Course Offerings
Department of English
Spring 2017
http://www.belmont.edu/english/undergraduate_course_descriptions.html

English Classes (ENG)

ENG 1050.01  Understanding Literary Language  Sisson

This course could also be called “Cultivating the Art of Paying Attention”—that is, paying attention to writing, to language, to literature. As such, it will focus on the elements of literature and the elements of writing about literature, the details of which make a significant difference in our reading and writing experiences.

This class will encourage you to consider and reflect on how writing is both a work of art and an act of rhetorical significance. In other words, we will consider together how writing is the carefully crafted result of the specific strategies employed by writers for particular purposes. The critical texts that you create in this class will be taken as seriously as the literature we study together.

We will read poetry (from Mary Oliver, Thirst and Mark Jarman, The Green Man); drama (Bernard Pomerance, The Elephant Man and Berthold Brecht, The Good Woman of Setzuan, both of which will be performed on campus); short stories (various authors); and novels (George Eliot, Silas Marner and Sherwood Anderson, Winesburg, Ohio). In addition to reading literature, we will make regular use of M. H. Abrams and Geoffrey Galt Harpham’s A Glossary of Literary Terms and John Trimble’s Writing with Style: Conversations on the Art of Writing.

ENG 1050.02  Understanding Literary Language  Trout

In this general education English course, students will focus on the craft of reading and understanding texts in a variety of genres such as poetry, short fiction, drama, and the novel while developing the technical literary vocabulary required to write about them. Students will learn to perform close readings of texts and should thereby gain a heightened appreciation of connections, patterns, and themes. Students will also be introduced to the study of grammar, syntax, and etymology. As the first of four core courses for undergraduate English majors, this course aims to begin students on a four-year (and ultimately lifelong) path to better, stronger, more critical reading and writing skills. This semester we will be reading, among other texts, Tennessee Williams’ A Streetcar Named Desire and William Faulkner’s The Unvanquished.

ENG 2000.01  Critical Reading and Writing  John

This course is designed to introduce English majors and minors to the nature of literary theory and writing about literature. You will be exposed to a number of critical approaches that you will practice applying to several major literary works. This is both a reading and writing intensive course. This class will also consist of serious critical discussion and will seek to develop students’ oral communication skills. Please note that this course will not count for General Education Humanities credit.

ENG 2000.02  Critical Reading and Writing  Trout

This course is designed to introduce English majors and minors to the nature of critical reading and writing. You will be exposed to a number of theoretical approaches that you will practice applying to several major literary works. You will also concentrate on writing an effective essay on literature. This is both a reading and writing intensive course. The class will also foster serious critical discussion and effective oral communication. We will consider several novels, including In the Lake of the Woods, My Antonia, and The Handmaid's Tale.
ENG 3000  Junior Seminar in English  Curtis

(Pass/Fail, 0 credit hours). **Prerequisite: Students should be in their Junior Year.** This requirement for all English majors, though open to English minors as well, is designed to be taken in the junior year. Students prepare for their future, considering such issues as preparation for graduate school, teaching, and writing as a profession. Guest speakers and graduates of the program will help introduce students to a variety of career paths.

ENG 3960  Internship  Overall

The purpose of the writing internship course is to provide practical application of classroom learning in an off-campus professional setting. Students enrolled in the course are in the process of performing the work of an internship designed and approved the prior semester in collaboration with Dr. Overall, the English Department’s Internship Coordinator. The number of hours you must complete in your work as an intern at your chosen workplace varies according to the number of credit hours for which you are enrolled: 3 hours Belmont course credit = 8 hours/week (approximately 96 hours total); 2 hours Belmont course credit = 5 hours/week (approximately 60 hours total); 1 hour Belmont course credit = 3 hours/week (approximately 36 hours). Class sessions are devoted to discussions of workplace writing issues and strategies. Students write reflections in which they describe their internship experiences; complete a series of short professional-writing “cases”; and compose and design a digital portfolio with documents they produce on the job. Half of the course grade will be determined from the above assignments while the internship supervisor evaluation will determine the other half.

For more information, see [http://www.joeloverall.com/courses/ENG3960/](http://www.joeloverall.com/courses/ENG3960/)

ENG 4900  Seminar in English Studies  McDonald

**Prerequisite: ENG 2000.** In Senior Seminar students will engage in a semester-long reflection on and discussion about their time at Belmont as an English major and look forward to their future endeavors after graduation. Specifically, students will consider the following questions: where have you been? Where are you now? Where are you going? We will be revisiting old writing, writing reflectively about the experience as an English major, and writing analytically and creatively about *Antigone* by Sophocles, *What Work Is* by Philip Levine, *The Upstairs Wife* by Rafia Zakaria, and *Nutshell* by Ian McEwen. Students will also enter into the conversation about the field of English Studies and produce a major research project about their individual future interests.

**Literature Classes (ENL)**

**ENL 3800  Avatars of the Modern in European Literature  Paine**

We will explore some of the dimensions of modern European literature. Authors will include Charles Baudelaire, Arthur Rimbaud, Stéphane Mallarmé, Rainer Maria Rilke, Anna Akhmatova, Franz Kafka, Virginia Woolf, Clarice Lispector, Albert Camus, and Tahar Ben Jelloun, among others.

**ENL 3890  African-American Literature  John**

This course will cover over 150 years’ worth of African-American literature, beginning with major slave narratives and ending with contemporary works. We will also engage with secondary materials that examine the primary works in relation to historical and cultural contexts such as Reconstruction, the Harlem Renaissance, and the Civil Rights movement. Like a survey course, this course covers a good amount of material in order to provide you with a broad scope of knowledge about the development of African-American literature; unlike a survey course, we spend multiple days on one work, and thus the course also will provide some in-depth knowledge. Major course assignments include a
final paper, a poetry roadmap, a reading journal, and a final exam.

**ENL 3940 Southern Literature Trout**

This will be an intensive reading course that surveys the literature of American Southern writers in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. We will begin by trying to define Southern literature as it developed during the Southern Renaissance, and we will conclude by examining the postmodern question of whether a distinctly Southern literature still exists. Authors for consideration include Elizabeth Madox Roberts, William Faulkner, Richard Wright, Carson McCullers, Flannery O’Connor, Eudora Welty, Cormac McCarthy, and Ron Rash. I strongly suggest you begin some reading over Christmas break. A complete reading list is available if you contact: sue.trout@belmont.edu

**ENL 4350 Jane Austen and Romantic Comedy Murray**

This course is offered in commemoration of the bicentennial of Austen’s death (18 July 1817). Works to be read: Austen, *Catharine and Other Writings, Sense and Sensibility, Pride and Prejudice, Emma,* and *Persuasion.* Also, Shakespeare, *Much Ado about Nothing* and Richard Brinsley Sheridan, *The School for Scandal.* We will also concern ourselves with Austen and popular cultural theory, as in Janice Radway’s *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Culture.* This course differs from the course “Jane Austen and the English Country House and Garden” (offered in the Belmont London Summer Program) so that both may be taken for credit. Satisfies the ‘single author’ requirement in the English major.

**Writing Classes (ENW)**

**ENW 2430 Introduction to Creative Writing Finch**

The goal of this class is for students to come away with an understanding of genre expectations for both poetry and fiction. For poetry, we will examine the writer’s attention to language, tone, line breaks, etc., and for fiction, we will focus on using specific concrete details while avoiding cliché, creating characters and scenes, and understanding how to tag dialogue. In this class, you can expect to be introduced to some of the aspects of the creative writing process that you might not be familiar with (such as workshop and revision). Finally, we will also read and discuss a number of different styles and voices in both fiction and poetry.

In *Making Shapely Fiction,* Jerome Stern describes a creative writing workshop as a place where “you are learning to articulate your reactions to a story...And you are teaching yourself to look at your own work with the same critical eye.” A story or a poem can benefit from guidance, but it needs to be the right kind. The ability to critique is not an innate skill, and instead, you must learn how to analyze a story through practice and instruction. Perhaps more importantly, you must also train yourself to be open to new ideas, to new ways of writing, new ways of reading, and even new ways of creating. As Albert Einstein said, “The mind that opens to a new idea never returns to its original size.” With this new set of skills, you will be ready to embark on further writing away from class with a basic foundation in how not just to write but how to be a writer.

**ENW 2510.02 The Art of the Essay Stover**

In this course students will explore the art of the personal essay by reading essayists ranging from Sei Shonagon (10th century) to contemporary essayists such as Joan Didion, Scott Russell Sanders, and Lia Purpura. Students will sample all kinds of styles that emerge as essayists attempt to write down the thoughts on their minds. True to Michel de Montaigne’s notion of the essay as a trial or an attempt, students will have the opportunity to make several attempts at crafting their thoughts into an artistically fashioned form that delights and instructs their readers. We will research, write about, and explore such concepts as persona, detachment, empathy, zuihitsu, negative capability, and reliable narration, among others. After reading a roundtable discussion by professors who teach the essay, students will follow
through by researching questions that intrigue them and by designing with their peers a roundtable discussion that reflects students’ insights on reading and writing the personal essay.

**ENW 2510.03 The Art of the Essay**  
Lovvorn

Essays are more than simply five-paragraph creatures that live and breathe solely under academic bubbles. They exist elsewhere but take various forms that often look very different from one another. In this section of The Art of the Essay, we will read, discuss, and emulate a wide variety of essay forms, including newer manifestations involving image and sound. The course will be broken into different units, including personal essay/memoir, food writing, place/travel writing, profile writing, and digital essays. We will spend time reading and writing essays in each vein, using source texts as a loose guide. This course is both reading and writing intensive. In addition to reading essays, students will be responsible for technical reflections on the genre and for their own engaging essays.

**ENW 2895 Digital Literacies**  
Overall

In this course, students will work to cultivate digital literacies. In order to do so, students will critically analyze and compose within a variety of multimedia genres such as web texts, video, image creation, and digital archives. In addition to learning industry-standard publication and design software such as iMovie, Adobe Creative Cloud, and HTML/CSS coding, students will work with many modes (words, image, sound, hypertext, arrangement) of texts and will produce a variety of products that involve many different media while exploring some of the most recent theories regarding the challenges to authorship these types of products invoke. For our final project, this semester’s class will be involved in creating and presenting the Nashville Shakespeare Performance Archive in coordination with materials collected by Dr. McDonald’s class from the fall semester. This project is made possible by a grant from the Folger Shakespeare Library and will be an actual website hosted by the Bunch Library at Belmont University. No prior experience with technology or Shakespeare is required.

**ENW 3020 Theories of Writing**  
Blomeley

Ever since Plato lamented the invention of writing 2500 years ago—saying, in Phaedrus, that writing is downright dangerous because it “cannot distinguish between suitable and unsuitable readers” and that readers of writing “will receive a quantity of information without proper instruction, and in consequence be thought very knowledgeable when they are for the most part quite ignorant”—theorists in the subsequent millennia have attempted to reconcile the simultaneous power, danger, and potential of the written word. This course is designed to introduce students to the study of writing, rhetoric, and critical theory. We’ll consider broad questions: What is composing? What is literacy? What does it mean to write about the self? What does it mean to write in the academy? What does critical theory teach us about the composition and interpretation of texts? And what is “good” writing anyway? To answer these questions, we will read texts ranging from 2500-year-old rhetorical treatises to difficult theoretical essays to contemporary songs and movies.

**ENW 3420 Creative Writing: Poetry**  
McDowell

Richard Hugo tells us, in his essay, “Writing off the Subject,” that “all truth must conform to music.” In other words, how we shape our experiences to the music of our language creates poetry. We owe reality nothing and the truth about our feelings everything, and yet still we find it hard to move beyond mere experience and memory to create image-driven, sonically pleasing poems. In order to practice doing so, we will read widely among contemporary poets (at least 6-7 books), one of which will be visiting campus, and through writing exercises and imitations (poems written under the influence of the poets we’ll be reading) in both verse and prose, we’ll create a polished and varied portfolio of original poems. Other requirements will include active participation in workshops and written responses to our readings. This is a workshop-style course in the writing of poetry, so come prepared to read, write, and have fun learning not only how to write poetry but how to be poets, how to be “one upon whom nothing is lost.”
ENW 3510  Creative Nonfiction  Smith Whitehouse

In this course, we will explore the rich, evolving tradition of “the fourth genre”—creative nonfiction. This course aims to be both theoretical and practical in that we will alternate between reading in/about the genre and conducting conferences and in-class workshops in which we share and analyze our own drafts. So, we’ll write from both the critic’s perspective and from the practitioner’s perspective. We will learn about subgenres within creative nonfiction—the memoir, nature writing, literary journalism, humor writing, and cultural critique. Finally, we will experiment with visual and digital storytelling methods.


ENW 3680  Editing in Context: The Belmont Literary Journal  McDowell

In this course we will, from the ground up, conceive, edit, and produce the 2015 edition of The Belmont Literary Journal. We will split into Editorial teams (for Poetry, Fiction, Non-fiction, Art, Managing, and Design editors) and advertise for and accept submissions; select poems, stories, essays, and artwork for inclusion in the journal; design the journal (which is, for the first time, transitioning to an online format!); work within our monetary budget; and advertise, celebrate, and represent the final product across campus, the Belmont/Nashville community, and the entire web. In addition, we will read literary journals from all over the world to learn what makes good writing, what makes good journal design, and what makes a literary journal a sum of its many, many parts. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Gary L. McDowell at gary.mcdowell@belmont.edu. TIP: If you like/KNOW web design, we NEED you in ENW 3680!!

ENW 4010  Writing Seminar: Portfolio  Lovvorn

This course serves as the capstone for students completing the Writing Minor. Students will compile a professional portfolio of their best writing for public exhibition.

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Online: ENL 2220
Other format: ENG 3960, ENW 4010
Graduate Courses

ENG 5820  Readings in British Literature II  Yeo

During the 17th and 18th centuries, Britain experienced a number of radical political and social upheavals, including a civil war, an early experimental republic, libertinism, colonialism, and the rise of modern scientific inquiry. This course will explore the literature of Britain within this cultural context, from the Elizabethan period through the 18th century. This is a reading-intensive course; we will read broadly and deeply to understand how authors responded to cultural, historical, and social movements through innovative developments in lyric and epic poetry, prose fiction, and drama. Ultimately, the aim of this course is to increase your analytical competency and familiarity with the development of pre-modern British literature, but I also hope it will help you simply to understand and enjoy the literature of the past. This course is also available online.

ENG 6200  Creative Writing Seminar: Fiction - Short Stories and Novel Chapters  Finch

For Creative Writing Seminar: Fiction, we will be examining and writing in two forms: the short story and the first chapter. The beginning of the semester will be dedicated to reading, dissecting, and writing short stories, and the second half will be dedicated to writing novel chapters, focusing primarily on the opening chapters of novels. This course strives to accomplish three primary goals: to expose writers to a variety of styles, story shapes, and authors, to encourage the critical examination of both published work and workshop material, and finally, to inspire writers to create a variety of original pieces, working in different points of view and structures, some of which may exceed the boundaries of the writer’s comfort zone. In order to accomplish these goals, you, as the writer, must be willing to try different techniques and exercises, and you must be open to criticism from peers as well as your instructor. The more you are willing to challenge yourself as a writer (and risk failure), the more you will gain from this class. As Hemingway said, “There is nothing to writing. All you do is sit down at a typewriter and bleed.”

ENG 6420  Composition Theories  Lovvorn

When we write, what happens? In other words, what forces are in play, and how do these forces shape writers, texts, and audiences? Moreover, why do we study these dynamics, and what have we learned so far? Such questions frame our course, which examines the relatively young, highly interdisciplinary field of composition studies.

Over the semester, we will trace key theories, movements, and debates that address how writing works as well as how we might best teach the writing craft. Topics will include disciplinary narratives, rhetorical directions, discourse theories, social constructions, identity politics, literacy connections, pedagogical practices, and new media effects.

The class, its readings, and its weekly conversations will benefit a wide range of students—including those who want to understand their own writing practices, those who pursue further graduate work in English, and those who teach English at the college level.