

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT COURSE DESCRIPTIONS FALL 2022

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.

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. Professional writing majors take English 200 and English 222. All 300/400 level courses are designed to follow up on 200-level courses and to prepare you for the capstone course in the major: English 460.

ENGL 200 (MW) 10:00am-12:00pm (In-person)

Reading Literature and Culture

Holl

In this introduction to the English major, we'll explore the ways that centuries of poetry, prose, drama, and media participate in long-running critical conversations and how writing provides us with platforms to participate in those conversations. Students will receive practice and instruction in the strategies and vocabularies of close reading and writing, and we'll discuss the ways that these various analytical tools can be applied throughout the major and beyond. Requirements include active class participation, four papers, and a presentation.

ENGL 203 (F) 2:00pm-3:00pm (In-person)

Career Readiness for Humanities Majors

Hawk

Many students wait until their senior years to think about careers when some important prep work should be done much earlier. This course aims to jump start students' thinking about what they want to do with their degrees while they still have plenty of time to choose particular courses, arrange internships, and investigate possibilities. This course will introduce students to the range of careers available to humanities majors, while also giving them concrete guidance in creating professional materials of their own. Requirements include engagement in class discussions and workshops, as well as creation of resumes, LinkedIn profiles, portfolios, and the like. Open to any student in any major who has completed the FYW course (or equivalent elsewhere) and a total of 15 credit hours.

ENGL 208 (TTh) 2:00pm-4:00pm (Hybrid)

British Literature

Potter

This course will focus on the histories of what some call "high fantasy" – the world of valiant warriors, monsters, and magic, of mighty deeds and tragic falls. Our approach will be historicist in nature, looking at literature's embedded connections with material culture, daily life, social change and upheaval, and politics generally. Our texts will include Beowulf, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, excerpts from Tennyson's Idylls of the King, the early writings of J.R.R. Tolkien, and conclude with Kazuo Ishiguro's The Buried Giant. There will be weekly response writings as well as two formal essays of 4-6 pages in length.

ENGL 209 (MTh) 12:00pm-2:00pm (In-person)

What Is an American? American Literature: Beginnings to the Present

Jalalzai

This course examines American national identities and literary production from the first inhabitants, explorers, and settlers to the present day. All along we will explore what constitutes American citizenship and literary production. Who was included, excluded, and why? How did outsiders become insiders? What struggles for inclusion still persist? We shall follow American literature historically and critically as well as through developments in literary form. Asking how politics and history shape the form as well as the content of literature, our analyses will include the following areas of American literature and culture:

- Exploration
- Puritanism
- Revolution
- Transcendentalism
- American Gothic
- Slavery and Race
- Harlem Renaissance
- Modern/Postmodern America
- Contemporary Ethnic literature

Requirements include: course presentation, midterm and a final paper.

ENGL 212 (TuTh) 4:00pm-6:00pm (In-person)

Adolescent Literature

Instructor TBA

Through a variety of literary and visual texts, students explore images of and themes related to adolescence in young adult literature.

ENGL 220-01 (TuTh) 2:00pm-4:00pm (In-person)

Introduction to Creative Writing

Shipers

This course introduces students to some of the basic elements of writing and reading creative nonfiction, fiction, and poetry. We will spend a lot of time discussing, studying, and practicing the five techniques essential to all three genres: image, voice, character, setting, and story. Students will complete approximately six formal assignments that will be workshopped by the entire class and at the end of the semester will turn in a portfolio of polished final pieces. Attendance, thoughtful reading of assigned texts, active participation in class discussion, drafting of creative work, and thorough revision are all required elements of the course.

ENGL 220-02 (MW) 2:00pm-4:00pm (In-person)

Introduction to Creative Writing

Boren

ENGL 230:01 (MTh) 12:00pm-2:00pm (In-person)

ENGL 230:02 (TTh) 2:00pm-4:00pm (In-person)

ENGL 230:03 (Th) 4:00pm-8:00pm (In-person)

Workplace Writing

Instructor TBA

ENGL 232 (TuTh) 10:00am-12:00pm (In-person)

Public and Community Writing

Caouette

What is public and community writing *doing* for us right now? As we grapple with a pandemic and as we work to preserve democracy, our environment, and our basic human rights, public and community writing is the tool we use to be knowledgeable citizens and activists. Such writing demands a great deal of us as credible authors, researchers, and designers, and knowing how to meet those demands is essential to the progress of our world.

In ENGL 232, we'll work to examine the kinds of public and community writing we already do, the kind we may want to do, and the kind we need to do to improve our communities. Students should think of this class very much like a writing lab, with ample time and space to write and receive the support of peers and the instructor. The class will engage in individualized, semester-long projects in which students become active, critical participants in a thoughtful public conversation.

ENGL 233 (TuF) 12:00pm-2:00pm (In-person)

Writing for the Health Professions

Michaud

Do health professionals write on the job? If so, what? And why? And how? And what can you learn about writing in the health professions now, while you're in college, that will help you succeed later, in what will be a critical aspect of your daily work?

This course attempts to answer all these questions and more. It will provide you with the tools to understand the role of writing in numerous health settings. You'll conduct writing research in a health workplace of your choosing and explore genres of writing unique to that context. Course assignments include informal writing and a semester-long workplace writing research project.

ENGL 261 (MW) 4:00pm-6:00pm (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 263 (MTh) 12:00pm-2:00pm (In-person)

Zen East and West

Zornado

How do we become who we are? Why do people suffer? What is identity? Where do we come from and where do we go? Is there a preferred way to navigate the challenges and struggles of

consciousness? Are we robots, programmed by our language and environment, or are we free? How can we know? Who can tell us? We will read, compare, and contrast various philosophical, literary, and religious responses to these questions including fundamental ideas from Buddhist and Christian traditions among other cultural and intellectual disciplines. We will engage in class discussion, work in groups both large and small in order to explore the assigned readings. Class discussion will encourage the development of “connections” across academic disciplines, historical periods, and famous statements about Zen from everywhere we can find them. Successful students will participate in class by demonstrating their engagement with the course material both in class, small group work, oral presentations, and through their writing: two formal papers and 12-15 pages of informal writing.

ENGL 300 (TuTh) 10:00am-12:00pm (In-person)

Introduction to Theory and Criticism

Duneer

This course is an introduction to literary and cultural theory as historically constituted and vitally relevant to current trends in English scholarship—and to the ways we make meaning of texts every day. Students will examine the assumptions readers make when encountering a text and practice reading literary and non-literary texts through the lens of several theoretical concepts. We will study a variety of foundational theoretical approaches (such as Formalism, Structuralism, Post-Structuralism, Psychoanalysis, Feminism/Gender Studies, Marxism, Postcolonial, and Critical Race Studies) and examine some of the ways contemporary scholars engage with key concepts and assumptions. Students will read and write about literary theory and criticism and develop rhetorical strategies that will help them navigate ongoing critical conversations within and beyond the classroom. Requirements include active class participation, informal writing, two formal papers, a presentation, and midterm and final exams.

ENGL 310 (MW) 10:00am-12:00pm (In-person)

Readings for Writers

Shipers

In this course, we'll read poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction in order to better understand *how* they're made—that is, what choices and techniques their authors use in order to create the readers' experience. We'll also read some essays about craft written by authors about their own work as well as by literary critics. Requirements include attendance and active participation, and a variety of informal and formal analytical writing assignments.

ENGL 327 (MW) 2:00pm-4:00pm (In-person)

Multicultural American Literatures

Instructor TBA

Course description TBA. (From catalog: Students explore issues of race, ethnicity, and canon through the study of several American literatures, such as Latinx, African-American, Asian-American, and Native-American. Course may be repeated with a change in topic.)

ENGL 335 (TuTh) 4:00pm-6:00pm (In-person)

Literatures of the World to 1500: Race in the Global Middle Ages

Hawk

This course examines race-making in world literature between about 400 and 1500 CE. We will study representations of racial and ethnic differences in and around medieval world literature in order to tackle three related issues: 1) how medieval literature from around the world represents,

discusses, and enacts race and racial difference; 2) how the Middle Ages came to be constructed in popular culture as a distinctly white, Christian, and Eurocentric subject despite a rich corpus of texts that loudly proclaim otherwise; and 3) how a historicized investigation of race helps to inform current understandings of race, race-making, and systemic racial oppression in the twenty-first century. Requirements include engagement in class discussions, informal presentations, short essays, and a research assignment.

ENGL 340 (TuF) 12:00pm-2:00pm (In-person)

Studies in Prose: Reading and Writing the Greatest Essays Ever Written

Zornado

In the *Best American Essays*, Ariel Levy says that writing an effective essay "requires real audacity." We will be working to grow our audaciousness in this class, and in that spirit, we will read and study examples of the greatest prose writing in English in essay form, from "A Modest Proposal" to "Consider the Lobster." We will be working steadily with weekly reading and writing assignments designed for the growth and development of the whole person, and especially the writer inside that whole person. Work includes a midterm essay and a final essay as well as dedicated attendance. Class time will be organized as a reading and writing workshop that will include lecture and group work, both large and small. We will meet in person twice a week. Only the audacious, the near-audacious—and perhaps those who might consider indulging in at least some small bit of audacity—need apply.

ENGL 346 (MW) 10:00am-12:00pm (In-person)

Shakespeare: The Tragedies and Romances

Abbotson

Many of you will have read some of these plays before, which may allow for a certain familiarity; however, we now need to expand that knowledge into a deeper understanding of why Shakespeare remains so engaging, important and relevant. We shall explore the presentation of Shakespeare's tragedies and at least one romance through a variety of media, placing each play within its historical, cultural, and intellectual context of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, as well how they have fared in contemporary times. You will learn how to analyze Shakespeare's use of language, creation of character, and methods of play construction to build a sense of how his plays work through a variety of solo and group presentations and individual writing, which will include a review of a production and a formal essay that utilizes secondary criticism. Class participation will be essential, and there will be a midterm and a final.

ENGL 371 (TTh) 2:00pm-4:00pm (In-person)

Intermediate Creative Writing, Fiction

Boren

ENGL 375 (W) 8:00am-10:00pm (In-person)

Shoreline Production: Selection and Editing

Shipers

In this course, students will learn and practice the elements of publishing a literary arts magazine, focusing this semester on solicitation of manuscripts and artwork, selection of material for the magazine, and editing. Requirements include attendance, active participation in discussion and in selecting and editing works to be published in the magazine. Much of your work for Shoreline will occur outside of the class meeting times, so you'll need to allow time outside of the classroom to do the work required.

ENGL 378 (MTh) 12:00pm-2:00pm (In-person)**Advanced Workshop in Professional Writing****Caouette**

In this course, intended as a “deep dive” into such professional writing practices as community writing, workplace writing, public writing, and technical writing, students will participate in a semester-long project that will ask them to consider the role of writing—and their status as writers—outside the academy. In taking seriously the “workshop” aspect of the course title, a good deal of class time will be spent composing and conferencing on our texts. Members of this course should expect to write a great deal, with additional time spent on relevant, interesting readings/viewings and class discussion. At the end of the fall semester, students will feel more confident about their writing abilities and better prepared for the full spectrum of writing in which they will participate after graduation. Students need not have enrolled in any previous Professional Writing courses in order to succeed in English 378; we welcome all students who are interested in advancing their writing talents in a supportive, active learning environment.

ENGL 460 (MW) 4:00pm-6:00pm (In-person)**Seminar in English****Holl**

English 460 offers students opportunities to reflect upon their experiences as English majors and apply the skills and strategies they have acquired toward the next steps in their academic and professional careers. In this semester-long, culminating workshop, we will revisit and revise past work; craft an educational narrative; prepare a professional profile for life beyond RIC; and draft an individualized capstone project that explores students' own interests and showcases their achievements in reading, writing, and research. Requirements include engaged participation; an assignment sequence of reading, writing, revising, and/or research assignments that will result in a final portfolio; and a presentation.

ENGL 477 (By arrangement)**Internship in Professional Writing****Michaud**

What do English majors write after they graduate? What role does writing play in 21st century “knowledge economy” workplaces? What will you need to know to navigate the transition from writing-for-the-teacher to writing-for-the-boss?

The Internship in Professional Writing is an opportunity for English majors to gain exposure to professional workplaces and professional writing. Students identify a site at which to intern, work with Dr. Michael Michaud to secure a position, and then work 12-14 hours per week on writing projects at their field-site. In addition, they participate in a classroom component (2-4 hours per week) in which they keep an internship journal, read in the professional literature about workplace writing, write weekly thought pieces on their reading, and produce two reports on their learning. The classroom component of the course is conducted entirely online.

If you are interested in an internship, please contact Dr. Michaud (mmichaud@ric.edu) the semester BEFORE you plan to intern to set up an informational meeting.

ENGL 501 (W) 4:00pm-7:00pm (In-person)**Literary and Cultural Theory**

Hawk

This course serves as an introduction to graduate study in English, with a focus on cultural theories and methods. We will survey some of the exciting yet challenging offerings of “theory” and consider how it relates to reading, writing, and culture. The central goals of the course are for students to 1) learn to approach graduate study as professional training, substantially different from undergraduate study; 2) develop a working knowledge of issues and methods in cultural theory; and 3) learn and practice essential research skills. Requirements include engagement in class discussions, presentations, short written exercises, and an end-of-semester project that combines analysis with interrogation of a selected theoretical method.

ENGL 521 (Th) 4:00pm-7:00pm (In-person)

Imagining the Worst: The Disaster Film as Social Practice

Zornado

Our seminar will take up the disaster film as social practice and track the evolution of the genre as the specular attempt to symbolize the desert of the Real. We will read appropriate theoretical texts in order to develop a perspective that takes disaster-as-apocalypse (as separate from the post-apocalyptic film narrative) in terms of restorative nostalgia and the disaster film as fetishistic disavowal. We will engage in secondary research, screen primary film texts, and take a cultural history from the Great Depression to the contemporary moment. Our seminar will track the disaster film genre as, at least in part, an example of the psycho-social and eco-critical transposition of cultural crisis into restorative fantasy. We will read, watch, research, and produce informal and formal writing assignments.

ENGL 581 (T) 4:00pm-7:00pm (In-person)

Workshop in Creative Writing

Boren

Select 100-Level Courses

ENGL 113 (TuTh) 10:00am-12:00pm (In-person)

Approaches to Drama: Page to Stage

Abbotson

Because this course satisfies the General Education Arts Requirement, there is a strong emphasis on the performative aspects of drama. However, this is not an acting class but an English one, in which we will be taking a whirlwind tour through the history of drama from the Greeks through to contemporary times, noting the changing styles of theaters and performance, while reading, watching, and analyzing the kinds of plays produced along the way. Requirements include class participation, (hopefully) a visit to a live performance, quizzes and response papers, midterm, final, and two short creative papers (3-5 pages each).

ENGL 120-04 (MW) 10:00am-12:00pm (In-person)

Studies in Literature and Identity

Okoomian

How does gender shape our identity? Starting from the assumption that gender is a "social construct," we will read literary texts that explore the way societies construct gender, and the way individuals experience, internalize, and/or resist those constructions. We will also pay attention to the way other categories of identity (such as race, sexuality, class, and ethnicity) intersect with gender in the literature we read. The course will emphasize critical reading and writing skills. You will write two essays as well as less formal writing, and class will be largely discussion-based.

ENGL 120-05 (TuTh) 10:00am-12:00pm (Hybrid)

Studies in Literature and Identity: Truth, Lies, and Telling Tales

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 story-telling 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 story-telling like magical realism and the graphic novel. We will end with analyzing propaganda and conspiracy theories in current political discourse. The class engage questions such as:

- Why do we study literature?
- Can truths be told in fiction?
- Is "making things up" the same as lying?
- Can we find common truths even though we may not share the same stories?
- Is using the same social media format (Tik Tok / Twitter) enough of a shared reality?
- How can we accept facts while believing that reality is subjective?

You will have weekly reading quizzes and discussion boards, one midterm paper with draft, and one final-research paper with draft.

ENGL 120-06 (Online Asynchronous)

Studies in Literature and Identity

Abbotson

How are identities formed and what does it mean to be human? In the literary imagination, Adam and Eve represent two of the earliest people to exist, but what are they like and why? Are people's identities determined mostly by nature or nurture? How far is the person we are influenced by aspects of culture, race, gender or politics? Explorations of how identities are formed have been rendered in verse, prose (fiction and non-fiction), artistic images, dramatic dialogue, and film. We shall be considering such explorations from their Biblical beginnings to more contemporary works to get a sense of what kinds of pressures help form an individual's identity, and how literature can aid us in better understanding ourselves and others.

Requirements include active participation in Blackboard discussions, a variety of quizzes and writing assignments, two essays (3-5 pages), and midterm and final exams. All online.

ENGL 121-01 (TuTh) 2:00pm-4:00pm (Hybrid)

ENGL 121-02 (MW) 8:00am-10:00am (Hybrid)

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 active class participation, online discussion board postings and quizzes, and two papers.