

Fall 2020 ECL Graduate Course Descriptions

Alicia Rivero

CMPL 747: The Novel in Spanish America II: Comparative and Interdisciplinary Seminar
TuTh 2:00pm-3:15pm

We will examine the theory and practice of the Latin American novel and novella since the 1960s, as well as hyper- and digital texts. We'll explore this together with major international trends and writers in order to better understand the innovativeness of said novel(la) and the cross-pollination of ideas that affected the development of these novelistic forms. Among the topics that we will discuss are the following: the Spanish American "boom" of the 60s and 70s; modernity, the postboom and postmodernity; magical realism and the contrasting "McOndo"; race; gender; cultural studies (for example, pop culture such as film and music, as well as techno, cyber, and digital culture); the historical novel and historiographic metafiction, etc. The course will be conducted in English and translations will be available, but specialists will read the texts in the original language. Note: Some of the topics, texts and authors are relevant to the Spanish MA reading list for the qualifying exam.

Required texts: (1) Printed: Cortázar, *Rayuela/Hopscotch* (a precursor to hypertexts); García Márquez, *Del amor y otros demonios/Of Love and Other Demons* (novella); Allende, *La casa de los espíritus/The House of the Spirits*; Puig, *El beso de la mujer araña/The Kiss of the Spider Woman*; Fuguet, *Las películas de mi vida/The Movies of My Life*; Fuentes, *Los años con Laura Díaz/The Years with Laura Díaz*; Rushdie, *Midnight's Children*; Lispector, *A Hora da estrela/The Hour of the Star* (novella). (2) Selected, free, digital novel(la) online (TBA). Readings may vary due to availability.

Work for the course: (1) active participation; (2) a presentation in English--unless everyone understands Spanish well--containing research on a theoretical/critical or literary text on the syllabus, chosen by the student and presented similarly to a conference paper (= 40% of the grade); (3) a research paper (= 60%). The latter may be written in Spanish or English; it must combine theory with textual analysis and criticism and will either be a rewrite of the presentation or may be on a new topic, per the student's choice but subject to the instructor's approval.

Heidi Kim

ENGL 747

W 10:10am-1:10pm

This course will focus on a diverse range of twentieth century U.S. novels and criticism, chiefly focusing on writing about race and ethnicity and the establishment of ethnic literary studies. Critical readings will be curated to introduce students to different fields and critical debates. For example, the reading of Faulkner will be paired with contemporaneous Southern Agrarian criticism as well as Marxist, Freudian, and feminist approaches. Other primary authors will include Ralph Ellison, Maxine Hong Kingston, and Julia Alvarez. Students will vote on some choices of primary texts in the first few weeks.

Kym Weed

ENGL 763: Introduction to Health Humanities

Tu 2:00pm-4:50pm

This interdisciplinary graduate seminar will introduce students to topics and methods in health humanities. In recent years, scholars have sought to define the field of health humanities as a broader and more inclusive set of research practices and objects of study than related fields like medical humanities. Therefore, this course will sample critical and creative texts that represent this field-expanding trend. Students will read foundational critical texts in health humanities and related fields including medical humanities, narrative medicine, disability studies, medical anthropology, graphic medicine, and rhetoric of health and medicine along with a series of primary texts. Together, we will define the scope, methods, and values that constitute the field of health humanities.

Readings may include selections by: Sari Altschuler, Oliva Banner, Catherine Belling, MK Czerwiec, Rita Charon, Paul Crawford, Lennard Davis, Lisa Diedrich, Arthur Frank, Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, Lisa Keränen, Arthur Kleinman, Craig M. Klugman, Erin Gentry Lamb, Annemarie Mol, Roy Porter, Dorothy Roberts, and Janelle Taylor, among others.

Assignments will likely include weekly blog posts, 2-3 short papers, in-class presentation/discussion leading, and a course research project that employs one or more of the methods we discuss.

Candace Epps-Robertson

ENGL 805: Rhetorics of Resistance and Narratives for Survival

Th 2:00pm-5:00pm

How do we understand resistance across communities? This course will take a historical approach to study resistance efforts as they have been shaped by various communities speaking to hegemonic powers. We'll look at a variety of sites and examine practices such as storytelling, hashtag activism, and silence, to name a few. Our goal will be to map counter rhetorical strategies and narratives.

Course Goals:

- To understand rhetorical practices of resistance as practiced across communities.
 - To theorize and develop an understanding of the connection between resistance and cultural rhetorics.
 - To survey and practice various research methods that allow for examining resistance efforts that occur across mediums.
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Patrick O'Neill
ENGL 814: History of the English Language
Tu 2:00pm-5:00pm

This course is predicated on the fact that you are all experts in the English language and the assumption that as students and teachers of English literature you would wish to know as much as possible about how the English language evolved over some thirteen centuries, from its humble origins as a dialect spoken in the north-west corner of continental Europe to its present status as an international language.

Because of our shared interest in literature the course is built around literary works representative of the different stages of English (traditionally defined as Old, Middle, and (Early) Modern English). Such is the inevitable diachronic aspect, showing how the language evolved over the centuries. At the same time, I hope that you (individually) will engage in a synchronic study of English by relating the history of the language to the period/movement of most interest to you in your own work, and that you will make this study the subject of a research project. As a course, History of the English Language (known affectionately as 'HEL') contains an inherent tension: emphasize history or language? The present course will favor the former while respecting the discipline of the latter.

Ideally, you should gain from our readings, assignments and the research project an enhanced linguistic awareness of your particular area of research, as well as the ability to make intelligent assessments of works in English from different periods and geographical regions of the language.

Reid Barbour
ENGL 830: Renaissance Singularity: Nashe, Donne, Browne, Cavendish
M 3:35pm-6:25pm

The quality of "singularity"—loosely, uniqueness—is a troubling one for writers in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England. Its associations with innovation, extemporaneousness, and endogenous creation are frequently judged to be not just trivial but suspect, insubordinate, arrogant, and blasphemous. The four writers that we will study come closest to laying some claim to a favorable version of singularity, one after all that had a mythical basis in the phoenix. But they too have complex relationships to the uniqueness of their own wits. With our focus on close readings in key texts by the four writers—Thomas Nashe, John Donne, Thomas Browne, and Margaret Cavendish—we will also connect singularity to a wide range of concerns: the invention of the newspaper; the printing press and information overload; Renaissance poetics and genre theory; theology and ecclesiology (prayer); Bacon's Great Instauration, the power of convention; the specter of monstrosity; Renaissance faculty psychology and medical theory.

Eric Downing
CMPL 841: History of Literary Criticism I (Classicism)
Th 2:00pm-5:00pm

The course introduces students to some of the major strains in literary criticism from the Classical Period to the 18th century. Readings of major authors will be paired not only with literary examples contemporary with our chosen critics, but also with modern day theoretical responses to their works.

Our objective is a working knowledge of dominant trends in European literary criticism up to (and including) the Enlightenment, useful in understanding the literature of the successive historical periods and also as a continuing, vital influence on 20th and 21st century poetics. We will also be devoting some time to the primary non-Classical tradition of early Western literary criticism, namely Biblical interpretation.

Authors read include Gorgias, Plato, Aristotle, Aristophanes, Horace, Longinus, Philo, Proclus, Plotinus, Augustine, Scaliger, Luther, Boileau, Sidney, Burke, Young, and Lessing; Homer, Pindar, Callimachus, Ovid, Vergil, Dante, and Pope; and Auerbach, Derrida, Genette, Ricouer, Benjamin, and Bernal.

Kimberly Stern
ENGL 842: Intellectual Work in the Nineteenth Century
Tu 11:00am-2:00pm

The nineteenth century has often been associated with the rise of intellectual disciplines, the professionalization of letters, educational reform, and — more abstractly — the discourses of the Victorian “sage.” This seminar interrogates the period’s approach to “intellectual work,” a term meant to encompass the literary output of nineteenth-century writers and their reflections on the pursuit of knowledge. Perhaps more importantly, however, we will think critically about our own intellectual work by exploring a range of methodologies (historical, archival, and biographical) that are often aligned with “the history of ideas.” As we read works from the period, we will consider how writers build upon and incorporate the work of their forebears, as well as how to justify, interrogate, and write about those connections in scholarly work. Accomplishing this goal will involve navigating fractured chronologies, contextualizing and comparing editions, making biographical claims in the face of limited evidence, and cultivating creative approaches to literary sleuthing. Reading may include works by Thomas Carlyle, George Eliot, and Oscar Wilde; however, in order to ensure that the class is relevant to each individual participant, the final syllabus will be a product of negotiation among members of the seminar.

Geoffrey Harpham
ENGL 857: Modernism
Tu 2:00pm-5:00pm

Geoffrey Harpham will offer a special course for graduate students in the Department of English and Comparative Literature fall 2020. Dr. Harpham, currently Senior Fellow at the Kenan Institute for Ethics at Duke University, was for many years the director of the National Humanities Center in Research Triangle Park. He is the author of eleven books and over one hundred articles and essays, most recently *The Humanities and the Dream of America* (2011) and *What Do You Think, Mr. Ramirez? The American Revolution in Education* (2017). *Scholarship and Freedom* will appear from Harvard University Press later on this year. He is currently working on race and popular culture in early twentieth-century America.

COURSE:

All literary periods were “modern” with respect to their own times, but Modernism (1900-45) grasped its own modernity to a far greater degree than previous periods. Modernist writers knew that their work represented a rejection of traditional thinking about morality, social organization, religion, and the state, and a commitment to artistic experimentation, cosmopolitanism, and a general desire to, in Ezra Pound’s phrase, “make it new.” But despite, or perhaps because of, this commitment to innovation, many modernist writers continued to meditate on traditional subjects, including race. In a number of the most interesting Modernist writers, race represents a challenge to modernity, a resistant element that cannot be assimilated to the new way of thinking, and a marker of the limits of modernism. We will be looking at theories of race and racial “science,” and at the place of race in the work of Modernist writers, including Joseph Conrad, James Joyce, T. S. Eliot, Nella Larsen, W. E. B. Du Bois, Zora Neale Hurston, and Dubose Heyward. We will also look at D. W. Griffith’s *The Birth of a Nation*, James Whale’s *Show Boat* (based on a novel by Edna Ferber), and George Gershwin’s *Porgy and Bess*.
