

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

SUMMER 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.

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 one of the two capstone courses in the major: English 460 (in literary studies) or English 461 (in creative writing).

Summer I Session (May 16-June 24)

ENGL 120-01 (TTh) 8:00am-12:10pm (Hybrid)

Literature and Identity: 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 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.

A partial reading list includes: Plato's *The Republic*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Shakespeare's *Othello*, and Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, Jhumpa Lahiri's "A Temporary Matter," and graphic text *The Department of Truth*.

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

Literature and Identity

Potter

In this class, we'll read a wide variety of short fiction, exploring the ways in which stories inform and shape our lives, and are in turn shaped by them. Our focus will be on stories and tales whose narratives frame and re-frame the self: fairy tales, tales of physical transformation, tales of ghosts and doubles, and stories that probe the innermost regions of the mind. Our readings will include selections from the Brothers Grimm, Hans Christian Andersen, Edgar Allan Poe, Amos Tutuola, Shirley Jackson, Ursula K. Le Guin, Jorge Luis Borges, and Steven Millhauser. There will be weekly response writings, as well as a final essay of 4-6 pages.

ENGL 262 (MW) 8:00am-12:43 pm (Hybrid)

Women, Crime, and Representation

Reddy

This connections course examines representations—in fiction, non-fiction, film, and television—of women as criminals, as crime victims, and as detectives. We will consider texts of several

national origins and time periods, paying close attention to the similarities as well as differences in their portrayals of women. We will draw on research and analyses done by scholars from a variety of fields, including film and media studies, gender and women's studies, sociology, history, and literature to help us make sense of these representations and what they might tell us about our society and ourselves. Course format will be discussion, with occasional brief lectures by the professor and presentations by students. Each student will write two formal papers of varying lengths, participate in a group presentation, and be responsible for frequent assignments in class and on Blackboard.

ENGL 301 (MTW) 1:00pm-3:56pm (Hybrid)

American Literature and the Racial Frontier: Reading America to the Civil War

Jalalzai

This course explores the concept of frontier as a contested space between settlement and wilderness between distinctive cultures, and between divergent understandings of race, gender, family, and community. This early American Literature course will start with the contact between Europeans and Native Americans through images of America as a sexualized space and move through the Colonial and pre-Civil War periods to think about how war and settlement affected the boundaries between people and contributed to competing ideas of the nation. Frontiers, like any border meant to regulate interaction, are also places where divisions are regularly breached and customs sometimes flouted. We will, therefore, examine literary instances of border crossing and racial/ethnic intermixing. Our reading list will include: John Smith's *The Generall Historie of Virginia*; Unca Eliza Winkfield's *The Female American*; Mary Rowlandson's *Captivity Narrative*; Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia*; De Crevecoeur's *Letters from an American Farmer*; Mary Jemison's *Narrative of the Life*; and Catharine Maria Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie*.

ENGL 477

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).

ENGL 531 (TTh) 5:00pm-8:18 pm (In Person)

Topics in British Literature from 1660-1900: All About Eve

Holl

From the Book of Genesis to *WALL-E*, the figure of Eve has long provided poets, artists, and theologians a topic of contentious debate and a site of ceaseless reinterpretation. This course will examine the ever-morphing figure of Eve from antiquity to today, with special emphasis on a particularly fruitful period of British literary inquiry from the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries. We'll begin with a careful reading of Genesis before moving on to some seventeenth-century reinvigorations of Eve in the poetry and polemics of Rachel Speght and Aemilia Lanyer and the proto-sci-fi romances of Margaret Cavendish, before we tackle John Milton's epic *Paradise Lost*. We'll trace Eve's evolution through the visual arts and the writings of Mary Wollstonecraft, Thomas Hardy, and others, and we'll employ a variety of theoretical lenses—including feminist, queer, and affect—in our readings. Course requirements will include active class participation, short responses, a discussion-leading presentation, and a research paper.

Summer II Session (June 27-August 5)

ENGL 121 (MW) 1:00pm-5:43pm (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 participation, online discussion and quizzes, and two short papers (4-6 pages each).

ENGL 208 (MTWTh) 1:00pm-3:10pm (Hybrid)

British Literature: Knights Errant: The Heroic Traditions of British Literature

Potter

This summer section of ENGL 208 will focus in 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 *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (in translation), excerpts from Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, the fairy tales of George MacDonald, Howard Pyle's Arthurian yarns, and the early writings of J.R.R. Tolkien. There will be weekly response essays as well as a formal final essay of 5-7 pages in length.

ENGL 230W (TWTh) 1:00pm-3:47pm (In Person)

Workplace Writing

Golini

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 colonialism, visual representation, and emergent literatures. Material will include historical accounts, fiction, and film, as well as music and other performative arts, by both indigenous and "Western" creators. Among these will be Jonathan Krakauer, Kenn Harper, Alooook Ipellie, and Tanya Tagaq. Requirements include attendance, active participation in discussion, weekly response paragraphs, and a 4-6 page critical essay on a topic chosen in consultation with the instructor.

ENGL 327 (TTh) 1:00pm-5:20pm (Hybrid)

Studies in Multicultural American Literatures: Border Crossings

Duneer

In the context of ongoing political discourse on race, immigration, and national identity, "border crossings" seems an appropriate theme for our study of multicultural American literatures. In the broadest sense, we will explore the relationships between geographical and conceptual boundaries, and the literary representations of home and communities on the move. Readings may include works by writers such as Elizabeth Acevedo, Brit Bennett, Laila Lalami, John Okada, Tommy Orange, and Ocean Vuong. Throughout the course, we will examine intersections of ethnicity with issues of race, class, gender, and sexual identity. Requirements include class participation, quizzes, informal writing, an individual or group research presentation, and two papers (6-8 pages each).