Fall 2021

English Course Schedule
Exploring Creative Writing
Caplan

The class will introduce students to the major genres of creative writing: fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction. We will write, read, and discuss examples of each, with the goal of growing as writers and readers of literature. No previous experience with creative writing is required, only an interest in exploring different forms and techniques. Writing Course.

College Writing Seminar
Various professors

A focus on writing as a tool for learning and communicating. Students will develop critical thinking skills, productive writing habits, and a style appropriate for college-level writing. Several short papers and one longer paper are taken through stages of the writing process. Instructional formats include class discussion, workshop sessions, and individual conferences. A sequence of library assignments introduces students to the use of Beeghly Library resources as an integral part of the liberal arts education.
Video games are changing the experience of storytelling, and the stories they tell are rooted in ancient patterns and themes. Traditional stories are “good to think with” and so are video games. The European fairy tale will be a centerpiece of the course. Students can expect to read … and play… stories from a variety of oral, written, and digital genres.

We explore the question: Can video games save folklore?

Students will engage in critical, creative, and intensive study of folk tales, tale type classification, and folklore theory. Students will identify, explore, and critique the genres, procedures, and tropes used by video games to construct stories. In discussion, written work, and group gaming sessions, students will be introduced to principles of critical thinking. Students will gain competency in at least one digital storytelling platform in the process of a semester-long digital project, which will culminate in an interactive fiction game created by student design quads. Writing Course.
American literature imagines America. It seeks to understand the country’s greatest possibilities and most pressing challenges. In this class we will read novels, short stories, poems, and nonfictional works by authors as different as Anne Bradstreet, Frederick Douglass, Nathaniel West, and Claudia Rankine that take up this urgent task in order to understand better the country where we live and the stories we tell about it. **Diversity Course. Writing Course. Honors Option.**

This class will train students to analyze literature with more sophistication and precision. We will build professional skills; we will learn to read as literary scholars. To do so, we will examine short stories, a novel, poems, and a play. A set of questions will guide our discussions. How does literature help us to understand ourselves and each other? How profound is the knowledge that literature conveys? **Diversity Course. Writing Course.**
"It's a dangerous business, Frodo, going out your door. You step onto the road, and if you don't keep your feet, there's no knowing where you might be swept off to"
--- Bilbo Baggins

In this class, we'll study a range of 'quest' narratives, stories in which heroes and heroines set forth on challenging journeys of self discovery. We'll explore the ways in which "leaving home" provides the questing hero/ine opportunities to (re)define the self, experience passionate love, reconfigure relationships to friends and family, and prove oneself in challenges both martial and mental. While many of these tales express an optimistic belief that trials can be overcome regardless of what troubles us -- the loss of a loved one, the betrayal of a friend, or tragic errors of judgment -- the "return home" of several quest narratives is complicated by darker notes of tragedy.

We'll explore these and related themes as we study the finest and most famous quest narratives of the Middle Ages including Marie de France's Celtic tales of love, chivalry and magic, Sir Thomas Malory's *Quest for the Holy Grail*, and two tales of orphaned children on a quest to discover their identities, *Sir Degare*, and *Freine*. The medieval quest narrative has exercised a profound impact on subsequent literature and film, and to enrich our understanding of our continued fascination with this genre, we'll view a few modern films. We're likely to screen *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, *Stardust*, and *Mad Max: Fury Road*.

**Honors Option Available.** Fulfills university distribution Group III/ Humanities. English Department British Literature and pre-1800 requirements. Medieval and Renaissance Studies (Foundation course).
This course is designed to explore the influence and importance of storytelling, taking as its premise the idea that the art of storytelling extends beyond simple social behavior to create a mode of thoughtfully and intellectually engaging society and components of identity and culture. As such, students will read a variety of short stories from both classic and contemporary writers, and together, we’ll discuss the ways in which their authors employ literary elements to evidence these historical, cultural, and social issues in an efficient and artful manner. In particular, we’ll ask of each text the following: how does the short story transcend place and time to take on universal meaning, what literary elements help shape it and, more importantly, how does the story create meaning from art? In short: we’ll be trying to figure out how, exactly, short stories function and why, but it is my hope, more than anything, that you’ll use this class as an opportunity to consider, fight, and question the world around you. This course features readings by men, women, and non-binary authors as well as writers from a variety of diverse backgrounds and identities, including LGBTQIA+, African American, Latino and Native authors. Writing Option Available.
In this course, we’ll strengthen our understanding of the way narrative develops, functions, and shapes writing over time through a selection of longer-form fiction readings. More specifically, we’ll analyze and discuss five novellas and ask of each how the plot structure, character development, and narrative arc are developed and sustained throughout the duration of the work. We’ll consider, too, the value and function of the novella form and will no doubt debate whether such a unique qualifier is even necessary to distinguish a text longer than a short story, certainly, but shorter than a novel. Above all, we’ll continue to deepen our understanding of narrative, strengthen our abilities as close readers and writers, and develop a unique space and ability to converse about interpretation, art, and literature. This course features readings by writers from a variety of diverse backgrounds and identities, including LGBTQIA+ and BIPOC authors. 

Writing Option Available.
“If it can be written or thought, it can be filmed.” So claimed Stanley Kubrick. If you’ve seen *2001: A Space Odyssey*, Kubrick’s statement makes complete sense! In Introduction to Film we will explore the magic, so to speak, of movies. We’ll start with the basic elements of film—the visual, aural, and narrative components of the medium—and apply these to a variety of genres that will include the silent movie, drama, romantic comedy, western, war story, film noir, horror and science fiction, and the summer and holiday blockbuster. Assignments will include short response essays, a midterm and final exam, a research essay, and a short creative bit of original filmmaking. If Kubrick can film it, then so can you!
In the Middle Ages, the Mediterranean was the site of cultural interaction between Western Europe, the Islamic world, and the Far East. Trade, including the lucrative Silk Road traffic, war, and the diffusion of scholarship all contributed to significant cross-fertilization of ideas. This course will focus on literary texts that reflect the meeting of East, Middle East, and West in the years between 1000 and 1500. Reading will include both the Middle English and Persian versions of the Alexander romance, *Floire and Blanchflor*, Chrétien de Troyes, *Cligès*, selections from Christian, Jewish, and Muslim poetry, *Aucassin and Nicolette*, Marco Polo’s *Travels*, and stories from *The 1001 Nights*. Diversity Course. Writing Option Available. Fulfills university distribution Group III/Humanities. English Department British Literature and pre-1800 requirements. Medieval and Renaissance Studies (Core or Elective course).
Writing for the Workplace may be one of the most important classes that you’ll take. As Laura Brown claims in *The Only Business Writing Book You’ll Ever Need* (2019): “Business writing has changed tremendously over the past few decades, and it continues to change rapidly. At the same time, writing is becoming more important in business. We’re all writing more at work than ever before. The advent of the Internet, with the explosion of e-mail and mobile communication, coupled with globalization and virtual teaming, means that writing is the primary form of communication in many work settings. If you can’t write well, your chances for success are limited.” See, I told you how important this class will be! In the course, you’ll write a variety of documents that will include emails and memos, letters (good news, bad news, and persuasive), formal and informal reports, promotional materials (news releases, brochures, and web-based documents), and cover letters and resumes. In addition, we’ll learn the importance of revision for the process of writing clear, concise, and correct workplace communications. **Writing Course.**
As the advanced level offering in creative nonfiction—herein referred to as essay—writing, this course emphasizes a more sophisticated, rigorous approach to writing and revising essays, which are in themselves something of an indefinable genre, inherently hybrid forms whose lofty goal it is to weave truth (nonfiction) and beauty (creativity). This course will function as an innately critical writing workshop, designed for students who are serious about their writing and serious, too, in their pursuit of advancing and polishing their work. As this course is particularly designed for juniors and seniors with prior experience in essay writing, I expect all participants to dedicate ample time reading, writing, and thoroughly and substantially revising—‘reseeing’—each work. The nature of our small class and our flexible, open schedule means you’ll be producing work and revising regularly, and you can expect ample freedom in both the content you create and the schedule you keep for yourself. Students are expected to come to class with mature ideas, interests, and risks that they hope to explore on the page.

Writing Course.
The play’s the thing…” Join fellow lovers of the page and the stage and release your inner Shakespeare (or August Wilson or Marsha Norman…). In this class, we will analyze traditional play structure, study the nature and process of playwriting as an art form, and explore how playwrights develop ideas through character and action. Each week, you will complete writing assignments and exercises, share your work, and respond to others' writing. Your work will culminate in the completion of two short one-act plays. An adventurous spirit and openness to collaboration strongly recommended! Prerequisite: ENG 105 (or credit) plus a college theatre or college creative writing course, or permission of the instructor. Cross-listed as THEA 369. Writing Course.
The fifty years between 1785 and 1835 saw one of most significant outpourings of artistic creativity in world history. Extraordinary poets (Wordsworth, Keats, Byron), pathbreaking novelists (Austen, Mary Shelley, Scott), and a variety of literary eccentrics (Blake, De Quincy) utterly transformed British literature and gave us the contemporary meaning of some of the most important words in the lexicon: “nature,” “culture,” “imagination,” “artist,” and “literature.”

In this course, we will read a wide variety of literature, with a particular emphasis on poetry. Topics will include Romanticism’s roots in the eighteenth century; theories of creativity, beauty, and artistic inspiration; Romantic opposition to the slave trade; and the relationship of Romanticism to revolution, religion, and love.
“Like the concept of *tradition*, a national soul is one that is reached for when the supposed signifier is threatened, or is of positive use when dealing with an *other*” -- “The Russian Soul ‘Englished’” by Catherine Brown. English translations of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky appeared at the turn of the twentieth century. Bewilderment, irritation, and admiration were among the first reactions to the concept of *Russian soul/русская душа* found in these ‘Englished’ novels. In this course we will follow the traces of the first readers of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky in English, notably Virginia Woolf and D.H. Lawrence. We will also focus on the serial publication of the novels and reception by the first Russian readers. Students will read Tolstoy’s *War & Peace* and Dostoevsky’s *The Idiot* -- published serially at the same time and in the same literary journal, *The Russian Herald*. Questions of seriality, literary relations, and intertextuality will be explored. Students will contribute to an ongoing digital chronicle of 19th-century Russian literature on the SCALAR platform. **Writing Course.**
The fiction, poetry, and plays in this course will take us on a tour of the 28% of the globe that was once a part of the British Empire. We will read literature from the Caribbean, Africa, South Asia, and Ireland. Writing in English, the language of their former colonizers, postcolonial writers negotiate complexities of power and history as they give voice to the postcolonial experience and landscape. They take the language and make it new, writing some of the most challenging and exciting literature of the past 100 years. To better understand the positions of these writers and the history of postcolonial studies, we’ll explore topics such as cosmopolitanism, nationalism, postcolonialism and diaspora, and the relationship between postcolonial literature and the changing canon. We will read writers like Bapsi Sidwa, Nuruddin Farah, Chinelo Okparanta, Colum McCann, Kei Miller, Ama Ata Aidoo, and Caryl Phillips. Diversity Course. Writing Course.