of the instructor only. For more information on applying to the ECT Program, please Asiroh Cham, Acting Student Affairs Officer for the Department of Comparative Literature, at [asiroh@humnet.ucla.edu](mailto:asiroh@humnet.ucla.edu) or visit <http://ect.humnet.ucla.edu>. Application deadline: November 15, 2014.

English 260

**Food and the Avant-Garde: Modernism to Bioart**  
Studies in Literature and Its Relationship to Arts and Sciences

Prof. Carruth

Tuesdays, 3-5:50pm

This course will orient students to the interdisciplinary field of food studies by way of studying avant-garde aesthetics in the twentieth and early-twenty-first centuries. Through this food-centered lens, we will investigate the historical avant-gardes of high modernism, futurism, objectivism, and Dada with a particular focus on English-language literary works as well as visual and performance art. We’ll conclude by considering a current cultural movement known as bioart, which draws on the avant-garde and for which food technologies and culinary practices are central.

With a focus on methods, we will investigate what textual criticism and archival research might offer to food studies; and we will pay close attention to genre and form by comparing literary and artistic works with unorthodox cookbooks, popular films, urban agriculture designs, and culinary ephemera. Primary materials will include *The Futurist Cookbook*, sections from James Joyce’s *Ulysses*, Samuel Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot*, the poetry of Wallace Stevens and Lorine Niedecker (among others), *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, *Soylent Green*, the recent cookbook *Modernist Cuisine*, and contemporary bioart collectives such as the Center for Genomic Gastronomy. Secondary materials will come from the fields of food studies and science studies as well as seminal theories and histories of the avant-garde.

## WINTER 2015 SEMINAR DESCRIPTIONS

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English 265

*The Global Novel*  
Postcolonial Literatures

Prof. Goyal

Wednesdays, 12-2:50pm

In recent years, the field of postcolonial studies has been undergoing a transformation into – variously – globalization studies, World Literature, and the study of the Global South. This course will explore the now ubiquitous category of the global novel to track the changing fortunes of postcolonialism in relation to contemporary theories of the novel. How does the frame of nation and narration change in the contemporary moment, especially in relation to new theories of time and space? How does comparison work in Atlantic and transoceanic frames, and how might long-standing debates about realism (Lukács, Jameson, Moretti) and newer models of peripheral realism help us read prominent global novels? Recent discussions of form and historicism, queer temporality, race and human rights will structure our readings of novels selected from such writers as Junot Diaz, Amitav Ghosh, Karen Tei Yamashita, Aravind Adiga, Taiye Selasi, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Chris Abani, NoViolet Bulawayo, Dave Eggers, J M Coetzee, and Zadie Smith.

Course requirements: sustained participation in class discussions, class presentation, 5 pp. short paper, 15 pp. final paper.

## SPRING 2015 SEMINAR DESCRIPTIONS

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English 201C

***Standardization (standardisation): Histories & Theories***  
Developments and Issues in Modern Critical Thought

Prof. Grossman

This course is part of the Urban Humanities Initiative and welcomes students enrolled in that program.

This course aims to introduce students to the topic of standardization. We will explore standardization in part by looking at the histories of establishing different standards. For instance: mortality was tabularized in the seventeenth century; language “purified” in the eighteenth; time was synchronized to a single source in the nineteenth-century, when also orchestras were set to a pitch, anatomical medicine projected a standardized body, and money changed from bank’s promissory notes to national currency; in the twentieth century standard shipping containers were developed for global intermodal transport and English alphabetic letters encoded by computers into ASCII (the American Standard Code for Information Interchange). As the variety of these examples suggests, the history of standardization is anything but standardized. Hence this course remains untied to period and global in outlook, though it will certainly be tilted by predisposition toward nineteenth-century England as well as toward considering what literature might have to do with standardization. Case studies will form part of its structure, and the course will be centered on reading *A Tale of Two Cities* as a novel concerned both with the history of urbanism and standardizing individuality.

The course’s overall goal is not merely to amass different stories of standardization. Rather we will ask: how and what does the establishment of different standards contribute to a history and theory of standardization itself? Standardization succeeds in part by fading into the background and through being forgotten (have you heard of the BSI or the NIST?). Can exploring standardization teach us anything about our current theoretical approaches? We will use the topic of standardization to open up and focus intellectual pressure on an array of critical approaches including systems theory; the history of science; design and technology; disability, race and gender studies; and globalization.

Students can opt to produce a project on standardization in a form relevant to their discipline or to write either three 5-page case studies or a 15 page essay on any aspect related to standardization. Reading will likely include selections from Robert Tavenor’s *Smoot’s Ear: The Measure of Humanity*, Jonathan Sterne’s *MP3: The Meaning of a Format*, and Karl Marx’s *Capital, Volume II*. I am currently open to suggestions for readings.

English 248

***Milton***  
Earlier 17th-Century Literature

Prof. Shuger

The seminar will focus on Milton’s early poetry (*Comus, Mornng of Christ’s Nativity, Lycidas, L’Allegro and Il Penseroso*), plus *Paradise Lost*, with a brief detour into the prose and poetry of the Interregnum (*Areopagitica*, sonnets), and in conjunction with Milton’s letters, college exercises, and Latin verse--the latter in translation or in the original. Students will give presentations summarizing (and critiquing) selected works of literary scholarship, chosen, if possible, with an eye to class members’ several fields of study, and we will probably read some of the criticism as a class. There will also be a final essay. . . . IN ADDITION, those who wish may enroll (as independent study) in a 1-3 credit seminar on Milton’s Latin prose, which will probably meet directly after the class for an hour each week. (Most of Milton’s writing during the Cromwellian period was as Latin Secretary to the regime; it’s this material that we’ll tackle.) NOTE: one can sign up for the Latin independent study whether or not one is enrolled in the Milton seminar.

## SPRING 2015 SEMINAR DESCRIPTIONS

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English 251

***William Blake's Three Lives***  
Romantic Writers

Prof. Maniquis

William Blake has had three lives. The first was the one lived out in London from 1757 until 1827, a life of immense aesthetic creation entwined with radical Protestant Dissent and the American and French Revolutions. But in this flesh and bone life, he was also a poetic ghost mostly ignored as an unhinged mystic. His second life and first fame began in the late 19th century when he was reverently taken up by Rossetti, Swinburne, and Yeats. Blake's third life began in the 1920s when the *professoriat* began to install him in the canon of English Romantic literature. Today he keeps the university quite busy and for readers all over the world, Blake has become, far beyond Byron and even Shakespeare, England's most popular poet.

In this course we shall study many of Blake's works and discuss his three lives: Blake *the* revolutionary Romantic visionary, Blake resurrected in the Victorian heyday of the British Empire, and Blake inspirer of Aldous Huxley, Jim Morrison, the *Doors*, and Hannibal the Cannibal. Who are these three Blakes, and what do they have to do with one another?

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The seminar will be useful to anyone interested in reader reception in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries -- and, of course, to anyone who is simply interested in poetry.

English 255

***Self-Transformation on the Western Frontier***  
Contemporary American Literature

Prof. Allmendinger

In "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" (1893), Frederick Jackson Turner defined westward expansion as a process of transformation. In the process of transforming "wilderness" into "civilization," American immigrants entered a "crucible," forging new alliances and creating a uniquely democratic society. The frontier also enabled individuals to explore new identities pertaining to gender, race, and sexual orientation. A former slave published an autobiography in which he claimed to be a Native American chieftain, launching his career as a movie star and 1920s socialite. An African American wrote about his years as a Rocky Mountain scout, while passing as white. A former cowboy insisted he was an orphan who was raised by a French fur trapper, hiding his record as a cattle rustler and convicted criminal. A little girl in an Oregon lumber camp, who composed poems about mythical forest creatures, insisted she was the lost heir of Russian aristocrats. Some writers were well-known public figures. Clarence King, the first director of the U.S. Geological Survey, spent his career exploring the Sierra Nevadas and his private life pretending to be a light-skinned Negro in New York City. Rose Wilder Lane secretly revised her mother's autobiographical fiction, allowing her to take credit for *Little House on the Prairie* (1935). And Willa Cather identified with her male protagonist in order to hide her attraction to women in *My Antonia* (1919). This seminar examines the transformative effect that the frontier had on late nineteenth and early twentieth-century American writers, and the ways that their works complicated discussions of race, gender, and sexual identity.

English 258

***The Novel after Consciousness***  
Studies in the Novel

Prof. North

It is a fairly common idea, represented, for example, by Nancy Armstrong's recent *How Novels Think* but also by a great many other critical studies, that one of the most essential tasks of the novel form is to represent consciousness. A number of very fine studies of the novel, including Dorrit Cohn's, describe the array of techniques that have grown up in service of this essential motive. But it is also clear that the consciousness so represented is a normative one whose actual existence, in literature and in life, is rather rare. The kind of consciousness embodied in the work of James or Woolf frequently turns out to be too fine to live. In any case, it is also generally agreed that at some point in its history the novel stopped

## SPRING 2015 SEMINAR DESCRIPTIONS

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refining its representations of consciousness and turned to something else. An art form that had painfully developed an exquisite sensitivity to subtle interior states of being then began to produce monsters like Robert Musil's *Moosbrugger*. How did the novel come to abandon what had seemed its fundamental purpose, and what does this mean for the forms that had grown up around that purpose? If novels don't think any more (Armstrong's study stops in 1900), what do they do?

Novels to be considered will include *Wings of the Dove*, *Return of the Soldier*, *Tarr*, *Tender Is the Night*, *Nightwood*, *The Waves*, *Watt*, *Valis*, and *Rings of Saturn*.

English 259

***Fictional Worlds***  
Studies in Criticism

Prof. Kareem

Fictional Worlds

We know what world means as a noun but what does it mean as a verb? What is a fictional world and how is it different from a literary world—or from a real world? These questions will be at the heart of this seminar, in which we'll read a range of texts from antiquity to the present day that explore the question of what it means to conjure worlds. Readings will include philosophy, literary criticism, and fiction. Possible authors include John Milton, Margaret Cavendish, Alexander Baumgarten, David Hume, Erich Auerbach, M. H. Abrams, and Thomas Pavel.

English M261

***The Latino 19th Century***  
Studies in Chicana/Chicano Literature

Prof. Lopez

This seminar begins from two basic assumptions. First: Latinos are not a 20th century phenomenon. Second: when we say "American," and when we study American literature, we must refer not just to the United States but to the broader Americas. Typically the US academy has imagined 19th century American culture on an east-west trajectory as people and print move from the major metropolitan centers of the Atlantic seaboard towards the frontier of the Western US. But the story of 19th century America is just as much one of north-south circulation as it is one of western expansion. Throughout the 19th century, Latin American intellectuals were active in the United States and in dialog with canonical Anglo authors. Events in Mexico and Latin America, moreover, had a significant impact on US writers, most famously Thoreau, of course, who refused to pay a tax that would support the Mexican American War of 1846, but Thoreau was hardly alone in the attention he paid to his sister republics to the south. In this seminar we will ask how our notions of space, place, and nation change when we entertain the notion of a Latino 19th century? How does such a thing revise our understanding of "American" studies? How does it help us craft new visions and new histories of "American" literature? (This course satisfies the English Graduate Program's post-1780 historical breadth requirement.)

English M262

***Post-Reconstruction/Pre-Renaissance:  
African American Literature at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century***  
Studies in Afro-American Literature

Prof. Yarborough

The period between the end of Reconstruction and start of World War I saw an unprecedented flowering of literature by blacks in the United States. One factor driving this phenomenon was the coming of age of a generation of African Americans born after Emancipation and provided with educational opportunities withheld from most of their forebears. A second was the gradually shifting status of black artists in the literary marketplace in the U.S. On the one hand, the growing number of black-operated newspapers and periodicals provided supportive outlets for African American authors. On the other hand, a handful of black writers, many of them early in their careers, were able to place their work in such mainstream

## SPRING 2015 SEMINAR DESCRIPTIONS

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magazines as *Century* and to publish their books with such major presses as Dodd Mead. Perhaps the best example of the possibilities now open to some African American authors is Paul Laurence Dunbar, whose wide appeal ranked him among the most popular American poets at the time, regardless of race. Dunbar's career also manifests the daunting challenges confronted by blacks writing in the era described by scholar Rayford Logan as "the nadir" of African American history after slavery, a period marked by unrelenting assaults on the image of the black in politics, journalism, fiction, film, theatre, poetry, advertising, and the social sciences. In this seminar, we will read the work of several African American writers active in the decades immediately before and after the turn of the century—among them, W. E. B. Du Bois, Charles Chesnutt, Pauline Hopkins, and Paul Laurence Dunbar. In addition to considering how these authors engaged the pressing political issues of the day, we will focus on their adoption of a range of formal literary conventions.

### Requirements

attendance & class participation

weekly on-line posts

an oral presentation

a short paper (5-6 pages)

a prospectus & an annotated bibliography

a final paper (15-20 pages)