

# English Graduate Courses - Fall 2024

ENGL 6010 **Shakespeare: Truth and Lies** - Crane | W 4:30-6:55 (G/UG)

Shakespeare lived and wrote at a time when the ideas about what was true, and how to determine what was true, were changing. The Protestant reformation, invention of the printing press, humanist education, exploration and colonialism, and the beginnings of the scientific revolution all motivated people to focus on questions of truth, falsehood, and epistemology. Although newspapers were just beginning to be invented near the end of Shakespeare's life, his plays are obsessed with fake news, how to tell if people are lying, how to figure out what is true. In this course we will read a selection of Shakespeare's comedies, histories, tragedies, and romances with a focus on how truth and lies are represented. We will also consider the history of various conspiracy theories that have tried to establish that William Shakespeare did not write the plays attributed to him.

ENGL 6033 **Eighteenth-Century Prose Fiction**- Mitsein | M 4:30-6:55 (G/UG)

Studies of the novel have sought the genres rise in eighteenth-century Britain when, as one old story goes, a new middle class with time on their hands and money in their pockets developed a sudden taste for literary realism and character interiority. Yet, what we think of as the novel was only a fraction of the eras prose fiction. The literary marketplace proliferated with what booksellers called romances, secret histories, adventures, narratives, and tales moral, oriental, and gothic. Eighteenth-century readers (and writers!) read them all. In this class, we will consider the eighteenth-century novels usual suspects (by Daniel Defoe, Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding, Laurence Sterne, and Jane Austen) alongside works that challenge the novel as a tidy category (by Penelope Aubin, Eliza Haywood, Sarah Fielding, Samuel Johnson, and Charlotte Lennox). How does broadening the way we understand eighteenth-century reading culture change our ideas about where novels came from, how narrative works, and what fiction can do?

ENGL 6306 **Archives in Action** - Pauszek | M 2-4:25 (G/UG, theory)

*The course counts towards the DH certificate for graduate students.* This course is about archival methods and methodologies in action. We will read exigent work in Writing Studies and Critical Archival Studies to learn about what archival work entails and how it happens how are archives created? Sorted? Indexed? Digitized? And what are the power dynamics associated with these tasks? In other words, we will consider who gets deemed archivable, how, and by whom, and we will explore the sustainability of such work. Students can expect to gain tangible experience exploring multiple archives (both print and digital) in order to see how to build a research project out of this work.

**ENGL 7025 *Imagining Race and the Environment* - Song | Tu 2-4:25 (theory)**

*Fulfills the graduate theory requirement.* Starting in the nineteenth century in the United States, the great outdoors implicitly and explicitly became racialized. It was whites (but not all whites) who could turn to the outdoors as a source of leisure and repair, while for others it was a place of danger, exclusion, work, or where they became ornaments. This course explores critical writings and creative works with an emphasis on theory that seek to reimagine nature, the wild, the human, and the outdoors to center the perspectives of Indigenous, Black, Asian, and Latinx peoples.

**ENGL 7026 *Aesthetics: Philosophy, Politics, Art* - Lehman | Th 4:30-6:55 (theory)**

*Fulfills the graduate theory requirement.* This course will be a discussion-driven survey of *aesthetics*--that subdiscipline of critical thought that attempts to answer the fundamental questions of what art is and what role it plays in our lives. Over the course of the semester, we will likely read texts by philosophers and critics including Immanuel Kant, Paul de Man, Arthur Danto, Stanley Cavell, and Jacques Rancire; and we will consider works by writers and visual artists such as Marcel Duchamp, Andy Warhol, Alexander Kluge, and Ben Lerner. Specific topics to be addressed will include: the relationship between subjective and objective claims about beauty; the connection of aesthetic experience to political activity; the challenge of modernism to classical standards of taste; and the so-called end of art. This class should be of interest to students of literature, music, visual art, and philosophy.

**ENGL 7034 *Reading the Past in an Uncertain Present: The Lessons of Early Modern Ireland and the MacMorris DH Project* - Palmer (Burns) | Th 2-4:25 (DH)**

Early modern Ireland is one of the places where modernity is trialed. The extreme violence of the Tudor and Stuart conquest, the settlement of English and Scots in the plantations which followed, the displacement of native lites by an incoming Protestant ascendancy created a template for English/British colonization in North America and beyond. At the same time, colonial approaches to the land and its resources made Ireland a laboratory for extractive practices which, in time, led to the Anthropocene. But the fascination of early modern Ireland is that colonial perspectives did not go unchallenged. Irish writers offered very different perspectives on violence, property, the built environment, and the natural world. Those unfamiliar perspectives still have the power to challenge orientations to the world which are as destructive as they are hegemonic. MACMORRIS, a decolonial DH project led by Prof Palmer, brings the work figures like Edmund Spenser, Sir Walter Raleigh, Thomas Herriot together with less familiar voices from early modern Ireland, writing in Irish, Spanish, Latin, and Italian (and available in translation on the website). This course will explore the potential of DH to decolonise the archive and it will explore how that more inclusive and polyphonic record might help us to think not only about the past but the present.

For more on the MACMORRIS project, see <https://macmorris.maynoothuniversity.ie/> or listen to Pat Palmer talking about it here:

<https://podcasts.apple.com/ie/podcast/history-hub/id464561881?i=1000632037706>

**ENGL 7732 Contemporary Irish Fiction** - Smith | Tu 4:30-6:55

Concentrating on contemporary Irish fiction, this seminar examines the confluence of stories representing Irish society since the mid-1980s. We will discuss significant cultural shifts and attempt answers to ongoing cultural questions. These include issues of national identity in an era of globalization, the relationship between tradition and innovation in Celtic Tiger Ireland, and the challenges and contradictions posed by the Northern Ireland Peace Process, as well as issues of gender, sexuality, and ethnicity in the new Ireland. Novelists include Roddy Doyle, Colm Tóibín, Patrick McCabe, Emma Donoghue, Mary Morrissy, Anne Enright, Eoin McNamee, Eilís N Dhuibhne, and Deirdre Madden.

**ENGL 7782 Issues and Methods in American Studies** - Klein | Tu 4:30-6:55 (MA methods)

This course offers an introduction to the field of American Studies, which focuses on the interdisciplinary study of American culture. We will read a range of recent scholarship, exploring diverse approaches, methods, and issues of interest. In the process, we will assemble a tool kit of critical skills for making interpretive arguments about works of culture in their historical moments. The cultural forms we analyze may include popular fiction, film, music, religion, and others.

**ENGL 7888 (HIST 7888) Graduate Colloquium: Digital Humanities** - Picone | Tu 2-4:25

Foundational course for the use of digital scholarship in the humanities. By the end of the course, students will have a grounding in what digital scholarship is as well as an arsenal of techniques for utilizing DS in their own work.

**ENGL 8844 Bodies and Souls: Visions, Mystics, and Medieval Devotion** - Stanton | F 2-4:20

Writings about mystical experience make up the most intense, most emotional, and most controversial genre of medieval literature. Mystics lived inner lives that distinguished them sharply from their fellow humans and outer lives that often threatened the religious and secular institutions of their day. In this course we will read five English mystics: Richard Rolle (d. 1349); Walter Hilton (d. 1396); the anonymous author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*; Julian of Norwich (d. 1414); and Margery Kempe (d. 1440). All texts will be read in Middle English, but no previous knowledge is required.

**ENGL 8887 Introduction to Advanced Research** - Ohi | Tu 7-9:25 (MA methods)

This course will acquaint you with the essential resources to carry out the central tasks of literary scholarship. Bibliography (broadly defined as the investigation of the production, dissemination, collection, location, and identification of literary artifacts) is indispensable to scholarship and criticism of all kinds, just as a critical sensibility guides our choice of what books to look for. You will be guided through the reference works and databases available in the Boston College library and others, discuss the goals, purposes, and future of the field of literary studies, and produce an original project based on archival sources.

**ENGL 9916 PhD seminar: Performance and Representation - Sofer | W 10-1**

In this introduction to the interdisciplinary field of Performance Studies (PS), topics may include the politics of representation; performing race/performing gender; performance and performativity; performance ethnography; queer performance; performance historiography; and digital performance. Likely critical readings include Jacques Derrida, J. L. Austin, Judith Butler, Joseph Roach, Diana Taylor, Tina Post, and others. Readings will be paired with one or more cultural performances (play, film, video, performance art, etc.). As well as writing a seminar paper, seminar members are encouraged to apply PS concepts and methods to their own field(s) of interest toward a conference paper or publishable book review.