

Department of English

Graduate Course Offerings Spring 2007

ENG 5810

Readings in British Literature

Wells

This course will cover literature (fiction mainly) written in England from the Anglo-Saxon period through the English Revolution and Restoration (1667). This period spans dramatic changes in the English language, and we will read representative samples of works written in Old English (in translation, of course), Middle English, and Early Modern English (once called “Renaissance” or “Elizabethan”). We will carefully examine traditional, canonical authors and works that at one time all (or almost all) English majors would have read, namely, *Beowulf*, Chaucer, *Sir Gawain*, Sidney, Spenser, Shakespeare, Donne, Jonson, Herrick, Herbert, Marvell, and Milton. To gain a sense of how the profession of English has changed, we will add to this list works of recently anthologized, recovered authors, including Elizabeth Cary and Mary Wroth. But the focus of this “readings” course will, appropriately, be on “reading,” in particular on expanding your primary literacy, or the ability to understand and enjoy works that are forbidding to many because they are written in earlier forms of our language. Regular assignments will have you researching features of the language used in these texts. This class will also move from a primary to an accomplished literacy, attempting to understand how language changes when it is used for artistic ends.

ENG 6110

Medieval Literature

Monteverde

The 'history' of King Arthur has been one of the shaping myths of modern western culture, especially of Great Britain and the United States. As we study the evolution of that story from the earliest legends of the pseudo-historical, fifth-century, Celtic military leader to modern retellings in popular literature and film, we will consider such issues as: the reshaping of the story to meet not just changing cultural norms but changing literary tastes as well; the contributions of several different European cultures, for example, Welsh, English, and French, to the central story; the blending of Christian and pre-Christian motifs; and the evolution of the literary genre of the romance. We will also speculate about the causes of the enduring popularity of the Arthurian saga, while also considering how the central love triangles of the story shaped our western notions of romantic love.

ENG 6410.01

Creative Writing

Hutchins

No one can “teach” you to write fiction or poetry—it is true. Yet there is much you can learn in this course, through your own writing process, through instruction, and through interaction with the teacher and your peers. Most students find creative writing classes both enjoyable and truly useful for encouragement, advice, challenge, motivation, personal growth—and as a guaranteed place where others are seriously interested in your work. Yet this course is not just a space for self-expression or self-development, nor is it only a feedback workshop. We will study about fiction

and poetry, asking questions about the history and nature of genre (including multi-genre and hybrid forms), using some theory and quite a few varied fictional examples, including two novels. I also assign exercises that have proved helpful both for getting work started and for building skills. We will spend some time talking about publication and study opportunities and investigating the directions creative writing seems to be taking as we enter the 21st Century. At the end of the term, you will have developed a portfolio of writing including “finished” work, work in progress, reflection on the semester’s progress, and prompts to stimulate further writing on your own. It is always my aim to provide ample freedom and stimuli for each individual but also to provide a comfortable and supportive environment for the risk-taking inherent in writing and sharing as a group. The course welcomes “beginning” creative writers as well as those who are more experienced. Come by to ask questions if you’d like (WHB 207A).

ENG 6420

Composition Theories

Hamilton

We will look at theories of composition from the 1960’s to the present, focusing on 1990 on, particularly the debates between and among proponents of expressivist, social-constructionist, feminist, collaborative, and cultural theorists and practitioners of writing. We will also consider the following questions: What is composing? How do these debates force us to question our definitions of discourse, both academic and personal? What should be taught in writing courses and how should it be taught?

Writing theorists continue to struggle to define key terms like “voice”, “community,” “error/grammar,” “writing across the curriculum,” and so on. We will look at our own composing processes and at recent collections that examine distinctions and connections between various theories of composition, in order to further pursue our interests in the field.

ENG 6370

Collecting and Analyzing Folklore

Cox

This course will center on the methods by which folklorists collect and analyze various types of folklore texts and artifacts. We will begin the course by studying the basic tenets of folklore research and examining some historical collection projects. We will then look at more recent projects and do some training in ethnographic research methods. Each student will conduct a semester-long primary research project.

Texts will include the following: Maria Tatar, *The Hard Facts of the Brothers Grimm*; Zora Neale Hurston, *Mules and Men*; Kyra Gaunt, *The Games Black Girls Play*; Pat Mullen, *Listening to Old Voices*; Zeitlin, Kotkin, & Baker, *A Celebration of American Family Folklore*; Edward Ives, *The Tape-Recorded Interview*, 2nd ed., Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*.