

2006 Summer Course Description

217 - Steele

"American Literature"

This course proposes to survey American literature from its origins to the present. In order to create some coherence out of the diverse field that is American literature, course readings are organized around a series of interlocking 'debates' that suggest differing and often contradictory constructions of identity and community in America.

THE PROBLEM OF ORIGINS: Where does American literature begin? What does it mean to construct a society that destroys or colonizes indigenous, American Indian communities? What did early English colonists exclude from their image of the body politic?

FREEDOM AND BONDAGE: Is it possible to achieve a life of total self-control or "self-reliance" (Emerson) beyond social interference? How does the experience of slavery complicate models of identity? What obstacles impede women writers' achievement of personal freedom?

IDEOLOGIES, MENTAL "FOG," AND COMMUNAL VALUES: In what ways is an individual's perception of the world clouded by unseen ideologies? What are the personal costs or benefits of existing in a world of communal values?

CONCEPTIONS OF SPACE: THE VILLAGE AND THE CITY: How do the communities in which a person exists shape his or her values? What constitutes the perfect community? What leads to the failure of community?

FANTASIES, DREAMS, AND VISIONS: What happens when individual dreams of success collide with social and economic structures? What conditions are necessary to allow the transformation of private dreams into visions that can be accepted by others?

226 - Wofford

"Introduction to Shakespeare"

English 226 will be taught this year in the three week summer term, Mondays through Fridays from 8:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m. by Susanne Wofford

This course will cover plays taken from the entire span of Shakespeare's theatrical career, including all theatrical genres in which he wrote. We will investigate the problematic borderline between truth and fiction in performance,

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and between history and tragedy, and between tragedy and comedy. We will read the following Shakespeare plays:

Two Gentlemen of Verona, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Richard II, Henry IV Part I, Much Ado About Nothing, As You Like It, Twelfth Night, Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Antony and Cleopatra, The Winter's Tale, The Tempest.

Topics for study will include the performance of identity; the role of surrogates, doubles and representatives; theories of representation; trouser roles and the body on the transvestite stage; the role of the audience in festive comedy; erotic imitation and performance; lyricism, song, and emotion in both tragedy and comedy; the relation of knowledge to emotion, memory and the body; the role of violence on stage and the question of catharsis; and the ways the plays link notions of identity to psyche, soul and religion.

There will be a full midterm examination and a final exam. Each will be worth 50% of your grade.

324 - Wanner

“Structure of English”

In this course we discuss the fundamentals of the syntactic structure of English sentences. Our approach is that grammar is not something scary “out there”—it’s part of every speaker’s intuitive knowledge of language, and we aim at making this knowledge visible through linguistic analysis. This course will provide you with basic tools of syntactic and morphological analysis and will enable you to describe and analyze English sentences on your own. You will learn to classify words (nouns, verbs, determiners, adverbs, etc.) and phrases (Noun Phrases, Verb Phrases, etc.) and to give visual representations of the structure of clauses (so-called “tree diagrams”). You will learn about functions in the clause (subject, objects, predicates, etc.) and about specific syntactic constructions (passive, relative clauses, direct and indirect questions, ...). One of the main points will be to develop an understanding of the relationship between word order, structure, and the meaning in English. In a group project of your choice you will have the opportunity to explore a common myth about language, such as the belief that babies acquire language by imitation or that English spelling is “kattastroffik”. The methods of analysis you acquire in this class will be applicable in a variety of ways in your study of literature, creative writing, English education, English as a second language, and further studies in linguistics.

Note: This class will make extensive use of online course software (Learn@UW), including online assignments, online quizzes, and podcasts. You will need regular access to the internet and a UW e-mail address.

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Textbook: Elly van Gelderen (2002): *An Introduction to the Grammar of English. Syntactic Arguments and Socio-Historical Background*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

466 - Ortiz-Robles

“Short Fiction in the Age of the Novel”

The literary landscape of the 19th century is dominated by the novel, an expansive fictional form whose sizable dimensions are well suited to accommodate the outsized ambitions, capacious desire, and enormous achievements of the Victorian era. But it is also a terrain dotted by a great variety of short fictional forms whose presence helps put the aesthetic and political aims of the novel into perspective. Detailed critical readings of short fictions from both sides of the Atlantic – stories, sketches, fables, tales, and one or two *nouvelles* – will allow us in this course to ask why criticism has given the short story short shrift. We will in other words consider the formal devices, rhetorical resources, narrative techniques, and thematic motifs the short story employs to compete with the ideological work of the novel and, in so doing, perhaps also to reaffirm it. Texts by Dickens, Melville, Hawthorne, Eliot, Poe, Conan Doyle, James, Gaskell, Stevenson, and Conrad. Historical and critical works will contextualize and supplement the topics to be covered, which include the role of the artist in society; suspense; secrets and secrecy; the ordinary and the extra-ordinary; irony; character, plot, action; ethics and conventional morality; reading practices; Victorian publishing and periodical literature; beginnings, middles, and ends.

591 - Olaniyan

“Ethnic & Multicult Lit: Black Women Dramatists”

The course is an introduction to dramatic writings by African and African American women. By paying close attention to convergences and divergences of both theme and technique, and formal appropriation of different/similar cultural forms, we will explore the exciting possibility of constructing a cross-cultural black female dramatic tradition. Some of the playwrights to be studied include Lorraine Hansberry, Ntozake Shange, Suzan-Lori Parks, Ama Ata Aidoo, Efu Sutherland, and Tess Onwueme.