

# SUMMER 2009 COURSES

## Department of English ♦ Rhode Island College

*For English 161, 163 and Writing 100, see the Summer/Fall 2009 RIC Course Bulletin.*

### SUMMER SESSION I (MAY 18 – JUNE 26)

#### ENGLISH 205: BACKGROUNDS BRITISH LITERATURE TO 1800 (4 semester hours)

**M-Th 10-12pm Stephen Brown**

This course will read widely in English literature of the first 1000 years, primarily in the genres of poetry and drama, but also in prose fiction and religious and philosophical prose. We will read canonically as well as extra-canonically, and we will consider what it means to do either. Along the way, we will consider other issues as well, such as the role of literature in forming an English/British (not to mention an "American") national identity, the logic and structure of periodization, and the problem of "genius" and "authorship." Requirements will include regular attendance, demonstrated commitment to the work of the course, regular exercises in critical interpretation, two critical essays, and a final exam.

#### ENGLISH 207: BACKGROUNDS IN AMERICAN LITERATURE: (4 semester hours)

**M-Th 7:50-9:50 am Stephen Brown**

Students will read significant texts from the history of American literature, colonial era to the present. The course cannot pretend to "survey" 400 years of our national literature, but we will consider a number of works within a rich cultural and historical context, with particular attention to the role of literature in negotiating and interrogating American national identity. Requirements will include frequent reading quizzes, two critical essays, and a final exam.

#### ENGLISH 210: CHILDREN'S LITERATURE (3 semester hours)

**MW 6-9pm Jean Brown**

From early folklore to current literature, from picture books to novels, from Beatrix Potter to Harry Potter, we will read and discuss representative examples of children's literature. Students will experience all literary types appropriate for use in the elementary schools. Among the genres we will examine are traditional literature, picture books, classics, historical fiction, contemporary realism, fantasy, non-fiction, and poetry. The course is designed to help students apply critical understanding to children's literature. The course focus is on critical understanding and evaluation of literature; however, we will also consider uses of these texts in the elementary classroom.

#### ENGLISH 212: ADOLESCENT LITERATURE (3 semester hours)

**TuTh 3-6:00pm Jennifer Cook**

In this reading intensive course, we will examine a range of current, popular adolescent literature from several genres, from teens-in-trouble, to vampire love stories, to graphic novels and girl heroes. We will consider the development and growth of adolescent literature over the past 40 years. We will also consider how society's attention to youth and to the marketing of youth culture has contributed to the production and distribution of literature for teenagers. In addition to the texts required for in-class discussion (10), you will be required to read at least two (2) novels on your own. There will be a midterm project and presentation and a final exam as well as several smaller, formal response and analysis papers. Because this class meets twice a week for about seven weeks, you should plan to carve out time to read at least two adolescent novels per week in preparation for our classes together.

#### ENGLISH 220: INTRODUCTION TO CREATIVE WRITING (4 semester hours)

**M-Th 10a-12p Mark Anderson**

The purpose of this course is to introduce the techniques and strategies of fiction and poetry writing. The two textbooks will be the primary sources of "how-to" instruction, and we will spend some time analyzing exemplary poems and stories printed there, but most of our class time will be devoted to discussions of work by class members. During the semester, students will write both poetry and fiction (eight poems and four eight-page stories, twelve poems and three stories, or sixteen poems and two stories, as you choose), and also revisions of two stories, eight poems, or one story and four poems.

Because I believe that the most important thing students can take away from a class in creative writing is a sense of audience, class meetings will be conducted as workshops: a major responsibility of each member of the class will be to serve as a faithful and attentive member of the audience for fellow students. Attendance and participation in class discussion will therefore have a substantial impact on final grades.

Required Text:  
Burroway, *Imaginative Writing*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition

#### ENGLISH 230: BUSINESS WRITING (3 semester hours)

**MW 6-9pm Gary Grund**

This course consists of lectures, discussions, and writing in and out of class. Students will compose letters, memoranda, proposals, and other forms of written communication appropriate to business and industry.

Students in ENGL 230 will complete all reading and writing assignments. Written assignments must be completed on a word processor or typed. Attendance and class participation are essential.

Students will be graded on ten (10) written assignments over the course of the term. Each of these assignments will be equally weighted, and each may be rewritten. There are no examinations.

The text for the course is Philip C. Kolin, Successful Writing at Work, 8<sup>th</sup> edition (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006).

### ENGLISH 263: ZEN AND THE LITERARY EXPERIENCE (4 semester hours)

**M-Th 10-11:50 Joseph Zornado**

According to the Chinese master Huang-Po, “Studying the Way—the Tao—is just a figure of speech, a method of arousing people’s interest in the early stages of their development. In fact, the Way is not something which can be studied. Study leads to the retention of concepts, and so the Way is entirely misunderstood.” Huang-Po signals a key paradox that we will confront and hopefully experience this semester, that of our intentional attempt to “study” the “Way,” something which cannot be studied or attained by intellectual pursuit yet the process cannot proceed without it. How can this be? We will keep Huang-Po’s warning in mind as we proceed and blithely enter the world of paradox.

Yet another Chinese master says, “let your mind wander in simplicity, blend your spirit with the vastness, follow along with things the way they are, and make no room for personal views—then the world will be governed.” This is a difficult proposition for most of us to understand let alone strive for precisely because, as subjects of this culture we have been taught to believe passionately that our “personal views” comprise the very essence of what we are.

Zen’s only interest in who you believe yourself to be is in inviting you to scrutinize the way in which we “grasp after life” rather than surrendering to it. To begin our impossible study of the Way we begin—and end—with the study of one’s “grasping self.” It is expected that you will be prepared for lots of reading, participation in class discussion, and fifteen-twenty-pages of writing.

**THIS COURSE FULFILLS THE CORE 4 REQUIREMENT IN GENERAL EDUCATION.**

### ENGLISH 265: WOMEN'S STORIES ACROSS CULTURES (4 semester hours)

**M-Th 8-9:50am Barbara Schapiro**

This course will study contemporary narratives by women, in both literature and film, from various Western and non-Western cultures. The thematic emphasis will be on woman as negotiator—as subject and actor—rather than as only victim or object of patriarchal oppression. We will look at the myriad ways women across cultures negotiate various conflicting claims, such as the pull towards family, tradition, and security vs. the desire for independence, freedom, and autonomy. The narrative form itself will be looked at as a means of constructing an identity, of discovering the story of one's self. Focusing on women's struggles for identity and agency within a global context, the course will compare women's diverse strategies of finding and telling their stories.

Requirements will include frequent informal response writing, two critical papers, and a take-home final exam. **THIS COURSE FULFILLS THE CORE 4 REQUIREMENT IN GENERAL EDUCATION.**

### ENGLISH 326: STUDIES IN AFRICAN AMERICAN LITERATURE (3 semester hours)

**M-Th 1:00-2:30 pm Maureen Reddy**

We will use Langston Hughes’s “Epilogue”—which begins “I, too, sing America”—as our inspiration for investigating ideas about America, Americanness, and blackness in African American literature, with a particular emphasis on autobiography and fiction from the 1840s to the 1990s. The goals of the course include acquiring some familiarity with several important works of African American literature and learning to write about those works thoughtfully and analytically. Course requirements include two short papers and a final exam. Texts will be chosen from the Norton Anthology of African American Literature.

### ENGLISH 336: NON-WESTERN LITERATURE AND THE GLOBAL CONTEXT (3 semester hours)

**MTuW 6:30-8:30pm Daniel Scott**

The student will encounter in this course some of the key concepts and trends of non-Western literary studies.

Through the reading of critical essays and literary texts, students will develop a broad familiarity with issues current in the field and elaborate their own perspectives in the area. We will read a variety of critical essays that highlight the critical and pedagogical possibilities of Non-western texts. Texts may include works by Chinua Achebe, Gabriel Garcia-Marquez, Jamaica Kincaid, Bapsi Sidhwa, Salman Rushdie, Wole Soyinka, Gayatri Spivak.

### ENGLISH 346: SHAKESPEARE: TRAGEDIES (3 semester hours)

**M-Th 10-11:30 Gary Grund**

“It is natural that people under new cultural imperatives should be impelled to fasten new interpretations (from the reasonable to the fantastic) onto aesthetic objects from the past. But criticism cannot stop there. The critic may well begin, ‘Look at it this way for a change,’ but the sentence must continue,’ and now don’t you see it as more intelligibly beautiful and moving?”

That is, if the interpretation does not reveal some hitherto occluded aspect of the aesthetic power of the art criticism (though it may be useful as cultural history or sociology or psychology or religion)”—Helen Vendler

Our goal in this course is the retrieval of the power, beauty, and joy to be found in the greatest poet in the language by carefully reading about eight or nine of his tragedies. We will trace Shakespeare’s development as a dramatic poet by starting with some of his earliest experiments with the form and examine his work at the height of his powers, our classroom discussions punctuated by references to Shakespeare’s dramatic background and the conventions of the Renaissance stage.

I have ordered *The Complete Pelican Shakespeare*, eds. Stephen Orgel and A.R. Braunmuller, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Penguin, 2002 (ISBN 014000589) as the single text in the course. Other standard texts—either complete collections or editions of individual plays—are perfectly acceptable. As a further way of reducing costs, students may wish

to download various software, such as MS .lit, Palm, or Adobe, to read e-books of Shakespeare's plays on laptops or PDAs for use in class. There will also be a WebCT component in the course.

In addition to the reading assignments, there will be two papers required for the course: a short (3-4 pages) treatment of Shakespeare's language and a somewhat longer (5-6 pages) essay due at the end of the session. There will also be a mid-term examination as well as a final examination.

#### **ENGLISH 433: MODERN ENGLISH GRAMMAR** (3 semester hours)

**MTuW 4-6:00PM**      **Russell Potter**

This course, despite its official name, is not strictly speaking a course on grammar, though grammar will not be neglected. What it really is an introduction to issues in the study and teaching of the English language today, including (but not limited to) such matters as the acquisition of language, grammar, usage, the idea of the "standard," perceptions of "accent," the history of the language, and its inner mechanics (syntax, morphology, phonology). Throughout the course, by demonstrating that there is in fact a history to many aspects of our language -- particularly to the usage perceived as "correct" at different times and places -- we will be able to demystify some of its apparently arcane and troublesome features. We will also pay particular attention to current issues in the teaching of English, such as the recent furor over "Ebonics" in the Oakland California Unified School District, the way gender affects the usage and social parsing of English, the questions raised by various "English only" movements, and issues of linguistic assimilation and 'English as a Second Language' instruction. Some attention will also be paid to the issues of language development, the psychodynamics of "correcting" student writing, and the ways in which new technologies of communication (satellite television, the Internet, the telephone) have affected patterns and perceptions about speech.

In addition to the regular class discussions and readings, there will be three linguistic exercises which will require careful observation of language and language-related behaviors, and which will be written up as short (2-4 page) reports.

#### **ENGLISH 550: TOPICS: TEACHING CREATIVE WRITING** (3 semester hours)

**MW 6-9pm**      **Karen Boren**

In this course we will explore a variety of practical techniques for teaching creative writing at various levels, techniques that will include but will not be limited to the following: generative writing exercises, writing to understand genre and the elements of imaginative prose and poetry, experiments with style, language precision, diction, characterization, scenic development, etc. We will also consider the very pragmatic issue of grading creative writing, as well as consider theoretical issues such as the nature of imagination and creativity. Students should expect to learn by doing, producing their own imaginative writing throughout the course.

### **OTHER COURSES TAUGHT BY ENGLISH DEPARTMENT FACULTY:**

#### **ENGLISH 116: APPROACHES TO FILM AND FILM CRITICISM** (3 semester hours)

**M-Th 7:50-9:50am**      **Kathryn Kalinak**

This course offers an introduction to film analysis through the study of a variety of filmic texts. During the semester, we will examine the formal elements within each film, study how each operates to impact meaning, and consider how these components relate dynamically to each other to engage the spectator. The focus of the course will be on the relationship between form and function, that is, between cinematic techniques and thematic intentions, and will include attention to the development of the basic terminology and analytical skills necessary to provide sensitive and persuasive interpretations of film. Primary emphasis is placed on feature-length narratives although alternative filmic modes are also examined. **THIS COURSE FULFILLS THE VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS CATEGORY IN GENERAL EDUCATION**

#### **FILM STUDIES 262: FILM AND REPRESENTATION: AMERICA AND JAPAN** (4 semester hours)

**M-Th 10-12am**      **Kathryn Kalinak**

This course introduces students to methods of critical inquiry which allow them to analyze cross-cultural representations in film. Reading and selected filmic texts will focus on the ways in which filmic representations are produced within individual cultures and the relationship of those representations to history, ideology, and social change. Specifically, this section of the course will consider representations of Japan in Hollywood cinema and representations of the United States in Japanese cinema. **THIS COURSE FULFILLS THE CORE 4 REQUIREMENT IN GENERAL EDUCATION.**

#### **ENGLISH 350/ENGLISH 550 ASTAL SUMMER INSTITUTE WRITING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

**Jean Brown**

The Institute will be held on June 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, with a follow-up day in the fall. Participants will attend presentations about book publishing featuring editors and publishers and they will meet and hear from guest authors. Additionally, published authors will serve as instructor/mentors working with participants in one of two strands: Writing Fiction for Young People or Writing Picture Books for Young People. In both strands, the instructor/mentor to student ratio will not exceed 1:8 to provide maximum opportunities for individualized instruction and feedback during work sessions. Enrollment is limited and students will be accepted in the order that we receive the applications by the strand indicated. Participants may enroll for three credits in either English 350 or English 450. Please go to [www.astal-ric.org](http://www.astal-ric.org) for application forms or for additional information.

#### **ENGLISH 390/ENGLISH 590 ASTAL INTERNSHIP**

**Jean Brown**

Students will experience planning and implementing a program and activities for a nonprofit organization. Duties will include communication with the press, copying and distributing materials, and assisting in the preparations for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual ASTAL Summer Institute. Students

will also work with the director and instructors during the Institute. While some work will be done before and after the Institute, attendance will be scheduled from 8:30-3:30 on June 9,20,21,23,24,25.

Registration materials available after May 1, 2009

## SUMMER SESSION II (JUNE 29 - AUGUST 7)

### ENGLISH 220: INTRODUCTION TO CREATIVE WRITING (4 semester hours)

**MW 10-12pm Mark Anderson**

The purpose of this course is to introduce the techniques and strategies of fiction and poetry writing. The two textbooks will be the primary sources of "how-to" instruction, and we will spend some time analyzing exemplary poems and stories printed there, but most of our class time will be devoted to discussions of work by class members. During the semester, students will write both poetry and fiction (eight poems and four eight-page stories, twelve poems and three stories, or sixteen poems and two stories, as you choose), and also revisions of two stories, eight poems, or one story and four poems.

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Required Text:

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### ENGLISH 230: BUSINESS WRITING (3 semester hours)

**MW 6-9pm Gary Grund**

This course consists of lectures, discussions, and writing in and out of class. Students will compose letters, memoranda, proposals, and other forms of written communication appropriate to business and industry.

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typed. Attendance and class participation are essential.

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The text for the course is Philip C. Kolin, Successful Writing at Work, 8<sup>th</sup> edition (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006)

### ENGLISH 302: AMERICAN LITERATURE FROM 1860 TO 1914 (3 semester hours)

**M-Th 10-11:30am Stephen Brown**

This course will survey literature of the United States from the period between the Civil War and the beginning of World War I. We will consider the variety of literary expression during this era as well as the relation of literature to the wider culture. Requirements will include regular attendance and participation in the work of the class, two critical essays, and a final exam.

### ENGLISH 337: TOPICS IN AESTHETICS OF FILM TOPIC: FILM GENRE (3 semester hours)

**MTuW 4-6pm Joan Dagle**

In this course, we will examine the concept of genre in film. We will focus on film noir, the dark, edgy Hollywood crime films first developed in the 1940s in classics such as The Maltese Falcon, Murder My Sweet, Double Indemnity, and Out of the Past. We will seek to understand the nature of film genre by contrasting the noir films with films made at the same time but within alternative genre frameworks such as the musical. We'll also examine more recent examples of the genre through examples of "neo noir" and "contemporary noir" films. Although English 337 does not assume that students have studied film previously, all students will be expected to become familiar with the basic vocabulary of film analysis.

### ENGLISH 350: THE HISTORY OF HIP-HOP (3 semester hours)

**MTuW 6:30-8:30pm Russell Potter**

In its rise to the top of the American popular music scene, Hip-hop has taken on all comers, and issued beatdown after beatdown. Yet how many of its fans today know the origins of the music? Sure, people might have

heard something of Afrika Bambaataa or Grandmaster Flash, but how about the Last Poets or King Tim III? For this class, we've booked a ride on the wayback machine which will take us all the way back to Hip-hop's precursors, including the Blues, Calypso, Ska, and West African griots. From there, we'll trace its roots and routes through the 'parties in the park' in the late 1970's, the emergence of political Hip-hop with Public Enemy and KRS-One, the turn towards "gangsta" style in the 1990's, and on into the current pantheon of rappers. Along the way, we'll take a closer look at the essential elements of Hip-hop culture, including breakdancing, writing (graffiti), and rapping, with a special look at the past and future of turntablism and digital sampling. Books will include Toop, Rap Attack 3, Potter, Spectacular Vernaculars: Hip-hop and the Politics of Postmodernism, and Hebdige, Cut 'n: Mix; films will include Wild Style, Bamboozled, and Zebrahead; there will also be a WebCT site and a disc of reserve listenings.

### ENGLISH 525: TOPICS IN GENRE: DETECTIVE FICTION (3 semester hours)

**MTuW 6:30-8:30pm Joan Dagle**

In this course, we will examine the development of detective fiction from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present, beginning with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and ending with either Sara Paretsky or Walter Mosley. We will consider contemporary ideas about genre and popular fiction in order to help us understand the significance of detective fiction and its connection to modern life, and we will consider theories of detection and detective fiction by critics such as Todorov and Foucault.