

SCW English Department Spring 2017 Course Descriptions

(If you have any questions about how a course 'counts' in the major, please see your English Faculty Advisor; if you still have questions, please contact Prof. Linda Shires shires@yu.edu and if you do not have an English Major Advisor, please contact Prof. Matt Miller matt.w.miller@gmail.com)

ENGL 1501 News Writing and Reporting Wed. 5:30-8

Prof. Avital Goldschmidt

This course will focus on fundamentals of journalism, featuring news writing skills and reporting and interviewing techniques. The skills of gathering information and writing news on deadline are valuable across industries. This course will teach you to consider the facts, choose words and details carefully, cite sources, and research background materials.

Required for the Journalism track in Media Studies. Elective for other Media Studies Tracks. Cross-lists with Creative Writing as elective. Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H.

ENGL 1610 Advanced Advertising Copywriting Tues. 6:00-8:30

cross-list with Sy Syms Marketing 3323

Prof. Erik Mintz

What does it take to get a job as a copywriter in the advertising business? A good book, for sure. The "book" means your portfolio, the spec ads that you'll need to show to a prospective employer. This course will be an intensive workshop devoted to further exploring what it takes to get your print, TV, and Internet ideas whipped into shape. For those who haven't taken the preliminary Advertising Copywriting course (ENG 1600), we will review principles discussed in that class and then go full force into trying to make creative, provocative and smart ads that could compel a viewer of the ad to act upon the message. *Note: For portfolio to be in presentation shape, student should be prepared to work on the "art" side of the ad as well, doing a semi-professional job in Photoshop, with her own hand-drawn artistic ability, or by enlisting the art talents of a fellow student.*

Required for students on the Advertising Track; Elective for other Media Studies Tracks. Pre-requisite: ENGL 1100 or 1200H.

ENGL 1651 Developing Effective Messages Mon. 5:00-7:30

Prof. Deb Brown

Do you ever wonder why some brands' messages resonate with you while others don't make any impact? Developing effective messages that break through the clutter and get your attention is a key component of public relations. The course will include individual papers, workshops, and a team project that focus on developing effective messages and influencing audiences. For the project, you will develop and launch a new product in a crowded marketplace. You will learn how to create compelling messages for your new product and each team will present to a panel of judges who are professionals in the

industry. Your final project can be used as a portfolio piece for internship or job interviews!

Required for the PR track; elective for other media tracks. Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H

ENGL 1722 Topics in Communications: Magazine Journalism

T/Th 12:00-1:15

Prof. Lynda Johnson

Mastering good journalism skills for the evolving media culture is key for today's journalist. With an emphasis on creativity, formatting, and audience, this course should also appeal to those in creative writing, other media tracks, or computer studies. Students learn the nuances of magazine development. Classes focus on how to develop and write all the editorial components from dynamic cover lines to compelling stories for both print and digital magazines. Each student will create her very own magazine~ which will be an exciting spring project that later can be included in a job application portfolio.

This course is recommended for the Journalism track, an elective for all media tracks, cross-listed with CW. Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H

ENGL 1800 Introduction to Creative Writing

M/W 11:55-1:10

Prof. Joy Ladin

How do writers write? Where do stories and poems come from, and what makes the good ones so compelling? This class will take a hands-on approach to exploring these questions, enabling everyone – people who have been doing creative writing forever, and people who find it mysterious and daunting – to learn and practice the nuts and bolts of creative writing. The class will be divided into two parts, the first focused on writing stories (fictional, autobiographical, and non-fictional stories about others) and the second focused on transforming ordinary language into poetic language – into language that means more than it says, that can make descriptions of ordinary things and scenes seem like metaphors for mysteries of existence. Every week, we will spend one class discussing an assigned reading that highlights techniques you will then practice in a short, ungraded exercise; in the other class, we will discuss several of those exercises to see how these techniques work when we use them ourselves. Every three weeks or so, you will revise and develop one of your exercises into a more substantial piece which will be graded. At the end of the class, you will turn in a portfolio of all the writing you have done during the semester, along with a reflection on how you have changed, grown, struggled, triumphed, and otherwise experienced being a writer. Whatever your strengths or challenges as a writer, you are welcome and will be supported in this class.

This course is a required for English majors on the Creative Writing Track. Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H.

ENGL 1801 Writing Fiction
T/Th 10:30-11:45

Prof. Sophie Rosenblum

Why do you write? Do you have a story to tell? An obsession with a particular character or setting? A love of language? In this class, we will explore all of those questions, asking how we might become writers, and how we can find out if we are already. In addition to navigating creative writing as a practice, this introductory fiction workshop will present students with a critical vocabulary for the genre, stylistic techniques and forms prevalent within it, as well as readings within, and at the boundaries of, the genre. Specifically, we will explore literary forms including the epistolary story, the compressed story, and the story as a character study by reading and experimenting with those techniques in our own work. We will discuss daily writing practices and identify which work best for each individual. The writing assignments will be discussed in a workshop setting, where students will receive supportive feedback from each member of the class. As we will be presenting and critiquing work that is written by students in this course, mutual respect will be key. In addition, students will read and analyze selected short stories, exploring the techniques used by authors. Requirements include writing exercises (both in and out of class), workshop commentary, a presentation on a short story from the selected reading, and a final portfolio of work (15-25 pages).

This course is a Creative Writing elective. If other tracks allow one CW course, this can be counted to fulfill that requirement also.

ENGL 2000 Ways of Reading
M/W 10:25-11:40

Prof. Seamus O'Malley

Who decides what texts mean? Are some interpretations better than others? Does the author's intention matter? How does language work? In this foundational course, we will study texts of the culture around us, as well as literature, as we consider the major debates about meaning and interpretation that have emerged throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. 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 of texts; 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 texts – and the language in some of the readings – difficult at first. But the course will help you gain some of the skills you'll need to read and write critically about all kinds of texts, not just literary ones. We will read poems, novels, short stories and plays. Each section of the course takes up a number of major issues of concern in literary and cultural studies, issues like authorship, language, reading, subjectivity, ideology, aesthetics, and history. The requirements are four essays and a final exam. Class participation will be a large percentage of the final grade.

Required for English Major and Minor. Students are encouraged to take it as early as possible in their career. This is an introductory-level “Language, Texts and Interpretation” course in English designed to pose questions: Why read? Why write? It fulfills a requirement in the SCW core curriculum: “Interpreting Literature and the Arts.” Pre-Requisite: English 1100 or 1200H. This course is normally capped at 18.

II Classes

ENGL 2006 Survey of American Literature I (II B Intro)

M/W 1:25-2:40

Prof. Joy Ladin

In less than a century, what we now call the United States of America went from being a collection of culturally diverse British colonies to a revolutionary democracy to an expanding nation ripping itself apart of the enslavement of millions of African Americans. Over the same period, American writers threw off the shadow of great British authors and began producing some of the most interesting, innovative literature the English language had ever seen. How did early American struggles over democracy shape American literature? What is the relation between social innovations and the new forms and styles that emerge in nineteenth-century American writing? This class will explore these questions through three units of readings and discussion. The first will focus on early writing about democracy – from the Declaration of Independence and other writings by “founding fathers” to literary reflections on the strains and strangeness of early American democracy by Washington Irving and Nathaniel Hawthorne. Our second unit will listen to some of the voices that spoke in response to the conflicts that accompanied the rapid growth of the United States – voices of Native Americans, slaves, Abolitionists, Americans of all kinds who bore witness to the difference between American ideals and American realities. In our last unit, we will look at direct and indirect literary responses to the civil war, a national convulsion that sparked a cultural explosion that continues to reverberate today. There will be two short (5 page) graded papers, as well as ungraded informal in- and out-of-class writing, a mid-term and a final exam, and a short class presentation introducing a text of your choice.

This course is a “Traditions” course in English designed to pose questions about how texts, interpretive communities and reading practices generate histories. It is an Introductory-level course. It fulfills a II B requirement for the English major. It can fulfill a requirement in the SCW core curriculum, “Interpreting Literature and the Arts.” It counts for the Minor in American Literature. Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H.

ENGL 2007 Survey of American Literature II (II C Intro.) **M 4:40-5:55 and W 5-6:15**

Prof. Matt Miller

This course in American Literature opens upon a world radically different from our own: no gasoline engines, telephones, air conditioning, film, radio (the word “broadcast” referred to a method of sowing seeds), no refrigerators, toilet paper, matches, light bulbs,

or blue jeans. The Civil War, recently concluded, had left America morally and physically exhausted. Slaves had been freed, but much of the South was in ruins. It was a time of immense industrialization, immense change, and these changes would only accelerate in the decades ahead, as radios, television, and finally computers revolutionized how we apprehend ourselves and our world. Machine guns would be invented, then airborne bombers (first in the form of dirigibles), and then the atomic bomb. It took an art as vibrant and dynamic as American literature to keep up, and keep up it did, as writers explored ever-evolving ways of expressing their world in language. To do justice to a span of creative production this rich and varied is indeed daunting. We will try our best, as we read some of the most important authors of the last century and a half, including Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Mark Twain, Willa Cather, James Baldwin, J. D. Salinger, and Toni Morrison, to name only a few. Through intense, athletic reading, lively and focused conversation, and our own reflective writing, students will come away with more sophisticated and enlivening understandings of American literary classics, as we relate these writings both to history and our own present lives.

This course is a “Traditions” course in English designed to pose questions about how texts, interpretive communities and reading practices generate histories. It is an Introductory-level course. It fulfills a II C requirement for the English major. It can fulfill a requirement in the SCW core curriculum, "Interpreting Literature and the Arts." It counts for the Minor in American Literature. Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H.

III Classes

ENGL 2710 Introduction to Fiction (III B Intro.)
M/W 3:10-4:25/3:35-4:50

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 three essays, a midterm, in-class cold-call oral responses, and one final exam.

This is an introductory-level “Forms, Identities, Reading Practices” course in English, designed to pose questions about who writes and reads for whom, in what ways, and why it matters. It counts as a category III B literature course for the English Major. It fulfills a

requirement in the SCW core curriculum, “Interpreting Literature and the Arts.” Pre-requisites: English 1100 or FHS.

ENGL 2720 The American Short Story (III B Intro)
T/Th 9-10:15

Prof. Sophie Rosenblum

This course will provide an introduction to a broad spectrum of the American short story. It will introduce students to such narrative elements as point of view, characterization, setting, theme, tone, and symbolism by highlighting the basic interpretive skills necessary to conduct literary analysis. Authors we are likely to read include Kate Chopin, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, J.D. Salinger, and Jhumpa Lahiri. By examining notable works, we will also investigate the ways in which the short story can be a medium for expressing the values, concerns, ideas, and desires of individuals and societies. We will read stories and consider questions such as: How do these works explore ethical values, and what lessons might we learn for living in our contemporary society? Do certain themes emerge as universal? How do the readings vary depending on the author's gender, background, or culture? In addition to class discussion, each student will craft a presentation focused on a work of her choosing. There will be brief written assignments as well as quizzes. A substantial final paper comparing two stories from the semester's selected readings will be required.

This is an introductory-level “Forms, Identities, Reading Practices” course in English, designed to pose questions about who writes and reads for whom, in what ways, and why it matters. It counts as a category III B literature course for the English Major. It counts for the Minor in American Literature. It fulfills a requirement in the SCW core curriculum, “Interpreting Literature and the Arts.” Pre-requisites: English 1100 or FHS.

ENGL 2791 Children's Literature (III C Intro.)
M/W 10:25-11:40

Prof. Linda Shires

Remember the child in yourself? Are you ready to find her again? It is fun to read with children, but adults also read children's books on their own to return to a world of the imagination that gets, well, dulled by adult responsibilities. From fairy tales to adventure stories, fantasies to animal fables, we'll explore together the ever-fascinating world of children's fiction. In this course you'll encounter a variety of stories and novellas written from the seventeenth-century up to modern times, with a focus on English and American literature. The conception of the child and childhood has changed over time and so we'll study sociological, psychological, aesthetic, and literary issues. We'll be asking such questions as: How does children's literature “work” for children *and* adults? How does it “work” in culture? What can children's literature tell us about how children “grow up”? What can it reveal about reading? How can images work in verbal texts? What do our own favorite books tell us about ourselves? Why does literature matter crucially in raising children? Authors include: Charles Perrault, the Brothers Grimm, Frances Hodgson Burnett, Lewis Carroll, Beatrix Potter, Rudyard Kipling E.B. White, Angela Carter, Emma Donoghue, Maurice Sendak, and others. Two short papers, midterm and final exams, presentation.

This course 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 it matters. It is an introductory course in English. It fulfills a III C requirement for the English Major. It can be used to fulfill a requirement in the SCW core curriculum: "Interpreting Literature and the Arts." Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H.

ENGL 2800 Literature and Culture of the City: New York (III C Intro.)

T/Th 1:45-3

Prof. Cynthia Wachtell

Through a selection of remarkable works by poets, novelists, essayists, songwriters, photographers, filmmakers, and other artists – from Walt Whitman to Woody Allen to Jay-Z – we travel through one hundred and fifty years of New York City’s history. We read about struggling immigrants, striving socialites, troubled adolescents, and much more, as we consider how “the city that never sleeps” has shaped, and been shaped by, those who call it home. New York City is both a geographical space as well as an imaginative space. Manhattan is an island, a mere eight miles long, but at times it seems boundless. From the dedication of the Statue of Liberty and the waves of immigration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to the tragedy of 9/11 and the recent financial crisis, we explore the unique experience of New Yorkers. Along the way, we travel from the Lower East Side, to Fifth Avenue, to Harlem, and even to the outer boroughs – the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island – as we trace the social and physical geography of New York City. Among the authors whose works we read are Edith Wharton, Anzia Yezierska, Langston Hughes, E. B. White, J. D. Salinger, and Jonathan Safran Foer.

This course 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 it matters. It is an introductory course in English. It fulfills a III C requirement for the English Major. It counts towards the Minor in American Literature. It can be used to fulfill a requirement in the SCW core curriculum: "Interpreting Literature and the Arts." Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H.

ENGL 2922H History of the Book: From Gutenberg to Google (III C Intro.;

Honors); xlist with HIST 2124 T/Th 10:30-11:45

Prof. Jeff Freedman

Today, digital technology and the Internet are transforming the world of books in multiple ways, challenging previous notions of what a book is, what it is for, how it is transmitted, and who owns it. This is not the first time, however, that the world of books has been so radically transformed. This course seeks to provide some historical perspective on the transformations of the Internet age by examining how the world of books developed in the aftermath of an earlier technological breakthrough: the invention in the mid-fifteenth century of printing with movable type.

In addition to our normal class meetings, we will be holding two special sessions on Friday mornings: the first in the Rare Books Library of Columbia University, where we will have the opportunity to examine an actual wooden hand press and various tools used in the manufacture of books during the Gutenberg era; the second in the Rare Books Division of New York Public Library, where we will examine printed books from the first centuries of printing.

GOALS. Students will gain an historical understanding of how the physical appearance of books changed in the transition from manuscript to print, how books were produced and disseminated in the age of the wooden hand press (ca. 1460-1800), and how the establishment of censorship and copyright regulations affected the status of authors and the process of literary communication. In addition, students will gain a number of theoretical insights into the nature of the book as material object: first, that the book is more than just a carrier of ideas, it is also a product of artisanal or industrial labor and an object of economic exchange; second, that its “paratextual” components (title page, frontispiece, illustrations, format, page layout, typography) shape and constrain the meanings it conveys; and, third, that the production of literary meaning is a collaborative process, one that involves not only authors but also publishers, editors, engravers, printers, and readers. Finally, the course will give students an historical perspective on the media revolutions of today, thus allowing them to identify continuities as well as discontinuities between the age of Gutenberg and the age of Google.

This is an Honors Course (3.5 GPA needed to enroll). 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 counts as an introductory course in English. It fulfills a III C requirement for the English Major. It fulfills a requirement in the SCW core curriculum, “Interpreting Literature and the Arts.” Pre-requisites: English 1100 or 1200H.

ENGL 2901 Introduction to Women’s Studies: Theory and Practice

(III D Intro.) x-list with WMNS 1020

Dr. Nora Nachumi

T/Th 12:00 – 1:15

This course introduces students to Women’s Studies, an interdisciplinary field that grew out of the twentieth-century women’s movement. In its early years, those in the field concentrated on the “absence” of women (from literature, history, science, etc) and worked to add them to the curriculum. Today, Women’s Studies is a vast and still growing field of study that draws on many different disciplines in the humanities and the sciences in its efforts to describe, understand and – in many cases – improve women’s lives.

This particular course is organized around diverse representations of female experience. Drawing on a variety of sources--including essays, short fiction and visual media--we

will ask how different categories of identity (i.e. race, class, gender, age, ability, etc.) impact each other. We will theorize and articulate our own positions regarding the issues we discuss and engage with positions that differ from our own. Students do not have to define themselves as feminists—or even be sympathetic to feminism as they currently define it—in order to take this course. Like all good conversations, the ones in this class generally benefit from a variety of reasoned opinions.

In addition to participation in class discussion, course requirements include reading quizzes, entries to a class forum, a presentation (oral and written) in lieu of a midterm, several short writing assignments and two papers (one with research).

This course is a “Forms, Identities, Reading Practices” course in English designed to pose questions about who reads for whom, in what ways, and why does it matter? It is an introductory-level course that fulfills a III D requirement for the English major. It fulfills a requirement in the SCW core curriculum, “Interpreting Literature and the Arts.” Pre-requisites: English 1100 or FHS. It is required for students pursuing Women’s Studies Minor.

ENGL 2970 Interdisciplinary: Psychology and Literature (III C Intro.)

M/W 11:55-1:10

Prof. Linda Shires

Why psychology and literature? As disciplines, psychology and literary criticism can be viewed as two ways of making sense of a “text” through a combination of close reading, reliance on a field’s specialized terminology, and interpretive methods based on both reason and affect. Science has evolved, over two hundred years, from phrenology and physiology to cognitive science and neurobiology to explain how the human brain works. Literature, in turn, has both adopted and anticipated theories of mind. Yet the disciplines also clearly differ. This course is divided into three units: different theories of mind as represented in literature over time; how *we* as readers process literature via thought, mental imagery and emotion; and similarities/differences among literary studies, cultural psychology, and cognitive science. We will look at texts or excerpts by Jorge Luis Borges, Charlotte Brontë, Lewis Carroll, Michael Cunningham, Mark Haddon, Virginia Woolf, Ayad Akhtar, James Joyce, and others alongside essays by scientists and social scientists. We will also watch one or two films. Required: two essays, midterm exam, a presentation, and response papers.

This course 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 it matters. It is an introductory course in English. It fulfills a III C requirement for the English Major. It can be used to fulfill a requirement in the SCW core curriculum: “Interpreting Literature and the Arts.” Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H.

ADVANCED COURSES

ENGL 3210: Rise of the Novel and Representation of the Self (II B ADVANCED)

T/Th 1:45-3

Prof. Nora Nachumi

What, exactly, is a novel? Although this literary genre is quite well established today, it came into being as an upstart contender, a new or “novel” mode of writing that lacked established conventions, critical respect or even a name. However, by the end of the eighteenth century the novel was an exceedingly popular literary form, one which created and dramatized new ways of thinking about human nature and identity. Our primary goal this semester is to think about the relationship between the rise of the novel and the emergence of the modern subject or “self.” We will attempt this by reading novels that represent distinct moments in the development of the novel as a specific literary form.

Paying attention to language and structure, we will examine how each of the novels represents the identity, character and consciousness of its protagonists. Along the way, we will look at literary criticism from different periods as well as relevant poetry and non-fiction prose. Among the novels that may be assigned are Daniel Defoe’s *Moll Flanders*, Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela*, Henry Fielding’s *Joseph Andrews* and Jane Austen’s *Sense and Sensibility*. Requirements: class participation, a presentation on a critical essay with a written component, one research paper with two preliminary writing assignments, a midterm and a final exam.

This course is a “Traditions” course in English designed to pose questions about how texts, interpretive communities and reading practices generate histories. This is an ADVANCED level English course. All students enrolled must have received either a flat “A” in ENGL 1100 or 1200H (and must show me their transcript) or have taken at least one introductory-level literature course in addition to 1100 or 1200H in order to enroll. It fulfills a II B Adv. requirement for the English Major. It fulfills a requirement in the SCW core curriculum, “Interpreting Literature and the Arts.”

ENGL 3920: Topics: Transcendentalism (III C Advanced)

M/W 3:10-4:25

Prof. Matt Miller

Between the 1830s and 1860s this country's most talented writers forged a distinctively *American* literature and philosophical outlook on the world known as Transcendentalism. What is our best self? What is our relationship to nature? to the universe? to each other? These are just a few of the key questions Transcendentalists addressed in stories, poems, and essays. A time of rebirth, this literary movement has been called "the American Renaissance" (F.O. Matthiessen, 1968). It features some of the most memorable literature of the last two centuries.

The course will begin with our discussion of influential essays of Ralph Waldo Emerson, such as "Self-Reliance" about one's relationship with nature and G-d, we'll read excerpts

of Henry David Thoreau's famous meditation on the natural world, *Walden*. We'll examine the journalism, as well as the feminist and abolitionist writings of women such as Margaret Fuller. We'll study Walt Whitman, both his poetry and prose, and examine how this singularly original American transformed Transcendentalism into something bolder, shaggier, and more in touch with ordinary Americans. We'll also take a look at the darker, almost gothic side of Transcendentalism as embodied by the stories of Nathaniel Hawthorne and the gem-like precision of the poetry of Emily Dickinson. Finally, we'll consider how the Transcendentalists are still relevant for us today, as we ask ourselves what Emerson called "the practical question of the conduct of life: How shall I live?"

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 it matters. This is an ADVANCED level English course. All students enrolled must have received either a flat "A" in ENGL 1100 (and must show me their transcript) or have taken at least one introductory-level literature course in addition to ENGL 1100 or 1200H in order to participate. It fulfills a III C Adv. requirement for the English Major. It fulfills a requirement in the SCW core curriculum, "Interpreting Literature and the Arts." It counts towards the Minor in American Literature.