

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

FALL 2015 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

ENGL 208 – The Personal Essay

T/R 11:30-12:45 PM

Nancy Barber

ENGL 208 will explore the personal essay, which starts with personal opinion and/or personal experience. The trick--through research, craft, and creativity--is to transform the personal into a literary work of art that speaks to others in engaging ways. We will analyze personal essays from established writers and try to model some of their magic as we craft, critique, and workshop our own essays.

ENGL 220 – Understanding Composition and Rhetoric

T/R 4-5:15 PM

Michael Barnes

This course introduces students to one of the most historically and intellectually important topics in academia—the fortunes of the study of rhetoric. Beginning with the classical period, we will define key issues related to the nature of rhetoric (most conspicuously, the apparent conflict between Platonic dialectic and sophistic persuasion). Carrying this theme of “conflict” forward, through the Renaissance, the Age of Reason, and finally, focusing on contemporary rhetorical theorists (Burke, Weaver, Derrida, Foucault, Toulmin), we will explore how modern interpretations of dialectic and rhetoric cast the classical debate in a new light. Additionally, the pedagogical associations between rhetoric and Composition Studies will be considered, particularly in reference to Corbett’s reintroduction of the classical system.

ENGL 241 A - Reading Narrative

T/H 2:30 – 3:45 PM

Grady Ballenger

An introduction to questions, concepts, and perspectives that inform the study of narrative. It emphasizes close, attentive critical reading as well as interpretative approaches to narrative texts. It examines texts of many eras, cultures, and genres; it introduces critical terms, conventions, and traditions of discourse appropriate to the study of narrative. (Catalog). In fall 2015, we will explore a range of narratives, from an ancient epic (*The Odyssey*) to contemporary poetry, short fiction (by Nobel-Prize winner Alice Munro and others), and novels (including Kevin Powers’s *The Yellow Birds*, a novel from the Iraq War). This is a writing-intensive course; students will write short papers and a focused researched essay as well as try out their hands at writing a short short story themselves. Understanding narrative, how to tell a story or to interpret one, taking into account all that is explicit as well as all that is deliberately unsaid, is valuable preparation for an English major at Stetson and ultimately for a wide range of careers after college. The immediate goal of this course, however, is to open up aesthetic pleasures that are at the heart of our humanity and central to project of liberal education. English 241A fulfills the General Education requirement for a course in Creative Arts (A) and may also be used for one of the requirements for the Major or Minor in English.

ENGL 242 A – Reading Lyric

M/W 4-5:15 PM

Joel Davis

Experiencing lyric poetry is the title I’d give this course had I my druthers. To experience lyric poetry, we read it to ourselves silently, of course, but we also read it aloud with others as a performance, we write poetry (or at least verse) in response, we talk and argue and commiserate with one another, we set poetry to music and perform the music, and

we write down prose responses of formal and informal – but always critical – kinds. This course invites you to experience lyric poetry

ENGL 325 – Grammar and Rhetoric

M/W 2:30-3:45PM

Megan O’Neill

Grammar need not be an intimidating concept—in this class, we parse the language, get annoyed at how English grammar seems purposely designed for obfuscation, and laugh out loud at the ways we humans opt to deal with this most human of abilities. I promise an intellectual challenge and a great deal of fun. We might even study some Klingon to understand how an artificial language operates by the rules we know as grammar. Analyzing grammar, tinkering with its tools, applying them strategically to your own writing and studying their operation in more abstract ways will be the focus of the course. Students should expect to laugh at the foibles of the language, learn how to identify and resolve ambiguity, process and study their own writing over the course of the semester, and emerge, at the other end, with a far more sophisticated understanding of grammar and rhetoric. Quizzes, reading, a midterm, a final, and a series of drafts and revisions will form the bulk of the production. Writing Intensive course.

ENGL 340R1 – “Art and Animals”

H 6-9

Mary Pollock

By examining patterns in animal behavior and expression that can be perceived aesthetically, “Art and Animals” emphasizes animals as agents and as “subjects of a life.” This course is based on recent developments in animal studies theory, and the sequence of material in the course is designed to invert the ideology of human exceptionalism. During the first part of the course, students will study art by animals (paintings by apes and elephants), whale and bird songs, flocking behaviors of birds, ritual behavior by canids, and architecture by bees and birds. As much as possible, the class will observe animals at natural sites, animal rescue organizations, and zoos. The second part of the course will be devoted to more traditional academic study of animals in the visual and plastic arts, music, literature, and film, with the most emphasis given to literary works. During the first part of the course, writing projects include a journal of reading, observation, and community service. During the second part of the course, students will write in familiar academic genres: essays and a research project. In its conclusion, the course will focus on developing an ethic derived from inverting the normal assumptions about animals and art. At that point in the course, students will be reading some core animal studies theories, such as those by Kari Weil, Margo DeMello, and Cary Wolf.

ENGL 341E1 – Dante’s *Commedia*

T/H 10-11:15 AM

Tom Farrell

Dante Alighieri's poem, written in 1306-20, remains one of the greatest creations of the human imagination. After consideration of basic background materials, this Junior seminar progresses through the three *cantiche* of the *Commedia* with particular attention to the various ethical systems invoked and the nature of the spiritual insight claimed. Students in Religious Studies, Philosophy, Political Science, History, and any branch of Literary Studies will be well prepared for this class.

ENGL 353 – 19th Century British Literature

M/W 12-1:15 PM

Mary Pollock

In this course, we will read literary works from the “long nineteenth century,” that is, the period between 1790 and the First World War. Cultural trends don’t stop and start with the turn of a century or a traditionally demarcated literary period. *Downton Abbey* illustrates the concept: the “story” begins with Violet Crawley’s birth in 1842; the first episode takes place in 1912, at the end of the “Edwardian” period, and the fifth season stops in 1924.

In this course, we will be looking for themes and continuities of the long nineteenth century. What are some connections among the works of John Keats, Alfred Tennyson and Oscar Wilde, for instance? Or between Jane Austen and Vera Britain? Charles Dickens and George Bernard Shaw? Mary Wollstonecraft and Virginia Woolf? The burning questions of that time—about art, war, sexuality, politics, money, and oppression—are still with us. The course will end with a contemporary novel which revisits some of the themes which worried and fascinated the writers of that earlier period.

Written work will include academic essays, with one creative option.

ENGL 366 – Shakespeare

T/R 10-11:15 AM

Lori Snook

“What country, friends, is this?” Viola asks in *Twelfth Night*; that question will inform the readings in this semester’s course on William Shakespeare. The course will emphasize both familiar and less familiar terrain of Shakespearean dramatic canon: the early comedy *The Comedy of Errors* and the early tragedy *Titus Andronicus*; the tragedy *Richard II*, leading into the three history plays of the Henriad; the green-world comedy *As You Like It*; the ‘problem plays’ *Measure for Measure* and (if time allows) *Troilus and Cressida*; the Roman tragedy *Coriolanus* and the half-Roman tragedy *Antony and Cleopatra*; the romances *The Winter’s Tale* and *The Tempest*. You also will do directed group work with two of Shakespeare’s greatest hits (your choice from a list provided to you), in each case leading to a class presentation. In addition to the independent projects, assignments will include a reading journal and response papers, two researched essays, a performance or creative adaptation (or reading project for those not feeling creative), and a final reflective essay in which you define the term ‘Shakespearean,’ with evidence derived in your semester’s travels through Will’s country.

ENGL 381 – Text – Criticism-Theory

T/R 1-2:15 PM

Michael Barnes

Learning to apply a theoretical lens to texts is an important part of an English major’s intellectual development; it is also an assumed ability in the capstone course. In ENGL 381 (Texts, Criticism, and Theory), we will rotate through the major critical theories (New Criticism, Reader-Response, Structural/Deconstructive, Historical, Psychological, Political, Rhetorical) in small groups with each articulating a consensually determined interpretation. For the final paper, however, you will choose a preferred theoretical camp and apply it to a work of your choice (novel, film, fiction, non-fiction, and so forth). For the purposes of our class discussions, we will concentrate on notable short stories that have prompted compelling interpretations over the years. Required work consists of short group papers for each theory, one significant individual paper, a mid-term, and final exam.

ENGL 460 – Genre Study Seminar: Epic and Novel

T/R 1-2:15 PM

Tom Farrell

This seminar will address issues of genre, time, and authority in literary texts through careful attention to two epic poems (probably the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid*) and 4-5 novels (candidates include Byatt, *Possession*, Chandler, *The Long Good-Bye*, Erdrich, *Tracks*, Faulkner, *Absalom, Absalom!*, Hawthorne, *The House of the Seven Gables*, Morrison, *Song of Solomon*, O’Brian, *The Thirteen-Gun Salute*, Pynchon, *V*, Robinson, *Home*, Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, Tolkien, *The Hobbit*, and Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*). Students will lead discussions on all readings and will make a theorized analysis of some generic aspect of a novel they have chosen in the seminar essay.

ENGL 476 – Interdisciplinary Seminar: Poetry in an Extended Field

M 6-9 PM

Terri Witek

This seminar considers how poetry works with and through other arts. From early examples of visual/textual work to contemporary conceptual poetics, the course will query the difference between reading and seeing. Short responses, theorized presentations, a seminar paper, and a poem of your own.

ENGL 499.01 – Senior Project

T/TH 11:30-12:45 PM

Grady Ballenger

FALL 2015 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS CREATIVE WRITING COURSES

ENCW 215A – Multi-Genre Creative Writing

MW 12-1:15 PM

Terri Witek, Andy Dehnart & Lori Snook

Taught by three different practitioners, this course asks you to write in three different literary genres: poetry, playwriting, and creative non-fiction, in order to develop a composite portfolio of your work. This course is especially appropriate for those who'd like to test the pleasures and perils of working in literary forms which vary technically, historically, and in the marketplace.

ENCW 312A – Fiction Workshop

W 6-9 PM

Mark Powell

A workshop helping students develop their skills in such fiction techniques as characterization, plot, setting, point of view, and style. Permission of the instructor required.

ENCW 313A/413 – Poetry Workshop/Advanced Poetry Workshop

T 6-9 PM

Terri Witek

An intensive workshop in poetic method. Each student will construct a portfolio of eight poems, at least four of them using techniques other than free verse. We will examine books of contemporary poetry for strategies and offer each other poetic challenges. Graduate students will do an extra project.

Permission of instructor required.