

Course Offerings Fall 2005
English Department
Hartwick College



English Literature I

(English 230-04) 3 Credits

Prof. Lisa Darien

MWF 11:15-12:10, Clark 342

This course is a survey of the great works of English Literature from the beginnings through the 18th century. Not only does the course explore some of the best and the most beautiful works written in Old, Middle, and Modern English, but it also introduces the student to the methods of literary study, particularly the study of poetry.



Among the works and authors read are *Beowulf*, *Gawain*, Chaucer, Sidney, Spenser, Shakespeare, Donne, Marvell, Milton, Dryden, Swift, and Pope. (This course is required for all English majors.)

American Literature I

(English 240-04) 3 Credits

Prof. Thomas Travisano

MWF 11:15-12:10, Clark 346

In this course, we'll be reading a diverse array of writings which, taken together, begin to tell the story of the founding of the United States and the emergence and establishment of distinctly American ways of writing and understanding. We'll hear from men and women, from people whose skin is white, black, and red, from poets and printers and politicians, from farmers and philosophers, and some in whom several of these elements were mixed.

We'll study emerging conceptions of freedom, individuality and equality, as these are tested in the crucibles of race, class, and gender. We'll watch the emergence and transformation of such basic American concepts as 'the self-made man' or woman. And we'll explore the struggle in American life between a devotion to traditions in politics, culture, arts and the sense of the self versus the transforming effect of a series of revolutions.

We will learn to read complex texts alertly and acquisitively and write about and discuss them analytically. In the process, we will develop an understanding of American literature and culture to 1865 and its relation to the present. We will develop a critical vocabulary to talk and think about literature. And we will learn to apply that critical vocabulary to the texts under discussion.

American Literature I

(English 240-06) 3 Credits

Prof. Vicki Howard

MWF 1:50-2:45, Clark 251

This course is a survey of American writing from the colonial period through the Civil War. Students will learn to analyze a wide range of texts, from slave narratives and political tracts to popular women's fiction and poetry.

Following the methodology of American Studies, the course will focus on the inter-textual relationships between literature and other forms of cultural production, such as art, architecture, popular writing, and photography.

Each week, discussion and lecture will place a literary work in its larger historical and cultural context.

Texts:

Early American Writing (anthology)

Susanna Rowson, *Charlotte Temple*

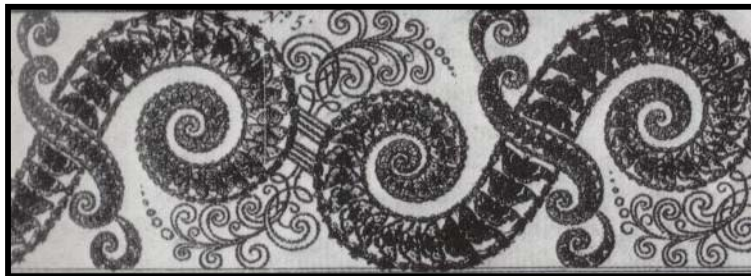
Edgar Allan Poe, *The Gold-Bug and Other Tales*

Henry David Thoreau, *Walden: Or, Life in the Woods*

Fanny Fern, *Ruth Hall & Other Writings*

Hannah Crafts, *The Bondwoman's Narrative*

Walt Whitman, *Selected Poems*





American Literature II

(English 241-Ef) 3 Credits

Prof. David Cody

TTh 3:35-4:55, Clark 244

This course is a survey of great (and not-so-great) American literary works from the Civil War to the present. Our authors include Emily Dickinson, Herman Melville, Walt Whitman, Henry James, Sarah Orne Jewett, Mark Twain, Charles Chesnutt, Ambrose Bierce, Stephen Crane, Jack London, Edith Wharton, T. S. Eliot, Margaret Mitchell, Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, H. P. Lovecraft, James Thurber, William Faulkner, Robert Frost, Sylvia Plath, Vladimir Nabokov, Michael S. Harper, and John Updike, all of whom have helped both to shape and to record our evolving national history and culture. All students will be expected to play an active role in class discussions; there will be two papers, a midterm, and a final examination.

Writing the Seasons

(English 250-67) 2 Credits

Prof. Carol Frost

F 1:50-3:50, Clark 346

Summer makes its light escape into the beautiful. (Dickinson)

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness... (Keats)

One must have a mind of winter

To regard the frost and the boughs

Of the pine-trees crusted with snow (Stevens)

But ki-ki-ri-ki

Brings no rou-cou,

No rou-cou-cou (Stevens)

Writing the Seasons will be offered during the fall of 2005 for two credits and during January-term for an additional credit to allow for more seasonal variety.

The focus in the fall will be on reading essays and poems that involve the natural environment during late summer, early and late fall, and early winter. From readings and observation—and taking flies, bees, grasshoppers, ladybugs, moths, wasps, flowers, squirrels, skunks, deer, raccoons, sky, river, lake, changing sunlight and darkness, trees, lawns, apples, fowl, bovine creature, as your subject—students will also *write* finished pieces of poetry or prose.

The focus during January will also be on reading and writing natural history, and our season will be the dead of winter.

The class in the fall will meet one day a week for 2-4 hours (the longer sessions take into account the field work). The J-term class will also meet one day a week in four four-hour sessions.

Our methods will include research in its largest application: field work, memory, interview, and secondary source work. There will be trips to Pine Lake with a fair amount of tromping around outdoors and taking notes and library sessions.

The questions underlying the course: What surrounds us that lives and dies or merely changes? What is our standing with the natural world?

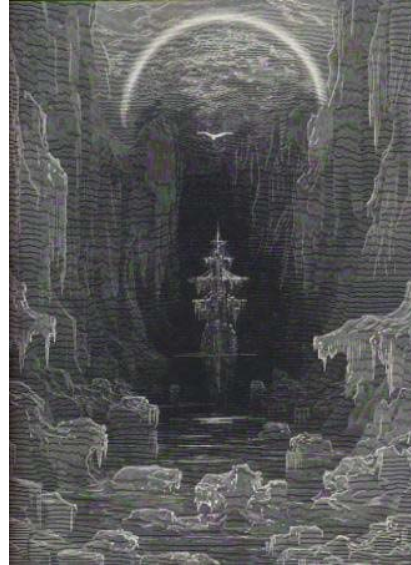
Prerequisite: Writing Level 3 CXXI: CPA

Four Great Fantasists: Tolkien and His Precursors

(English 250-Ef) 3 Credits
Prof. David Cody
TTh 1:00-2:20, Clark 251

This exploration of the literary fantasy—the realm, that is, of the imaginary, the fabulous, and the uncanny—will center on the works of four of the central figures in the history of the genre. William Morris—poet, artist, political radical, a man who thought of himself as having been “born out of his due time”—created the modern literary fantasy when he wrote *The Wood Beyond the World* in 1894. Shortly thereafter H. G. Wells began to publish the “scientific romances” (*The Time Machine*, *The Invisible Man*, *The War of the Worlds*, and so on) that J. L. Borges has described as “atrocious miracles,” and in 1926 E. R. Eddison produced *The Worm Ouroboros*—still, in the opinion of many connoisseurs, the best of all heroic fantasies. Our final author is J. R. R. Tolkien, a magisterial figure whose *The Lord of the Rings* is in many ways a summary and compendium of all that had come before it.

As we read and discuss these and other, related works by fantasists such as Lord Dunsany, H. P. Lovecraft, and John Buchan, we will examine the ways in which they explore very real concerns with issues (industrialism, imperialism, militarism, technology, pollution, psychological alienation, and economic exploitation) that still loom large in modern life and culture. There will be two research papers, a midterm, and a final examination.



Creative Writing: Non-Fiction

(English 310-03) 3 Credits

Prof. Thomas Travisano

MWF 10:10-11:05, Clark 329



This is a course in non-fiction writing for those who already write well and want to get better. It's called "Creative Writing: Non-Fiction" because we'll be exploring how to use creative tools: narrative, humor, surprise, metaphor: appeals to strong emotion in writing based on opinion and fact. We'll be focusing in particular on feature writing and the essay, those areas of journalism and periodical writing that give the freest rein to the prose writer's creative talents.

One basic text is William Zinsser's *On Writing Well*, a professional's guide to his craft. We will also read for emulation the prose of such major modern essayists as E. B. White, James Baldwin, Lewis Thomas, Virginia Woolf, George Orwell, Joan Didion, Maxine Hong Kingston, Annie Dillard and Stephen Jay Gould. Note that most of these great essayists are also successful fiction writers. We will also read brief personal essays by a range of talented and mostly younger authors who are adept at an emerging form sometimes termed the "short." We will learn to read acquisitively: that is, following the advice of Mark Twain, we will try to imitate, adapt, or otherwise acquire the most effective elements of the technique of these writers.

Class sessions will normally follow a workshop approach, in which students will discuss, criticize and learn from writing samples. We will often meet in small group conferences to examine papers. On occasion, outside visitors will be invited to talk to the class about their craft.

Each student will write six short papers (up to 1000 words) that nibble at some corner of the trade: an interview, a report on a public meeting, a personal reminiscence, a humorous column, a review, a story on science, politics or sports, an essay on city or country. Of course, all papers must be typed. A final project will be to write a paper of 3,000 to 5,000 words, roughly equivalent in length to a magazine feature.

Chaucer

(English 331-09) 4 Credits
Prof. Lisa Darien
MW 5:15-7:15pm, Clark 251

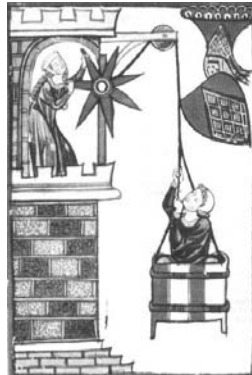


Among all the great writers in the British tradition, three figures – Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton – are usually elevated above the rest, distinguished both for the quality (and quantity) of their works and for their pervasive influence not only on British literature, but indeed on much of Western culture. Of these three, Shakespeare is, of course, the most widely studied and (perhaps) admired. On the other hand, Chaucer is widely admired but certainly less widely studied, perhaps because of the perceived distance between his language and culture and ours, a distance that seems to grow greater every year.

The truth is that Chaucer is different. Chaucer's language, Middle English, is hard, at least at first. The culture in and about which he wrote is very different from ours. It must be understood in order to truly appreciate his poetry, and that's also hard. (Not to mention that the textbook's big and heavy too!) No way around it: studying Chaucer is not easy.

So why do it? Because Chaucer's poetry truly is great: it's profound, it's funny, it's profane, it's beautiful, it's not to be missed. After a few weeks, you'll wonder why you ever worried about the language in the first place. And you'll be glad you took up the challenge to study something different and difficult – after all, isn't that why you're here in the first place?

We will be concentrating on Chaucer's two greatest works: *Troilus and Criseyde*, his only completed masterpiece, and large parts of his unfinished *Canterbury Tales*.



English Renaissance Literature: Moving in Elizabethan Circles

(English 335-04) ["A"] [Women's Studies] 4 Credits

Prof. Kim Noling

M 11:15 - 12:10, WF 11:15-12:40, Clark 251

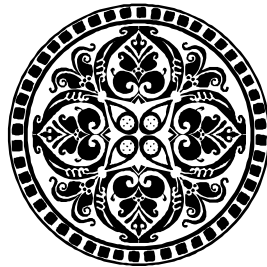
The turning vault of heaven formed was,
Whose starry wheels he hath so made to pass
As that their movings do a music frame
And they themselves still dance unto the same.
—Sir John Davies,

“Orchestra” (1596)

This dancelike movement of the heavenly spheres was an Elizabethan image of celestial harmony, but back on earth, movement in other Elizabethan circles was more a scramble than a stately dance. With an eye always to the focal point of such circles, Queen Elizabeth herself, we will examine the literary representation of models for success in court; the circulation of poems and of children through and between aristocratic households; the literary and political circles of the Sidneys; and the volatile career of the brilliant and despised upstart Walter Raleigh, who cut right into the royal circle. We will also give due attention to the colliding sphere of Elizabeth’s cousin, antagonist, and fellow poet Mary, Queen of Scots, and to the more shadowy world of the playwrights and other London denizens.

Readings include Elizabethan sonnet cycles, pastoral romance, revenge tragedy, song, lyric comedy, and the literature of exploration and colonization. Authors include Hoby, Wyatt the Elder, Philip and Mary Sidney, Marlowe, Spenser, Kyd, Shakespeare, Mary Stuart, Elizabeth I, Greene, Raleigh, and Wroth.

Methods: discussion; four short critical essays from different critical approaches; a longer paper; a class presentation; and a group oral final exam.





MODERN BRITISH LITERATURE

(English 365-Ef) ["A"]

Prof. Margaret Schramm

TTh 12:20-2:20, Clark 248

“On or about December 1910 human character changed,” said Virginia Woolf in response to a London art exhibition titled “Manet and the Post-Impressionists,” for which the Bloomsbury art critic Roger Frye had assembled paintings by Van Gogh, Gauguin, Matisse, and Picasso. As Woolf observed, the exhibition revolutionized the way people looked at art and “human character.” Christine Walsh, an art critic for *The Daily Herald*, called these artists “Great Rebels of the World” and grouped them with Edwardian socialists and suffragettes.

Texts by the great literary rebels of the Edwardian Age will be the focus of our study in this course. We’ll read *Dubliners*, a short story sequence by James Joyce, the Irish author whom T. S. Eliot called “the man who killed the nineteenth century.” Others would argue that Virginia Woolf deserves that accolade for her innovations in fiction. Reading her novel *To the Lighthouse* will allow us to explore her revolutionary approaches to character and her use of stream-of-consciousness narration.

In her essay “Modern Fiction,” Woolf explained that her aim in using this narrative mode was to capture the “flickerings of the innermost flame,” in other words, the internal worlds of human beings. Such flickerings also appear in other works included in the course: the poetry of William Butler Yeats, T. S. Eliot, Philip Larkin, and Seamus Heaney; D.H. Lawrence’s short stories; and Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*.

Since this is an Approaches (A) course, we’ll begin by examining E. M. Forster’s novel *Howards End* from three theoretical perspectives: psychoanalytical, Marxist, and feminist and gender. Later, these and other theoretical positions will enrich our conversations about short stories and other novels in the course.





Fiction Workshop

(English 411-Cd) 4 Credits

Prof. Robert Benson

TTh 10:10-12:10, Arnold 251

Fiction Workshop. The workshop will be designed and conducted as preparation for the senior project in creative writing, and as a stand-alone, monumental turning-point enrichment crash-course liftoff and landing, over and over. We want to test what our stories can address within ourselves, so conceived and so dedicated, as within the body politic. We want to learn what words will do when unleashed and leashed to power greater than their own. We will be drawn between autobiography and invention, nature and artifice, fiction and metafiction, anecdote and novel, flight and mining, and other vexing contraries. More in this place to utter is unwise. Meet me at the appointed time & place & I will disclose to thee such sports and imaginings...provided you have the prerequisite (prior course in creative writing) or permission of the instructor (me).

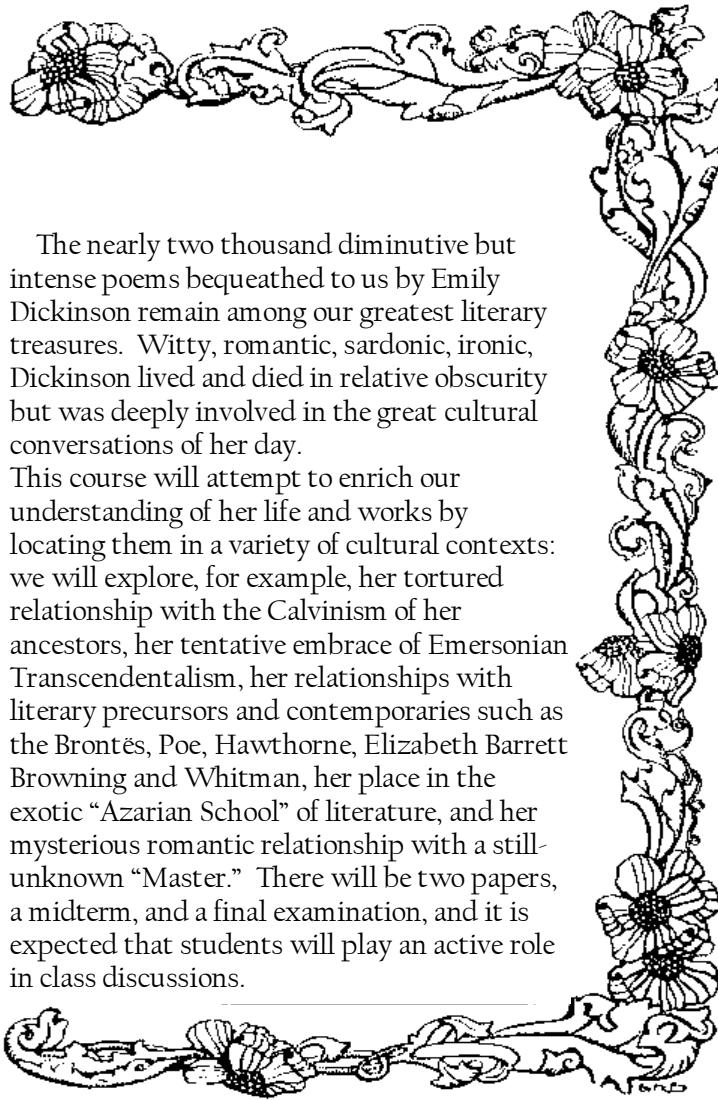


Emily Dickinson and Her World

(English 450-78) 4 Credits

Prof. David Cody

MW 2:55-4:55, Clark 252



The nearly two thousand diminutive but intense poems bequeathed to us by Emily Dickinson remain among our greatest literary treasures. Witty, romantic, sardonic, ironic, Dickinson lived and died in relative obscurity but was deeply involved in the great cultural conversations of her day.

This course will attempt to enrich our understanding of her life and works by locating them in a variety of cultural contexts: we will explore, for example, her tortured relationship with the Calvinism of her ancestors, her tentative embrace of Emersonian Transcendentalism, her relationships with literary precursors and contemporaries such as the Brontës, Poe, Hawthorne, Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Whitman, her place in the exotic “Azarian School” of literature, and her mysterious romantic relationship with a still-unknown “Master.” There will be two papers, a midterm, and a final examination, and it is expected that students will play an active role in class discussions.

***Also from English Department
faculty...***

Children in War

(English 150-Cd\$) [FYS] 4 Credits

Prof. Nejlá Camponeschi

TTh 10:10-12:10, Clark 251

This seminar examines writers' and filmmakers' handling of children's experience who live through modern war as well as deepening the young adults' sensibilities to the pains and triumphs of children in wartime. Objectives include reading closely and analyzing works of literature and film – constructing meaning, supporting interpretation through reading assignments and viewing films, and honing research techniques. Much of the coursework is collaborative and cooperative.





The Warrior and the Poet: Masculinity, Gender, and Identity in the Middle Ages

(English 150-07) [FYS] 3 Credits

Prof. Lisa Darien

MWF 2:55-3:50, Clark 329

Most people imagine the warrior and the poet as complete opposites: the warrior is a strong, silent, muscular fellow who doesn't think much about what he fights for, whereas the poet is a weak and wordy wimp sitting alone in contemplation.

Of course, this is a modern view, one that does not conform much to the realities of the past, particularly the realities of the Middle Ages. As we read the medieval works, we will discover warriors and poets that do not conform to simplistic stereotypes of the barbarian warrior or otherworldly poet. Indeed, we will also find that modern gender stereotypes of the past – i.e., before the modern period, women had no power, were only wives and mothers, and were oppressed; and men were only interesting in fighting and ruling – are particularly inapt. We will find sensitive warriors, women warriors, and even warrior poets. An exploration of the figures of the warrior and the poet will therefore lead to a more accurate and nuanced understanding of the complexity of both gender and identity in the medieval period.

Among the major texts we will read (in translation) are the Celtic epic *The Tain*, the Old English poem *Beowulf*, the Icelandic saga *Egil Skallagrimson's Saga*, the Old French *Lais of Marie de France*, and the Middle English lai *Sir Orfeo*.



Brochure by Katie Serviss '07, Lindsay Carapella '06, and Susan Navarette