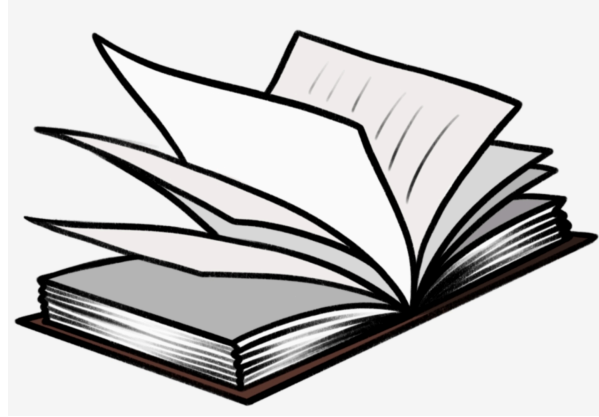


Literature Core Sections

Fall 2024



ENGL 1080.1

Philosophical Fictions

TuTh 12

This section of Lit Core will introduce students to major problems at the crossroads of philosophy and literature. We will raise questions such as: Why would a writer whose aims are philosophical decide to produce a work of literature? Why would a writer whose aims are literary make use of philosophical ideas, motifs, and vocabulary? What, in general, can literary forms achieve that non-literary forms cannot? Can literature improve its readers morally? Can it teach them something? Or does literature's value depend on a refusal to provide easy answers? Our objects of study will span literature, film, and philosophical theories of art.

Robert Lehman

ENGL 1080.2

title

TuTh 1:30

(description)

Matthew Messer

ENGL 1080.3

Castaways and Cannibals

MWF 10

Most people haven't read Daniel Defoe's novel *Robinson Crusoe*, but almost everyone can recognize its influence on the past 300 years of Western culture. Stories in which a stranded person or group of people must find a way to survive in a hostile wilderness (sometimes called *Robinsonades*) have fascinated readers for millennia and are still being told today. Often, these protagonists are menaced by the specter of cannibalism, either from their fellow castaways or the "savage" Other lurking in the wilds. What is it about this premise that we find so compelling? What do these stories say about how we

ENGL 1080.7**Literary Bodies****MWF 11**

In this section, we encounter literary works that consider what it means to have a human body, and we explore these works alongside discussions of health, illness, disability, and medicine. As a class, we ask: How do literary works represent the human body? How do they represent physical and mental illness, injury, recovery, disability, and stigma? How do literary works understand what it means to live an embodied life? These questions will inspire us to think deeply about what it means to be human, both as individuals and as members of wider communities. We will study texts from Shakespeare to the present day, and we will engage with a variety of literary genres, including fiction, nonfiction, drama, poetry, and film. Potential texts include Shakespeare's *King Lear*, Esmé Weijun Wang's *The Collected Schizophrenias*, Emily St. John Mandel's *Station Eleven*, and Yaa Gyasi's *Transcendent Kingdom*.

Megan Bowman**ENGL 1080.8****title****MWF 1**

(description)

Kelley Glasgow**ENGL 1080.9****title****TuTh 9**

(description)

Jessica Brewer**ENGL 1080.10****The Teller and the Tale****TuTh 10:30**

Stories rule our lives. But how are stories shaped into effective literary narrative? This course examines the relationship between story and narrative, or tale and teller. We will analyze various kinds of narratives including fiction, graphic memoir, contemporary drama, and film. By the end of the course, you should have an increased appreciation for literary techniques, together with some fresh conceptual tools to enhance future reading.

Andrew Sofer**ENGL 1080.11****Difficult Texts and How to Read Them****TuTh 10:30**

This class will focus on the analysis of literary texts that are difficult to read because of their form and/or their content. Stylistic and rhetorical complexity in stream of consciousness novels by Faulkner and Morrison make these great books tough going for the reader. Other literary works challenge us through their subject matter: they address difficult topics, including death and dying, fractured families, addiction, mental illness, and trauma. This course will focus on developing the skills necessary to become adept at reading, analyzing, and writing about challenging literary texts, including

ENGL 1080.15**What the Wild Things Say****TuTh 1:30**

For centuries, writers have interrogated the human experience through plants, animals, and ecosystems. In this course, we will read satire, poetry, and short stories that engage other species and think about the narrativity of those “wild things.” We will examine how other species speak back, interject in human narratives, and raise questions about our shared earthly experience. We will ask questions like: what are the ethical benefits and pitfalls of anthropomorphization and personification? Writers will include Alexander Pope, Walt Whitman, William Wordsworth, Emily Lawless, as well as environmental writers like Rachel Carson. By embracing “wild” languages in literature, we will examine wider social concerns like gender, race, and climate change.

Colleen Taylor**ENGL 1080.16****Literature and the Forms of Memory****TuTh 1:30**

In this section of Literature Core, we will consider how varied literary forms work to capture, re-imagine, and/or probe the contours of memory. We’ll read memoirs by Tim O’Brien, Natasha Trethewey, and Allison Bechdel as well as shorter science fiction pieces by Ted Chiang, responding to texts in both analytic and creative assignments. Is memoir reliable or “true”? How does speculative or science fiction offer visions of the ways memory may be altered by technology in the future? How do monuments work (or fail) to capture cultural memories? Several short papers, an in-class midterm, and creative assignments will help you hone your analytic and expository skills.

Amy Boesky**ENGL 1080.17****title****TuTh 1:30**

(description)

Joseph Nugent**ENGL 1080.18****title****TuTh 1:30**

(description)

Gayathri Goel**ENGL 1080.19****Literatures of Globalization****TuTh 3**

“Globalization” has become a buzzword since the 1990s, signaling an era of rapid transmission of information, increase in cultural exchanges, and consumerism, mainly in the Western world. Although, some scholars argue that it is hardly a new phenomenon, but an accelerated version of global relationships forged over centuries. This course asks: What does it mean to live in a globalized world *now*? How are the processes of globalization embedded and reflected in our everyday lives? We will look at literature—including novels, short stories, poems, popular non-fiction, along with movies

and documentaries—to trace the arc of globalization and investigate the opportunities it creates for the “exchange” of culture, knowledge, commodities, languages, information. At the same time, we will also pay attention to global conflicts, crises, and the asymmetries produced around issues such as migration, exploitation of the environment, and the export of harm. We will turn to literature to better understand a rapidly-changed/changing world and the way globalization continues to create unequal relationships among peoples of the world.

Gayathri Goel

ENGL 1080.20

Monsters Of Our Own Making

TuTh 3

Why are monstrous animals such a compelling subject in literature, art, and film? What might these creatures—mythical, mutant, alien, fantastic—tell us about the ways in which we imagine and consume them as cultural and artistic inventions? What kinds of emotions or reactions do these creatures inspire in us when we encounter them—fear, pleasure, or a mix of both? In this class, we will engage with a variety of fantastic creatures in work ranging from Gothic fiction to Creature Features. Not only will we study the origins of infamous creatures, we will also see how modern adaptations reproduce them for new audiences and contexts. We will work with novels, poetry, film, art, and more from around the world to develop close-reading and visual analysis skills. Assignments for this class will consist of analytical and creative work.

Krithika Vachali

ENGL 1080.22

Monstrous Humanities

MWF 12

In this course, students will examine both what makes humans monstrous and what makes monsters human. We will read poems, plays, novels, and essays in addition to engaging with visual media in an effort to analyze and understand how monsters reflect their historical and social contexts. Central to our conversations will be why modern societies have inherited monster lore and how these narratives continue to operate on human consciousness through many genres of storytelling. During the semester, students will gain a deeper understanding of the roots of monsters from Beowulf to Dracula and how monsters reflect deep racial, sexual, psychological, and scientific anxieties.

Kara McCabe

ENGL 1080.23

Literary Bodies

MWF 1

In this section, we encounter literary works that consider what it means to have a human body, and we explore these works alongside discussions of health, illness, disability, and medicine. As a class, we ask: How do literary works represent the human body? How do they represent physical and mental illness, injury, recovery, disability, and stigma? How do literary works understand what it means to live an embodied life?

These questions will inspire us to think deeply about what it means to be human, both as individuals and as members of wider communities. We will study texts from Shakespeare to the present day, and we will engage with a variety of literary genres, including fiction, nonfiction, drama, poetry, and film. Potential texts include Shakespeare's *King Lear*, Esmé Weijun Wang's *The Collected Schizophrenias*, Emily St. John Mandel's *Station Eleven*, and Yaa Gyasi's *Transcendent Kingdom*.

Megan Bowman

ENGL 1080.24

Artful Transitions

TuTh 4:30

Our course will engage literature that deals with the possibilities and power of transitions. Transitions can be physical or emotional, geographical or relational, transcendent or mundane. We will investigate how transitions (re)imagine identity and power, paying particular attention to how social identities (e.g., gender, race, dis/ability, sexuality) inform such moments. We will situate ourselves within the genre of the short story, reading the work of Ted Chiang, Nalo Hopkinson, Samuel Delany, Flannery O'Connor, Ursula Le Guin, Carmen Maria Machado, and others. We will also explore across genres and media, from a speculative novel and romantic poetry to animated film and contemporary song lyrics. We will close read literary texts on their own terms and develop habits of mind that will help us navigate future transitions with greater ease.

Luke Brown

ENGL 1180.1

From Slavery to Mass Incarceration

TuTh 9

This course fulfills both the Literature Core and the Cultural Diversity requirements. This section of Literature Core will focus on narratives that speak to questions of slavery, mass incarceration, and freedom—both literal and metaphorical. The course will start with historical and political writings about slavery from the 1800s and the social contexts in which these writings were produced and consumed. We will then move on to historical and contemporary fiction and film that informs and challenges our historical understanding of slavery and the relationship between slavery and our current system of mass incarceration. Course texts may include: *Homegoing* (Yaa Gyasi), *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl-Excerpts* (Harriet Jacobs), *David Walker's Appeal*, *Beloved* (Toni Morrison), *Kindred* (Octavia Butler), *The Nickel Boys* (Colson Whitehead), *Just Mercy* (Bryan Stevenson), and *How the Word Is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America* (Clint Smith).

Marla De Rosa

ENGL 1184.1

Literature, Testimony, Justice

TuTh 1:30

This section of Literature Core explores how literary texts bear witness to historical events and address social issues in order to engage with questions of difference and justice. Through the study of poetry, fiction, drama, and autobiography, we will examine how writers have used a variety of literary genres and forms to expose inequality and injustice; to call for justice, solidarity, and inclusion; and to transform experiences of trauma, displacement, difference, and oppression into art. Part of this course is devoted to considering how Black American writers, from Frederick Douglass to Toni Morrison, have used literature to testify to the history of slavery and its legacies in the United States. We will also read literary works that address class and gender inequality, LGBTQ rights, and religious persecution.

Lori Harrison-Kahan