Fall 2020

English Course Schedule
Exploring Creative Writing
Butcher

Calling all writers, all lovers of creative language, all tinkers of text: this class is new and waiting, designed especially with you in mind. Exploring Creative Writing is the ideal primer for potential or non-majors who wish to study and explore three distinct creative writing genres (literary fiction, nonfiction, and poetry) before enrolling in a single-genre workshop. The goal of this course is to help new OWU creative writers self-identify and form a larger literary community here on campus while growing creatively as individuals. Throughout the course of the semester, students will read and study a wide variety of creative texts, develop and implement a critical vocabulary, and sharpen their critical thinking and editorial skills through workshopping their classmates’ manuscripts. Students will also simultaneously draft their own new creative material through exercises that target genre, certainly, but also point-of-view, form, voice, and structure. Students should expect to produce ample writing throughout the semester and share this work with others regularly in a formal workshop environment. Course work will culminate in a final portfolio comprised of revised drafts of all formal assignments, notes taken during workshop, and a thoughtful reflection on the revision process for each assignment. 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.
This course will assist students in developing and strengthening reading approaches and strategies as we examine literary words by Black writers. We will look at short fiction by writers such as Toni Morrison, Ernest Gaines, Charles Johnson, John Wideman, Toni Cade Bambara, Alice Walker, James Baldwin, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, and Charles Chesnutt.
Once upon a time, long before the Age of Oprah, writers who had lived through something fascinating or terrible or both would turn their experiences into fiction; nowadays, however, these stories equally take the form of creatively rendered memoirs—a sub-genre of the diverse and expansive genre we typically call creative nonfiction, or “essay.” Between the 1940s and 1990s, the number of books published under this category tripled; more recently, the Neilson Bookscan reports a recorded 400% increase in the number of memoirs published between 2004 and today, with many of these soon thereafter adapted into award-winning, feel good Blockbusters. What does this mean? It means, in part, that the form is considered both artful and necessary, that experiences once deemed so humiliating or painful that people worked to hide them are now so remunerative that some writers even make them up. But where do we draw the line between what is fiction and what is fact, what is real and what is imagined, what happened in our lives with what might happen on the page? In this class, we’ll study some of the most innovative, genre-defying examples of the form, works that tackle and engage ideas of creative liberty, self-expression, and exaggeration in pursuit of better art. We’ll work daily to engage and understand the idea that memoir is less interested in the past than it is the act of remembering and the ways past selves continue to inform who we are in the present. And perhaps most importantly, we’ll test our theories and the genre’s limitations through creative exercises that help us hone in on why the genre can feel so tricky. In short, we’ll talk a bit about truth, identity, and veracity in art, then we’ll throw our own stories at the wall to see what makes them stick. **Honors Course.**
This course is an introduction to literary studies. It serves two main purposes: (1) to help students acquire the analytical skills to interpret works of literature written across a range of time periods in a variety of genres; and (2) to help students reflect upon the value and purpose of literary studies in contemporary culture as well as in their own lives. By the end of the semester students should have acquired a solid foundation in the skills necessary to succeed as a major in English should they choose to do so, as well as a sense of why they might wish to do so. **Writing Course.**

It is said that fiction is the lie that tells the truth. All are welcome to join in this spirited workshop one night a week with intentions of writing fiction, improving their fiction and moving their fiction beyond the ordinary. We will discuss all things fiction from the elements of short story to the wide culture within which we write. We will discuss “the new” and ideas of originality. We will discuss what we mean to each other and to ourselves. Rather than answers we will seek the deeper questions that surround us and these we will embroider into our work. **Writing Course.**
From its inception, the word “essay” implied a sense of experimentation, and in this course, that’s exactly what we’ll do: attempt, to the best of our ability, to weave the abstract qualities of beauty and truth in an effort to construct artful narratives of our lives. This course takes as its premise the idea that nonfiction writing and essays inherently move beyond personal experience to include and engage larger issues of identity, society, and culture; essays enlarge, inhabit, and assume positions that must necessarily resonate with readers unfamiliar to the writer and his or her world. Throughout the course of the semester, students will read and study a wide variety of both contemporary and canonical essayists and essayistic forms—including personal essays, narrative essays, braided essays, lyric essays, experimental essays, and graphic and video essays, to name a few—and together, we’ll discuss the craft and formalistic guidelines inherent to each while simultaneously drafting our own through exercises that target point-of-view, form, voice, and structure. Students should expect to produce ample writing throughout the semester and to share this work with others regularly in a formal workshop environment. The course will culminate in a final portfolio comprised of original drafts and revised work, notes taken during workshop, and a thoughtful reflection. **Writing Course.**

This class will teach students how to write poetry. We will read, discuss, and write poems in order to learn how they are made and how we can make them. No knowledge of poetry is required, only an interest in learning about the art form. **Writing Course.**
In this class, we will study and practice cultural criticism: that is, interpretative and evaluative writing for a general audience. Students will write and revise reviews (e.g., book, film, music) and try their hand at other forms, such as the critical analysis of a cultural trend. Other assignments will include peer editing and a substantial diet of reading, since good writing depends on the study of first-rate examples. While this class cultivates many of the skills that are central to the study of English, it is suitable for all majors. Writing Course.

In this course, students learn a contemporary approach to business communication commonly found in today’s workplaces, including writing letters, memos, emails, social media posts, blogs, resumes, cover letters, reports, and LinkedIn profiles. Students sharpen writing, editing, and page design competencies. The course considers business communication from an audience-centered and purpose-driven perspective. Since oral communication skills are vital in the workplace, this course requires both formal and informal oral presentations. 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.

An introduction to screenplay form and technique, this workshop moves from text readings and film viewings to a number of varied writing assignments, including 2-3 page exercises, short scripts of 5-10 pages, and a completed dramatic script of about 25 pages. All work is to be revised. Scripts are critiqued in workshop sessions and individual conferences. Writing Course.
There are few stories of adventure more riveting than that of King Arthur and his knights. We’ll read a wide variety of Arthurian legends: beginning with the earliest chronicles of Geoffrey of Monmouth, turning then to the Celtic tales of love and magic by England's first female writer, Marie de France, and concluding with the chivalric romances of Sir Thomas Malory, Sir Gareth, and Sir Lancelot du Lake.

Readings and discussions will be focused primarily upon fictional texts, but we will also situate the literature in relation to the ideals of chivalric knighthood, the medieval practices of jousting & tournament, the psychology of love as expressed in courtly literature, artistic illustrations of Arthurian literature in medieval manuscripts, and the role of women as writers and readers of Arthurian legend.

In order to better understand our culture's continuing fascination with the legends of Arthur, we will also view several famous films (Boorman's Excaliber, Erec Rohmer's Perceval) and consider how they reinvent Arthurian legend.

**Writing Option available.** *Fulfills university distribution requirements for Group III/Humanities, English Department requirements in British Literature and pre-1800, and Medieval and Renaissance Studies (Core or Elective course).*
The Victorian age (c. 1832-1901) witnessed unprecedented technological, psychological, and sociological changes. In this course, we will read widely in the extraordinary literature that arose in response to these transformations. Texts will include fiction by Stevenson, Dickens, and Eliot; poetry by Tennyson, the Brownings, and Swinburne; and non-fiction prose by Carlyle, Darwin, and Ruskin. We will also find time to read some nonsense poetry and working-class literature—and to savor what is probably the funniest play in the English language.

What did it mean to be a creative writer in the English Renaissance? How did Renaissance authors understand the nature of their work? Why is this gentleman on fire? This course attempts to get inside the heads, hearts, and habits of Renaissance authors as they crafted some of their most enduring works. We will dig deeply into a relatively small number of these works, taking time to immerse ourselves in the culture in which they were conceived, the biographical experiences that sparked their creation, and the compositional processes by which they were brought to life. We will strive to do justice both to the cultural distinctiveness of Renaissance authors—what makes them different from us—as well as to the shared needs, passions, and contradictions that reach across the centuries to connect them to us. Writing Option available. Fulfills university distribution requirements for Group III/Humanities, English Department requirements in British Literature and pre-1800, and Medieval and Renaissance Studies (Core or Elective course).
This course will examine narratives of Slavery—in both literary and cinematic form, looking specifically at features such as audience literacy and audience positioning, polyvocality, authorial/directorial vision, (visual) imagery, socio-cultural, and historical context. Works to be examined will likely include Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*, Grace Nichols’s *I is a long memoried woman*, Charles Burnett’s *Nightjohn*, Steven Spielberg’s *Amistad*, Haile Gerima’s *Sankofa*, Carlos Diegues’ *Quilombo*, Steve McQueen’s *12 Years A Slave*, and Kasi Lemmons’ *Harriet*. **Writing Option available.** Cross-listed as BWS 369. Diversity Course.
Linguistics is the study of a language's sound system, word-creation systems, and sentence-construction methods. The history of the English language concerns how these have changed over time. In this class, students will begin their study of English by looking at the Old English of *Beowulf* fame, turning then to the Middle English used by Chaucer and the anonymous bards of Celtic fairie, and then the Early Modern English of Shakespeare and Milton. We'll conclude by considering how select modern English varieties (Appalachian, the African American Vernacular) emerged in America.

Since language is inseparable from the lives of the individuals who use it, we'll also explore English in its broader cultural context.

**Writing Option available.** In addition to counting towards the English major, this class counts as a Group III Humanities course, and as an AMRS core course for Medieval Studies and Renaissance Studies. It is also a requirement for those in English Education (e.g. the licensure track).

All American literature might be said to offer one long argument about “freedom,” its definition, possibilities, and limitations. This class will examine American literature’s struggle to achieve this elusive state. We will analyze novels, poems, essays, and a film that seek to define political, social, sexual, and psychological freedom. Three focuses will shape our discussion. We will consider literature about slavery, the 1960s, and the very concept of what it means to be “free.” Assigned writers will include Frederick Douglass, Walt Whitman, Adrienne Rich, and Joan Didion. This class satisfies the senior seminar requirement for the Literature concentration of the English major. **Writing Option available.**
This class—in conjunction with the mandatory .5 credit course during the spring semester—will focus on the process of creating, editing, and publishing a student literary journal. Students are involved in every aspect of publication, including soliciting submissions, selecting and editing student manuscripts, working with writers in the revision of work, designing the magazine’s aesthetic and layout, and launching the journal in the spring.