

# Department of English Graduate Course Descriptions *Spring 2019*

**Eng 506:01**      **Old English I**  
**L. Brady**        **M 3:00-5:30 pm**  
                         **lbrady@olemiss.edu**

Unlock your word-hoard and learn *wordrihta fela* (many proper words) in an introduction to the Old English language and its literature. The first half of the semester will be an intensive study of Old English grammar (phonology, morphology, syntax, and vocabulary), accompanied by shorter readings in prose. The latter portion of the course will turn to longer translations of prose and an introduction to Old English poetry. Course requirements: class participation and weekly translation, midterm, final, and a research paper for graduate students. There are no prerequisites. This course satisfies the pre-1800 requirement for English graduate students.

**Eng 521:01**      **Special Topics in English: Eudora Welty**  
**A. Trefzer**        **W 4:30-7:00 pm**  
                         **atrefzer@olemiss.edu**  
                         **\*\*For Education Graduate Students only\*\***

One of the most influential writers of the twentieth century is Eudora Welty who chronicled life in Mississippi from the 1930s well into the 1980s when her memoir *One Writers Beginning* was published. Short stories launched her career, and she became a master of the American short story. Her work was selected several times to appear in *Best American Short Stories* and

won multiple literary awards. To this day, her short story collections are the cornerstones of her literary achievement. This course focuses specifically on the genre of the short story and Welty's four story collections: *A Curtain of Green* (1941), *The Wide Net* (1943), and *The Golden Apples* (1949), and *The Bride of the Innisfallen* (1955). Designed for secondary school teachers and graduate students in the School of Education, this course requires weekly presentations on pedagogy and literary scholarship as well as a seminar paper.

**Eng 680:01**      **Graduate Fiction Workshop**  
**T. Franklin**      **M 6:00-8:30**  
                         **tfrankli@olemiss.edu**

This is an intensive fiction workshop in which students submit original fiction for group review. Content varies and may be repeated three times for credit.

**Eng 682:01**      **Graduate Poetry Workshop**  
**M. Ginsburg**    **T 3:00-5:30**  
                         **mginsburg@olemiss.edu**

In this Graduate Poetry Workshop students will turn in a minimum of one poem per week. Class time will be devoted to critiques of new work. Reading assignments will include one contemporary poetry collection as well as assorted individual poems. In addition to writing weekly poems, students will write a statement of poetics and compile a packet of poems that have influenced their work.

**Eng 683:01**      **Form, Craft, and Influence: Fiction**  
**M. Bondurant**    **TH 3:00-5:30**  
                         **mrbondur@olemiss.edu**

This class will examine a variety of texts with a focus on the craft elements at work, such as narrative structure, voice, style, and tone. We will incorporate other narrative media, such as documentary film, to further our discussion. We will also have a series of Skype conversations with authors to discuss these topics as well as the professional aspects of writing and publication, particularly as it pertains to the early stages of a writer's career and first books.

**Eng 686:01      Studies in Genre**  
**K. Laymon      W 6:00-8:30**  
**kmlaymon@olemiss.edu**

What does the writer Dana Johnson mean when she says that home, voice and the blank page are our only mobile metaphors? Can you bring love to your writing, your people and your rituals into your creative nonfiction? What are you most afraid to write? What are you most afraid to read? What parts of creative nonfiction writing give you the most joy? Do you see useful distinctions between craft and content, politics and prose, identity and characterization? With the help of James Baldwin, Zandria Robinson, Rachel Kaadzi, Alexander Chee, and your classmates, these are questions we'll explicitly and implicitly explore in this creative nonfiction workshop this semester.

**Eng 705:01      Studies in Middle English: Medieval Piety in the English Vernacular**  
**M. Hayes      W 6:00-8:30**  
**hayes@olemiss.edu**

This course will attend to varieties of medieval English religious beliefs and pious practices as they are conveyed in texts written ca. 1000-ca. 1550. Part of our project in studying this literature 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. We will consider their possible use in a live devotional setting, their relationship to orthodox beliefs and practices, and whether their doctrinal "errors" result from ignorance or heretical intent. A couple of key questions will animate our collective inquiry: 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, whether by a clerical figure or a literate lay person?

Additionally, we will consider a tension inherent to religious texts in the English vernacular. On the one hand, the vernacular was the vehicle for pastoral care efforts that aimed to teach basic doctrine to the unlearned populace. On the other, heterodox groups who were also intent on democratizing access to religious discourse championed the vernacular, which was thus associated with doctrinal error. English vernacular mystical texts fell somewhere in the middle. They were brimming with pious enthusiasm yet often viewed with suspicion for their perceived circumvention of ecclesiastical apparatus. The variety of genres that we will study— sermons, mystical texts, literature for religious women, magical

charms, *miracula*, biblical plays, and saints' lives—speaks to the polyvocality of medieval religious literature in the English vernacular (ca. 1000-1550).

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 once (with a partner or two), and write a critically-attuned final essay (ca. 20-25 pages). This course satisfies the "pre-1800" requirement for graduate students in the English department. Additionally, it counts toward the graduate minor in Medieval Studies.

**Eng 710:01      Studies in Early Modern Literature: Ability and Disability in Early Modern English Culture**  
**A. Friedlander    T 3:00-5:30**  
**ari@olemiss.edu**

This course introduces students to the major movements of disability theory and uses them to investigate representations of able and disabled bodies in Renaissance literature and culture. We will examine disability as a cultural phenomenon with historical and socio-economic dimensions while remaining cognizant of the body's materiality and how it shapes these discursive realities. Beginning with a unit on contemporary medical and cultural models of disability, we move on to units that pair early modern texts with criticism on the gender, sexual, social, and racial politics of disability. The first unit will be on class and disability in mid-sixteenth century popular crime literature, followed by a unit on what is often called "queer crip" sexuality in seventeenth century drama and poetry, including plays by Thomas Heywood and Richard Brome. Next, we will study class and madness in Shakespeare's *King Lear*, before ending with a unit on religion, service, and blindness in Milton. Throughout the course we will consider how early modern texts both reflect and challenge modern ideas about disability and the body. Critical and theoretical readings will include: Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, Tobin Siebers, Ellen Samuels, Robert McRuer, Jasbir Puar, Lennard Davis, Valerie Traub, David Mitchell, and Sharon Snyder, among others.

**Eng 717:01 18<sup>th</sup> Century Studies: 18<sup>th</sup> Century Poetry and Poetics**  
**E. Drew T 6:00-8:30**  
**eedrew@olemiss.edu**

The long eighteenth century was a period preoccupied with poetic form, decorum, and the unique role of poetry in society. This course will examine the conventions, affordances, limitations, and politics of forms and genres of poetry prominent in the long eighteenth century, including the couplet, the ode, blank verse, the pastoral, the georgic, and locodescriptive poetry, among others. In addition to studying canonical versions of each form, we will examine the ways that writers outside of the literary mainstream—including women writers and writers from the working class—negotiated, adapted, and at times resisted the strict poetic decorum of the period from within these forms themselves. Though our course readings will be historical, the questions this course will pursue are applicable to poetry of any period, as well as to practitioners of poetry: What is the relationship between form and meaning? What does adherence to form make possible, and what does it restrict? What role does—or should—poetry play in culture and politics that is distinct from other forms of writing? How does poetic form operate to create or convey knowledge—scientific, philosophical, ontological, emotional, or otherwise? Authors will include John Dryden, Anne Finch, Alexander Pope, Jonathan Swift, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Mary Leapor, John Dyer, Thomas Gray, Thomas and Joseph Warton, Anna Seward, Anna Laetitia Barbauld, William Cowper, and Anne Yearsley, among others.

**Eng 720:01 Studies in the Romantic Period: The Theory of Lyric**  
**D. Stout M 6:00-8:30**  
**dstout@olemiss.edu**

When poets and critics of the recent decades have thought about romantic poetry it has often been to position it as a conservative project—an aesthetic hurdle a truly progressive poetry must needs get over. The romantic lyric, the story goes, models a regrettable (neoliberal, masculinist, presumptively white, rationalist, etc.) self-involvement at the level of both form—romantic lyrics are small, highly wrought, formally dense, manifestly committed to unity—and content—romantic lyrics deal in personal epiphanies and other ego-centric flights of consciousness. This charge has come from both poets and critics alike. More than fifty years ago, for instance, Charles Olson famously argued that contemporary poetry needed to break away from a romantic obsession with the “private-soul-at-any-public-wall”. Recently, Virginia Jackson has argued that poetry has been “lyricized” in a way that cuts us off from alternative models of poetry and the (preferable, possibly) political programs to which those alternative models might be attached.

This seminar takes this history of anti-romantic complaint as an opportunity. The aim is to return to (or, to encounter for the first time) some of the truly striking and often surprising claims that were made in the romantic period for poetry as a practice or a mode of relation and to look carefully at some of the actual poems of the period. The goal will, I hope, be an expanded sense of the romantic legacy and a more nuanced understanding of our contemporary commitments—to think about the plusses and minuses, as it were, of lyricism and about the long (indeed, properly romantic) tradition of experimenting with a poetry that might aspire to something else entirely. Our romantic readings will be paired with work by both contemporary poets and theorists including (likely) Claudia Rankine, Rowan Ricardo Phillips, and Jos Charles. This class should be of interest to students in both critical and creative programs (and final projects can be tailored accordingly).

**Eng 740:01 Studies in Critical Theory: Theorizing the Present, from the US South to the Global South**  
**L. Duck W 6:00-8:30**  
**lduck@olemiss.edu**

The arts of the twentieth century were deeply concerned with time—its accelerations and repetitions, its stark breaks with previous eras and continued hauntings by past injustice, and its perceived differences across diverse spaces. But if this fascination yielded a tendency to periodize (think of the Jazz Age, the Cold War era, the postcolonial era, and a whole series of human “Generations”), such questions have become even more pressing in the twenty-first century. How much of what we are experiencing is new, and how much continuation? And how might understanding these relations facilitate efforts to shape a more just and habitable future? Alternatively, might this quest to periodize the present distract us from thinking about planetary “deep time”? The problem is not only the difficulty of categorizing an ongoing process, nor even only that other temporal frameworks now co-exist with a world-threatening crisis (the Anthropocene). It also seems increasingly impossible to focus such inquiries on any locale, as even isolationist nationalisms and state-sponsored institutions (most notably, prisons) are expanding globally. And yet the form of the present is also influenced by local pasts. Accordingly, while exploring theoretical models for understanding contemporary time, we will also consider spatial links between the US South and the Global South, a term used for areas negatively affected by capitalist globalization. Historically another category for “Third World” nations—and thus associated with efforts toward transformative strategies and solidarities, which included oppressed minorities in thoroughly industrialized nations—this label is now often used to highlight global fractures between elites and

subalterns. Though we cannot perform a scholarly “deep dive” into the contemporary and historical cultures of multiple global locales, we will look for signs of similarity, ongoing networks, affiliative possibilities—and forms of divergence. How, especially, do writers and filmmakers articulate local presents for global audiences?

Critical texts will likely include works by Martyn Bone, Joel Burges and Amy Elias, Mel Y. Chen, Eva Cherniavsky, Angela Davis, Amitav Ghosh, Donna Haraway, Anne Garland Mahler, Achille Mbembe, Elizabeth Povinelli, Christina Sharpe, Boaventura de Sousa Santos, Loïc Wacquant, and Jini Kim Watson. Novels, poems, and films will probably include works by Chris Abani, Bong Joon-ho, Dionne Brand, Mohsin Hamid, Lucrecia Martel, Mira Nair, Monique Verdin, and Jesmyn Ward. Course requirements include active participation in discussion, almost-weekly written responses to the texts, and a research project including a prospectus, an annotated bibliography, a class symposium in which students present their research, and a 15-25 page seminar paper (depending on students’ degree programs).

**Eng 747:01      Studies in African and African Diasporic:  
Contemporary African Literature**  
**A. Alabi            M 6:00-8:30**  
**aalabi@olemiss.edu**

This course will focus on how contemporary critical theory can aid our understanding of major developments in African literature. We will start by reviewing aspects of recent literary theories, especially globalization, ecocriticism, postcolonial, and feminist theories that can illuminate our interpretation of African literature. We will then examine the representation of orality, language, culture, patriarchy, ecology, colonialism, and postcolonialism in African literature. The texts for our discussion, selected from various genres and parts of Africa, will include Nadine Gordimer’s *July’s People*, Ngugi wa Thiong’o’s *Matigari*, Wole Soyinka’s *Death and the King’s Horseman*, Nawal El Saadawi’s *Woman at Point Zero*, Chinua Achebe’s *Anthills of the Savannah*, Naguib Mahfouz’s *Miramar*, and Chimamanda Ngozie Adichie’s *Americanah*.

**Eng 762:01      Studies in 19<sup>th</sup> Century American Literature: The  
Nature of Race in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century**  
**C. Ellis            T 3:00-5:30**  
**ceellis2@olemiss.edu**

Today, we are used to talking about race as a feature of the *social* world—a construct of discourse, culture, and ideology. By

contrast, this course will examine the various ways in which nineteenth century Americans thought about race as a feature of the *natural* world, tracing the circulation of these ideas through literary and popular culture. From Indian removal and slavery before the war to immigration and eugenics afterwards, race was a political flashpoint that drew fault lines down the center of every effort to construct a usable self-image of the still notional American nation. In this course, we will consider the history of racial thought in light of an unfolding crisis of epistemic authority in this era, as increasingly (but never wholly) distinct theological, philosophical, and scientific discourses vied for dominance as explanatory regimes. We will also study the evolution of American racialist discourse in light of the concurrent transformation of governmentality known as the birth of biopolitics, and the intensification of human efforts to control and dominate nature. Along the way, we’ll ask ourselves how ideas about racial difference intersected with ideas about gender, class, and the nonhuman world, and we’ll highlight counter-discourses of race written by those targeted by racist theory.

**Eng 766:01      Studies in Contemporary American Literature:  
“Outrageous, Dangerous, Unassimilable”: The Idea of  
Lesbian Literature**  
**J. Harker           M 3:00-5:30 pm**  
**jlharker@olemiss.edu**

In 1977, Bertha Harris published a manifesto of lesbian literature that framed both lesbians and literature in revolutionary terms. Rejecting popular lesbian stereotypes of the 1970s, she named her utopian dream: “Lesbians, instead, might have been great, as some literature is: unassimilable, awesome, dangerous, outrageous, different: distinguished” (6). This class examines the idea of a revolutionary lesbian literature. It was a notion conceived in the early days of women’s liberation and gay liberation, one that invented a usable past of Paris expatriates, picked up lesbian pulp writers along the way, and created a renaissance of lesbian writing from the 1970s to the 1990s. We will consider the historical creation of “lesbian literature” and its continued resonance in contemporary writing. Together, we will read a wide range of genres: manifestos, novels, poetry, essays, and key works of theory and criticism. Possible writers include Gertrude Stein, Djuna Barnes, Virginia Woolf, h.d., Renee Vivien, Patricia Highsmith, Ann Bannon, June Arnold, Bertha Harris, Pat Parker, Audre Lorde, Adrienne Rich, Jewelle Gomez, Gloria Anzaldua, Cherrie Moraga, Barbara Smith, Minnie Bruce Pratt, Dorothy Allison, Leslie Feinberg, Sarah Schulman, Jeannette Winterson, Ali Smith, Jane Eaton

Hamilton, and Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha. Students will write weekly response papers and a 20-25 page seminar paper.

**Eng 770:01      Studies in Faulkner**  
**J. Watson        W 3:00-5:30**  
**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 U.S. 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, technology, identity, and psyche. Course requirements will include weekly online reader-response journals, in-class discussion “sparking,” and a 15-25-page research project. The reading list will include the following “clusters”: (1) readings on Great War modernism by Paul Fussell, Eric Leed, Modris Eksteins, George Mosse, Pearl James and others; Faulkner, *Soldiers’ Pay* (1926); (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) Bob Johnson, *Carbon Nation: Fossil Fuels in the Making of American Culture* and related readings by Imre Szeman, Matthew Huber, and others on energy and modernity; Faulkner, *Pylon* (1935); (5) Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet*; Faulkner, *Light in August* (1932); (6) readings on Black/Atlantic modernism by Paul Gilroy, Joseph Roach, and Houston A. Baker, Jr.; Faulkner, *Go Down, Moses* (1942); (7) selected writings on nationalism and biopolitics by Benedict Anderson, Michel Foucault, and others; Faulkner, *A Fable* (1954). We will also over the course of the semester read a generous selection of Faulkner’s short stories.



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