

# Graduate Course Descriptions *Spring 2013*

**603:01 The Literature of Medieval Popular Piety: Texts and Contexts**  
**M. Hayes** M 6:30-9:00  
Ext. 7456 [hayes@olemiss.edu](mailto:hayes@olemiss.edu)

This course will attend to the history of medieval popular piety as told through written texts. When reading these medieval texts, we will consider their possible use in a “live” devotional setting, how well they reinforce orthodox beliefs, and whether their doctrinal errors result from ignorance or heretical intent. In addition to recognizing their religious import, we will also evaluate these texts as written artifacts. Given that the lay people were largely illiterate during the Middle Ages, how well could these (or any) written texts capture experiences and mindsets that were largely unrecorded? In turn, since books were scarce, why did these particular texts come to be written down? Part of our project in studying the literature of medieval popular piety will be to account for how these texts cooperated in a larger network of verbal, visual, tangible, and social signs that medieval worshippers (whether literate) decoded.

The course will be organized around cultural moments, trends, and phenomena significant to popular piety: pastoral care initiatives, devotional forms by and for women, worship of the Eucharist during and outside of Mass, “the sin industry,” rituals for the sick and dying, and heretical movements that levy institutional critiques. The polyvocality of these discourses will transpire in the sheer variety of genres that we will study, such as sermons, mystical writings, magical charms, biblical and morality plays, saints’ lives, and inquisitors’ manuals.

This course presumes no prior background in medieval religion and/or literature. We will read Old English, Anglo-Norman, and Latin texts in translation. The Middle English texts will be read in the original language (with glosses and dictionaries, if necessary). Students will attend and

participate in all class meetings, complete a series of short papers (ca. 2 pages), lead class discussion, and write a critically-attuned final essay (ca. 12-15 pages). This course satisfies the “pre-1800” requirement for graduate students in the English department.

**617:01 Teaching College English**  
**B. Cummings** TH 6:00-8:30  
Ext. 2121 [cummings@olemiss.edu](mailto:cummings@olemiss.edu)

The purpose of this course is to give an introduction to the teaching of composition at the University of Mississippi. The course is not an introduction to the history or theory of composition and rhetoric, nor is it a course in the principles of education theory. Instead, the course is structured to allow you to make decisions on balancing your focus between theory and practice as you learn how to design, teach, and conduct assessment within a first-year writing course. We will give particular emphasis to the “assign-respond-evaluate” cycle for student writing. We will spend most of our time working in teams to design a Writing 101 course, from the syllabus down to lesson planning for each day, with the goal of allowing you to “leave the course with a course.” We will also write case studies to anticipate and respond to teaching challenges. Based upon your rationale for enrolling in the course, you will develop a learning plan by choosing from a range of projects, including: a statement of teaching philosophy, a Writing 101 syllabus, a Writing 101 writing assignment, a review of a composition article for a course annotated bibliography, a review of a scholarly book for the course annotated bibliography, and one or more observations of writing classrooms. These artifacts will be collected in a showcase teaching portfolio.

**655:01 Studies in the Romantic Period: The Romantic Lyric Poem**  
**D. Stout** W 6:30-9:00  
Ext. 7106 [dstout@olemiss.edu](mailto:dstout@olemiss.edu)

In recent years, the lyric poem—as a form (if it really is one) and as an idea (which it definitely is)—has come in for a good deal of criticism and reconsideration. To some critics, the concentrated ego of the lyric speaker and the well-wrought spaces of lyric form seemed particularly artificial: denials of the complexity and instability of the real world and real language. A similar debate was staged within poetic practice itself, as poets who operated in recognizably lyric ways (Hass, Glück, Pinsky, etc.) worked alongside poets who more or less set themselves to resisting certain lyric expectations (Ashbery, Olson, Language poetry, etc.). The basic suggestion

of all this activity was that one needed to think beyond (or at least come more thoughtfully back to) something that went under the catch-all of “the Romantic lyric.”

But what was this Romantic lyric? To get at this question, we will begin with a survey of considerations of lyric form from the Romantic period until today. This survey of thought *about* the lyric will lay the groundwork for an intensive examination of a set of poems that must be (if any poems are) Romantic lyrics. Readings will include Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, Byron, as well as the work of possibly less familiar poets like Charlotte Smith and John Clare. The course will conclude with a consideration of the relation between Romanticism and contemporary lyric theory and practice. Graded assignments will include an in-class presentation and a longer final paper/project.

**657:01                    Studies in the Victorian Period**  
**N. Schroeder        TH 3:00-5:30**  
**Ext. 7668                [nschroed@olemiss.edu](mailto:nschroed@olemiss.edu)**

In an essay on *Great Expectations*, Jay Clayton points out that Dickens has become a “continuing presence in contemporary popular culture,” and that he “lives on at the end of the twentieth century.” This course will focus on the life and works of Dickens in relation to his afterlife in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. We will look at the texts in relation to their multiple film versions, adaptations in children’s books, adaptations in recent novels and consider how the contemporary adaptations interpret and reread the texts. #We will also pay special attention to Dickens’s development as a novelist from the beginning of his writing career to the end and to recurring themes and patterns in the fiction. Finally, we will consider Dickens’s work as a reflection of Victorian attitudes and concerns.

**659:01 Studies in Contemporary Literature: Black Voices from Prison**  
**P. Alexander        W 6:30-9:00**  
**Ext. 5602                [pealexan@olemiss.edu](mailto:pealexan@olemiss.edu)**

Responding to African American literary criticism’s recent engagements with contemporary imprisonment, this course examines the representation of prisons and the imprisoned in African American literature over the past five decades. We will be particularly attentive to how contemporary African American fiction and autobiographical works anticipate and

resituate recent prison studies scholarship on police intimidation, racial profiling, mass incarceration, indefinite solitary confinement, and racialized prisoner abuse. Moreover, we will explore literary criticism that considers how the African American literary text offers an illuminating lens through which the current epoch’s hyper-criminalization of Black men, hyper-punitive forms of confinement, and iconizing of imprisoned writers and imprisoned intellectuals might be understood—namely, the work of H. Bruce Franklin, Michael Hames-Garcia, Brian Conniff, Doran Larson, Auli Ek, Karla Holloway, and D. Quentin Miller.

In addition to excerpts from Etheridge Knight’s edited anthology *Black Voices from Prison*, our readings will likely include Martin Luther King, Jr.’s *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, the prison letters of Eldridge Cleaver and George Jackson, essays by death-row intellectual Mumia Abu-Jamal, novels by Donald Goines, James Baldwin, and Ernest Gaines, and autobiographical works by Angela Y. Davis, Assata Shakur, Nathan McCall, asha bandele, Robert Hillary King, and R. Dwayne Betts.

**661:01                    Faulkner**  
**J. Watson            W 3:00-5:30**  
**Ext. 7671                [jwatson@olemiss.edu](mailto:jwatson@olemiss.edu)**

A seminar intended primarily for graduate students in English and Southern Studies. The reading for the course will “cluster” primary works by Faulkner with readings in critical theory, cultural studies, and southern history, in order to approach Faulkner’s works as offering an imaginative chronicle of modernization in the U.S. South, including the impact of the modernizing process on land use, social and racial relations, culture, identity, and psyche. Course requirements will include weekly online reader-response journals, an in-class presentation, and a 15-25-page seminar paper. The reading list will include the following “clusters”: (1) Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*; Faulkner, *Flags in the Dust* (1927); (2) Marshall Berman, selections from *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity*; Pete Daniel, selections from *Breaking the Land: The Transformation of Cotton, Tobacco, and Rice Cultures Since 1880*; Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury* (1929); (3) Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*; Faulkner, *Sanctuary* (1931); (4) Enda Duffy, *The Speed Handbook: Velocity, Pleasure, Modernism*; Faulkner, *Pylon* (1935); (5) Paul Gilroy, selections from *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*; Joseph Roach, selections from *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance*; Faulkner, *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936); (6) Walter Benjamin, Theodor

Adorno, and Andreas Huysmans, essays on mass culture; Faulkner, *If I Forget Thee, Jerusalem* (1939); (7) Houston A. Baker, Jr., *Modernism and the Harlem Renaissance*; Baker, *Turning South Again: Re-Thinking Modernism, Re-Reading Booker T.*; Faulkner, *Go Down, Moses* (1942). We will also over the course of the semester read a generous selection of Faulkner's short stories.

**669:01**            **American Nature after Romanticism**  
**C. Ellis**            **M 3:00-5:30**  
**Ext. 7183**            [ceellis2@olemiss.edu](mailto:ceellis2@olemiss.edu)

The Romantic movement is remembered for putting the natural world at the center of literary attention. Now two centuries later, Romantic literature continues to be a crucial touchstone for environmental activists and ecocritical theorists. In this course we will draw upon a range of contemporary ecocritical theory to interrogate how Romantic texts construct the natural--as an aesthetic, as an ethic, and/or as material process--and we will consider how these various strains of Romantic environmental thought have traveled down through 20th and 21st century imaginaries. Primary texts and screenings will take us from Walden to Tinker Creek, and from James Fenimore Cooper's *Natty Bumppo* to James Cameron's *Jake Sully*. Secondary readings will include classic (Leo Marx) and unconventional (Brian Massumi) ecocritical theory. Students will be assessed on the basis of a final seminar paper, which may either take the form of a literary critical essay or a hybrid of creative and critical work.

**675:01**            **Studies in American Literary Regionalism**  
**A. Trefzer**            **T 6:30-9:00**  
**Ext. 7675**            [atrefzer@olemiss.edu](mailto: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 both pre- and post World War II 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 theoretical and critical materials that

highlight new regional, national, and global approaches to Southern fiction. The course might include a field trip to her home in Jackson, MS.

**676:01**            **Studies in Southern Literature**  
**E. Young-Minor**    **TH 3:00-5:30**  
**Ext. 7688/8814**    [eyoungmi@olemiss.edu](mailto:eyoungmi@olemiss.edu)

Black writers have long interrogated landscape in their narratives, with special attention to the south and its cultural practices. In doing so, many Black writers expose complex understandings of the socio-historical place of Black people within southern landscapes. English 676 amplifies the voices of these black writers, and their contradictory attitudes towards the south, while also pursuing a better understanding of the intersections between African American and Southern Literature. All of the primary texts in the course are written by African American writers and will explore writers such as: Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Richard Wright, John O. Killins, Tyehimba Jess, ZZ Packer, and Tayari Jones. Topics explored may include: the role of race in Southern writing and the importance of Black folk culture in regional readings of literature. The critical voices that will undergird the course include: Trudier Harris, Bernard Bell, Houston Baker, Michael Kreyling, Harry Stecopoulos, and Thadious Davis.

**679:01**            **Elliptical Poetry**  
**M. Ginsburg**        **T 6:30-9:00**  
**Ext. 7672**            [mginsburg@olemiss.edu](mailto:mginsburg@olemiss.edu)

This discussion-based seminar will focus on contemporary poetry that employs modes other than traditional narrative realism. The term elliptical poetry, coined by Stephen Burt, refers to poetry that is fragmented, compressed, driven by lyric impulse more than logic. (Think Dickinson more than Whitman.) It abandons or subverts the constraints of prose and received forms. Its vital tools are the pun, personae, juxtaposition, and white space. Its influences include surrealism, Stein, Berryman, the New York school, and the metonymic mode of Asian poetry.

The goal of this class is to broaden our abilities to read all kinds of contemporary work, to expand our understanding of current poetic modes, and to generate some new poems.

We will read 8-10 collections of poetry from the last 20 years. Readings are likely to include Mark Levine, DA Powell, Lucie Brock-Broido, Susan Wheeler, Matthea Harvey, and others. We will read criticism written by

poets: Burt, James Longenbach, Joan Houlihan, Donald Justice.

Students will write a number of poems and informal responses, and one formal essay that will focus on close readings of poems. Each student will deliver a short lecture and lead a discussion.

**681:01**                      **Graduate Fiction Seminar II**  
**T. Franklin**                **M 6:30-9:00**  
**Ext. 7914**                    [tfrankli@olemiss.edu](mailto:tfrankli@olemiss.edu)

A workshop wherein the class critiques its members' original short stories. The instructor will also assign several books including Lewis Nordan's Music of the Swamp.

**682:01**                      **Graduate Poetry Seminar**  
**D. Harriell**                 **W 3:00-5:30**  
**Ext. 6947**                    [harriell@olemiss.edu](mailto:harriell@olemiss.edu)

English 682 is a course designed for advanced students of poetry writing. While this course will function as a craft workshop, our overall scope will be macro. This means we will consider the work of our participants through sequence. Students will have two opportunities to workshop a sequence of around 5-10 poems. Collectively, we will consider and comment on narrative and or aesthetic patterns amongst craft concerns. Our goal is to immerse ourselves in an environment that aims to foster creativity, curiosity, and a respect for language. Our course requirements will consist of an essay, two workshops, and a final revised manuscript of around 10-15 pages. With your full engagement, by the end of this course you will have a greater appreciation and a truer understanding of the sequence: the ways in which a good poetry collection is constructed and the way that particular— and purposeful—construction creates an impression on the reader. Additional readings will be provided at various points throughout the semester.

**683:01**                      **Form, Craft, and Influence: Fiction**  
**J. Pendarvis**               **W 4:00-6:30**  
**Ext. N/A**                    [pendarvi@olemiss.edu](mailto:pendarvi@olemiss.edu)

Consider this a practical lit class designed especially for MFA students. By studying the lives and works of various creative individuals, we are going to

try to figure out what it means to be an artist, and how we might use that information to become better artists ourselves.

**686:01**                      **Studies in Genre: Memoir and the Nonfiction Novel**  
**B. McClelland**            **M 3:00-5:30**  
**Ext. 5500**                    [wgbwm@olemiss.edu](mailto:wgbwm@olemiss.edu)

In this class we will read some unique and popular exemplars of this no-name genre. What's more, we'll try our hands at writing some of "the fourth genre" ourselves. Thus, this is a course in literary study with a significant creative writing component, involving us in both reading critically and writing creatively. As an introductory journey into the art and culture of contemporary nonfiction, the course focuses on the nonfiction novel and the memoir. So, too, is the course an exploration of the interior worlds of our lives, recalled as they are, variously, in our memories. Thus, we will study of the literature of some notable nonfiction writers and memoirists and we will also have the opportunity to write our own nonfiction and/or memoir selections. To support our reading and writing processes, we will participate in studio class activities: writing journals, discussing texts, writing multiple drafts of our texts, and reading and responding to each other's writing. Among subjects central to our study will be recent research on identity, memory, narrative, and authority. We will read the works of such writers as Truman Capote, John Berendt, Joan Didion, Elizabeth Gilbert, Laura Hillenbrand, and Susan Orlean.



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Graduate students schedule appointments by calling 915-7686. The Writing Center is located in Suite 310, J.D. Williams Library

