ENGL 7283 Topics in 17th Century Literature: British Poetry

Professor Frank Blessington

- CRN: 35355
- 3 semester hours
- Thursday, 6:15-8:30 PM*
- Location: 400B Holmes Hall
- Fulfills: 17th Century/Restoration/18th Century

Study of the lyric poetry of Donne, Herbert, Crashaw, Vaughan, Jonson, Herrick, Dryden and others. Metaphysical poetry, Sons of Ben, and Cavaliers. Meditative, mystical, and neo-classical traditions. And a course in the nature of lyric poetry.

ENGL 7332 Topics in Film: Portrait of the Artist in Film and Literature

Professor Beryl Schlossman

- CRN: 35357
- 3 semester hours
- Thursday, 3:30-5:45 PM*
- Location: Barrs Room
- Fulfills: Theories & Methods; Cinema Studies

In film and in modern literary art, the artist’s reflection on media, on form and content, and on the creative process shapes some of the most compelling works of modernity into portraits of the artist.

One of the specific characteristics of modern art the artist’s search for expression as an authentic rendering of experience informed by the art medium itself: the sense of a vocation, and a voice — or a symbolic place — for art launches the viewer and the reader on a voyage of discovery.

This interdisciplinary seminar is an introduction to film and literary studies with a focus on questions of form, style, image, content, and text.

Major portraits of the artist are explored through a range of works from different countries, periods, and traditions. Literary works may include James Joyce’s Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, excerpts from Marcel Proust’s Remembrance of Time Past, Virginia Woolf’s Orlando, and others. Film directors studied may include Dziga Vertov, Buster Keaton, Federico Fellini, François Truffaut, Agnès Varda, and others.

Required readings may include novels, stories, poetry, essays on culture, and texts on film studies. Assignments include short class presentations and a research paper.
ENGL 7342 Topics in Criticism: Early Modern Close Reading

Professor Erika Boeckeler

- CRN: 33491
- 3 semester hours
- Wednesday, 6:15-8:30 PM*
- Location: Barrs Room
- Fulfills: Medieval/Renaissance

“Will, will fulfill the treasure of thy loue,/ I fill it full with wils, and my will one.” Knowing that “will” can indicate a future tense, a legal document, a desire, the power of asserting one’s choice, and knowing the writer is William Shakespeare… how do you read this line? Close reading serves as a foundational methodology for literary studies. This course focuses on the seminal shift in its practices spurred by the press’ invention. It considers the triple nature of language as sound, image, and material thing to ask fundamental questions about close reading. Do different objects demand different kinds of close reading? Can we close read in translation? How do new technologies enhance or undermine close reading? When is it counterproductive to close read? We will draw on a diversity of discourses including bibliography, art history, & world literature, with texts drawn from contemporary and early modern critical practices. And we will indulge all semester in the fulfilling pleasure of close reading authors like Shakespeare, Dante, George Herbert, and John Donne.

ENGL 7351 Topics in Literary Study: The American Novel of Passing, 1894-2011

Professor Carla Kaplan

- CRN: 33492
- 3 semester hours
- Wednesday, 3:30-5:45 PM*
- Location: 400B Holmes Hall
- Fulfills: 19th Century/20th Century -or- Theories & Methods; Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

This course will consider American literature of passing (race, class, gender, and sex) from 1894-2001, with particular attention to theories of literary “identification,” theories of race including “Whiteness Studies” and critical race theory, the “performative” nature of all socially constructed identity, and theories of how passing, especially, both destabilizes the constructed nature of social identity and, at the same time, shores up the very identities it destabilizes. Because the novel of passing begs both for close reading and for historical contextualization, we will make use of a range of literary methods of analysis, combining methodological tools sometimes considered disparate, including both theoretically-inflected analyses as well as archival research. A surprising number of novels of passing have been made into films and we will, consequently, look at passing films, as well as at memoirs and
autobiographies of passers (such as Deirdre McCloskey’s Crossing: A Memoir, Bliss Boyard’s One Drop: My Father’s Hidden Life, Honor Moore’s The Bishop’s Daughter, John Howard Griffin’s Black Like Me, Edith Han Beer, The Nazi Officer’s Wife, and Martha A. Sandweiss’s, Passing Strange), at websites and blogs, and at a range of archival resources. Theoretical readings on passing, identity, and identification will include works by Baz Dreisinger, Michelle Elam, Coco Fusco, Elaine Ginsberg, Erving Goffman, Philip Brian Harper, Samira Kawash, Adrian Piper, Jennifer DeVere Brody, Maria Sanchez, Gayle Wald, and others. All students in the seminar will be required to undertake an identity-crossing experiment of their own, lasting at least 48 hours, and write about what it is like to pass as something they are “not.” Literary readings for the course will include Mark Twain, Charles Chesnutt, James Weldon Johnson, Mary White Ovington, Sinclair Lewis, Marie Stanley, Langston Hughes, Walter White, Jessie Fauset, Nella Larsen, Vera Caspary, George S. Schuyler, Fannie Hurst, Rita Mae Brown, Danzy Senna, Colson Whitehead, Philip Roth, and others. Each member of the seminar will contribute a presentation on materials from outside the syllabus, write up his or her experiences of “passing,” and write either two papers (with the first designed to lead to the second) or one paper and a final project which can take any number of forms, including film, video, blog, essay, or other.

**ENGL 7360 Topics in Rhetoric: Rhetorics of Domestic Violence**

Professor Beth Britt

- CRN: 33047
- 3 semester hours
- Monday, 3:30-5:45 PM*
- Location: 400B Holmes Hall
- Fulfills: Rhetoric and Composition -or- Theories & Methods

This course operates on two levels: one, as a case study in a particular method of rhetorical criticism, and two, as an exploration of representations of domestic violence in contemporary American culture. Our methodological focus will be on stasis theory, developed by ancient Greek and Roman rhetoricians as a method of discovering the point at issue in a debate. Although stasis theory was originally used to help a speaker invent arguments, we will use the four stases (fact, definition, quality, and procedure) to analyze a wide range of texts related to domestic violence, including fiction, journalistic essays, film, legislation, case law, activist statements, academic studies, and psychological accounts. Our goal will be both to map the range of representations about domestic violence and to understand how framing devices (here, the first three stases of fact, definition, and quality) help determine which social responses (represented by the stasis of procedure) are seen as desirable or even possible. Assignments include a presentation and short written analysis of an outside text, a longer project of the student’s own choosing, and contributions to an annotated bibliography.