



Department of English – Graduate Division

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Spring 2020 Graduate Course Descriptions

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Linguistic Theory and Child Language, English 320

Jacee Cho

TuTh 2:30 PM-3:45 PM, HC White 4281

[English Language and Linguistics] (Mixed Grad/Undergrad)

*Students who have taken English 420 Universal Grammar and Child Language Acquisition prior to Spring 2020 may not enroll in this course.

This course provides an introduction to the linguistic study of child language within the generative theory. According to this theory, humans are born with genetically determined linguistic knowledge called Universal Grammar, which guides children in learning language. Students will learn the basic concepts of the generative theory and learn to apply them to the study of child language. Topics include universal linguistic principles that govern children's acquisition of syntax and semantics and cross-linguistic influence in children acquiring more than one language from birth or early childhood. We will discuss empirical research studies testing the Universal Grammar theory of language acquisition.

There is no required textbook. All reading materials will be available electronically on the course website.

English Syntax, English 514

Anja Wanner

TuTh 11:00 AM-12:15 PM, Education L155

[English Language and Linguistics] (Mixed Grad/Undergrad) In this class we will apply the framework of Generative Grammar to the analysis of sentences in English. You will learn to identify complex syntactic constructions in a sentence and give visual representations ('tree diagrams') of their structures. The type of constructions and the theoretical concepts that we will discuss goes well beyond the material from English 314 (The Structure of English). Every student will become the expert for one particular construction (such as the relative clause, the resultative construction, the subjunctive, or the imperative) and will compare and evaluate two different approaches to that particular construction. Tree diagrams will get fairly complex in this class, but what really makes this an advanced class is the focus on the ability to construct a

syntactic argument: What makes a construction interesting/challenging from a linguistic perspective? Why is one analysis better than another? What are problems that remain unsolved? This class makes use of a textbook and is organized around weekly homework assignments. Assessments include a take-home midterm exam, an open-book final exam, several quizzes, an in-class presentation, and, for graduate students, a literature review.

Advanced Old English Literature, English 521

Jordan Zweck

TuTh 9:30 AM-10:45 AM, HC White 7115

[Literary Studied] (Mixed grad/undergrad) An intensive study of *Beowulf* read in the original language (Old English). Line-by-line translation of the text will be supplemented by discussion of related issues (whether linguistic, thematic, or contextual) as well as by readings from relevant critical literature. Open to graduate students as well as undergraduates. PREREQUISITE: one semester's study of the Old English language (English/Medieval 520 or equivalent).

Perspectives on Literacy, English 702

Morris Young

F 10:00 AM-12:30 PM, HC White 7109

[Composition and Rhetoric] This course will focus on the emergence and sustainability of “literacy studies” as an area of emphasis in the field of composition and rhetoric and how the study of literacy exists across disciplines, including anthropology, education, print and digital culture studies, and history. While research and practice about the teaching of writing remains the central organizing principle in the discipline, studies of literacy practices (ranging from individuals to socially/politically/culturally arranged groups to the transformative effects of emerging literacy technologies) have gained more attention in the discourses/discussions of our field. This course will examine definitions and applications of literacy and its various formations (e.g., literacy practices, literacy events, etc.). We will also consider how writing practices are subsumed under the broader term of literacy and what pressures and complications arise out of interdisciplinary research (by methodological approaches to the study of literacy in the community).

Possible readings may include work by Deborah Brandt, Suresh Canagarajah, Ellen Cushman, Anne Ruggles Gere, Keith Gilyard, Jack Goody and Ian Watt, Harvey Graff, Shirley Brice Heath, Beverly Moss, David Olson, Iswari Pandey, Sylvia Scribner and Michael Cole, Brian Street, Annette Vee, Amy Wan, and others.

Possible writing may include an auto/ethnography of literacy, a book review/keyword essay, and an article-length essay.

Economies of Literacy, English 706

Eileen Lagman

W 10:00 AM-12:30 PM, HC White 7109

[Composition and Rhetoric] Since Deborah Brandt's *Literacy in American Lives*, writing studies scholars have commonly used economic frameworks to understand how literacy works in tandem with economic processes to not only shape the value and meaning of literacy but also to provide the means for participating in economic systems. This course continues that research trajectory by examining literacy as it works within emerging structures of global capitalism. Our course readings and discussions will examine the economic concepts and metaphors that have shaped our theoretical understandings of literacy, including how literacy scholars have drawn on economic frames and how economic research constructs literacy as an economic unit. We'll also pay particular attention to how writers, texts, and labor are defined in research on emerging economic formations, such as affective economies, precarious labor, biocapital, economic ruins, and speculation. In investigating economic formations and subjectivities for literacy that might be found in the spaces of precarity and mobility, we'll consider alternate possibilities for economic frames in writing research.

Advanced English Phonology, English 709

Tom Purnell

MWF 1:20 PM-2:10 PM, HC White 7105

[English Language and Linguistics] This course develops segmental and syllabic analyses of English along with morphophonemic alternations. As part of these analyses, the role distinctive features and other specialized representations in accounting for the sound pattern of English will be identified. Focusing on English provides a vehicle for creating specific detailed analyses for reasonably well-understood phenomena. Developing comparative analyses of languages other than English is encouraged in the research-based term project. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches are encouraged. Prerequisite: Eng 315 or instructor's consent (meets with Linguistics 510)

Topics in Contemporary English Linguistics "Introduction to Statistics and data science for Linguists, English 713

Eric Raimy

MWF 11:00 AM-11:50 AM, Education 151

The course will provide a survey and introduction to tools available for linguists to collect, organize and analyze primary data of many sorts. We will cover and learn to use tools for transcription (ELAN), for data organization & manipulation (Excel & R), for text editing (BBEdit), for survey creation (Qualtrics), for data visualization, statistics & record keeping (RStudio, RMarkdown, GraphViz), and for using scripts for data manipulation (Python, ssh). We will work with data from interviews, surveys, and other sources from many subfields of linguistics (i.e. sociophonetics, syntax, phonology, etc.).

Advanced Second Language Acquisition, English 715

Jacee Cho

TuTh 9:30 AM-10:45 AM, HC White 7105

[English Language & Linguistics] (Graduate)

Prerequisite: Eng 318 Second Language Acquisition or equivalent

This course continues the introduction to Second Language Acquisition (Eng 318) by focusing on a number of critical issues in SLA from linguistic (generative) and psycholinguistic perspectives. In this course we will discuss findings of recent research in SLA that address questions such as: (1) what is the role of Universal Grammar in L2 acquisition? (2) how does L2 knowledge develop over time? (3) how does abstract linguistic knowledge interact with other cognitive and psychological factors in real-time language performance (production & comprehension)? We will learn how to design various linguistic and psycholinguistic experiments, and you will carry out a research project to investigate second language acquisition within the generative or psycholinguistic theories.

There is no required textbook. All reading materials will be available on the course website.

Creative Writing: Graduate Workshop, English 780

Beth Nguyen

Tu 12:30 PM-3:30 PM, HC White 7109

This workshop focuses on creative nonfiction, which can include memoirs, personal essays, narrative nonfiction, hybrids, and more. As we discuss the craft of nonfiction we will also talk about intention, context, audience, and concepts of narrative. We will read texts that provide examples of contemporary nonfiction and that include varying perspectives on craft. We will also cover central issues such as ethics, research, and the idea of truth. The workshop will be an unsilenced space, where open dialogue and discussion are encouraged. Creative nonfiction is a burgeoning field and this class will help fiction writers and poets broaden their craft.

Pre-Reqs: Admission to the MFA in creative writing; open to other graduate students by submission of writing sample.

Graduate Poetry Workshop, English 782

Amaud Johnson

M 10:00 AM-1:00 PM, HC White 7109

[Creative Writing] Graduate level poetry workshop for MFA creative writing students. Open to other graduate students by submission of writing sample.

Pre-Reqs: Admission to the MFA in creative writing or permission of director of creative writing.

MFA Thesis, English 785

Creative Writing Faculty by Permission
By arrangement

[Creative Writing] For Creative Writing MFA students only.

Literary Studies Colloquium, English 795

Monique Allewaert
Various Locations and times.

Independent Reading, English 799

Faculty by permission
Meeting times by arrangement

Requires permission of faculty member. If this independent study course is taken in lieu of a regular classroom course to fulfill English requirements, a 799 Approval Form must be completed, signed by the student and instructor, and submitted for approval to the Director of Graduate Studies.

***Piers Plowman* and the Arts of “Doing” in Late Medieval England, English 803**

Lisa H. Cooper
M 2:00 PM-4:30 PM, HC White 7109

We may think of “how-to” books as a recent invention, but this in fact far from the case. From the tenth through the fifteenth centuries, medieval readers turned with increasing frequency to a variety of texts that taught them how to manage daily affairs of all kinds and how to prepare for the afterlife; how, in short, to understand, regulate, and improve their lives. While the audience for such works was at first limited to monks and university schoolmasters, increasing lay literacy and, finally, the advent of printing greatly expanded the reach and the scope of didactic (that is, instructional) literature. This seminar seeks to explore this vast syllabus of “how-to” works by way of one of the most encyclopedic fictions of the late Middle Ages, William Langland’s alliterative and allegorical fourteenth-century poem *Piers Plowman*. Difficult but moving, frustrating but exciting in equal measure, *Piers Plowman* touches upon virtually every aspect of late medieval life through the dream vision of “Will,” the poet’s narrator, who finds himself on a quest to learn how and what it means to do well, do better, and do best. *Piers* is a poem about “doing” in many different senses of the word, and so in addition to attending to the poem *qua* poem (we will focus on what is known as the “B-text,” while also taking into consideration the versions known as A, C, and Z), we will also use it to think about the many ways to “do” things—and the many things that could be done—in late medieval England, frequently pairing our readings with related practical/instructional material in both verse and prose in order to do so. Members of the seminar will be invited to bring their own theoretical perspectives to bear on the reading, but we are likely also to consider together a number of theoretical methodologies on issues ranging from affect to action. No previous experience with medieval literature is required (indeed, in its encyclopedism, *Piers* is a very

good introduction to late medieval English culture generally). We will be reading the poem in a facing-page Middle English/modern English edition (medievalists will be expected to focus on the original). Work for the course will likely consist of two short presentations and a final article-length essay; students will also participate in the building of a critical bibliography for the seminar as a whole.

Books (please have in hand before the course begins; they will also be at College Reserve; available Kindle editions are fine for the two secondary texts)

- William Langland, [*Piers Plowman*](#), ed. Elizabeth Robertson and Stephen H.A. Shepherd (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006).
- Emily Steiner, [*Reading Piers Plowman*](#) (Cambridge University Press, 2013)
- Michael Calabrese, [*An Introduction to Piers Plowman*](#) (University Press of Florida, 2017)

Discourses of Disability Before 1800, English 804

Elizabeth B. Bearden

Th 4:00 PM-6:30 PM, HC White 7109

This course centers on concepts of disability from antiquity to the Renaissance. Literary theory, philosophy, and history will help us frame our thinking about how disability is produced. Along with considering how texts like Shakespeare's *Richard III* or Milton's *Samson Agonistes* represent disabled figures, we will investigate the generic, social, and spatial contexts from which these representations arise. Disability and Crip Theory perspectives from authors such as Tobin Siebers, Robert McRuer, Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, Ellen Samuels, and Allison Kafer will help guide our theoretical explorations. The reading for this advanced, comparative course will be plentiful and challenging. A willingness to work hard and an openness to new ways of thinking are required. That said, the student need not have prior exposure to premodern literature or disability studies; students with a variety of concentrations are welcome.

The course has four thematic areas of focus:

1. Genealogies of disability: Monsters, miracles, marvels, medicalization?;
2. Body-mind, passibility, and incarnate subjectivity;
3. Narrative prostheses and unnatural narratology;
4. Space, the *imago mundi*, and geographies of disability.

Learning Outcomes:

The student should have a firm understanding of the course content and themes by the end of the class. These topics will help to define our lively classroom discussion and critical thinking. Writing assignments will encourage the student to demonstrate knowledge of this content, make a compelling argument through textual analysis, and hone their writing skills. The goal of the course is not only to provide an understanding of the history of the representation of disability in literature before 1800, but to think critically and deeply about how these early productions of disability continue to affect the way we ascribe meaning to disability today.

Joyce, Beckett and Modernity, English 808

Begam, Richard J.

TuTh 11:00 AM-12:15 PM, HC White 7105

This course breaks down into roughly three parts. We begin by examining a number of theoreticians of modernity, postmodernity and contemporaneity, including Friedrich Nietzsche, Richard Rorty, Fredric Jameson, Jean-François Lyotard, Theodor Adorno, Peter Bürger and Astradur Eysteinnsson. We will then consider James Joyce and Samuel Beckett in light of these theoretical readings, devoting approximately six weeks to *Ulysses* and five weeks to selections from Beckett's fiction and drama, with occasional excursions into Martin Heidegger and Jacques Derrida. Discussions will focus on a number of debates in modern studies, including foundationalism (naturalism vs. constructionism), aestheticism (textual autonomy vs. social engagement), the "great divide" (high culture vs. popular culture) and the linguistic turn (grammatology vs. epistemology).

Texts:

James Joyce, *Ulysses* (Vintage, Gabler edition)

Don Gifford, *Ulysses Annotated* (University of California Press)

Samuel Beckett, *Three Novels* (Grove Press)

Samuel Beckett, *No How On* (Grove Press)

Samuel Beckett, *Collected Shorter Plays* (Grove Press)

Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition* (University of Minnesota Press)

Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination* (University of Chicago Press)

Xerox packet (available Social Sciences)

Enchanting Modern: African Literature, African States, English 813

Tejumola Olaniyan

W 6:00 PM-8:30 PM, Van Hise 487

[Literary Studies] In this course, we will bring into systematic interaction three composite entities that are traditionally the objects of different study areas and therefore are studied together rarely or only casually: contemporary African literature, the postcolonial African political state, and the larger global modern context that subtends the two. African literature is renowned for its "highly charged political character." We will historicize this popular knowledge by exploring the evolution of the literary tradition's fixation with macro-political state matters. We will also pay close attention to the postcolonial state and its transformations, to understand why it attracts such absorbed literary scrutiny, especially of an oppositional kind. The literature and the state, we will learn, are really intimate siblings of the same parent, the global modern. We will study this modernity and its particular inflections in the African context. Our course goal is to have a better grasp of not just Africa's literary history but also a political history of its literature, and a literary-cultural history of its politics. We will select primary texts from literature, film, music, and art, as well as scholarship from history, political science, philosophy, and sociology.

Heavy Weather: Semiotics, Atmospheres, Affects, English 817

Allewaert, Monique

W 10:00 AM-12:30 PM, HC White 7105

In this seminar we will consider how ecocritical and environmental humanist approaches change how literary scholars conceive language, interpretation, and the effects and affects that follow on language and literary interpretation. To do this, we will explore semiotic theories and think about how these theories bear on a set of problems linked to (literary) atmospheres. At stake in our investigation is elaborating a specifically literary theory for ecocritical and environmental humanist reading, an effort to advance a methodology (or set of methodologies) apposite to the literary branch of the environmental humanities, and an attention to how attending to histories of colonialism and racism change the terms of ecocriticism and the environmental humanities as well as the methods in which they trade.

We will start by determining the accounts of semiotics and interpretation at play in the work of two prominent recent ecocritical literary critics before launching an investigation of semiotic theories proper. In our investigations of semiotics, we will first consider the still dominant model of Saussurian semiotics, then Peircian semiotics, and finally Martínez-Ruiz's Kongo-Atlantic semiotics to complicate the "Western" frame semiotic theories often presume. We will then put into practice some of the ideas about signs we've explored by tracing how they inform theories of literary atmosphere (a problem we will define collectively but that I provisionally define as the weather and setting evoked by aesthetic artifacts as well as the effects and affects these settings provoke: in short as a problem that requires that we think the relation between the diegetic and the extradiegetic). We will first do this by engaging William Gilbert's strange, elaborately annotated poem *The Hurricane* and enslaved revolutionary Nat Turner's alleged mode of reading the earth, commodity crops, and skies. Then, we will consider the semiotics and semiotic theories at work in M. NourbeSe Philip's poem *Zong!* as well as Christina Sharpe's turning of Philip's language experiments to the problem of weather, atmosphere, and racial in/justice. Drawing on these Black Atlantic theorizations of the problem of weather, we will turn to the problem of "atmosphere" in historical materialism, ecocriticism and environmental humanist approaches, considering how the work we have done in the first part of the term reframes these historical materialist, ecocritical, and EH claims. Finally, we will draw on critical and creative writers to consider how the problem of atmosphere, colonialism, race/ism, and environmentalism together impact how we conceive literary tone and affect.

Course readings will include (in addition to the texts mentioned above) Timothy Morton, Amanda Goldstein, Sianne Ngai, Saidiya Hartman, Dora Zhang, Edgar Allan Poe, Herman Melville, Tobias Menely.

Drama! Theatre! Spectacle!, English 851

Trotter, Mary

TuTh 9:30 AM-10:45 AM, Van Vleck B215

[Literary Studies] From "legit" drama to circus performances, American theatre in the nineteenth century was a primary vehicle through which diverse Americans imagined themselves, their histories, and the possibilities for their rapidly changing nation's future. The legacy of American theatre found in the texts and archival remnants of its melodramas, minstrel shows, musicals, "wild west" shows, and vaudevilles offer important insights into the legacy of theatricality and representation in American culture that continues to inform how "America" performs/is performed locally and globally on TV and film, on stage, and in everyday

life. We will learn about playwrights, theatre companies and spaces, actors, stage technology innovations, theatre economics, and audience spectatorship.

This is a great class for students interested in nineteenth-century American literature and history, dramatic literature, popular culture, radio/television/film studies, and theatre and performance studies. Graduate students may take this course for credit toward a PhD Minor in Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies. ITS Students may take this course for credit as a theatre history course.

Undergraduate and graduate students will read about two plays per week along with supporting critical and historical texts about American theatre and performance. Graduate students enrolled in ENGL 851 will also complete additional readings, attend two grad-only course sessions (to be scheduled) outside of the regular course time, and write a longer research paper. They also will be excused from at least two class meetings reserved for undergraduates.

Please note that this course will address sensitive and difficult issues. These will include racial and ethnic prejudice, stereotyping and violence on the American stage, including blackface minstrelsy, and those representations' reflection of and influence on contemporary art and politics.

Dissertation Research, English 990

Dissertation Chair by Permission
By Arrangement

Available to post-prelim examination PhD students by permission. Students who have reached dissertator status should enroll in 3 credits. This is a variable credit course, however, and may be used in combination with other enrollment credits to satisfy minimum enrollment requirements prior to reaching official dissertator status.

Reading for Prelims, English 999

Prelim Chair by Permission
By Arrangement

Faculty by Permission

This course is used primarily to satisfy enrollment requirements while preparing for preliminary exams. It requires faculty permission. The faculty member is normally the chair of the student's preliminary examination committee. Permission does not presume that prelim chair will serve as dissertation director.

