

Spring 2026

MA Course Descriptions

ENGL 701: Graduate Methods and Writing

Thurs. 4:40pm – 6:30 pm

Prof. Karen Weingarten

Course Number: 42713

This course introduces students to practices, tools, and skills they'll need to succeed in graduate-level course work and research. We'll begin by examining the history of scholarship of one novel, Nella Larsen's *Passing*, to understand the kinds of questions, methods, and ideas that are engaging the field today and the academic history that led to these conversations. One of the goals of this course will be to help students navigate their interests within the discipline and begin to carve a place for themselves within the numerous conversations. To do this, we'll focus on how to generate research questions and intervene in already existing scholarly debates. In part, our work in this course will be technical. We'll spend time exploring journals, books, and databases to learn how to read and manage already existing literary scholarship. Through this work we will also explore the history of English Studies to understand how contemporary conversations emerged within the discipline. Finally, the course will also devote time to students' own writing to prepare them for producing thesis-driven, research-based, and theoretically-grounded papers in their courses, and eventually, for their final research project. We will do a lot of writing and revising in this course so that students can practice the kind of work that goes into creating a research paper.

ENGL 720: Revenge Tragedy & Early Modern Drama

Mon. 4:40pm – 6:30 pm

Prof. Sawyer Kemp

Course Number: 42647

In the late 16th Century, a new genre of plays became increasingly popular: stories of revengers who take matters into their own hands and fill the stage with blood on their quest for payback. These plays drew on conventions of Greek & Roman tragedy to present stories of protagonists wronged by nemeses, circumstance, and systemic corruption—but, crucially, they did this

through hyperbolic displays of violence which required technical feats of practical stage effects. In this class, we will read a selection of plays from the peak popularity of Revenge Tragedy in the late 16th & early 17th century (including but not limited to: *The Spanish Tragedy*; *Titus Andronicus*; *The Revenger's Tragedy*; *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*); we will also read influential classical works like *Medea* or *Thyestes* and also examine plays that carry the themes of Revenge Tragedy into the 18th Century (*The Revenge*) and into our modern age (*Gary: A Sequel to Titus Andronicus*; *The Cook, The Thief, His Wife, & Her Lover*). Topics may include: corruption and authority; theatre material history; history of science and medicine; feminist & queer critique; mad studies; English Civil Wars & Restoration. *The course satisfies the pre-1900 requirement for MAT and MSED students.*

ENGL 732: Chicana/ Latina Feminisms

Thurs. 6:40pm – 8:30 pm (online)

Prof. Vanessa Pérez-Rosario

Course Number: 42714

Latina feminist writing has for decades provided critical concepts to innovate and transform feminist theory in the United States and beyond. This semester we will examine key writers beginning from the 1980s to the present whose work has intervened in the field of feminist theory although their contributions to the field are not always recognized. In the 1970s and 1980s, women of color were in the process of defining themselves, asserting their agency, and building their own intellectual traditions. The publication of Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa's *This Bridge Called My Back* (1981) and Gloria Hull, Patricia Bell Scott, and Barbara Smith's *All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, but Some of Us Are Brave* (1982) set out to expand the definition of *feminist* to make this analysis relevant to women of color in the United States. These texts sought a signifier, a self-representation that would underscore women's multiple subjectivities of race, class, sexuality, and gender, generating a theoretical space to critique sexism, homophobia, a gendered analysis of history, politics, institutionalized racism and economic exploitation. Out of their subordination as Latinas and their exclusion from both the male-dominated ethnic studies movements and the white-dominated women's movements, Chicanas and Latinas sought to create spaces to articulate a feminist consciousness as members of diverse national groups, and as pan-ethnic Latinas, while also articulating political solidarity between Third World women in the United States and women activists south of the border. In this class, we will look specifically at Latina and Chicana writers whose writings, essays, poetry

and theatre are the foundation of Latina feminist theoretical interventions. We will then look at 21st century Latinas who continue to redefine and reimagine Latina feminisms today.

ENGL 733: 21st-Century Asian American Literatures

Tues. 6:40pm – 8:30 pm (online)

Prof. Caroline Hong

Course Number: 42644

In this graduate course, we will read a wide range of twenty-first-century Asian American literary works and think about how they represent the “heterogeneity, hybridity, multiplicity” of Asian Americans, to use scholar Lisa Lowe’s influential formulation. We will frame our readings and discussions with theory and criticism from the field of Asian American studies and within/alongside the complex historical, social, cultural, political, and economic contexts of their production and reception. Over the course of the semester, we will think about how Asian American literatures in general, and these texts in particular, help us expand and complicate our understandings of identity, history, culture, and community, as well as of race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, class and labor, (dis)ability, trauma, imperialism, and so on. And, hopefully, together we will explore how Asian American literatures not only reflect the world we live in but also are themselves world-making.

Writers we read might include Daphne Palasi Andreades, Gina Apostol, Fatimah Asghar, Elaine Castillo, Alexander Chee, Chen Chen, Franny Choi, Tarfia Faizullah, Cathy Park Hong, Mimi Khúc, Alice Sola Kim, Lisa Ko, T Kira Māhealani Madden, Rajiv Mohabir, Aimee Nezhukumatathil, Viet Thanh Nguyen, Ruth Ozeki, Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, Bushra Rehman, Barbara Jane Reyes, Margaret Rhee, Solmaz Sharif, Anthony Veasna So, Lysley Tenorio, Kai Cheng Thom, Mai Der Vang, Saymoukda Vongsay, Ocean Vuong, and Charles Yu.

Requirements will include weekly discussion posts on Slack, a presentation on one of the course texts, an annotation and close reading assignment, and a final project.

ENGL 736: The Novel and the Archive

Tues. 4:40pm – 6:30 pm

Prof. William Orchard

Course Number: 40072

This course explores the contemporary novel's entanglement with the archive, examining how literature both draws upon and resists the structures of archival knowledge. We will read three contemporary texts—Justin Torres's *Blackouts*, Valeria Luiselli's *Lost Children Archive*, and Allison Bechdel's *Fun Home*—that foreground archival investigation, whether through documentary fragments, intertextual citations, or acts of recovery and erasure. At stake is how the novel negotiates questions of history, memory, and power: Whose voices are preserved? Whose are silenced? What forms might resist dominant narratives or recuperate archival gaps? Alongside these works, we will also read critical theories of the novel that consider the form's relation to capitalism, history, and ideology. We will also study theories of the archive—from such thinkers as Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Saidiya Hartman, Brent Edwards, and Ann Cvetkovich—to understand the archive as both a repository and a contested site of knowledge. Students will develop close readings of novels and theoretical texts, considering how literature stages archival practices of citation, omission, and re-imagination. Ultimately, the course asks how novels function as counter-archives, reconfiguring the relationship between story, history, and the political work of memory. *In Spring 2026, 736 will satisfy the 636 requirement for MA and MFA students.*

ENGL 781: American Authors in Performance

Wed. 4:40pm – 6:30 pm

Prof. Roger Sedarat

Course Number: 40294

To creatively explore the implications of how and why American authors since the seminal 19th century up until today perform their identities, this seminar invites participants into a radical pedagogical experiment. Though at times remaining traditional scholars (sigh) in our respective ethnographies as we combine anthropological and literary approaches, as American authors ourselves we will challenge each other to risk a kind of “method criticism.” This means inhabiting a liminal space comparable to the American Romantic ideal, wherein we engage Emerson's destabilizing yet all-encompassing formative influence toward our own writerly ends. Considering the frequent use of ritual theory in our application of performance studies to poets and prose writers, each week we will invent our own class rituals in the spirit of the assigned authors by further considering how they challenge the limitations of culture (including academic inquiry) placed upon them.

Secondary readings will include critical and theoretical writing by Arnold van Gennep, Victor Turner, Julia Kristeva, Judith Butler, Richard Schechner, José Esteban Muñoz, Joseph Roach, and others. Primary texts will include a survey of well-known 19th century authors like Ralph Waldo Emerson, Mark Twain, Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, Frederick Douglass, Margaret Fuller, etc. Representative 20th century figures range as widely from Robert Frost and W.E.B. Dubois to Mohammad Ali. Contemporary writers include Douglass Kearney, Tracie Morris, Zadie Smith, Cutter Wood, Francesca Lia Block, along with translators like Christian Hawkey and Coleman Barks, plus an ambitious survey of performance and slam poets. We will continue to add to such lists. Importantly, authors on the syllabus serve only as loose models for us to collectively interrogate. Participants are encouraged to build a semester-long project based upon their unique interests, which ultimately must foreground their own attempts at self-reinvention. *The course satisfies the pre-1900 requirement for MAT and MEd students.*

ENGL 781: Gothic, Horror, and The Weird

Mon. 6:40pm – 8:30 pm (online)

Prof. Sian Silyn Roberts

Course Number: 42717

In this course, we're going to consume the creepy, the ghostly, the horrific, and the bizarre: in other words, we're delving into the capacious literary histories of Gothic, Horror, and (New) Weird fiction. Putting aside their indisputable sensational appeal and resisting the urge to reach for overcooked psychoanalytic explanations, what has compelled writers and readers, from the eighteenth century to the present, to experiment with the languages of fear, loathing, reverie, the grotesque, and the unknown? What innovations and narrative techniques distinguish Gothic, Horror, and (New) Weird, and how do they reproduce, update, and challenge their cultural conventions across literary histories and within Anglophone contexts? How have a diverse range of authors responded to and adapted these conventions? By exploring these questions and more, we will examine how sensational tales, from the eighteenth- to twenty-first centuries, may be read as arenas in which different notions of community, race, environment, gender, and individual subjectivity enter into conversation, confront, and revise one another. *The course satisfies the pre-1900 requirement for MAT and MEd students.*