

## ***COURSE DESCRIPTIONS ENGLISH DEPARTMENT: FALL 2022***

NOTE: If you have any questions about how a course ‘counts’ in the major, please see your English Major Faculty Advisor. If you do not have a Faculty Advisor, please contact department Associate Chair, Prof. Seamus O’Malley [seamus.omalley@yu.edu](mailto:seamus.omalley@yu.edu)

**Media Exit Project:** If using the OLD requirements (only available for students who declared their major prior to Fall 2021 semester), enroll in English 4002 with the name of your Track Co-ordinator: Mintz or Gewirtz and contact that person to get the directions and deadlines. Beginning with the current semester, the media exit project will be completed as part of an advanced course taken with our media studies instructors.

**CW Portfolio:** For the creative writing concentration, you complete this requirement in ENGLISH 1900 if you have not done so already. If you are graduating this spring or next fall and have not done the exit project, you should enroll in this course this term to complete it. Any creative writing students who have already taken a previous creative writing class is also eligible to take it, and it is strongly recommended for all writing minors.

**Internships:** *Must be approved for academic credit before being started.* Fill out the form <https://www.yu.edu/registrar/forms> and give description of the internship duties to your faculty advisor or your media advisor. Internships are required for media studies students using the old requirements, OR for new media studies students wishing to earn a concentration in journalism or advertising.

## **MEDIA AND CREATIVE WRITING COURSES**

**ENGL 1502 Feature Writing**  
**M 6-8:30PM**

**Jason Gewirtz**

This class focuses on the many aspects of how to write features on digital journalism platforms. We will start the course by learning the basics but you will be doing a lot of writing. There’s no better way to improve your skills and to learn how to write better... than to write.

The course will cover story idea generation, story production, how to pitch your stories, ethics, best practices, details on the state of the business, high-end/highly produced digital features, basic photography, graphics production and what is sometimes referred to as second day stories... where we take news of the day or breaking news and then pull a specific thread to explore a cause or personal story impacted by that day-of or breaking news story.

We have also made an agreement with the student editors of the YU Observer this year that will allow students in this course to work with the news-site to pitch their feature stories and to have them published online and in the newspaper when appropriate.

In this class, you will learn like students, but you’ll be asked to work like modern day digital journalists and features writers.

Elective for Media Tracks; Counts for Creative Writing Track; Counts for Writing minor. Pre-req: ENGL 1100 or ENGL 1200H.

**ENGL 1600/MAR 3323 Advertising Copywriting/ Creative Advertising**  
**T 5:30-8PM**

**Erik Mintz**

Good advertising doesn't have to be an oxymoron. In this course we'll examine what it takes to make an ad that's persuasive-- one that entertains or makes us laugh, cry, think, or change our minds-- while simultaneously accomplishing the goal of selling a product, service or just getting us to nod our heads in agreement. By studying the masters who've done and still do exceptional advertising we'll begin to understand how to create advertising that people actually want to see and watch and share. Through weekly course assignments and teacher and student critique we'll develop the skills to write effective print, TV, radio, and digital/new media advertising. We'll also undertake an appreciation of design, layout, and type treatments and apply those skills and techniques to the work.

Required for Advertising track; Elective for other Media Tracks, Same as MARK 3323 Pre-req: ENGL 1100 or ENGL 1200H

**ENGL 1724 Topics: Visual Narratives**  
**T/Th 1:40PM-2:55PM/1:25-2:40PM**

**Emily Singer**

This course will explore visual storytelling as a means of graphic expression. Through projects including collage/photomontage, creating a setting and simple characters for a fable or children's story, and a book that describes an event or process, students will explore single-frame, multi-frame and sequential narrative. The class will be primarily digital but will also involve some physical image-making, as we explore techniques of layering, transparency, and compositing images.

Elective for Media Tracks; same as ARTS 3969. Pre-req: ARTS 3009 or permission of instructor.

**ENGL 1728 Media Revolutions, Freedman (media X-list)**  
**T/Th 9AM-10:15AM**

**Prof. Jeffrey Freedman**

This course will survey the history of media from the ancient world to the present. Taking 'media' in the broadest sense to encompass the full range of communications technologies, we will begin with the papyri scrolls of ancient Greece and move from there through the manuscript codex of the Middle Ages, the printed book of the age of Gutenberg, newspapers in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, radio and film in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the internet and social media of our own digital age. Several recurrent questions will frame our survey of media landscapes: How, to what ends, and in what institutional settings are particular media used? How do they affect modes of thinking? And what are the relations of different media to the various historical forms of religious, political, and economic power?

Elective for Media Tracks; Same as HIST 2909 Pre-req: ENGL 1100 or ENGL 1200H

**ENGL 1815 Writing Women's Lives**  
**T/Th 11:50AM-1:05PM**

**Prof. Ann Peters**

We'll be asking a number of questions in the course. Can a personal story really be just about "me?" How much of our stories are really about others—family and community? What happens when we take the seemingly shapeless events of our lives and try to shape them into a story? Can we say that a memoir is really true? What

part does fiction play in the writing of a life story, and what part does autobiography play in some writers' fiction? In this course we will study examples of women writing about their lives and practice writing our own autobiographical narratives, using examples by some masters of the form to help us find our own voice and style. Some of the writers we'll study this semester include Joan Didion, Mary McCarthy, Maxine Hong Kingston, Jessmyn West, Joyce Johnson, Patricia Hamp, Jamaica Kincaid, Vivian Gornick, and Maggie Nelson. You will write one short analysis paper, weekly short writing exercises, including two mimic exercises in a style of a writer you admire, and one longer memoir piece written in two drafts.

Counts for Creative Writing Track; Open to Others; Counts for Writing Minor; Pre-req: ENGL 1100 or 1200H.

## **LITERATURE COURSES**

**ENGL 2000 Ways of Reading**  
**M/W 3:10-4:25PM/3:35-4:50PM**

**Prof. Matt Miller**

Who decides what texts mean? Why are some interpretations better than others? How much does the author's intention matter? How does language generate meaning? In this foundational course for English majors, we will study a variety of texts, including some classic literature, as we consider major debates about meaning and interpretive practices that have emerged throughout the last hundred years.

This course is more about how we read than what we read. The goal is to show how meaning is created through critical reading and to help you learn to read and interpret works contextually and closely. To this end, our course has several objectives: students should leave this course with a clear sense of the variety of theoretical approaches available to them as readers, have a sense of why these approaches matter in apprehending all different kinds of texts, and be able to manifest their ability to read texts in different ways through verbal and written modes of communication.

You may find that the issues and readings difficult at first. But the course is also enjoyable and will help you gain the skills you'll need to read and write critically about all kinds of texts, not just literary ones. We will read poems and a novel, but we will also be interpreting videos, essays, photographs, and other kinds of "texts" you encounter every day (and yes, a photograph can be read as a text—we'll learn how and why). Different sections of the course take up major issues of concern in literary and cultural studies, issues like authorship, language, reading, subjectivity, ideology, aesthetics, and history.

This course is a requirement for English majors and minors (but not for the writing minor). It fulfills a requirement in the SCW core curriculum: "Interpreting Literature and the Arts." Pre-Requisite: English 1100 or 1200H.

## **LITERATURE COURSES: Category II (Survey) Courses**

**ENGL 2004 Survey of British Literature II (II B Intro)**  
**M/W 1:25PM-2:40PM**

**Prof. Seamus O'Malley**

This course introduces you to some of the most influential writing in Western literature. We study British poetry and fiction written from 1670-1870 in the retrospectively tagged literary ages: Restoration, Eighteenth Century, Romantic, and Victorian. British literature laid the groundwork for our American literature and influenced English-speaking global literatures, much of which today still alludes to, while rewriting, the texts we'll study. Although this course is a survey stressing the development and changes of literary topics, forms, and genres, we will also study historical influences to which the literature responded. The reading chosen offers a compelling

variety, but we'll be focusing on the theme of humanity's place in the universe: How do we relate to the universe? How do we depict it? Is the self in harmony with the world, or alienated from it? And how do individuals relate to others when society lacks common answers to these questions? Writers will include John Milton, Jonathan Swift, William Wordsworth, Mary Shelley, and Christina Rossetti.

This is a survey course. It is a "Traditions" course in English designed to pose questions about how texts, interpretive communities and reading practices generate histories. It is an Introductory course. It fulfills a Survey II B requirement for the English major. It can fulfill a requirement "Interpreting Literature and the Arts." Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H.

**ENGL 2600 Historical Topics: Global Short Fiction**  
**T/Th 1:35-2:50PM**

**Prof. Ann Peters**

This is a course about the short story as a literary form with a focus on short stories from around the world. We will acquire a technical vocabulary for discussing how short stories are made and how they can be interpreted. Why do stories matter? Why do we read and write them? What are the limits of the form? And how does reading stories from around the world help us better understand different cultures and help us better understand ourselves? Works will include (but not be limited to) stories by Achebe, Beckett, Borges, Chekhov, Dinesen, Ginzburg, Joyce, Kafka, Garcia Marquez, Mueenuddin, Murakami, Petrushevskaya, Poe, Singer, and Yi Yun Li. Course Requirements: One 7-10 page paper, regular reading quizzes, four reading response letters (2 pages), and a final exam.

Interpreting Literature and the Arts, IIB Intro; Pre-req: ENGL 1100 or ENGL 1200H

## **LITERATURE COURSES: Category III (Topics) Courses**

**ENGL 2710 Introduction to Fiction (III B Intro.)**  
**M/W 10:25AM-11:40AM**

**Prof. Seamus O'Malley**

Works of fiction are stories about things that aren't really true. So why has humanity been fascinated by them throughout recorded history? This course aims to improve how you understand fiction by looking at short stories and novels. We'll investigate how fiction functions via the field of knowledge known as Narratology. We will ask questions like: How is meaning generated by stories? How do thoughts become part of a story's fabric? How does characterization work? How does narrative perspective affect the way we relate to a story? What is the relationship between the plot of a story, and the form by which we receive that plot? Why do we take pleasure in reading narratives? What kinds of pleasure do we feel or know? The requirements for the course are two essays, a midterm, in-class cold-call oral responses, and one final exam.

This is a "Forms, Identities, Reading Practices" course in English, designed to pose questions about who writes and reads for whom, in what ways, and why does it matter? It fulfills a III B Intro. requirement for the English Major. It fulfills Interpreting Literature and the Arts. Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H.

**ENGL 2793 Novels and Screens**  
**T/Th 10:25-11:40AM**

**Prof. Nora Nachumi**

What happens when a novel is adapted into a film? Are some better than others? Who gets to decide what texts mean? How do novels and films generate meaning? Over the course of the semester we will read a selection of

novels and short stories which pose very different challenges to those who adapt them in terms of their structure and content. Each text will be considered alongside one or more film adaptation, ranging from those that are “faithful,” or “straight” adaptations (e.g. *Emma*, *Jane Eyre*) to those that are much “looser” in their relationship to the original (e.g. *Clueless*, *Blade Runner*). We will study the strengths and limitations of these adaptations, paying special attention to the different modes of representation they employ. What can written words do that films cannot and vice versa? What are some of the historical and cultural contexts, the marketing goals and the audience’s knowledge that influence the makers and viewers of these adaptations? Requirements: short assignments (quizzes on the novels and films), short writing assignments including informal response & scene analyses, two formal essays.

Interpreting Literature and the Arts, IIIB Intro; Pre-req: ENGL 1100 or ENGL 1200H.

**ENGL 2795 Magic Realism and Literature of the Uncanny**  
**M/W 4:40-5:55PM / 5-6:15PM**

**Prof. Matt Miller**

“Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendía was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice.”

--Gabriel García Márquez, *A Hundred Years of Solitude*

“A book must be the axe for the frozen sea inside us.”

--Franz Kafka

This course will be an imaginative journey into what happens in fiction when the real, normal or everyday confront the unreal, dreamlike, or downright bizarre. The conjunction in the quotation of the extraordinary situation, with an ordinary memory, but of a discovery that sounds just plain odd is just one example of the mind-bending prose we will explore together. Not only that, but the novels, stories, and essays we'll read are internationally recognized as some of the greatest writers of our time: including Italo Calvino, Franz Kafka, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, and Toni Morrison, two of them winners of the Nobel Prize in Literature. On our journey, we'll explore memories, alternative realities, fantastic places, and magical transformations into the extraordinary. Toward the end of the class, we will consider the relationship between what is often called the “magic realism” of these writers and other types of art such as painting and film.

This class fulfills a III C Intro. requirement for the English Major. It also fulfills the general requirement, Interpreting Literature and the Arts. Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H.

**ENGL 2903 French Women Writers: From Enlightenment to Existentialism**  
**M/W 11:55AM-1:10PM**

**Prof. Rachel Mesch**

This course traces how French women writers have explored key questions surrounding their female identity by engaging with the literary and ideological movements of their time. As we make our way through a series of fascinating novels from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, each module of the class will be organized around the central question of the novel at hand:

We'll ask **What Is Love?** as we read Françoise de Graffigny's *Letters from a Peruvian Woman* (1747), a story in letters exchanged between an Incan princess kidnapped by European invaders and her fiancé, who may or may not be waiting for her. Next we'll consider **What Is Marriage?** with George Sand's *Indiana* (1832), the story of a young woman unhappily married to a violent man, and the drama that unfolds in a series of unexpected love triangles that traverse race and class. Then we'll turn to **What is Madness?** in Rachilde's *Monsieur Vénu*s (1884), which draws on popular medical literature and leaves the reader wondering who gets to decide when a woman's (mis)behavior is deemed insane. We'll ask **What is Independence?** with Colette's *The Vagabond* (1910), in which a woman attempts to support herself after the end of her tumultuous marriage to a cheating husband. Finally, we'll explore **What is Liberty?** in Simone de Beauvoir's *A Woman Destroyed*

(1968) a collection of three short stories in which women consider their own destiny as they grapple with choices they have made, and whether they had any choice at all. The novels will be contextualized in a variety of ways: through excerpts from contemporary feminist critics, early French medical and scientific texts about women, and nineteenth- and twentieth-century French women's magazines. Students will gain an understanding for the sweep of French literary tradition, while examining how fiction can function as a mode of critique. In the process, they will develop their own literary analysis and close reading skills, as well as an appreciation for how cultural and historical context can frame their literary interpretations.

Interpreting Literature and the Arts; IIID Intro; Pre-req: ENGL 1100 or ENGL 1200H; Counts for minor in Women's Studies.

**ENGL 2925H Topics: Female Friendship, IIC Intro**  
**T/Th 3-4:15PM**

**Prof. Ann Peters**

In this course, we'll explore the theme of female friendship in five relatively contemporary novels from five different countries: Italy, Great Britain, the United States, Hungary, and Canada. (I also ask that you read—or reread—Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* before the semester begins.) We'll begin with Elena Ferrante's *My Brilliant Friend* (2011) and use the novel as a touchstone, returning to it for the rest of the term. After *My Brilliant Friend*, we'll read Muriel Spark's *Girls of Slender Means* (1963), Toni Morrison's *Sula* (1973), Magda Szabo's *The Door* (1987), and Margaret Atwood's *Cat's Eye* (1988). We'll end the semester viewing the recent HBO adaptation of *My Brilliant Friend*.

The story of women's friendship is the central theme, but our exploration will take us in all sorts of directions. In reading *My Brilliant Friend*, for example, we may find ourselves talking about class conflict or ambivalence over maternal roles or the effects of education. Or in Atwood's *Cat's Eye*, we'll discuss how the novel of female friendship works as a bildungsroman or coming-of-age story and will look at the changing status of women in the seventies. In our reading of all five novels, we'll consider the varying formal experiments employed and how the structure of the novels connects to subject matter. This course will be taught as a seminar. At the beginning of each class, I'll ask one of you to open the discussion with two or three guiding questions.

Requirements for the course include regular reading quizzes, five short 2-3 page reading response papers, a final paper (7-10 pages), and a final exam.

HONORS: Interpreting Literature & the Arts: IIC Intro; Pre-req: ENGL 1100 or ENGL 1200H; Counts Toward Women's Studies Minor; HONORS or 3.5 OR above GPA.

## **ADVANCED LITERATURE COURSE: Category III (Topics)**

**ENGL 3920 Topics: Jane Austen in Her Time**  
**T/Th 1:35-2:50PM**

**Prof. Nora Nachumi**

Jane Austen's novels have been called "timeless" in the sense that they still appeal to readers today. In this course we examine the assertion by considering the novels as products of their time. In this course we will think about Austen's development as a writer. We will read all of Austen's work in chronological order, paying particular attention to cultural and historical contexts that helped shape the novels and to learn about the issues with which the novels engage.

**Course Goals and Objectives:** By the end of the semester, students will have read and thought about Austen's work and her development as a writer, have considered contemporary and current debates relevant to the novels and will have analyzed Austen's work and engaged with arguments about the texts via discussion and in their own written work.

**Course requirements:** reading quizzes, short response papers, two formal essays.

**Interpreting Literature and the Arts:** IIC ADV; Counts for Women's Studies Minor; Pre-req: ENGL 1100 or ENGL 1200H; Students must have an "A" grade in ENGL1100/1200H or have taken at least one introductory level lit beyond ENGL 1100/1200H.

## SUMMER COURSES

### ENGL 2794 Short Fiction and Film (Summer 1, fully remote)

**Prof. Nora Nachumi**

A significant number of films begin as short stories. Among them are Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds* (1963) and *Rear Window* (1954), classic comedies like *All About Eve* (1950) and *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1958) and modern comedy-dramas—like *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* (1947, 2016). Classic examples of film noir, like Ernest Hemingway's *The Killers*, and westerns, like *High Noon* and *3:10 to Yuma* (1947, 2007) owe their lives to short stories. So do films widely regarded as masterpieces of science fiction, like *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), *Minority Report* (2002) and *Arrival* (2016).

In this course we will examine the distance—and difference—between films adaptations of short stories and the fiction upon which the movies are based. Film adaptations of novels inevitably require filmmakers to condense the material, to make decisions about what to keep and what to omit. Short stories, in contrast, invite those who adapt them to expand upon the original text. Over the course of five weeks we will examine a series of films alongside the stories upon which they were based. Focusing on both content and form, we will consider and evaluate the reasons and methods by which the filmmakers extend the original tale. Along the way, we also will learn about the narrative, auditory and cinematic techniques involved in adapting a story from one genre into another.

Among the stories and films we may consider are: Stagecoach"/*Stagecoach*; "It Had to Be Murder"/*Rear Window*, "The Killers"/*The Killers*, "The Tin Star"/*High Noon*, "*The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*"/*The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* (1947, 2017), "Minority Report"/*Minority Report*, "Story of Your Life"/*Arrival*.

Assignments: short writing assignments (quizzes, reading responses, scene analyses), 1 short essay & 1 longer paper.

Open to men and women. Pre-Req: ENGL 1100 or 1200H; or A in ENGL 1010; or FYWR 1020. SCW - Interpreting Literature and the Arts, III C Intro. YC - Satisfies a major/minor or elective requirement. SSSB - Humanities/English Literature.

### ENGL 2920 Humor in American Literature (Summer 2, fully remote)

**Gina Grimaldi**

Great American Literature can seem like a grim collection of tragic deaths, hard-knock lives, scandal, and disappointment. But as Mark Twain remarked, "Humor? It is nature's effort to harmonize conditions. The further the pendulum swings out over woe the further it is bound to swing back over mirth." Our class will focus on this harmonizing mirth. We will cover comedic works from American authors—some of them known for their humor, some of them not as much—that represent a variety of humor genres, including anecdotal narrative, dark wit, absurdism, local color, farce, and political satire. We will also spend a session examining humor in two key 20th-century media: radio and early television. Our texts progress chronologically from about 1800 to present day, as we attempt to cover important literary works within their historical contexts and make connections among writers, eras, and senses of humor. Requirements include two formal writing assignments, discussion board activity, and a short presentation.

Open to men and women. Pre-req: ENGL 1100 or 1200H; or A in ENGL 1010; or FYWR 1020/H. SCW: Interpreting Literature and the Arts, III C Intro; Counts towards Women's Studies minor. YC: English major and minor. SSSB: Humanities./English Literature.