Wake Forest Department of English
Spring 2027 English Literature Courses
Updated 11/2

Table of Contents
Please scroll through the document or click the anchor links below to be taken directly to each section in the document.

Chart of All Major Courses
This chart lists all 200- and 300-level courses in the major, and indicates which major requirement(s) each course satisfies.

1-hour and 1.5-hour English Electives & Internships

100-Level Division II (Literature Requirement) Courses
These 100-level courses satisfy the University's Division II Literature requirement. English majors and minors may count one 100-level ENG course as elective credit (3 credit hours maximum). Students may also count any 200- or 300-level ENG course toward the Division II requirement.

200-Level English Major Gateway Courses
The 200-level Gateways are requirements for the English major. Prospective English majors are encouraged to take a gateway course for the Division II literature requirement.

300-Level English Courses
These 300-level ENG courses can be used to fulfill the upper-level requirements of the English major/minor or to fulfill the Division II Literature requirement.

Links to External Major/Minor Resources
- English Major Requirements Checklist
- The English Major
- The English Minor
- Undergraduate Bulletin

Click the anchor links to move around the document:

Major Courses Chart | Short Courses | 100-Level Courses | 200-Level Courses | 300-Level Courses | Back to Top

Chart of All Spring 2026 Major Courses

200-Level English Gateways	Professor	Overlays	Day	Time
ENG 265-A - British Literature before 1800	Harlan	Meets Gateway Requirement	WF	3:30-4:45
ENG 266-A - British Literature 1800 to the Present	Saloman	Meets Gateway Requirement	TR	9:30-10:45
ENG 275-A - American Literature	Madera	Meets Gateway Requirement	MW	2:00-3:15
ENG 290-A - Foundations in Literary Criticism	Hena	Meets Gateway Requirement	TR	3:30-4:45
300-Level English Courses		**Overlays**	**Day**	**Time**
ENG 302-A - Happily Ever After: Jane Austen and Popular Romance	Richard /Ruocco		MW	2:00-3:15
ENG 302-B - “To tell her glories with a faithful tongue”: Black Women Writers and the Archives	Bowie	Race and Racialization & American Literature	WF	2:00-3:15
ENG 311-A - The Legend of Arthur	Sigal	Pre-1800 Literature	TR	3:30-4:45
ENG 312-A - Hidden Messages: Riddles, Ciphers, and Secrets in Medieval Literature	Clark	Pre-1800 Literature	TR	11:00-12:15
ENG 323-A - Tyranny, Revenge, and Revolt: Shakespeare on Power	Hogan	Pre-1800 Literature	TR	12:30-1:45
ENG 335-A - The English Novel from Defoe to Coetzee	MacDonnell	Pre-1800 Literature	WF	9:30-10:45
ENG 344-A - Contemporary Irish Poetry	Holdridge		TR	2:00-3:15
ENG 353-A - Tech Attack!	Jenkins		MW	12:30-1:45
ENG 387-A - African American Fiction: Colson Whitehead	Brown	Race and Racialization & American Literature	TR	12:30-1:45
ENG 388-A - Honors in English	Pyke		TR	5:00-6:15
ENG 395-A - Cyborgs & Sorcerers: Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Multicultural America	Lee	Race and Racialization & American Literature	TR	9:30-10:45
300-Level CRW Electives in the Major		**Overlays**	**Day**	**Time**
CRW 385- A - Advanced Poetry Workshop	Ekstrand		WF	3:30-4:45
CRW 386-A - Happily Ever After: Jane Austen and Popular Romance	Richard /Ruocco		MW	2:00-3:15
CRW 387- A - Advanced Creative Nonfiction Workshop	Wilson		WF	12:30-1:45

Click the anchor links to move around the document:

Major Courses Chart | Short Courses | 100-Level Courses | 200-Level Courses | 300-Level Courses | Back to Top

1-Hour and 1.5-Hour Elective Courses & Internships

A handout on English professional development opportunities (internships, internship credit, practicums, and 1.5-hour professionalization courses) in the English Department can be found here. Majors may count ENG 397 and ENG 398 together as 3 hours of elective credit in the major.

ENG 298: WFU Press Internship
Prof. Jeff Holdridge
(Credit hours variable)
Independent/Individual study for internship with WFU Press.

ENG 397: Internship in the Major (1.5 hrs)
Written proposal required
This course number is for students who would like to integrate paid or unpaid work in the community with their academic coursework in English. Proposals require approval by the English department's curriculum committee; students must submit a written plan and identify a faculty sponsor for the internship. More info about writing proposals is available online here or in the English office. Students cannot receive retroactive course credit for internships completed before registering for the course, nor can students receive course credit in two departments or programs for the same internship.

Click the anchor links to move around the document:
Major Courses Chart | Short Courses | 100-Level Courses | 200-Level Courses | 300-Level Courses | Back to Top

100-Level/Division II English Literature Core Courses

Writing 111 is a prerequisite/corequisite for enrollment in our core literature classes (ENG 150-190). English majors and minors may count **no more than one** 100-level ENG course as elective credit toward the major/minor. Prospective majors are encouraged to register for a 200-level Gateway course as early as possible in their college careers. 200- and 300-level classes can also be used to fulfill the Division II requirement.

*100-level English courses are **not** sequential and all are taught at the same level; they vary only in topic.*

The Will To Survive

ENG 150 A/B
Prof. Rian Bowie
A: MWF 12:00 - 12:50 PM
B: MWF 1:00 - 1:50 PM
Fulfills 21st Century Stewardship: EI

Human beings possess highly developed survival instincts and imperatives. We adapt, strategize, and act against natural and unnatural forces that threaten our existence. We endure so that the sacrifices that we or others have made will not have been in vain. Literature selected for this course, along with complementary contextual information, will challenge students to think critically about the lengths that individuals have gone or would go to ensure that they or others survive during times of uncertainty or impending disaster. What sacrifices would people make to survive, what would happen if/when that survival was contingent upon another's destruction, and how would those choices be remembered relative to prevailing power dynamics? Each literary will raise important questions about the lasting effects that decisions made in discrete moments can have upon the present and the future.

Primary Texts may include:
Kauzo Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*, Faber and Faber, 2021.
Octavia Butler, *Kindred*. Beacon Press. 2024.
Julie Otsuka, *When the Emperor was Divine,* Anchor, 2003.
Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale,* Knopf, 1998.
Tim O'Brien, *The Things They Carried,* Mariner, 2009.
Frederick Backman, *Anxious People*. Atria Books, 2020.

Far From Home: Migration and Diaspora in the Middle Ages

ENG 150 C
Prof. Amy Clark
TR 9:30 - 10:45 AM

People in the Middle Ages moved—a lot. Their lives were shaped by war, immigration, lost homes, and new horizons, and the things they wrote reflect the communities and ideas produced by those experiences. In this class we will focus on four early English textual communities that existed between 500-1100 CE: the North African texts and traditions imported to Britain by Abbot Hadrian of Canterbury and others; the Scandinavian settlers and raiders who would come to occupy the Danelaw; the West Saxon Boniface missionaries who immigrated to continental Europe; and the Welsh and Irish inhabitants of Britain and Ireland who lived through centuries of violence, migration, and colonization as different groups of people arrived on their shores. Together we will think about how "old homes" came to shape new ideas and literatures in the early medieval world, even when miles and oceans away.

Click the anchor links to move around the document:
Major Courses Chart | Short Courses | 100-Level Courses | 200-Level Courses | 300-Level Courses | Back to Top

The Mutable American

ENG 150 D
Prof. Dean Franco
TR 12:30 - 1:45 PM

This course will study U.S. literature's representation of the shape-shifting, identity-swapping, malleable American. Since the nation's founding, American identity has sat at the crossroads of radical acceptance and radical exclusion, and the grounds of that intersection has shifted across two centuries, through legal, economic, and cultural change. American literature, especially written by and about racialized groups, charts that shift. This course will examine representations of the processes of inclusion and exclusion in writing by Herman Melville, Charles Chesnutt, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Sandra Cisneros, Philip Roth, and more. Focusing on key characters and characterizations of identity performance, we will learn about literature—form, structure, style—and we will think about and with literature's account of American identity. Students are required to read all texts, write short reflection pieces and two essays, and engage in discussion. Key topics will include the construction of race, and the relation of racial formation to literary form; the range of genres and the relation between genre (literary form) and social representation; and literature's ongoing mediation of American identity.

Writing About Objects

ENG 150 E
Prof. Susan Harlan
MWF 2:00 - 2:50 PM

This class explores objects in literature and culture, focusing on contemporary and 20th -century nonfiction and poetry about the things that populate our lives. We will think carefully and critically about the material world and our relationship to it. We will pay particular attention to everyday things, from clothing to books to food to tchotchkes, and we'll ask a series of questions, including:

What is an object?
How do we think through objects? How are we connected to objects?
How do we identify with objects? What do objects reveal about who we are?
Why do we get attached to objects?
How do we make objects our own?
How do objects represent our feelings?
What kinds of stories do objects tell, both personal and cultural?
What kinds of memories do objects hold?
How do objects connect us to the present and the past?
Do objects have biographies?
How do objects connect us to people?
How do objects connect us to places?
Why do we hold onto objects or why do we get rid of them?
How does the material value of an object relate to its sentimental, personal, or abstract value?
Why do we anthropomorphize objects?
How do we categorize objects and which objects defy categorization?
How do objects engage with the unknown?
How do objects engage with our imagination?
How do objects engage with death? With life?

Click the anchor links to move around the document:
Major Courses Chart | Short Courses | 100-Level Courses | 200-Level Courses | 300-Level Courses | Back to Top

Animals Make Us Human: A Service Learning Course

ENG 150 F
Prof. Melissa Jenkins
MWF 10:00 - 10:50 AM
Fulfills 21st Century Stewardship: EI

This course takes its inspiration from the title of Temple Grandin's influential book *Animals Make Us Human*, framing it as the central question of the class. Students explore a wide range of literary and critical texts from various perspectives to examine the complex relationship between humans and animals. Key topics include animal rights, the psychological effects of animal ownership and interaction, and contemporary research on animal cognition. Through these discussions, we will discover that literary and socio-cultural explorations of the non-human world not only offer intrinsic value but also provide profound insights into the human experience. Authors include Virginia Woolf, Franz Kafka, J.M. Coetzee, Mary Oliver, and Rajiv Joseph.

This is a service-learning course that requires a commitment of time beyond regular class hours. Students should expect direct contact with companion animals. Please keep this in mind when registering. Severe allergies or phobias to cats and dogs may pose challenges to full engagement with the service portion of the course. As part of the course, students will volunteer with one of our community partner organizations: Forsyth Humane Society, a private shelter located at 4881 Country Club Road, Forsyth County Animal Control, the county's open-admissions shelter at 5570 Sturmer Park Circle, or AARF, a cat-centered foster and adoption center at 302 Thurston Street. Expect to spend a minimum of 4 hours volunteering at your location.

This course has been approved to fulfill the Ethical Inquiry (EI) General Education Requirement. Ethical Inquiry (EI) courses encourage students to engage with ethical questions, values, practices, and decision-making. EI courses can be taught across various disciplines and may draw on diverse theoretical and pedagogical approaches.

EI courses equip students to do the following:
- Navigate ethical diversity
- Evaluate competing ethical claims
- Respond intentionally to disagreement

Literature and the Environment

ENG 150 G
Prof. Kevin MacDonnell
WF 12:30 - 1:45 PM

The relationship between nature and culture has long been a source of interest for artists and thinkers alike. This is particularly true of those living alongside the rise of industrial modernity, a period when human dominion over the natural world came to operate as a foundational principle of Western social and economic development. Accordingly, forms of cultural expression like literature and art can inform our understanding of how this paradigm has been constructed, complicated, and resisted throughout modernity. This course will seek to uncover how these processes played out with respect to how we have historically engaged and interacted with natural ecologies from the early modern period to the present.

Click the anchor links to move around the document:
Major Courses Chart | Short Courses | 100-Level Courses | 200-Level Courses | 300-Level Courses | Back to Top

TITLE:TBD
ENG 150 H
Prof. Arielle McKee
MWF 10:00 - 10:50 AM

Victorian Detective Fiction
ENG 150 I/J
Prof. Jenny Pyke
I: TR 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM
J: TR 12:30 - 1:45 PM
Victorian detective literature was popular entertainment at the same time that it took on the anxieties and hopes of its historical moment, including those around capital, nation, race, authority, domesticity, and theories of knowledge. Through historical readings and current theory, we will examine the double work of this literature. Arthur Conan Doyle and the character Sherlock Holmes will provide a central focus through which we will read influences and afterlives, which may include works by Poe, Wilkie Collins, Dickens, R.L. Stevenson, and Georges Perec, as well as current writing on television and film adaptations.

TITLE:TBD
ENG 165 A/B
Prof. Arielle McKee
A: MWF 10:00 - 10:50 AM
B: MWF 11:00 - 11:50 AM

The Unexpected: Hybridity and Transformation in British Literature
ENG 165 C
Prof. Gale Sigal
TR 2:00 - 3:15 PM
What do a 12th -century werewolf, an angel, a shapeshifter, a madman, and a vampire have in common? They all force us to question what it means to be human and live a fulfilling life. Moving across centuries of British literature, this course examines how authors accept, resist, and subvert the values of their time and how their works empower us to critique our own. Together, we will examine stories of shapeshifters, monsters, and transcendent visions to explore how writers challenge stereotypes, gender roles, critique the marketplace, and examine what is fundamentally human. In a world driven by rapid change and packaged culture, imaginative Literature offers a powerful site of resistance. We will thus explore how fiction's "lies" often reveal the deepest cultural truths, helping us interpret our own lived experiences today. Spanning medieval epic to late-Victorian Gothic, as well as some films, we will investigate how British writers navigate the boundary between the natural and the supernatural, the human and the monster, and the real and ideal. We will journey through haunted ancient landscapes (*Beowulf*), shape-shifting lovers (*lais of Marie de France*), subversive storytellers and holy hypocrites (*The Canterbury Tales*), fallen angels (*Paradise Lost*), and Victorian nightmares (*Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Dracula*). Exams, presentations, and essays will demonstrate your increasing knowledge.

The Gothic Experience in British Fiction
ENG 165 D
Prof. Eric G. Wilson
WF 2:00 - 3:15 PM
If we're honest, we have to admit that we often feel most alive not when we are happy, but rather when

Click the anchor links to move around the document:
Major Courses Chart | Short Courses | 100-Level Courses | 200-Level Courses | 300-Level Courses | Back to Top

we feel anxious, scared, obsessive, or sad. This feeling of the vitality of darkness is Gothic, and the subject of this class. We will study several great works of British Gothic literature, hoping to understand the powers and pains of melancholy, love, trauma, obsession, possession, the uncanny, terror, anxiety, hallucination, and nightmare. Our list of works will include Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca*, and Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea*.

Environmental Destruction: An Introduction to the Environmental Humanities

ENG 175 A/B
Prof. Meredith Farmer
A: TR 3:30 - 4:45 PM
B: TR 5:00 - 6:15 PM

What can the humanities teach us about our current environmental crisis? This question is at the heart of the "environmental humanities," which consider the ways that humans are entangled in a world with plants, animals, and other "things" that are imagined as "natural resources." The environmental humanities respond to a rapidly intensifying awareness of human precarity, which is rooted in our clear dependence on "nature." They also call for increased attention to the ways that attention to the non-human world forces us to think differently about ontology, epistemology, ethics, and justice.

"Environmental Destruction" will focus on the ideological causes, palpable effects, and imagined futures linked to the destruction of our environments. We will begin with the concept of "Manifest Destiny," or the idea that Americans were divinely ordained to move West, along with a series of serious problems that were inextricable from this idea of the landscape as an inviting blank slate. (Native Americans, for example, already inhabited this supposed promised land.) Our consideration of this human-centered, possessive approach to the environment will help us understand the logic that set the stage for the clear crisis of our moment. In subsequent sections of the course we will turn towards the ways that twentieth-century authors began to describe the slow annihilation of the natural world, along with traditions that were rooted in it. We will consider early responses to environmental loss and the nostalgia it inspired, registered by the establishment of institutions and spaces devoted to conservation and preservation, like national parks, national forests, wildlife preserves, and zoos. (Here you will develop podcasts on different early attempts at conservation.) Next we will turn not to this slow process of extinction—and attempts at conservation—but to the ecological disasters that transform built and "natural" environments in quick, overwhelming moments. To do that we will take on two case studies: Hurricane Katrina and Deepwater Horizon, diving into questions of environmental justice.

We have traditionally concluded this course by creating class digital essays and documentaries that will become part of environmentaldestruction.org. This year, however, we are developing a collaborative project with Wake Forest's Sabin Center for Environment and Sustainability focused on the Sudd, an enormous wetland in South Sudan that plays a critical role in supporting biodiversity, regulating regional climate, and sustaining local communities. Working in small groups, students will research different environmental challenges facing the Sudd and the people who depend on it, with particular attention to questions of environmental justice. Our collaboration will also connect students with researchers, environmental advocates, and members of the substantial South Sudanese community here in the Piedmont Triad. Drawing on these conversations, students will produce short films that we will share at a community screening and discussion.

Last semester's syllabus can be viewed here. Assignments include one paper, one group podcast, and these final projects. Readings and screenings will include work by Emerson, Thoreau, John Muir, Frederick Jackson Turner, Spike Lee, Natasha Trethewey, Tim Gautreaux, Joanna Kavenna, Mohammed Hasan Alwan, Nick Estes, and Jaskiran Dhillon, along with secondary sources from the *Oxford Handbook*

of American Indian History, *First Along the River: A Brief History of the U.S. Environmental Movement*, and *Living Oil: Petroleum Culture in the American Century.*

The Human Journey in American Literature

ENG 175C
Prof. Judith Madera
MW 12:30 - 1:45 PM

This course surveys a selection of work by American authors. It is organized around the theme of the journey. We will look at literature, media, and art to examine the human journey across different spans of American life. Is the journey itself the destination? How do the stakes of our pursuits change us, and what can we learn from the explorations of others? As we think about these broad questions, we will consider how writers responded to major events that shaped their world perspectives. We will discuss the dynamic links between US literature and human psychology, and between literature and the law. In each unit, we will pose questions about the ways stories can shape lives.

Texts include:
Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*; Nella Larsen, *Passing*; Truman Capote, *In Cold Blood*; Greg Bottoms, *Angelhead*
Short fiction by Edgar Allan Poe, Paul Bowles, James Baldwin, Shirley Jackson, Toni Morrison, and Richard Ford
Course films are streamed for free through WFU Kanopy

Studies in Global Literature

ENG 185 A/B/C
Prof. Tara Needham
A: MWF 2:00 - 2:50 PM
B: MWF 3:00 - 3:50 PM
C: MWF 4:00 - 4:50 PM

What is home? Is it a physical place? A feeling? A particular country? A group of people? In this course, we will read novels, short stories, and poems from multiple literary and cultural traditions that explore how writers from the early 20th century to the present have navigated and negotiated the complexities of this question. Staged in a world increasingly connected through technology and travel, and set against backdrops of empire, anti-colonial struggle, and its aftermath—as well as transnational migration and climate change—these texts explore how private and intimate lives intersect with history, politics, science, and more, often staging conflicts between tradition and modernity, “the west” and “the east”; and self and community. Authors include Mulk Raj Anand, Jamaica Kincaid, Mohsin Hamid, Samantha Harvey, Doris Lessing, Bessie Head, Katherine Mansfield, and Rabindranath Tagore, among others.

Introduction to International Poetry

ENG 185 D/E
Prof. Daniel Ruiz
D: MWF 11:00 - 11:50 AM
E: MWF 12:00 - 12:50 PM

This hybrid literature and creative writing course functions as an introduction to modern and contemporary poetry from around the world. Throughout the semester, we will be reading poems, craft essays, and manifestoes by international poets, which will give us the opportunity to study the art, its history, and tradition from a variety of critical, creative, national, and transnational perspectives. By reading these poets and comparing their ideas about poetry, all of which arise out of specific social, historical, and political contexts, we will investigate the idea that literature can be reduced to a single tradition. We will ask questions, like, Does modern poetry uphold tradition, or challenge it? Are history and poetry in

cahoots or at odds with each other? Can we each make our own “tradition of rupture,” as Nobel Prize-winning poet Octavio Paz calls it? Representative writers in this course include Federico Garcia Lorca, Anne Carson, Aimé Césaire, Joyce Mansour, Frank O’Hara, and several others. Written assignments will center on critical and creative responses to the assigned readings, including surrealist games, imitations, and writing poems ourselves. Final projects will include a variety of critical and creative approaches.

Utopian and Dystopian Fiction

ENG 190 A

Prof. Sarah Hogan

TR 9:30 - 10:45 AM

In 1516 Thomas More published a small book of social satire on an imaginary island that he wittily titled *Utopia*, a word of More’s own invention that in its Greek roots playfully signified both “good place” and “no place.” From the beginnings of this literary tradition, there was already tension, ambiguity, alternative viewpoints, and even skepticism built into the utopian form. Indeed, close examination of most literary utopias across the centuries reveals the genre to be as tethered to the present and as critical in its orientation as it is fantastical and idealistic, therefore challenging contemporary (mis)conceptions of utopias as states of simple “perfection” or repressive control.

In this course, we will survey the history of literary utopias and their modern, nightmarish offshoot, the dystopia, exploring how these overlapping and somewhat antithetical fictional traditions both radically intervene in their historical circumstances, while tasking readers with imagining and entertaining possibilities for social difference. Our main goal, however, will be to place these texts in conversation with our own crisis-ridden present, reflecting on what lessons these books provide on navigating disasters, surviving trauma and violence, and imagining new ways of living together ethically. Along the way, we will also discuss related subgenres and sister traditions like anti-utopias, critical utopias, ecotopias, cli-fi, and speculative fiction, learning to identify formal and ideological patterns and departures in our cultural texts.

Writing will be the main means of assessment in the course, and—in keeping with utopianism’s original discursive form—the class format will encourage student discussion and lively debate both in person and on our class Canvas discussion board. Main readings include More’s *Utopia*, Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, Margaret Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale*, Octavia Butler’s *Parable of the Sower*, and Emily St. John Mandel’s *Station Eleven*. Please note: This class satisfies the Division II Literature requirement.

Fall 2026 English Major Gateway/Division II Courses

All English majors must take ENG 265, either ENG 266 or ENG 275, and ENG 290, and are encouraged (but not required) to do so early in their major.

British Literature Before 1800

ENG 265 A
Prof. Susan Harlan
WF 3:30 - 4:45 PM
Major Gateway Requirement

This course will introduce students to major texts in the literary history of Britain up to the late eighteenth century, as well as to the tools of literary analysis. We will read literary texts across a range of genres (including poetry, prose, drama, epic, and the essay) in order to establish the important features of each period and to understand the development of literary forms and modes over time. The course will emphasize the interpretive possibilities of texts and their place in literary history. Students will take a midterm exam and a cumulative final exam.

British Literature, 1800 to the Present

ENG 266 A
Prof. Randi Saloman
TR 9:30 - 10:45 AM
Major Gateway Requirement: Majors take either 266 or 275

English 266 is meant to introduce English majors to significant British, Irish and other English-language authors from a succession of periods and movements. We will begin with Romanticism and end in the contemporary period, considering a number of different literary genres (prose, drama, and poetry). It is designed to make students familiar with the breadth and depth of the literature in these periods and locations. We will also explore different ways of reading literature, from close reading to theoretical framing. Seminar lectures and discussions will highlight key ideas and styles associated with various literary movements. Required readings from the *Norton Anthology of English Literature.*

US Literature

ENG 275 A
Prof. Judith Madera
MW 2:00 - 3:15 PM
Major Gateway Requirement: Majors take either 266 or 275

English 275 will introduce you to significant American authors from a succession of periods and movements. The class is designed to broaden your awareness of the range and richness of American literature. Seminar lectures highlight key ideas and styles associated with various literary movements. ENG 275 is designed to be a conversational class. English majors are encouraged to work in partnership with classmates and share ideas. You will be asked to write in different modes and to assess texts comparatively. You will also have opportunities to develop your critical thinking and analytical skills through class discussion and peer review. Students should expect to develop a strengthened foundational understanding of US literature from the 18th through 21st centuries.

Authors for consideration include Mather, Franklin, Poe, Hawthorne, Thoreau, Jacobson, Gilman, Martí,

---

Click the anchor links to move around the document:
Major Courses Chart | Short Courses | 100-Level Courses | 200-Level Courses | 300-Level Courses | Back to Top

---

Larsen, Bowles, Faulkner, Baldwin, Capote, Kerouac, Morrison, and Jordan
Course films streamed for free through WFU Kanopy

Foundations in Literary Criticism

ENG 290 A
Prof. Omaar Hena
TR 3:30 - 4:45 PM
Major Gateway Requirement

This course will introduce you to foundational texts and concepts in literary theory and prevailing methods of literary interpretation to prepare you for studying literature in the English major. We will anchor our discussions in canonical texts from British literature including Shakespeare's *Othello*, selections from Olaudah Equiano's *Interesting Narrative*, Romantic poetry by William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and John Keats, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, and Jason Allen-Paisant's *Self-Portrait as Othello*. Along the way, you will become introduced to mainstream schools of literary criticism including formalism, Marxism and new historicism, poststructuralism, psychoanalysis, feminism and gender studies, postcolonial studies, Afropessimism, and ecocriticism. Requirements will include pop reading quizzes (open notebook, closed book), short response papers, participating and discussion, a midterm, and a final exam.

Click the anchor links to move around the document:
Major Courses Chart | Short Courses | 100-Level Courses | 200-Level Courses | 300-Level Courses | Back to Top

300-Level Literature Courses

The English major requires at least 21 hours of coursework at the 300 level.
English minors must take at least 15 hours of courses at the 300 level.

More information on major/minor requirements:
English major requirements checklists
English minor requirements

300-level CRW and WRI Electives in the English Major & Minor:

CRW 386-A: Advanced Fiction Writing, Prof. Joanna Ruocco

For dates and times, see the major courses chart above. For full CRW course descriptions, see the Creative Writing course list.

Happily Ever After: Jane Austen and Popular Romance

ENG 302 A / CRW 386 A / HON 238 A
Prof. Jessica Richard & Prof. Joanna Ruocco
MW 2:00 - 3:15 PM

Was Mr. Darcy the original alphahole? Can we trace every enemies-to-lovers romance back to *Pride & Prejudice*? Why does Jane Austen merit serious scholarly attention while popular romances are "guilty pleasures?" Is it sacrilege to discuss today's popular romance novels alongside Jane Austen's classic marriage plot novels?

We'll explore Austen's uses and transformations of romance and her legacy in today's popular novels. We'll examine the prejudices against novels that are often (but not always!) by, about, and for women, both in the nineteenth century and today. Reading several Austen novels, many popular romances published in the past 10 years, and watching a couple of films, we'll interrogate the power of romance as a cultural narrative across centuries. You'll learn the structure of romance narratives by writing your own romance novel (or at least part of one).

"To tell her glories with a faithful tongue": Black Women Writers and the Archives

ENG 302 B
Prof. Rian Bowie
WF 2:00 - 3:15 PM
Satisfies Race and Racialization & American Literature overlays

What strange and wondrous developments have Black women writers inspired? Black women writers pioneered pathways for being and becoming through literary and activist participation, often against the grain of conventional norms used to silence or malign them, their complex identities, and their political desires. This course examines the role of public media in the flourishing of Black women's authorship and public activism across the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Readings for this course will draw attention to how their works and their situatedness within newspaper, periodical, and magazine culture

Click the anchor links to move around the document:
Major Courses Chart | Short Courses | 100-Level Courses | 200-Level Courses | 300-Level Courses | Back to Top

contributed to shifting social and cultural landscapes. Across the semester, we will explore various resources beyond our assigned books, including engagement with Special Collections, print culture, and digitized media archives, to investigate how Black women's involvement as editors and contributors to public media transformed those virtual spaces into sites of resistance, self-fashioning, and collective empowerment.

Writers for this course will include Phillis Wheatley, Frances Harper, Pauline Hopkins, Jessie Fauset, Zora Neale Hurston, Lorraine Hansberry, Audre Lorde, to name a few. This course will also draw on Print Culture studies and Black Feminist scholarship to enrich the study of these important authors and their works.

The Legend of Arthur and the Seductions of Chivalry

ENG 311 A
Prof. Gale Sigal
TR 3:30 - 4:45 PM
Satisfies Pre-1800 Literature overlay & Medieval and Early Modern Requirement

Journey into the shadows of Camelot, where knights, blood, sorcery, romance, and betrayal collide. For nearly a millennium, the legend of King Arthur has enchanted writers, artists, and filmmakers -- and its spell is far from broken. In this course, we explore the mythic heart of the British Isles to uncover how a charismatic wartime leader became the immortal national embodiment of England. From the prophecies of Merlin and the enchanted realm of Avalon to the quest for the Holy Grail, we will explore how generations and ethnicities re-envision the Arthurian legend to mirror their deepest desires, social anxieties, and ideals of the heroic. Our readings will draw from histories (Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*), romances (the Lancelot tale), an anti-romance (*The Quest for the Holy Grail*, the monumental masterpiece of Malory's *Le Morte D'Arthur*, and finally selections from Tennyson's majestic 19th -century *Idylls of the King*. The viewing of specific films will also enhance our concepts of the modern medieval and the haunted landscapes of Britain. The course requires active engagement and discussion, short presentations, engaging creative/analytical projects, and exams.

Hidden Messages: Riddles, Ciphers, and Secrets in Medieval Literature

ENG 312A
Prof. Amy Clark
TR 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM
Satisfies Pre-1800 Literature overlay

What has a sniffing snout, a wagging tail, and two sharp sticks stuck through its head? What does COAFAH spell? And who scrawled the name "EADBURG" over and over again across the pages of a precious medieval manuscript -- in invisible ink?? Medieval people left behind all kinds of literary and textual mysteries in Old English and Anglo-Latin literature, both on purpose and by accident. In this class we will focus on a new poem, riddle, or cipher each week as we work to decode both the playful and serious secrets of the medieval world.

All texts will be provided in translation; no Old English language skills are required (though always welcome).

Tyranny, Revenge, and Revolt: Shakespeare on Power

ENG 323 A
Prof. Sarah Hogan
TR 12:30 - 1:45 PM
Satisfies Pre-1800 Literature overlay

In this course we will examine Shakespeare's monumental body of work, sampling several of his dramatic

genres: comedy, tragedy, English history, Roman history, romance, and “problem play.” But our focus will be on Shakespeare’s insightful, psychologically oriented portraits of power and its abuse: tyrannical rulers, would-be kings, remorseless villains and rapists, blind followers and complicit apologists, but also the victimized, vulnerable, scapegoated, revenger, and rebel subjects who dare to name corruption and pursue its end.

We’ll find much of interest here: remarkable, eloquent examples of subjectivity in early English literature; characters who highlight the very human condition (and flaws) of all who govern; meditations on various political formations and ideologies; theatrical machinations within the plays themselves that rather overtly suggest the political nature of theater and the theatrical nature of the state; plenty of deceit, gore, and splatter-farce that will have us considering the psychic and social relationship between literature and violence; a surprising obsession with the supernatural in a Protestant moment; worldviews that verge on nihilism, atheism, or existentialism, though often simultaneously Christian; and personal and communal acts of rebellion that look ahead to the republican revolution and civil war of the mid-seventeenth century. Students in this course should expect rigorous historicism in the analysis of our Shakespearean texts, then, but the plays will also prompt us to reflect on the role of the arts in times of crisis and censorship, while we debate what it means to live justly in our own maddening times.

Primary works will likely include *Titus Andronicus, Richard III, The Merchant of Venice, Julius Caesar, Hamlet, Measure for Measure, Macbeth* or *King Lear*, and *The Tempest*. A handful of contemporary cinematic adaptations on Shakespeare’s plays will also help facilitate our analytical leaps into discussions about tyrannical ambition and the struggle against it in more contemporary contexts.

The English Novel from Defoe to Coetzee

ENG 335 A
Prof. Kevin MacDonnell
WF 9:30 - 10:45 AM
Satisfies Pre-1800 Literature & Race and Racialization overlays

This course will survey the origins, character, and politics of the English novel through two alternating perspectives. First, we will read the novels of Daniel Defoe, an eighteenth-century British writer often associated with the beginnings of the English novel who was embedded in a moment of emerging—and rapidly intensifying—capital accumulation and imperial expansion. Second, we will read these novels against, and alongside, the novels of J. M. Coetzee, a contemporary South African writer who is both a successor to Defoe in terms of his formal commitments and an inheritor of the colonial-capitalist world that Defoe and his contemporaries helped establish and refine. Defoe and Coetzee lived in different worlds, separated in space and time by hundreds of years and thousands of miles. Yet by reading their work together, this course will examine the origins and afterlives of the English novel and situate this distinctively modern literary genre in relation to the colonial and postcolonial worlds inhabited by these respective Writers.

Studies in Poetry: Contemporary Irish Poetry

ENG 344 A
Prof. Jefferson Holdridge
TR 2:00 - 3:15 PM

Reading the poetry and prose of Seamus Heaney will help us map the sites of contending discourses in the consciousness of this Nobel-Prize winning poet from Northern Ireland. Most importantly it will also provide a stable narrative for discussion of the work of other poets from Ireland, North and South, whose work will be considered at strategic moments for comparison with Heaney’s. Heaney’s life and career, in short, will provide a center of continuity for a larger understanding of contemporary Irish poetry.

Click the anchor links to move around the document:
Major Courses Chart | Short Courses | 100-Level Courses | 200-Level Courses | 300-Level Courses | Back to Top

Heaney's early volumes consist of sensuous memories of nature and childhood on the family farm. Through them, the poet evokes the Irish countryside and comments on the care and skill with which ancestors farmed the land, while contemplating how such a life must stand the cruel tests of nature. Here pastoral meets anti-pastoral. The middle poetry often addresses the history of social unrest in Northern Ireland and considers the relevance of poetry in the face of violent political upheaval. This period is an intersection of myth and history, of aesthetics and politics. Later work includes parables of Irish family life or meditates on spirituality in the face of a menacing political history. In his last twenty years, Heaney diverged somewhat from themes of political and civic responsibility, returning to childhood experience and Irish communal rituals. Many critics have cited the stylistic and technical virtuosity of this late period as well as the imaginative qualities and the focus on visionary transcendence experienced through the quotidian. The practical emphasis will be on close reading as a pathway to the contexts of Irish cultural life in the postwar period.

Tech Attack!

ENG 353 A
Prof. Melissa Jenkins
MW 12:30 - 1:45 PM

In March 2026, Bloomberg published Martha Gimbel's essay "The Best Guide to the AI Revolution May be Victorian Fiction." Gimbel, of course, points to Elizabeth Gaskell and other greats of industrial fiction, suggesting that the turbulence and excitement of the Industrial Revolution is our best preview for what is to come in the twenty-first century. We are indeed living in unprecedented times. As we watch the AI Renaissance (or apocalypse) unfold in real time, this class will ask about the roots of what got us to this moment. Over the course of this semester, we will investigate how technologies of travel, communication, and industry evolved during the reign of Queen Victoria, and how writers of fiction responded. What we are likely to discover is not dissimilar from what some Victorian authors discovered, that, as Tamara Ketabgian argues in The Lives of Machines, "the most potent human feelings are rooted in the nonhuman – in practices, communities, and identities marked by animal, mechanical, and prosthetic traits" (Ketabgian 167). Similarly, (WFU Grad) Paul Fyfe's book *Digital Victorians* offers "a prehistory of the digital age in the nineteenth century" (Fyfe 3), as he watches George Eliot examine "the distributed surveillance of a data-driven culture" (Fyfe 27) or Stevenson offer "a record of professional convulsions in a shifting media landscape" (Fyfe 138).

This class will examine fiction and nonfiction prose from the Victorian era about new technologies for travel, industry, learning, and writing. Texts will include short fiction, journalism, essays, and novels by Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Elizabeth Gaskell, Edward Bulwer-Lytton, Samuel Butler, Thomas Hardy, H.G. Wells, Rudyard Kipling, Oscar Wilde, and Edith Nesbit.

Assignments: reading journal, presentation, research paper.

African American Fiction: Colson Whitehead

ENG 387 A
Prof. Chris Brown
TR 12:30 - 1:45 PM
Satisfies Race and Racialization & American Literature overlays

In this course we will survey the work of Colson Whitehead, perhaps America's most prominent contemporary novelist. Reading his novels, essays, and criticism, this seminar will situate Whitehead's work amidst the changing political and literary landscape of the 21st century and celebrate the extraordinary inventiveness and pleasure of his fiction. We will pay careful attention to Whitehead's reimagining of the African American literary tradition. And we will explore the ways in which his work

attends to the idea of “blackness” in his particular narratives of African American identity and to the formal innovation and craft of his prose.

Honors In English

ENG 388A
Prof. Jenny Pyke
TR 5:00 - 6:15 PM
A conference course centering upon a special reading requirement and a thesis requirement. For pre-approved senior students wishing to graduate with Honors in English.

Cyborgs & Sorcerers: Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Multicultural America

ENG 395 A
Prof. Derek Lee
TR 9:30 - 10:45 AM
Satisfies Race and Racialization & American Literature overlays
Fulfills 21st Century Stewardship: POR
Modern audiences typically read ethnic fiction through the lens of realism—the autobiographical slave narrative, the immigrant memoir, and so on. However, what is the role of multicultural fiction that embraces the fantastical, the futuristic, the alien, and the posthuman? How do they differ from “traditional” science fiction and fantasy novels? How do they confirm or challenge our expectations of ethnic literature? Most importantly, how can they help us gain a better understanding of twenty-first century political life? We will attempt to answer these questions by reading and watching some of the very best works in ethnic science fiction and fantasy, including Rivers Solomon’s *The Deep*, Ken Liu’s *The Paper Menagerie*, and Victor LaVelle’s *The Ballad of Black Tom*. Along the way we will address issues of race, power, social justice, and scientific progress. In addition to reading and analyzing speculative fiction, we will also design our own magical objects as a means of reconsidering contemporary life.

Click the anchor links to move around the document:
Major Courses Chart | Short Courses | 100-Level Courses | 200-Level Courses | 300-Level Courses | Back to Top