

ALBION COLLEGE

English Department
Spring 2012
Course Offerings



ENGL 205 (1 Unit) INTRODUCTORY CREATIVE WRITING

HELENA MESA (M W 11:45 AM-1:35 PM) (T R 10:30 AM-12:20 PM)

Prerequisite: English 101. An introduction to the basics of writing poetry and fiction, approaching both genres from a writer's perspective. Because learning to write involves an understanding of how stories and poems are put together, a major portion of this course is centered on the examination and discussion of contemporary texts. You will be asked to write your own poems and stories, to comment on your peers' work, and to read extensively and carefully, looking for ways in which a particular work can inspire and inform your own composition. **This course counts for the Artistic Creation and Analysis Mode.**



ENGL 248 (1 Unit) CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

JESS ROBERTS (T W R F 10:30-11:20 AM)

For many of us who find ourselves in higher education, both as professors and as students, books played a central role in the life of our minds from a very young age. Books developed our imaginations, shaped our sensibilities, and offered us worlds to witness and explore; in short, they made us readers. This class takes the rich and dynamic genre of children's literature as its object of study. Reading picture books and chapter books from the nineteenth as well as twentieth centuries, we will bring the skills of literary analysis to bear on these texts in order to understand better the particular power of this literature. Texts will include Bill Watterson's *Calvin and Hobbes*, J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*, L.M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables*, A. A. Milne's *House at Pooh Corner*, Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are*, Philip Pullman's *The Golden Compass*, Neil Gaiman's *The Wolves in the Walls*, and Brian Selznick's new novel *Wonderstruck*, among others. There will be a service component to this class.



ENGL 253 (1 Unit) BRITISH LITERATURE 900-1660

AMITY READING (M W F 2:15-3:20 PM)

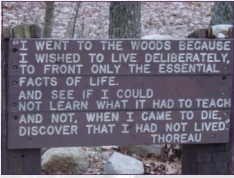
This course presents a survey of representative works of Medieval and Renaissance English literature, from *Beowulf* to *Paradise Lost*. Authors will include Chaucer, Marie de France, Shakespeare, Sidney, Donne, Wroth, Philips, and Milton. Because we will be considering canonical texts within their historical and cultural milieu, the class will be a combination of lecture and text-based discussion. Requirements include quizzes, exams, responses, and essays. **This course counts for the Textual Analysis Mode requirement.**



ENGL 256 (1 Unit) BRITISH LITERATURE 1900-present

MARY COLLAR (M W 11:45 AM-1:35 PM)

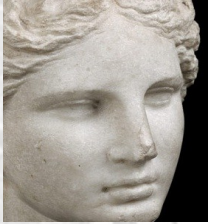
This survey is framed by two wonderful novels: E. M. Forster's *Howards End* and Zadie Smith's *On Beauty*, a contemporary revisioning of the Forster text. Between these bookends, we will pull from the shelves many other provocative pieces, including texts by the most influential writers of High Modernism (for examples, James Joyce and Virginia Woolf), poetry and fiction about the Great War produced within the shadow of that war and from the distance of more than eighty years, socially engaged texts of the period between WWI and WWII, award-winning dramas, and texts from the post-colonial re-examination of the meaning of "English" literature. **English 256 meets a survey requirement for both the major and the minor and satisfies the Textual Analysis Mode.**



ENGL 257 (1 Unit)
AMERICAN LITERATURE 1600-1860

JUDY LOCKYER (M W 9:15-11:05 AM)

A survey of American literature from the colonial era through the Civil War, English 257 is constructed to give students a solid understanding of the colonists' experience as well as of Native Americans and slaves. We will read captivity narratives, diaries, poetry, Harriet Jacobs' slave narrative, foundational documents such as *The Declaration of Independence*, the weirdly compelling novel *Wieland*, essays by Douglass, Thoreau, Emerson, stories by Hawthorne, Poe, Melville. These texts open the past and provide solid context for understanding our present. **This course counts for the Textual Analysis Mode requirement.**



ENGL 261 (1 Unit)
GREEK & ROMAN LITERATURE

IAN MACINNES (M W F 3:30-4:35 PM)

A survey of classical writers in translation, including Homer, the tragic dramatists, Virgil and others. Discussion topics include the cultural contexts of ancient literature (Greek religion, the Athenian polis, Roman imperialism, etc.) and the role of "the classics" in constructions of a western European "tradition." **This course counts for the Textual Analysis Mode requirement.**



ENGL 285 (1 Unit)
GAY AND LESBIAN LITERATURE

SALLY JORDAN (T R 10:30 AM-12:20 PM)

We will begin this class by reading selected classical texts written by Plato and Sappho, to provide important contexts for later works. Then we will move to reading gay and lesbian literature written in Great Britain and America from the Renaissance through the twentieth century, including works by Shakespeare, Byron, Whitman, Dickinson, Wilde, Cather, Baldwin, Lorde, and Winterson.

In this class, we will wrestle with some thorny questions: chief among them is, what does it mean to call a piece of literature "gay"? We will also think about whether these works form any sort of literary tradition and, if so, how they build on and influence each other. The class will consider social and historical issues, such as the cultural construction of gender; since one of the reasons homosexuality causes so much cultural anxiety is that it transgresses notions of what men and women are and how they should behave, we need to investigate the systems that construct and police gender roles. We will examine how the cultural oppression of people who express same-sex desire shapes the literary texts they produce, especially that many of them have to be coded in some way. This oppression also, we often find, has shaped the way these texts have traditionally been taught and read.

This class is discussion-based, and requirements include some brief literary analyses, a research project, and a reading journal. **This course counts for the Gender Category requirement.**



ENGL 289 (1 Unit)
SELECTED TOPICS. ARTHURIAN ROMANCE

AMITY READING (M W 9:15-11:05 AM)

Knights in shining armor, damsels in distress, fire-breathing dragons... and wise-cracking peasants? The legends of Arthur and his illustrious Knights of the Round Table have been popular for centuries, capturing the hearts of medieval and modern audiences alike. But Arthur's origins are much darker and more complex than our present day image of him suggests. This class will explore the genre of Arthurian Romance from two points of view. First, we will trace the historical development of Arthur's legend, examining sample Arthurian texts beginning in sixth century Wales and ending in twenty-first century America. Second, we will probe the allure of medieval "fantasy" in present day society. Using some basic literary theory, we will ask ourselves, *what is the difference between "the medieval" and "medievalism"?* Why does Camelot continue to be an intriguing fantasy space for the modern imagination? What is an "Arthurian Romance" anyway?

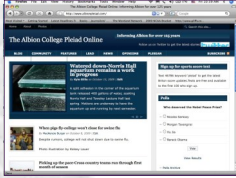
Texts will be read in translation, and will include historical writings by Gildas (ca. 500 A.D.) and Geoffrey of Monmouth (ca. 1100 A.D.); selections from the Welsh romances recorded in the *Mabinogion* (ca. 1100 A.D.); some of the Anglo-Norman *lais* of Marie de France (ca. 1150-1200 A.D.); selections from Middle English, German, and French romances (ca. 1200-1400); excerpts from Sir Thomas Malory's famous prose *Le Morte d'Arthur* (1485 A.D.); and some modern film adaptations, including *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1974) and *King Arthur* (2004). Course requirements include participation in class discussions, quizzes, responses, and longer formal essays.



**ENGL 308 (1 Unit)
ADVANCED MULTIMEDIA JOURNALISM**

LAURA WILLIAMS (T R 8:00-9:50 PM)

Prerequisite: English 207 or permission of instructor. An advanced media workshop with assignments including investigative reporting, specialized coverage, long-form articles, multimedia packages, and short video documentaries.



**ENGL 311 (1/2 Unit) ENGL 312 (1 Unit)
MULTIMEDIA EDITING II**

LAURA WILLIAMS (T R 8:00-9:50 PM)

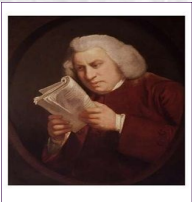
Prerequisite: English 309 or 310. An even more advanced workshop for student journalists. Includes reporting, writing, and shooting for the Albion College *Pleiad*, the award-winning, student-run campus news source.



**ENGL 321 (1 Unit)
ADVANCED CREATIVE WRITING—POETRY**

HELENA MESA (T R 2:15-4:05 PM)

Prerequisite: English 205 or permission of instructor. In this workshop, students will continue the study and practice of writing poetry, with special emphasis on both traditional and nontraditional form. Students will learn various poetic devices and acquire a poetic language with which to discuss and critique poetry. The course requires weekly submissions of poems (some based on assignments), weekly critiques of fellow poets' work, extensive reading in and about contemporary poetry, and a final portfolio of significantly revised work. **This course counts for the Artistic Creation and Analysis Mode.**



**ENGL 330 (1 Unit)
THE NOVEL and THE NEW: BRITISH FICTION, BEHN TO BRONTE**

SALLY JORDAN (M W 2:15-4:05 PM)

In the late seventeenth century in England, a new literary form was born, one that would come to dominate the literary marketplace: the novel. This course traces the development of the English novel from its beginning up through the Romantic period. We will consider the novel's origins in genres like travel narratives, spiritual autobiographies, romance tales, criminal biographies, and personal letters. We also will examine the effect on the novel of historical and cultural factors such as criminal law, the slave trade, gender roles, the emergence of companionate marriage, the rise of capitalism, and competition between writers. The authors whose novels we'll be reading include Aphra Behn, Daniel Defoe, Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding, Jane Austen, and Charlotte Bronte. Class will be discussion-based and will emphasize both close textual analysis and larger considerations of form and historical context. **This course counts for the Historical and Cultural Analysis mode.**



**ENGL 344 (1 Unit)
THE AGE OF ELIZABETH**

IAN MACINNES (M W R 1:00-2:05 PM)

This course will explore Elizabethan literature in its literary and cultural context. We will examine the ways in which writers deployed poetry, prose, and drama in the service of political ambition, literary aspiration, and religious sentiment, as well as erotic desire. Our broad goal is to use these literary expressions to discuss the ways that subjectivity in the Renaissance rested uneasily on distinctions between self-assertion and narcissism, soul and body, health and disease. We will also be paying particular attention to ways in which poetic expression contributes to the gendering of subjectivity. **This course counts for the Gender Category requirement.**



ENGL 354 (1 Unit)
THE IDEA OF NATURE, THE NATURE OF IDEAS

NELS CHRISTENSEN (T R 8:00-9:50 AM)

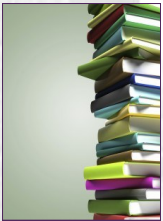
This course sets out to explore the relationship between the imagination and the natural world in the works of six American writers. Drawing on the creative and critical tools of multiple disciplines—including literary studies, creative writing, and natural history—our primary goal will be to investigate how ecology provides a model for thinking and writing about the imaginative and creative capacities of the human mind and spirit. **This course counts for the Environmental Studies Category requirement.**



ENGL 360 (1 Unit)
THE PROBLEM OF RACE IN AMERICAN LITERATURE

JUDY LOCKYER (T R 2:15-4:05 PM)

Prerequisite: Sophomore standing or higher or permission of instructor. In 1903 W.E.B. DuBois claimed that “the problem of the 20th-century is the problem of the color-line,” ([The Souls of Black Folk](#)) and thus accurately predicted and underscored a set of problems that continue to plague American life into the 21st-century. This course examines issues of skin color as “racial conflict” in the literature of white, black, brown writers beginning in the late 19th-century, a time described as the nadir of race relations in this country. The texts reveal the difficulties of negotiating the color line, especially those situated in historical moments that have defined surges in writing about race: lynching and the Jim Crow era, the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 60s, the Black Power and Black Arts Movements, the racial tensions that exploded in the Rodney King beating and the continuing injustices following 9/11. Among the works we will read are [The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man](#) (James Weldon Johnson), [The Heart is a Lonely Hunter](#) (Carson McCullers), [Meridian](#) (Alice Walker), and poetry by Ahga Shahid Ali, and Yusef Komunyakaa. **This course counts for the Ethnicity Category requirement and counts for the Ethnic Studies major.**



ENGL 378 (1 Unit)
CREATIVE WRITING: FICTION WORKSHOP

DANIT BROWN (M W 11:45 AM-1:35 PM)

Prerequisite: English 322 or permission of instructor. A workshop for advanced fiction writers. Student writers will design their own writing projects in consultation with the professor (generally several short stories or one novella totaling 80-100 pages), and they will extensively revise their work. In addition, students will be asked to read several short-story collections and/or novels and, if time permits, to familiarize themselves with literary journals. This course also requires written critiques of fellow writers’ work and responses to published stories.

English Department Faculty

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Nels Christensen Vulgamore 411 Ext. 0349
Mary Collar Vulgamore 414 Ext. 0334
Scott Hendrix Writing Center Ext. 0828
Sally Jordan Vulgamore 404 Ext. 0549
Judy Lockyer Vulgamore 412 Ext. 0339
Helena Mesa Vulgamore 402 Ext. 0340
Amity Reading Vulgamore 403 Ext. 0367
Jessica Roberts Vulgamore 405 Ext. 0463

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