

## **ENGLISH DEPARTMENT COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

### **SUMMER 2023**

The English major at Rhode Island College offers the opportunity to explore literature, creative writing, and professional writing. All majors learn to read texts critically, to understand the historical and cultural conditions within which texts are produced, and to practice critical, creative, and practical writing.

Your introduction to the major begins with English 200, which emphasizes close reading and acquiring a critical vocabulary and methodology. Creative writing majors also take English 220, the introduction to creative writing. All 300/400 level courses are designed to follow up on the 200-level courses and to prepare you for the capstone course in the major, English 460.

### **Summer I Session (May 15-June 23)**

#### **ENGL 120-01 (TTh) 8:00am-12:20pm (Hybrid)**

##### **Intro to Literature: Truth, Lies, and Story-telling**

**Jalalzai**

Humans have been telling stories for as long as we have had language. How does telling stories shape our sense of reality and of ourselves? What expectations of truth have we had of our stories, and how have those changed in a post-truth world? This class examines the role of storytelling through various genres and eras to consider the questions of how stories have both brought people together and pushed them apart. We will start with Classical and religious philosophy and narratives to medieval epics to more contemporary forms of storytelling like magical realism and comics. We will end with analyzing propaganda and conspiracy theories in current political discourse. This class fulfills the General Education Literature requirement.

Students will work on developing important skills related to both deep and lasting learning in college and to success in the workplace in their post-college careers (regardless of major): critical thinking, creative thinking, written communication.

#### **ENGL 120-02 (MTWTh) 1:00pm-3:10pm (Hybrid)**

##### **Literature and Identity**

**Potter**

The moment we walk out the front doors of our homes and apartments, we enter the world of social expectations. Our entire journey to adulthood is filled with their study -- we must first learn language, then how to speak properly to parents, teachers, and playmates; at school, we learn to sit attentively at our desks, and not to make noise in libraries. Our life is so rule-bound, indeed, that it's no wonder we need release at the end of the day, whether that comes in the form of food, entertainment, or simple relaxation. Yet are those enough? What unfulfilled wishes, what resentments, what cravings are left for our shadows to pursue? In this course, we'll look at the way a number of different literary writers have represented this world of shadows. From Hans Christian Andersen to Edgar Allan Poe, and from Charles Chesnutt to Shirley Jackson, we'll trace the darker sides of the human imagination. Our readings will be primarily in the form

of short stories, though we'll also look at films adapted from them, ranging from animated shorts to episodes of *The Twilight Zone*.

This class fulfills the General Education Literature requirement; Students will work on both informal and formal writing, using an online discussion board, prompts, and free-writing. Regular responses on our course board are required, along with a formal paper of 4-6 pages in length, which will go through a draft and review process midway through the term.

**ENGL 230W Online Asynchronous  
Workplace Writing  
Michaud**

What kind of writing do college students do after graduation? What will you need to learn to communicate effectively on the job? What role does writing play in 21st century workplaces? This course attempts to answer all these questions and more. ENGL 230 will provide you with the tools you need to understand the role of writing in the workplace so that you can successfully navigate the many challenges you will face as a writer after college. You will conduct writing research in a workplace of your choosing and explore and experiment with typical genres of professional writing (e.g., letters, memos, reports). Course assignments include frequent informal writing and a semester-long workplace writing research project.

**ENGL 261 (MTWTh) 4:00pm-6:10pm (Hybrid)  
Arctic Encounters  
Potter**

This class examines narratives of cultural contact both “factual” and “fictional” between European explorers of the Arctic and its indigenous peoples in the comparative context of European and colonialism, visual representation, and emergent literatures. Material will include historical accounts, fiction, and film, as well as music and other performative arts. Requirements include attendance, active participation in discussion, a weekly response paragraph, and two 4-6 page critical essays, each of which will go through a draft reading process.

**ENGL 306 (TTH) 8:00am-12:00pm (Hybrid)  
Studies in British Literature 1700-1914: The Gothic  
Reddy**

Note: Registration for this **study-abroad course** requires pre-approval. Contact Dr. Jennifer Holl at [jholl@ric.edu](mailto:jholl@ric.edu) as soon as possible for information.

This course will explore the Gothic mode, beginning with Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) and ending with a recent short story by Owen Booth, “Frankenstein's Monster Is Drunk, and the Sheep Have All Jumped the Fences” (2020). In between, we will read Jane Austen's spoof of Gothic novels and their readers, *Northanger Abbey* (1817); John Keats's gothic poem, “Isabella, or the Pot of Basil” (1820); and some short stories, including Charles Dickens's “To Be Read at Dusk” (1852); George Eliot's “The Lifted Veil” (1859); Elizabeth Gaskell's “The Grey Woman” (1861); and Elizabeth Bowen's “The Demon Lover” (1945). We will also read some criticism and theory to help us figure out the enduring appeal of this mode as well as the censorious view taken by many critics, who saw it as dangerous,

especially for young women readers. In England, we'll explore some sites associated with our readings, including the town of Bath, where Austen set *Northanger Abbey*; Walpole's Strawberry Hill House, just outside London, which is the model for the titular castle of his novel; and others in London itself, such as Keats's house (now a Keats museum). Course requirements will include active participation in all activities in the classroom and abroad, regular blog posts, and a final presentation.

**ENGL 350 (MW) 8:00am-12:43 pm (In Person)**

**Topics: Shakespeare's England/England's Shakespeare  
Holl**

Note: Registration for this **study-abroad course** requires pre-approval. Contact Dr. Jennifer Holl at [jholl@ric.edu](mailto:jholl@ric.edu) as soon as possible for information.

This study-abroad course will explore connections between Shakespeare's plays, his life in early modern England, and his multiple "afterlives," or the ways that his memory and work have lived on through performance, scholarship, and popular appropriations. In the classroom, we'll read *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Richard III*, and *Macbeth*, and we'll examine the ways that Shakespeare negotiated his political and cultural world through his plays. We'll explore the available biographical information—from his early days in Stratford-on-Avon, to his two decades on the London theater scene, to his eventual retirement back to Stratford—as well as the competing speculations about his possible scandals, loves, and pastimes. We will also discuss Shakespeare's enduring afterlives—the processes and performances by which, in the 400 years since his death, Shakespeare has become England's national poet and a global cultural icon. We'll discuss the differences between what scholars generally refer to as Shakespeare, the poet and his works, and "Shakespeare," the ongoing collection of cultural narratives that perpetually redefine him for each era, and most importantly, we'll explore the sites of this remarkable transformation from Shakespeare to "Shakespeare" with visits to the places where he lived and worked. Course requirements will include active participation in all activities in the classroom and abroad, regular blog posts, and a final presentation.

**ENGL 477W**

**Internship in Professional Writing  
Michaud**

Students interested in a summer internship should contact Professor Michael Michaud as early in the spring semester as possible ([mmichaud@ric.edu](mailto:mmichaud@ric.edu)).

**ENGL 531 (TTH) 8:00am-11:35am (Hybrid)**

**Studies in British Literature 1600-1900  
Reddy**

This course will explore the Gothic mode, beginning with Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) and ending with a recent short story by Owen Booth, "Frankenstein's Monster Is Drunk, and the Sheep Have All Jumped the Fences" (2020). In between, we will read Jane Austen's spoof of Gothic novels and their readers, *Northanger Abbey* (1817); John Keats's gothic poem, "Isabella, or the Pot of Basil" (1820); and some short stories, including Charles Dickens's "To Be Read at Dusk" (1852); George Eliot's "The Lifted Veil" (1859); Elizabeth Gaskell's "The Grey Woman" (1861); and Elizabeth Bowen's "The Demon Lover" (1945). We

will also read some criticism and theory to help us figure out the enduring appeal of this mode as well as the censorious view taken by many critics, who saw it as dangerous, especially for young women readers. In England, we'll explore some sites associated with our readings, including the town of Bath, where Austen set *Northanger Abbey*; Walpole's Strawberry Hill House, just outside London, which is the model for the titular castle of his novel; and others in London itself, such as Keats's house (now a Keats museum). Course requirements will include active participation in all activities in the classroom and abroad, regular blog posts, and a final presentation.

**ENGL 550 (MW) 8:00am-11:43 pm (In Person)**

**Topics: Shakespeare's England/England's Shakespeare  
Holl**

This study-abroad course will explore connections between Shakespeare's plays, his life in early modern England, and his multiple "'afterlives,'" or the ways that his memory and work have lived on through performance, scholarship, and popular appropriations. In the classroom, we'll read *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Richard III*, and *Macbeth*, and we'll examine the ways that Shakespeare negotiated his political and cultural world through his plays. We'll explore the available biographical information—from his early days in Stratford-on-Avon, to his two decades on the London theater scene, to his eventual retirement back to Stratford—as well as the competing speculations about his possible scandals, loves, and pastimes. We will also discuss Shakespeare's enduring afterlives—the processes and performances by which, in the 400 years since his death, Shakespeare has become England's national poet and a global cultural icon. We'll discuss the differences between what scholars generally refer to as Shakespeare, the poet and his works, and "'Shakespeare,'" the ongoing collection of cultural narratives that perpetually redefine him for each era, and most importantly, we'll explore the sites of this remarkable transformation from Shakespeare to "'Shakespeare'" with visits to the places where he lived and worked. Course requirements will include active participation in all activities in the classroom and abroad, regular blog posts, and a final presentation.

**Summer II Session (June 26-August 4)**

**ENGL 121 (MW) 1:00pm-3:30pm (Hybrid) and online asynchronous  
Studies in Literature and Nation: Literature of the Contact Zone  
Duneer**

In *Imperial Eyes*, Mary Louise Pratt defines "contact zones" as "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other." In this course students will encounter contact zones from a variety of time periods and perspectives, beginning with Columbus's descriptions of America and Shakespeare's imagination of the New World in *The Tempest*. We will then view the contact zone through the eyes of 20th- and 21st-century African, Caribbean, American, Native American, Asian, and Pacific Rim writers. Students will consider the particular and universal aesthetics of storytelling, as well as the power of stories to shape the way readers view themselves and understand people of other cultures. Requirements include participation, online discussion and quizzes, and two short papers (4-6 pages each).

**ENGL 261 (MTWTh) 4:00pm-6:10pm (Hybrid)**

**Arctic Encounters**  
**Potter**

This class examines narratives of cultural contact both “factual” and “fictional” between European explorers of the Arctic and its indigenous peoples in the comparative context of European and colonialism, visual representation, and emergent literatures. Material will include historical accounts, fiction, and film, as well as music and other performative arts. Requirements include attendance, active participation in discussion, a weekly response paragraph, and two 4-6 page critical essays, each of which will go through a draft reading process.

**ENGL 477W**  
**Internship in Professional Writing**  
**Michaud**

Students interested in a summer internship should contact Professor Michael Michaud as early in the spring semester as possible ([mmichaud@ric.edu](mailto:mmichaud@ric.edu)).

**ENGL 540 (TTH) 4:00pm-7:00 pm (In Person)**  
**Topics: American Lit Before 1900: American Realist Short Fiction**  
**Duneer**

This course will introduce students to the Realist movement between the Civil War and World War I. Writers in this period attempted to redefine the subject matter and aesthetics of realism as a rejection of sentimentalism and romance, to represent “the truthful treatment of material” (Howells). Definitions of American realism as a genre or literary approach continue to be debated: questions of style, periodization, and perspective. At its core, these debates resonate with our current concerns about what is “real” and “fake.” Course readings will consist of short stories and novellas that reflect a range of realisms (genteel/psychological, naturalistic, regional, urban); issues of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality; and ethical complexities for characters grappling with a rapidly transforming American society. Requirements include active class participation, short written assignments, a discussion-leading presentation, a conference-length research paper and a conference-style presentation.