**SPRING 2021**

**HUNTER COLLEGE -- ENGLISH DEPARTMENT**

**GRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

***NOTE: This is a document that is tentative and updated frequently, so please continue to check back before registering.***

***Up to date versions of this document can be found at:***

[***http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/english/courses***](http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/english/courses)

***ALWAYS CHECK CUNY FIRST FOR ACCURATE DATES AND TIMES***

**All English classes (unless otherwise noted) are 3 credits.**

**MA LITERATURE COURSES**

**ENGL 615 RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION (2 hours plus conferences)**

**Professor Wirtz, Class Number: 6491**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Tu | 5:30:00 PM | 7:20:00 PM |

This course brings together the experience of writing with research and theory on writing. As we participate as a workshop of writers, we will be working from the inside-out to study the nature of writing and how it is learned. Specifically, this course focuses on writing in a variety of genres and deals with curricular issues at the local level during the process of writing such as responding to student writing, creating writing assignments, invention and revision strategies, peer review as a pedagogical technique, developing rubrics, encouraging student engagement in the writing process, and the creative interplay of technology and writing. Requirements include four major writing assignments, periodic responses to assigned readings, small group and whole class discussions, short in-class and out-of-class assignments, and an abbreviated teaching demonstration with supporting materials.

Textbooks: *Teaching Composition, Third Edition*, T.R. Johnson ed. Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2008. (copies of this text are being provided by the publisher—Bedford/St. Martin’s); Aristotle’s *On Rhetoric and Poetics* (both of these can be found online unabridged); *Within and Beyond the Writing Process in the Secondary English Classroom.* Dornan, Reade, Lois Matz Rosen, and Marilyn Wilson. Pearson Education Group, 2003. ISBN: 0-205-30576-8.

**ENGLISH 68101** **READING CREDIT (1 credit)**

**Staff, Hours to be arranged**

**Class Number 5379**

A specialized program of study designed according to the student's interests and needs. Written permission by a full-time member of the English Department required before registering.

**ENGLISH 68102** **READING CREDIT (2 Credits)**

**Staff, Hours to be arranged**

**Class Number 5380**

A specialized program of study designed according to the student's interests and needs. Written permission by a full-time member of the English Department required before registering.

**ENGLISH 68103** **READING CREDIT**

**Staff, Hours to be arranged**

**Class Number 5381**

A specialized program of study designed according to the student's interests and needs. Written permission by a full-time member of the English Department required before registering.

**ENGL 70282 James Joyce**

**Section 01 (Israel) Class Number: 20785**

**Wednesdays 5:30-7:20 p.m.**

Legend has it that James Joyce quipped that it took him seventeen years to write his final novel, Finnegans Wake (published in 1940), and he didn’t see why the book shouldn’t take seventeen years to read. In this seminar we will read his 672-page “book of the night” in fifteen weeks, and it is the only novel we will read during the semester.

The Wake tells the story of one night in the mid-twentieth-century life of a Dublin bar owner and his family, and in doing so retells centuries of myths, legends and stories from Ireland, Britain, Europe, the United States and elsewhere. Primarily written in English, the novel is filled with puns and portmanteau words and Joyce weaves into his inimitable sentences words from dozens of other languages. Yes, it is a difficult novel, but there is no need to be intimidated by it, as it teaches you how to read it as it goes along. Besides, there is no “mastering” it, though it is a lot of fun trying and failing to do so. It would be great if you had read, before taking the class, Joyce’s earlier novels Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man and Ulysses, as the Wake is, like those other novels, partly an autobiography, but that isn’t essential. What is essential is that you make a concerted effort to take the novel’s ideas seriously--and those ideas are very important, both in relation to Joyce’s engagement with then European history (and impending World War II) and in terms of our current moment. Over the course of the semester, we will encounter some salient examples of contemporary Joycean criticism; of particular interest to our seminar will be questions of gender, postcoloniality; globality and the limits of “attention” engaged in the novel.

If you think you might want to take this seminar, please have a look at the first page of the novel here:<https://www.finwake.com/1024chapter1/fw01.htm>

If you are inclined to work together with your fellow students to figure out what Joyce might be saying, you are most welcome to join us.

A final word: despite (or maybe because of?) its intellectual fireworks, this most comic of comic novels is hilarious, so, Zoom or no Zoom, be prepared to laugh throughout the semester.

**ENGL 70753 MEDIEVAL DEATH**

**Professor Hennessy, Wednesdays 5:30-7:20 p.m.**

**Class Number 20786**

**(Two hours plus conferences)**

Ghosts, revenants, and the undead stalked the medieval imagination; indeed, death is the obsessive subject of some of its most remarkable literature. In this course medieval death culture will first be contextualized by looking at early Christian attitudes towards the dead, with a special focus on the development of the cult of the saints and relics. Then we will read miracle tales and other texts including Viking sagas that recount stories of the dead rising from their graves to haunt their friends, relatives, and enemies. Relationships between the living and the dead will also be viewed through the lens of monastic visions of heaven, hell, and purgatory. The bulk of the course will focus on literary texts produced after the onset of the Black Death, the Great Mortality of 1348-1350 that left between one-half and one-third of the population dead, with a particular emphasis on its spread across Britain. Middle English texts to be read include Chaucer’s *Pardoner’s Tale*, John Lydgate’s *The Dance of Death*, and *The Disputation between the Body and the Worms*. Continental texts to be read in translation include European chronicle accounts and selections from Giovanni Boccaccio’s *Decameron*.

**ENGLISH 71502 SHAKESPEARE AND ECOLOGY**

**Professor Hollis, Tuesdays 7:30-9:20 p.m.**

**Class Number 55027**

One of Shakespeare’s early critics, Samuel Johnson, famously proclaimed that Shakespeare was a “poet of nature.” This course will put Johnson’s epithet to the test. Building on Hamlet’s famous advice to actors, that they should hold “a mirror up to nature,” Jonson saw in Shakespeare a poet able to capture human manners and behaviour, and hence was able to generate universal appeal even though so often his characters were kings and queens. But if for Jonson nature = human nature, we will explore Shakespeare as a poet of natures: human, animal, vegetal, arboreal, herbaceous, leguminous, aquatic, terrestrial, subterranean, meteorological, cosmic. For Shakespeare and his contemporaries, human nature—human manners and behaviours—was entwined with and dependent on the world around it and within it. Indeed, to understand Shakespeare’s ideas of nature, the noun “nature” may no longer suffice: we might more productively think in terms of environments, habitats, ecologies. Our eco-critical approach, then, will approach the humus in the human, put our animal kin back into contact with humankind, face the storm within the human story, so as to think productively about ways in which Shakespeare’s works think humanity within natures as much as humanity and nature. And we will do so with some urgency: while historical in our approach, we will keep our eyes close to the current climate, pun very much intended. To read Shakespeare in terms of the ecological cannot be a disinterested act.

Together, we will be reading about gardens, woods, wastes, and waters in Richard II, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Pericles, Macbeth, As You Like It, The Winter’s Tale, and King Lear, along with recent eco-critical approaches to Shakespeare and current ecological theory. Students will be required to present on at least one occasion, and complete a short midterm paper and a substantial research paper.

We will be using the following editions, in the Arden Shakespeare series.

Richard II ed. Charles Forker (ISBN: 9781903436332)

A Midsummer Night’s Dream ed. Sukanta Chaudhuri (ISBN: 9781408133491)

Pericles ed. Suzan Gossett (ISBN: 9781903436851)

Macbeth ed. Sandra Clark and Pamela Mason (ISBN: 9781904271413)

As You Like It ed. Juliet Dusinberre (ISBN: 9781904271222)

The Winter’s Tale ed. John Pitcher (ISBN: 9781903436356)

King Lear ed. R.A. Foakes (ISBN: 9781903436592)

**ENGL 72200 MILTON: EARLY WORK AND PARADISE LOST**

Section 01 M 7:30-9:20 Lynne Greenberg Class Number: 20787

Designed for both MA and MFA students, this course foregrounds John Milton’s poetry within the poetic traditions of the seventeenth century, attending, in particular, to the lyric poetry of the metaphysical, religious, and Cavalier poets. We will position Milton’s poetry, particularly *Paradise Lost*, against this backdrop and consider how poets work within traditions to comment upon, revise, and often rebel against their predecessors. We will also explore how such readings are ultimately incomplete without contextualizing the poetry within the turbulent Civil War, religious, and gender upheavals of the period. Questioning the myriad ways that women poets challenged the gender politics of the period, we will also explore how Milton’s poetry both produces and reproduces dominant ideologies. This course is designed to assist students in gaining an expertise in close, technical reading of poetry, learning sensitivity to stanzaic form, meter, allusion, and figurative language, as well as in genre analysis, focusing on the elegy and epic. This course encourages those students interested to consider their own creative work within such traditions. Authors include: John Donne, Lady Mary Wroth, Ben Jonson, Aemilia Lanyer, George Herbert, Robert Herrick, Andrew Marvell, Katherine Philips, and John Milton. Course requirements include 3 response papers or creative works, a mid-semester term paper, and a final research paper.

**ENGL 75753 CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN POETRY**

**Professor A. Robbins, Thursdays 5:30-7:20 p.m.**

**Class Number 6784** CANCELED

“Surrealism, such as I conceive of it, asserts our complete *nonconformism* clearly enough so that there can be no question of translating it, at the trial of the real world, as evidence for the defense. It could, on the contrary, only serve to justify the complete state of distraction which we hope to achieve here below… This summer the roses are blue; the wood is of glass. The earth, draped in its verdant cloak, makes as little impression upon me as a ghost. It is living and ceasing to live that are imaginary solutions. Existence is elsewhere.”

--- André Breton, 1924

This course will be a collective study of modern and contemporary American poetry that has been influenced by the philosophy, core principles, and aesthetic innovations of (or associated with) French Surrealism. We will begin the semester with André Breton’s *First Manifesto of Surrealism*, wherein the author lays out an argument for the imagination – liberated in the unconscious and accessible in dreams – as the locus of freedom from the waking nightmare of life in administered society. For Breton and his fellow Surrealists, it is the encounter with otherness – aesthetic, material, social, or corporeal – that activates the dormant imagination and produces “the marvelous”, or the experience of an ostensibly ungoverned, unfettered insight that exceeds the limits of reason and logic. Altogether, Surrealism’s constitutive ideas and sets of practices – reason by analogy, free logic of association, collisions of opposites, encounters with others and otherness, access to the unconscious – are productive or emblematic of what Breton terms a “disinterested play of thought”, a creative process of intellection, free of social constraint, that is the spirit and the dream of revolution.

In the context of the Surrealists’ fascination with otherness in the everyday encounter and its appearance in an unlimited variety of poetry and other art forms (there is no single surrealist aesthetic or medium), and in conversation with the corresponding argument that odd or counterintuitive juxtapositions and unlikely arrangements of disparate elements ignite entirely new and subversive thought, we will read and discuss a selection of modern and contemporary American poetry/poetry of the Americas that foregrounds such encounters and juxtapositions (aesthetic, formal, social, temporal) as the moment when the material world, newly imbued with mystery, is imagined otherwise. And yet, as this is a course in poetry, our primary focus throughout the semester will be on the details and particulars of the primary works themselves: language, form, aesthetic, texture, innovation, and – never least, always necessarily first – pleasure.

Readings include but may not be limited to poetry (and sometimes visual art) by John Ashbery, Frank O’Hara, Bernadette Mayer, Alice Notley, Eileen Myles, Aimé Césaire, Claudia Rankine, and Charles Bernstein; supplemental essays, criticism, and historical or theoretical works/excerpts by André Breton, Paul Éluard, Tristan Tzara, Sigmund Freud, Antonio Gramsci, Charles Bernstein, and Maggie Nelson.

Requirements: occasional brief, informal writings; one midterm essay (5-7 pages); term paper proposal and annotated bibliography; term paper of 15-20 pages.

**ENGLISH 75853 HARLEM RENAISSANCE**

**Professor Nims, Thursdays 7:30-9:20 p.m.**

**Class Number 6177**

In 2009 Junot Diaz won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, challenging many traditional and often stereotypical "norms" of Dominican culture and society. One major premise of the novel is the notion of fuku (a curse) and zafa (a cure). In the recent renewal of black social movements, like Black Lives Matter, to combat deadly oppression seemingly based on race, there is no better place to look for zafa than to the Harlem Renaissance. The Harlem Renaissance is one of the landmarks of African American literary, artistic and intellectual history. It marked the emergence of a distinctive current of modern black expression in arts and literature, involving a remarkable gathering of black writers who sought to give expression to the African American experience in all its beauty and complexity. The graduate seminar will focus on texts by W.E.B. Du Bois, Claude McKay, Countee Cullen, Langston Hughes, Jean Toomer, and Zora Neale Hurston. We will also examine the influence of the Harlem Renaissance in the evolution of African American literature, as well as its impact on other movements in the black world, notably the Negritude movement associated with the French-speaking African and Caribbean writers.

**ENGLISH 75956 LITERARY TRADITIONS**

**Professor O’Neil, Wednesdays 7:30-9:20 p.m.**

**Class Number 5104**

In this class, we will explore fiction's relationship with power, and its role in investigating, challenging, and dismantling the structures of social inequality. Together, we will be looking at the works of Ralph Ellison, Toni Morrison, Leo Tolstoy, Marguerite Duras, Toni Cade Bambara, and Jean Toomer; examining how identity and social power is constructed in their works. Open only to MFA students.

**ENGLISH 76649 RACE & MODERNITY**

**Professor Chon-Smith, Tuesdays, 7:30-9:20 p.m.**

**Class Number 24540**

This course is an advance study of key texts in the investigation of race and modernity. We will underscore the historical contexts from which “modernities” have been constructed—the Enlightenment, nationalism, liberal democracy, industrialization, colonialism, imperialism, global diasporas, and modern warfare etc.—and the theoretical conversations that have commented on their development and significance. The aim of the course is to illuminate the relationship between the economic, political, cultural, private, and public spheres of modern life from an interdisciplinary framework. Some themes we will investigate include settlement histories of the ethnic communities, legal discourses of immigration, post-civil rights class cleavages, multiracial hierarchy, multiculturalism, neocolonialism, and imperialism. Thus, our inquiry will take into consideration a range of conversations taking place in and outside the academy, including feminist, queer, critical race, Marxist, postcolonial, American, and cultural studies.

**ENGL 77157 19TH CENTURY AFRICAN AMERICAN NARRATIVES**

**Professor Neary, Mondays 7:30-9:20 p.m.**

**Class Number 5913**

CUNY and Slavery

*Make them the property of the people — open the doors to all — let the children of the rich and the poor take their seats together and know of no distinction save that of industry, good conduct and intellect.*

~Townsend Harris, president of New York’s Board of Education, in a letter published in *The Morning Courier* and *New York Enquirer* on March 15, 1847.

*I wanted to engage the past, knowing that its perils and dangers still threatened and that even now lives hung in the balance. Slavery had established a measure of man and a ranking of life and worth that has yet to be undone. If slavery persists as an issue in the political life of black America, it is not because of an antiquarian obsession with bygone days or the burden of a too-long memory, but because black lives are still imperiled and devalued by a racial calculus and a political arithmetic that were entrenched centuries ago. This is the afterlife of slavery—skewed life chances, limited access to health and education, premature death, incarceration, and impoverishment.*

~Saidiya Hartman, *Lose Your Mother*, 2007

In 2003, Brown University President Ruth Simmons convened a faculty and student committee to produce “a better understanding of the complicated and controversial questions surrounding the issue of reparations for slavery.” In her charge letter to the committee, Simmons positions Brown as both a site of historical and critical inquiry and itself a subject of history, contending that, “Brown’s history makes this an issue about which we have a special obligation and a special opportunity to provide thoughtful inquiry.” The report of that committee, published in 2006 as *Slavery and Justice*, became a model for institutional and scholarly reckoning with racial slavery and its afterlives, with faculty, students, and librarians at a number of universities taking up similar projects at their institutions. These undertakings, happening largely as individual classes, have enriched our historical archive and understanding of the connections between higher education and the ongoing workings of racial capitalism. The first institutions to follow Brown’s lead were elite, private Northeastern universities (Harvard, Columbia). Although some public research universities in the South have since followed suit, a significant study of the relationship of slavery and a public education system founded on the principles of democratic egalitarianism has not been done. This course undertakes that project.

Collecting texts across a wide variety of genres—history, literature, visual art, administrative report, journalism—this course establishes a framework for investigating the historical, structural, economic, relationships between CUNY, slavery, and abolition. Working in the space between the two epigraphs above—the declaration of educational access and parity called for by Townsend Harris (founder of The Free Academy, the progenitor of CUNY), and the definition of the “afterlife of slavery” advanced by literary theorist Saidiya Hartman—we will study the institutional, epistemological, and pedagogical forms that condition race relations at CUNY, attending, in particular, to how value is assigned and how knowledge is organized. In addition to collectively establishing the epistemological framework for this project, students will individually pursue independent research to both fill out the historical archive, calculate the impact of these legacies, and consider how to redress inequities within the system. Discussions will be organized around the way the texts under consideration shed light on the long trajectory of racial justice work in the US as it relates to higher education, from the antebellum period through Black Lives Matter movement today. We will take up the questions that have been important flashpoints along the way, such as the politics of monuments and memorialization, disciplinary divisions, and the role of student protests in determining curriculum and scholarship. Requirements include lively participation in class discussion, BlackBoard posts, close engagement with primary and secondary texts, a creative project reflecting on the monumental landscape of NYC, and a final research paper and presentation. The course will conclude with a public forum in which students from this course and from the MIT and Slavery course—happening simultaneously—will convene to share their research at a colloquium hosted by Cooper Union. At the colloquium, students will have the opportunity to place institutional relationships to slavery and abolition in comparative context, addressing, among other things, differences in public vs. private education; the role academic specialization (engineering, art, or liberal arts); and various social and institutional relationships to class and wealth production. Course materials will include the original Brown University *Slavery and Justice Report*; selections from Leslie Harris’s *Slavery and the University* and Craig Wilder’s *Ebony and Ivy*; popular, activist, and scholarly histories of CUNY; visual art by Lubaina Himid, Titus Kaphar, Bethany Collins, Kerry James Marshall and Fred Wilson; in conversation with Christina Sharpe, Saidiya Hartman, Toni Morrison, Joy James, and Lindon Barrett. The course will proceed in 6 units: Institutional Reckoning with Slavery, CUNY/Hunter History, Epistemology and the Archive, Pedagogy and Value, Monumental Landscapes, and Framing: Appropriating Institutional Forms for Antiracism.

**ENGLISH 788 READING (ARTS & SCIENCES)**

Hours to be arranged

A course of readings designed according to the student's interests and needs. Written permission by a full-time faculty member of the English department.

Sect 01, Class Number 3671

Sect 02, Class Number 5385

Sect 03, Class Number 3672

Sect 04, Class Number 4447

Sect 05, Class Number 5386

Sect 06, Class Number 6102

Sect 07, Class Number 6116

**ENGLISH 789 MASTER’S THESIS**

Department permission required before registering.

Directed research on M.A. thesis. Required of all candidates for the Master's Degree in Literature.

Sect 01, Class Number 3673

Sect 02, Class Number 3674

Sect 03, Class Number 3675

Sect 04, Class Number 3676

Sect 05, Class Number 3677

Sect 06, Class Number 4433

Sect 07, Class Number 6121

Sect 08, Class Number 6122

**MFA COURSES**

Please note: only matriculated MFA students may register for MFA classes.

**ENGL 79002 FICTION WORKSHOP**

Tuesdays 5:30-7:20 p.m.

Class number 20817

**ENGL 79102 POETRY WORKSHOP**

Professor Masini, Thursdays 5:30-7:20 p.m.

Class number 20818

**ENGL 79202 CRAFT SEMINAR IN FICTION**

Mondays 5:30-7:20 p.m.

Class number 20819

**ENGL 79402 CRAFT SEMINAR IN POETRY**

Professor Barnett, Tuesdays 5:30-7:20 p.m.

Class number 20820

**ENGL 79502 Creative Nonfiction Writing**

Mondays 5:30-7:20 p.m.

Class number 20821

**ENGL 79602 Craft Seminar Creative Non-Fiction**

Thursdays 5:30-7:20 p.m.

Class number 20822

**ENGL 79702 POETRY THESIS TWO**

Professor Sleigh, Mondays 5:30-7:20 p.m.

Class number 5362

**ENGL 799 MFA THESIS**

Hours to be arranged

Sect 01, class number 5382

Sect 02, class number 5383

Sect 03, class number 5384

Sect 04, class number 3678

Sect 05, class number 3679

Sect 06, class number 3680

Sect 07, class number 3681