

Spring 2025 Graduate Seminars

ENGL 7006

W 3:30-6:20

Allen 226

M. Ruffin

Writing the Novel

This class is for graduate students interested in writing novels. Seminar discussion will include topics like novel structure and other craft elements as well as analyzing a novel. Students will also occasionally turn in creative material to increase their skill set.

ENGL 7007

W 12:30-3:20

Allen 212-C

A. Clay

Poetry Workshop

In this poetry workshop, we will generate new and innovative ways of discussing and critiquing poems. During the first part of the semester, each student will design a new workshop approach, which will be shared with the class through a short presentation and a brief handout that explains the pedagogical reasoning/approach. Moving forward, each student can select the specific approach they'd like the class to use for their poem. Along with exploring new forms of critique, we will read several contemporary first books of poetry, with conversations centering on specific poems and the manner in which the books are structured/ordered.

ENGL 7009

M 3:30-6:20

Allen 113

M. Kornhauser

Writing for TV or Film

This is a workshop with the goal to finish a rough draft of a film script or TV pilot. You will learn form and structure by writing. Bad writing encouraged and embraced if you get stuck as it is all about page count to get to the end ASAP. Writing is rewriting. The workshop will be run like a writer's room with a lot of productive spitballing on each writer's project. Collaborative fun leads to a good writing process of evolution of structure, plot, and character. This class is designed for those who have never written a script before and those who have.

ENGL 7107

T 12:00-2:50

Allen 113

A. Francisco

Craft of Poetry in Translation

Literature is more than just information, it is language come alive. How do we facilitate the transference of literature from one language to another? How do we ensure that the piece arrives alive and well into English, and sings and dances in the same ways as the original? A translation is not a carbon copy, it's a transmutation—existing in a new medium (language is the medium we work in, right? Right). In this course we will look at various craft essays/excerpts on literary translation from Kate Briggs, Esther Allen, Walter Benjamin, and others while reading pairings of multiple translations in order to inform our own translations. We'll talk about how the translations differ, which we find most effective and why, and how/why the translators made different decisions. We'll use these discussions to fuel our weekly assignments. Complete fluency in a second language is not required.

ENGL 7170

M 12:30-3:20

Allen 212-C

A. Meany

The Indigenous City

Colonial assumptions about Indigeneity presume that Indigenous life is incompatible with the city. While the rest of the nation tipped into modernity and U.S. cities became the social and cultural center of the American geography, Indigenous peoples either simply dropped out of history, or were presumed to exist in a far-off, rural space, contained on reservations. In reality, Indigenous peoples have always populated urban spaces, though, as we shall see, this relationship has been fraught. In the period following the Indigenous Relocation Act of 1956, the U.S. government made efforts to forcibly resettle Indigenous peoples in cities under the pretense of employment and housing. Many consider relocation an “extermination program.” Others have keyed the Red Power movement and other twentieth-century Indigenous movements for decolonization to urbanization. In this course, we will read novels by Leslie Marmon Silko, Louise Erdrich, Tommy Orange, and others that engage the Indigenous city. We will encounter critiques of and responses to relocation and the literary figure of the “urban Indian.” Reading Indigenous literature and historical scholarship, we will explore the relationship between Indigeneity and the U.S. city in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

ENGL 7221

Th 6:00-8:50

Allen 202

S. Lal

Postcolonial Theory

This course will introduce students to the central concerns and debates of postcolonial theory. Reading canonical theorists such as Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, and Homi Bhabha, we will discuss how their works have been advanced to engage questions raised by ongoing changes in the postcolonial world. We will also study newer works that have emerged at postcolonial theory’s intersections with feminist and queer studies, ecocriticism, affect studies, disability studies, and digital humanities to consider the field’s current preoccupations and future directions. Readings may include texts by Achille Mbembe, Anjali Arondekar, Ato Quayson, Leela Gandhi, Neil Lazarus, Rey Chow, Rob Nixon, and Sara Ahmed.

ENGL 7222/EDCI 7311

W 4:30-7:30

Allen 212-C

A. Wittchow

Relational Literacy Studies

Drawing on the work of posthumanist scholar, Rosi Braidotti, this graduate seminar will attempt to conceptualize “relational” literacy practices as a means of grounding the humanities in ecosocial ethical considerations. Students will consider what it means to read and write “with and in relation” to the more-than-human worlds around them (Victor, 2024). To this end, students will develop pedagogical practices designed to foster ecological relationships beyond student, teaching, and text, cultivating literacies that reflect the interconnected environments we inhabit. The tentative reading list includes the works of Alexis Pauline Gumb, Talia Lakshmi Kolluri, Leslie Marmon Silko, as well as various theoretical readings from the field of environmental humanities.

ENGL 7930

W 12:30-3:30

Allen 202

C. Rovee

Dissertation Workshop

This workshop is meant to help you write your dissertation. For some of you, this means finishing a chapter. For some of you, this means writing a prospectus. For all of you, this means getting a better feel for your overall project and its significance. It also means identifying stylistic and methodological models, becoming familiar with the major journals in your field(s), growing an awareness of your needs as a writer, and revising your work with the help of others' feedback. Finally, the workshop requires you to develop collegial, professional, and pedagogical skills related to the task of offering feedback to others. To read others' work generatively and generously is not merely the cost of having others do this for you; it is also a way to reimagine your own work and your own process. Those of you who make the effort to read others' writing and research with sincere care will find that your understanding of your own writing and research deepens as a result.

ENGL 7943

T 3:00-5:50

Allen 226

D. Nee

Shakespeare's Forms and their Afterlives

This course explores the uses of form in Shakespeare's works and their afterlives, as well as the critical concepts of form we ourselves employ when writing about (or adapting) Shakespeare. We'll study poetic form in Shakespeare's sonnets; dramatic form across several plays; bibliographic form (actor's parts, quartos, etc.); and the new media forms that have shaped Shakespeare's global afterlives. Throughout, we'll assume that the many and frequently confused meanings of "form" are not a liability for criticism but an asset, seeking to better understand how different types of form are interrelated in Shakespeare and what that means for our work as scholars and writers.

ENGL 7974

Th 12:00-2:50

Allen 212-C

L. Coats

Writing Land

This course will focus on textual inscriptions and remediations of land in American literature of the eighteenth and—primarily—nineteenth century. How have texts created and portrayed American environments in works by authors such as Nellie Bly, Charles Chesnutt, Ebenezer Cooke, Thomas Hutchins, Sarah Orne Jewett, and John Ledyard? Our investigations will have us engage criticism about genre (we'll read travel narratives, novel, surveys, stories), book history and circulation (how these texts got their way into manuscript, print, and/or onto screens), and critical race studies and ecocriticism (how the authors represent environmentalisms, nature, belonging, race). We'll put our theories of textual representations of place into praxis by remediating a land-focused text of our own choosing, which will take us into Hill Library or digital archives and re-representing the materials we find.