

Department of English

Graduate Course Descriptions

Spring 2025

Required hours	Category	Courses offered during <i>Spring 2025</i> that fulfill each category
6	Pre-1800	Eng 741, 743, 766, 770
6	Post-1800	Eng 717
12	Creative Writing Workshops (MFA/PhD-CWC only)	Eng, 677, 681, 682

Eng 617
Monroe
Teaching First-Year Composition
M 3-5:30
smonroe@olemiss.edu

Eng 677
Sundar
Graduate Creative Nonfiction Workshop
T 6-8:30
smsundar@olemiss.edu

This course is designed for students interested in memoir and personal essay. Our concrete goal is to produce one strong example of each, one of which will be revised for inclusion in your portfolio. More broadly, my aim is to help you deepen your understanding of yourselves as writers, and the stories you seek to tell about yourselves and the world.

Eng 681 **Graduate Fiction Workshop**
Bondurant **M 6-8:30**
 mrbondur@olemiss.edu

This course will attempt to acclimatize graduate student fiction writers with various aspects of the profession, as well as working on our own fiction in a traditional workshop arrangement. Our focus will be the craft and publication of the literary short story (though not exclusive to this genre) as part of a comprehensive plan to achieve artistic as well as book publishing success. To achieve this part of the class will touch on such things as literary journals, submissions, conferences, and agents, as well as aspects of craft that come into play in the creation and revision of literary short fiction. We will have a series of conversations, live and via zoom, with authors whose books we will be reading. In these conversations we will talk about the writing process, craft elements, techniques, as well as the journey these authors made that led them to the publication of this book.

Eng 682 **Graduate Poetry Workshop**
Avant **TH 3-5:30**
 ahavant@olemiss.edu

Intensive poetry workshop. Content varies and may be repeated for credit.

Eng 717 **18th Century Studies**
MacKenzie **TH 6-8:30**
 smack@olemiss.edu

In the eighteenth century, British aesthetic thought and practice began more and more to value the new, the singular, the unexpected, and the unrepeatability. This class will survey and assess some of the participants in these developments, whose consequences include narrative suspense, fictional realism, and progressive historicism. We will seek to build accounts of the reasons for this emerging poetics of singularity, the relationships between its role in aesthetic practice and the socio-historical circumstances from which it emerged, including political economy, colonial enterprise, and sex-gender systems. Readings will include poetry by Margaret Cavendish, Alexander Pope, William Blake, Phillis Wheatley, and others; fiction by Daniel Defoe, Laurence Sterne, and Ann Radcliffe; and prose by William Hogarth, Olaudah Equiano, Edmund Burke, and others. Our critical analyses will be supported by a range of readings in recent and not-so-recent scholarship and theory. Each participant will provide one short presentation, weekly reading journals, and a term paper.

Eng 741 **Cultural Studies: The Blues Tradition**
Gussow **T 6-8:30**
 Agussow@olemiss.edu

This course will explore the way in which African American (and selected white American) writers have translated the oral culture and social milieu of blues musicians into a range of literary forms: poems, stories, novels, plays, interviews, autobiographies, and

theoretical/prophetic writings. Since the blues tradition is grounded in what David Oshinsky has called “the ordeal of Jim Crow justice,” we’ll devote considerable attention to the way in which adverse social conditions in the early modern South—lynching, segregation, sharecropping, and other forms of racialized exploitation—are represented and contested in blues texts. We’ll cover a range of other themes: the tragicomic dialectic that underlies blues expressiveness; the shaping role played by various forms of interpersonal violence; “signifying” as a textual strategy; womanist self-assertion and the sounding of desire; the emergence of a mass white blues audience in the 1960s; contemporary blues performance and blues literature as scenes of interracial contact in which the legacy of Jim Crow is engaged in both productive and troubling ways. Requirements include several short response papers, a term paper, and an oral presentation.

Eng 743 Studies in Literature and the Environment
Ellis T 3-5:30
ceellis@olemiss.edu

This course will explore four traditions of environmental aesthetics: the eco-sublime, eco-horror, eco-erotics, and eco-camp. Our archive will be (modestly) transhistorical, tracing developments in these aesthetic traditions from Romanticism (conventionally credited with having moved the natural world to the center of Western aesthetic concern) to the present day. For each aesthetic we’ll endeavor to define its salient features, discern its prevailing affects (awe? guilt? disgust? desire? vitality? irreverence?), distill the conceptualization of environment it frames for us, and appraise (or perhaps envision) its rhetorical and political effects. In more concrete terms, we will ask questions like, for instance, how might the environmental movement’s early partiality to the aesthetic of the eco-sublime have influenced its tendency to frame its arguments in moralized (rather than, say, utilitarian) terms, and how might that tendency have helped and/or hurt its cause? Does the growth of eco-gothic and eco-horror genres in the era of climate change reflect an increasing ecological awareness or an intensification of ecophobia? What might the less well-known aesthetics of eco-erotics and eco-camp, with their emphases on pleasure and play and their challenges to normative gender and sexuality, have to offer environmentalist literature, rhetoric, and politics going forward? This is a new course I’m developing so readings are still TBD; (I am also open to student requests).

Eng 766 Studies in Contemporary American Literature: The Queer 1990s
Harker W 3-5:30
jlharker@olemiss.edu

In 1989, Minnie Bruce Pratt published a collection of poetry entitled *Crime Against Nature*, which explored her loss of custody of her two sons when she came out as a lesbian. It was published by a small feminist press, but it ended up winning one of the most prestigious poetry prizes in the country. This marked the beginning of a surge mainstream interest in LGBTQ+ culture in the 1990s. Independent feminist and queer presses fostered distinctive queer literary cultures, with writers like Dorothy Allison, Sarah Schulman, Jewelle Gomez, and Jeannette Winterson foregrounding queer women’s culture. New York ballroom culture garnered mainstream attention through the documentary *Paris is Burning* and Madonna’s single “Vogue.” ACT UP and Queer Nation responded to the AIDS crisis with confrontational activism that rejected the politics of respectability. New Queer Cinema featured experimental

queer filmmakers, including Rose Troche's *Go Fish*. Leslie Feinberg and Susan Stryker foregrounded "transgender" culture in essays and fiction. In mainstream film, films about drag and AIDS were everywhere; famous pop musicians came out, including Melissa Etheridge and k.d. lang; and queer writers won major literary prizes, include Pulitzer Prizes for drama (Tony Kushner's *Angels in America*) and fiction (Michael Cunningham's *The Hours*). In academia, queer theory took literary criticism by storm, with Eve Sedgwick and Judith Butler at the center; conversations about a "queer aesthetic" dominated conversations about LGBTQ+ literature. In this class, we will explore the diverse queer cultures that emerged in the 1990s, in poetry, memoir, literary criticism, theory, film, music, television, and more. Assignments include weekly 500-word journals and a final 20-25 page seminar paper.

Eng 770 **Studies in Faulkner**
Watson **W 6-8:30**
 jwatson@olemiss.edu

An intensive reading and discussion course intended primarily for English and Southern Studies students. The focus will be on African American (and in one case Afro-Caribbean) literary engagements with Faulkner's fictional oeuvre, in its technical and thematic dimensions. The intent is not to frame (and delimit) these Black writers as "heirs" to Faulkner or as "influenced" by him but to trace their interrogations of his writings around areas of mutual concern, especially the linked crucibles of race, gender, and modernity in the Americas. Among the groupings of texts I am considering are: (1) Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*, Ernest Gaines, *A Gathering of Old Men*, Suzan-Lori Parks, *Getting Mother's Body*, and Jesmyn Ward, *Salvage the Bones*; (2) Faulkner, *Light in August*, Richard Wright, *Native Son*, and Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*; (3) Faulkner, *Absalom, Absalom!* and Édouard Glissant, *The Fourth Century*; (4) Faulkner, *Go Down, Moses* and Toni Morrison, *Song of Solomon*. Writing assignments will include weekly reader-response journals and an article-length research project, and each student will also be responsible for "sparking" discussion for the first 75 minutes of at least one class meeting. MFA and PhDCWC students may develop a creative or hybrid project in lieu of the critical research project.



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audience consideration, organization, style, grammar, and document presentation. Undergraduate students can schedule appointments through our online appointment calendar at www.olemiss.edu/depts/writing_center or call 915-7689.