

Graduate Course Descriptions *Fall 2014*

Engl 505:01 **Old English II (pre-1800)**
M. Hayes **T TH 6:00-7:15**
Ext. 7456 **hayes@olemiss.edu**

ENGLISH 505 This course will offer students a survey of the English language's outer history (i.e. cultural and social changes) and inner history (phonology, graphics, morphology, vocabulary, and syntax) from its origins through its "standardization" during the Early Modern period. It will include four units: Introduction, Old English, Middle English, and Early Modern English.

In the first unit, students will learn the basic skills used for studying language. In the last three units, students will acquire a basic grasp of Old, Middle, and Early Modern English through language drills and brief translation exercises. We will read medieval and Early Modern texts (with the aid of dictionaries and glosses) to understand their linguistic and cultural importance to the history of the English language.

We will not be studying Present Day English (PDE). Our study of pre-modern language and literature, however, will give us some background on "modern day" issues such as language-based imperialism, the English language and national identity, initiatives to standardize a "proper" English language, and the relationship between the English language and social constructions of race, class, gender, and religious orthodoxy.

This course presumes no prior study of linguistics, Old English, or Middle English. For graduate students, it satisfies the "pre-1800" requirement.

600:01 **Introduction to Graduate Study**
P. Reed **W 6:00-8:30**
Ext: 7685 **preed@olemiss.edu**

English 600 is required of all graduate students in English. This course introduces theoretical frameworks for writing and teaching in English as a discipline while also engaging practical challenges graduate students will encounter in their intellectual and professional development. Readings will address the history of the profession, its theoretical and institutional contours, and the various past and present methodologies and critical approaches to literary studies. We will also concern ourselves with the pragmatic matters of course selection, research techniques, conferencegoing, publication, grant- and fellowship-winning, professional service and eventual employment. Independent research and writing will aim (first) to foster a broader sense of "English" as a professional field and a discipline, and (second) to encourage students to articulate a sense of their own evolving relationship to these ideas.

607:01 **Old Norse Sagas in Translation (pre-1800)**
L. Brady **T 6:00-8:30**
Ext: 7668 **lbrady@olemiss.edu**

In a 1966 interview in *The Paris Review*, Jorge Luis Borges eloquently characterized the singularity of the Old Norse sagas that had so inspired his own work as narratives in which "the reader is, I suppose, made to feel that the story goes deeper than the story itself." Long admired for their stark realism, spare yet powerful prose, intergenerational cycles of feuding and vengeance, and emergence from the exceptionally literate medieval society of early Iceland, the sagas are a bleak yet arresting blend of history and legend, encapsulated in a singular narrative form. Old Norse sagas stand apart as the only native medieval European literary tradition written in vernacular prose: they are either Europe's only prose epics, or the first European novels. This course provides an introductory window into this vivid and powerful literary tradition.

We will read, in modern English translation, some of the best representative examples of Old Norse saga tradition. Our class will focus largely on the *Íslendingasögur* (known as the Sagas of Icelanders or Icelandic family sagas), a group of realistic, dramatic, and tragic narratives set roughly during the time of Iceland's first few generations of settlers in the tenth century, prior to the introduction of Christianity at the turn of the millennium. We will consider these texts alongside historical trends in saga scholarship (paying particular attention to the heightened roles of structuralism and formalism in shaping saga studies), while we tackle

questions of realism and fictionality; history and legend; literacy and orality; fate and free will; feuding, vengeance, and violence; and outlawry and periphery.

608:01 **Bibliographical Tools and Methods**
G. Heyworth **TH 3:00-5:30**
Ext: N/A **heyworth@olemiss.edu**

Image, Text and Technology (ENG 608) is an interdisciplinary course in the history of textual and visual media as an artistic subject and a technology of communication. Beginning with the origins of writing on papyrus and parchment, we will consider the earliest technologies of dissemination, the printing press and first newspaper, and end by thinking about television, photography, and the internet. With theoretical readings in Plato, Aristotle, Lessing, Benjamin, McLuhan, and Derrida the course will explore the poetic, communicative, and technological limits and conjunctions of visual and verbal media. Students will have the option to work on an archival or digital humanities project for their seminar paper.

641:01 **18th Century Studies: Environmental Criticism and**
Eighteenth-Century Literature (pre-1800)
E. Drew **T 3:00-5:30**
Ext: 6548 **eedrew@olemiss.edu**

The eighteenth century witnessed an astonishing transformation in the natural world and the way English culture related to it. From the spread of colonial ties to the Caribbean and Asia to the rise of modern science to the early stirrings of animal rights, English culture experienced an influx of new materials, ideas, and ideologies that challenged and transformed older views of the relationship between humans and nature--and paved the way for environmental challenges we still face today. Yet in spite of this, serious environmental criticism (ecocriticism) has only recently begun to emerge on the literature of this period. In this course we will study the depiction of nature in eighteenth-century literature in order to understand better the connections between the eighteenth-century ideas of "nature" and twenty-first century environmental challenges. In addition, we will read important works of ecocriticism (eighteenth-century and otherwise) to learn how the field has developed, what its current concerns are, what factors have led to the eighteenth-century's marginalization, and what ecocriticism and eighteenth-century literature may have to contribute to one another in the future. Texts may include Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, and poetry by Alexander Pope, William Cowper, Anna Barbauld and others.

645:01 **Studies in the English Novel**
D. Stout **TH 6:00-8:30**
Ext: 7106 **dstout@olemiss.edu**

The "English Novel" that the title of this course mentions sounds a little narrow, but Idea One of this class is that the history of the novel (in general, which is to say as *a genre*) and the history of the English novel (as a species, I guess) go together in an important, non-negligible way: from the murky origins of the term "novel" itself, through modernism, and on to the whatever strange mix is happening in the neorealist postmodernism (if that's not a contradiction (it isn't)) of the 21st century.

So despite the nationalism implied by the title, the aim of this class is really to offer a kind of a synoptic view of the formal history of the novel. We will do this by looking at a series of texts that, in ways more or less overt and more or less aggressive, reconfigured, or at least reconsidered, what it means for a work of fiction to count as a novel. Thus, unlike our most common histories of the novel—in which everyone is happily writing realist fictions until, like, WWI, when everyone gets suddenly suspicious of narrative convention—we will be tracing a much longer history of formal experimentalism in the English novel. From the 18th-century experiments in narrative perspective, to the 19th-century rise of new narrative sub-genres (e.g. the gothic, the historical, the detective), to the theoretically-enabled reconfigurations of modernism, and, eventually, to a kind of fiction that, in the hands of a Zadie Smith or an Ian McEwan, feels like a return to an earlier realism but probably isn't. The goal is not to produce (despite the from-to-to structure of that last sentence) a linear literary history, but to get a sense of some of the perennial formal questions that are, if anything is, built into the heart of the novel.

In addition to a significant number of literary-critical and theoretical accounts of the novel, primary texts will include: Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*; Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*; Hogg, *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*; Doyle, assorted stories; Stoker, *Dracula*; Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*; O'Brien, *At Swim-Two-Birds*; McCarthy, *Remainder*. Students planning on taking this class should also read *Pride and Prejudice* (or read it again) over the summer.

653:01 The Study of Film
D. Barker W 3:00-5:30
Ext. 7758 dbarker@olemiss.edu

We will examine a variety of theoretical and critical approaches and their applicability to film, literature, and media studies, with an emphasis on adaptation, affect, feminist, and psychoanalytic theories. Students will be responsible for viewing films, which will be on reserve in the library. Course requirements include a class presentation and final research paper.

663:01 Studies in Major American Writers: Eudora
Welty: Mississippi and Beyond
A. Trefzer T TH 4:30-7:00
Ext. 7675 atrefzer@olemiss.edu

Eudora Welty's famous essay "Place in Fiction" seemed to have confirmed her as a Southern writer who cares in the first place about her region. This entrenched understanding of Welty's regionalism and her place in literary histories of the U.S. South is gradually giving way to more comprehensive readings of her work within national and transnational frameworks of study. This course proposes to bring Welty's work into conversation with questions of national culture and politics and with new scholarship that might help us understand her fiction as part of global geographies and historical deep structures. Welty's body of work, from her earliest short stories to her 1984 memoir *One Writer's Beginnings*, will be brought into dialogue with recent scholarship on the South. The course is most suitable for graduate students seeking a degree in Education.

Required Texts:

Eudora Welty. *Stories, Essays, Memoir*. New York: Library of America, 1998.
Eudora Welty. *The Complete Novels: The Robber Bridegroom, Delta Wedding, The Ponder Heart, Losing Battles, The Optimists Daughter*. New York: Library of America, 1998.

669:01 Whitman and Dickinson: From Manuscript to Digital Media
C. Ellis M 6:00-8:30
Ext: 7183 ccellis2@olemiss.edu

This course offers students an intensive introduction to the radically innovative verse of Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson, the two nineteenth-century poets most commonly hailed as forebears of American poetic modernism. We will study their work in historical context (situating their poetry in relation to the poetry and culture of their time) as well as along a transhistorical axis (examining how subsequent poets and artists in other media have taken up their legacies). We will also consider the formal

challenges their unconventional textual practices—Whitman's continuous self-revision, Dickinson's variants, fascicles, and enclosures—pose to readers and editors, and explore how digital archives for these poets propose to open new inroads to their work. Students will be asked to write a series of short papers during the semester, propose (but not engineer) a new digital archival tool for studying one of these two corpuses, and complete a final seminar paper on either Whitman or Dickinson that engages and reflects on one of the three methodological approaches (historicist, formalist, archival) we have studied.

679:01 Form, Craft, Influence for Poets
D. Smith M 3:00-5:30
Ext: 6949 djsmith@olemiss.edu

All poems tell stories in different ways, with different results, some better than others. Choices and strategies are form decisions which lead to categorization by "genres." Because poems struggle to go beyond genre and form limitations, we will study how narrative strategies in a selection of poets address that struggle. While this course is not a history of narrative poems nor of narratology, we study narrative choices these poets made and what they might tell us about choices for future poets who must consider, write, and organize story from line to book structure. The poets we might read, given availability of collections, are Robert Penn Warren, Elizabeth Bishop, James Dickey, Ted Hughes, Philip Larkin, Seamus Heaney, Eleanor Ross Taylor, Stephen Dunn, Ellen Bryant Voigt, Larry Levis, and Yusef Komunyakaa. Last, certain critical perspectives will be incorporated in our study.

680:01 Graduate Fiction Seminar 1
M. Miller T 3:00-5:30
Ext: 6510 maryumiller@gmail.com

The primary purpose of this seminar is to workshop student manuscripts and to provide encouragement for fiction projects. Students will learn to critically read their own work by offering thoughtful and generous critiques of the work of their peers. Over the course of the semester, students will be asked to generate three new stories. There will also be assigned readings based on risk-taking in both story and prose. We will read fiction by Susan Steinberg, Gary Lutz, Christine Schutt, Diane Williams, and Frederick Barthelme, among others. Students may also be asked to complete various in class exercises and reflections.

682:01

A. Fisher-Wirth

Ext: 5929

Graduate Poetry Seminar

W 3:00-5:30

afwirth@olemiss.edu

The focus of this workshop will be on documentary poetry and poetics--works that incorporate documents of various kinds, including advertising, legal records, public testimonies, newspapers, and photographic archives, to create innovative forms of reportage. Students are free to develop their own poetic projects over the course of the semester--and are free to diverge from this focus if necessary. Reading for the course will probably include some or all of the following:

Brenda Hillman, *Cascadia* or *Practical Water*

M. NourbeSe Philip, *Zong!*

Craig Santos Perez, *from unincorporated territory [saina]*

Muriel Rukeyser, *The Book of the Dead*

Juliana Spahr, *Well Then There Now*

William Carlos Williams, *Paterson*

692:01 Cultural Studies: Louisiana through the Lens

L.A. Duck

M3:00-5:30

Ext: N/A

laduck@olemiss.edu

This course asks not only how films have represented Louisiana—creating a trove of images, styles and genres through which to imagine that state—but also how changes in the film industry affect the conceptions of social, economic, and political life that appear onscreen. Examining Louisiana’s cinematic history, we will pay particular attention to how the state has been positioned in relation to the nation and other areas of the globe. In the second half of the semester, we will consider how—and to what extent—these spatial imaginaries shift following the state law establishing tax incentives for filming (2002), leading to the development of “Hollywood South.” Throughout, we will situate films in relation to broader dynamics in Louisiana and beyond, including changing race relations, economic globalization, environmental degradation, and Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath. Ranging across documentary and fiction film by independent, international and Hollywood producers, we will discuss works including *Jezebel* (dir. William Wyler, 1938), *Louisiana Story* (dir. Robert Flaherty, 1948), *Panic in the Streets* (dir. Elia Kazan, 1950), *A Streetcar Named Desire* (dir. Elia Kazan, 1951), *Easy Rider* (dir. Dennis Hopper, 1969), *Eve’s Bayou* (dir. Kasi Lemmons, 1997), *When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts* (dir. Spike Lee, 2006), *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* (dir. David Fincher, 2008), *Bad Lieutenant: Port of Call New Orleans* (dir. Werner Herzog, 2009), *Veins in the Gulf* (dir. Elizabeth Coffman and Ted Hardin, 2011), *My Louisiana Love* (dir. Sharon Linezo

Hong, 2012), *Beasts of the Southern Wild* (dir. Benh Zeitlin, 2012), and *12 Years a Slave* (dir. Steve McQueen, 2013). (Weekly viewings will be paired with additional recommended films.) Readings will consider film genres and industries, Louisiana’s cultural history, and cinematic representations of race, history, landscapes, and cities. Course requirements include active participation in discussion, weekly written responses to the reading, and a 15-25 page seminar paper; this research paper will be preceded by a prospectus and annotated bibliography as well as a class symposium in which students present their research.



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