English Department Courses
FALL 2015

College of
Saint Benedict + Saint John's

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
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NOTE: Checklists for the English major and minor as well as internship guidelines are available on the English department website. The URL is: http://www.csbsju.edu/english/

Capstone Requirement

English 365C: Capstone: Show Business: Race & the American Imaginary

Days: TR  Time: 11:10-12:30  Professor: Christina Tourino
Campus: SJU  Office: 354B

What can we make of the stubborn New World habit of giving symbolic power to black populations while simultaneously denying them real social power? Why are whites so often comfortable “at play” in black cultural forms? Our primary texts will be novels from the U.S., mostly from the second half of the 19th Century; we will also consider other fine arts forms such as minstrelsy, classical music, jazz, painting, and photography, as well as writings from Economics, New Musicology, Literary Theory, and Cultural Studies. Since this is a seminar, students will take central responsibility for their learning: expect a vigorous reading load, a substantive seminar presentation, and a research paper. We begin with Eric Lott’s Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class. Novels may include: Mark Twain’s Huckleberry Finn (1884), James Weldon Johnson’s Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man (1912), and William Faulkner’s Absalom, Absalom! (1936). Music may include works of Louis Moreau Gottschalk, Scott Joplin, Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, The American Songbook, and Charlie Parker.
English 387: Linguistics

Days: TR  
Time: 2:40-4:00  
Campus: CSB

Professor: Ellen Lucast  
Office: RICH N28

Linguistics, as a discipline, is the scientific study of human language. This course will cover the core of linguistic study: phonetics and phonology (sounds and sound systems), morphology (word shapes), syntax (sentence structure), semantics (the meanings of linguistic forms), and pragmatics (meaning in context). We'll also look at a wide variety of other topics including sociolinguistics (language and identity), language contact, change, death, and revitalization; and writing systems.

Courses that Meet Common Curriculum Requirements  
Offered Fall 2015

**Humanities (HM):**  

**Gender (GE):**  
ENGL: 223C

**Intercultural (IC):**  
ENGL: 383

**Experiential Learning (EL):**  
ENGL: 206, 214

* This course has HM pending.
Courses Required for the Major(s) Offered Fall 2015

Gateway Courses
See pages 11-14

English 243: Literary Theory and Criticism
See page 14

English 213: Creative Writing: Poetry and Fiction
(Requirement for English Major with a Concentration in Creative Writing)
See page 16

English 311: Writing Essays
See pages 18-19

English 313B: Advanced Poetry Workshop
See page 20
(Requirement for English Major with a Concentration in Creative Writing)

English 365A: Capstone: Current Issues in Literary Studies
See page 29

English/Communication 386-01A: Studies in Film (HM)

Days: TR
Time: 2:20-3:40
Room: Q360
Lab: Tuesday 3:50-6:00

Professor: Luke Mancuso
Office: QUAD 355B

Hooray for Hollywood!:
A Cultural History of the 1st Hundred Years of Hollywood Cinema

An upper-division course, which showcases the wider scope of film studies, concentrating on formal analysis of film sequences, with the daily practice of covering the formal elements of film (mise-en-scene, cinematography, camera angles, editing, narrative, acting, content, etc) within the larger context of Hollywood cultural history---from production to marketing to exhibition to the star system.

Students will engage with group analysis of film sequences, diverse narratives, community discussion, and engaged writing about film narratives. Vigorous active participation required.

This course carries an HM designation.
English 383: Postcolonial Theory and Literature (HM) (IC)

Days: MWF  
Time: 1:00-1:55  
Campus: CSB

Professor: Madhu Mitra  
Office: RICH P28

The accession to independence of the colonial countries places an important question before the world.... The fundamental duel which seemed to be that between colonialism and anti-colonialism, and indeed between capitalism and socialism, is already losing some of its importance. What counts today, the question which is looming on the horizon, is the need for a redistribution of wealth. Humanity must reply to this question, or be shaken to pieces by it.

--Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*

Fanon's comment serves as a point of entry for this course. Gesturing towards a “postcolonial” world, Fanon identifies the need for a global, not national, resolution for the problem of unequal distribution of wealth which European imperialism had created. It’s an urgent matter for all humanity, he warns. Today, when we confront the devastating consequences of global inequalities, Fanon’s warning rings as true as it did in the 1950s when formal or territorial colonization was coming to an end and the “Third World” was emerging. Fanon’s way of seeing the world—not as discrete units of nations and cultures, but as people and communities located unequally in the global networks of commerce and power—is a foundational concept in postcolonial studies.

Postcolonial studies is a dynamic and multidisciplinary field that has given rise to some of today’s most innovative and influential theories of cultural production. This class is intended to serve as a general introduction to postcolonial literature and theory. Toward that end, we will read some great novels by postcolonial authors, grapple with some thought-provoking theory, and watch some stirring films. We will pay special attention to the imperatives of globalization and how they are shaping the future of postcolonial studies. Our texts will include Frantz Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth*, Harris Wilson’s *Palace of the Peacocks*, Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart*, Chris Abani’s *Graceland*, Chimamanda Adichie’s *Half a Yellow Sun*, Achmat Dangor’s *Bitter Fruit*, Jamaica Kincaid’s *A Small Place*, and Michelle Cliff’s *No Telephone to Heaven*.

This course carries an HM and an IC designation.

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**English Major: 40 Credits**

Requirements:

- 8 credits of ENGL 221-223 (must be differently numbered):
  - 221: World Literatures
  - 222: Literatures in English
  - 223: Literature of the Americas

- 4 credits of ENGL 243: Literary Theory and Criticism

- 4 credits of ENGL 311: Writing Essays

- 4 credits of Capstone:
  - ENGL 365: Capstone
  - HONR 398 Honors Senior Essay, Research or Creative Project
  - EDUC 362 Student Teaching

20 additional credits of English electives:

ENGL _____
ENGL _____
ENGL _____
ENGL _____
ENGL _____

At least 16 credits of coursework counted toward the major must be 300-level:

ENGL _____; ENGL _____; ENGL 311; Capstone

Students may apply only one course from 120-124 toward the major.

Students must have sophomore standing to enroll in 300-level courses.
**English Major with Creative Writing Concentration:**

**44 Credits**

**Requirements:**

- 4 credits of ENGL 213: Creative Writing—Fiction and Poetry
- 8 credits of ENGL 221-223 (must be differently numbered):
  - 221: World Literatures
  - 222: Literatures in English
  - 223: Literature of the Americas
- 4 credits of ENGL 243: Literary Theory and Criticism
- 4 credits of ENGL 311: Writing Essays
- 4 credits of ENGL 313: Advanced Creative Writing
- 4 credits of Capstone
  - ENGL 368: Creative Writing Capstone
  - HONR 398 Honors Senior Creative Project

**16 additional credits of English electives***:

ENGL _____
ENGL _____
ENGL _____
ENGL _____

*Students may apply 4 credits from COMM 245: Media Writing; COMM 345: Advanced Media Writing; or THEA 211: Playwriting

At least 16 credits of coursework counted toward the major must be 300-level:

ENGL _____; ENGL 313; ENGL 311; Capstone

Students may apply only one course from 120-124 toward the major.

Students must have sophomore standing to enroll in 300-level courses.

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**Electives:**

**Upper Division**

**English 352A-01A: Shakespeare (HM)**

Days: TR
Time: 9:35-10:55
Campus: SJU

Professor: Matthew Harkins
Office: QUAD 352C

This course will focus on reading closely, discussing, and writing about key representative plays from Shakespeare’s career. We’ll consider how his work both contributed to, and moved past, the conventions of Elizabethan and Jacobean theatrical genres. We will move in a roughly chronological order, in order to consider the trajectory of the plays as well as historical and cultural shifts. Plays will likely include *The Merchant of Venice*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Henry IV Part One*, *As You Like It*, *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, and *The Winter’s Tale*.

This course carries an **HM** designation.
In the classic essay, “The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility,” theorist Walter Benjamin notes: “When Abel Gance fervently proclaimed in 1927, ‘Shakespeare, Rembrandt, Beethoven will make films … All legends, all mythologies, and all myths, all the founders of religions, indeed, all religions, … await their celluloid resurrection, and the heroes are pressing at the gates,’ he was inviting the reader, no doubt unaware, to witness a comprehensive liquidation.” (23) We are over one hundred years into the age of cinema, and it is the goal of this course to examine the various liquidations and rebirths that have resulted from movies. We will use Benjamin’s work to guide us through various periods and genres of movies, and to investigate the cultural material produced and reproduced in movies. The course will begin with early montage theory and early movies. From this base, we will venture into specific genres and explore the kinds of characters, stories and myths that have become “celluloid resurrections” of some tenets of our culture. The course will explore some of these topics: the origins of movies and montage theory; the romance comedy; the gangster film and a final selection of classic films.

This course will serve as an introduction to a cultural studies approach to reading film. Active participation in class discussion, attendance at film screening labs and informed critical writing will be the basis for evaluation.
English Minor (20 credits)

20 credits of English courses, including at least 12 at the upper-division level*

ENGL ___
ENGL ___
ENGL 3___
ENGL 3___
ENGL 3___

*The English Department strongly recommends that students take English 311.

Students may apply only one course from 120-124 toward the minor.

Writing Minor (20 credits)

12 credits of writing courses within the English major*+

ENGL ___
ENGL ___
ENGL ___

*Students may substitute COMM 245: Introduction to Media Writing and COMM 345: Advanced Media Writing
+ The English department strongly recommends that students take English 311.

8 additional elective English credits

ENGL ___
ENGL ___

Electives: Lower Division

English 286-01A: Intro to Film Studies (HM)

Days: MWF
Time: 3:00-3:55
Room: Q346
Lab: Monday 4:00-6:15

Welcome to Film Heaven: An Introduction to Active Spectatorship. In film heaven, we will go beyond the level of —two thumbs up and will work toward a more theoretical and historical understanding of Hollywood film and film history. Students will gain an understanding of the history of film in the U.S. and abroad, and we will look at aesthetic and technical aspects of filmmaking. Students will also become familiar with film terminology. 2G2BT.

We will watch many cinema masterworks in the course of the semester, and there will be a lab scheduled for this purpose. We will also read film theory, reviews, and other texts to broaden our understanding of the medium and its genres. Attendance at film lab is mandatory.

Students will do presentations, writing, and will be expected to participate actively in our discussions. They will also be expected to keep up with readings and screenings. There may be a nominal cost for photocopied materials.

Attention: This course requires vigorous and active participation.

This course is cross-listed with COMM 286 and carries an HM designation.
With the publishing industry in rapid flux, book publishers knit their brows and try to forecast demand for printed books and e-books. Every prediction prompts a new round of hand-wringing about the future of the book.

The shift from print to electronic formats has had, and continues to have, enormous consequences for the publishing industry. Claims that this shift spells the death of books, however, demand careful examination. In English 315, we’ll explore the rapidly changing book-publishing industry, looking closely at the ways in which industry developments and new technologies affect writers, readers, and publishing companies. We’ll begin by studying the traditional book-publishing model, and then we’ll study the effects of digital technologies on the transmission of writers’ works to audiences of readers. By the end of the semester, we may not arrive at certain answers about the future of book publishing, but we’ll understand many of the forces that will shape that future.

100-Level Courses

English 120F: Monstrosity and Metamorphosis in Fiction (HM)

Days: MWF
Time: 9:10-10:05
Campus: SJU

Professor: Rachel Marston
Office: QUAD 357A

Monsters are an integral part of our narrative experience, from childhood ghost stories to updated contemporary tales of vampires and zombies. We are fascinated with monsters, the creatures that are like us but are not us.

This course will examine literary representations of the monstrous. We will ask: How do we conceive of the monster and the monstrous? What forms can the monstrous take? What is the relationship between monsters and desire? What does monstrosity teach us about narrative forms? And above all, what does the monster reveal or show us about ourselves, especially how we understand and construct individual and social identity?

Texts will include *Frankenstein*, *The Metamorphosis*, “The Company of Wolves,” and others.

This course is an introduction to fiction with emphases on close reading, critical thinking, discussion and writing skills.

This course carries an HM designation.
English 122D: Literature: Men, Women and Aliens (HM)

Days: MWF  
Time: 8:00-8:55  
Campus: SJU

Professor: Betsy Johnson-Miller  
Office: QUAD 355C

Find me near the flower’s eye  
that takes in provocation  
and begins to grow.  
--Rumi

One definition of the word provoke is "to stir up intentionally." In this class, we will examine literature that provokes readers. The literature we will encounter will provoke us in a variety of ways: from asking us to examine race and gender roles to asking us to question some firmly and commonly held beliefs, from asking us to enter into a poem that we might not understand to demanding that we jump into a narrative that will not let us go. The purpose of this class is to get stirred up by literature, to find ourselves breathless, angry, thrilled, confused, all within the confines of a page, so that we may, as Rumi suggests, begin to grow.

This course carries an HM designation.

English 313A: Advanced Poetry Workshop

Days: TR  
Time: 12:45-2:05  
Campus: SJU

Professor: Jessica Harkins  
Office: QUAD 350B

Are you secretly a poet? Do you love to write? This course offers a careful study the art of poetry and the writing life. Together, we read a wide variety of styles and forms of poetry as we write original poetry throughout the semester. Students may expect readings and writing exercises to supplement their study and to stretch their writing. Regular writing workshops will provide sustained feedback on student writing, as well as exercise in reading and editing skills. As part of the course each student will read the major works of an individual poet in a guided study of that author’s achievements, and each student will produce a revised portfolio of creative work, meet with visiting writers, and participate in a poetry reading. The course primarily aims to develop creative writing skills and to help students grow as writers; additionally though, the course enhances students’ ability to read and discuss poetry, provides practice revising and editing written work, and expands students’ knowledge of poets writing in English.
Put simply, we'll be committing “creative nonfiction.” Like the writers we’ll be reading, we’ll try to discover exactly what we want to say—and then say it so well that others will want to read our writing.

In inventing the essay as we know it, Montaigne noted how his work remained provisional and exploratory—“essays” or attempts at his subject. In a very real sense these qualities stemmed from his drive to keep diving deeper and deeper into his prose to try to discover what it was exactly that compelled him to write in the first place. Subjects are difficult like that. E.B. White, writing about the first moon landing, went through multiple drafts, writing and rewriting until finally satisfied with his narrative tone—and thus understood what it was he wanted to say.

We’ll be paying a good deal of attention to how this “what” takes shape largely through “how” an essay comes together; form cannot be separated from content. Small, telling details, precisely rendered, ground one’s work in the world, letting a series of thoughts take root. Developing this precision will be at the heart of our writing. Everything submitted this semester should be the product of multiple drafts—some turned in, some not—as apprentices of a demanding craft, we hone our skills.

Poetry is an oral art. Traditionally, poetry has been spoken or chanted aloud and integrated with music, dance and ritual. Today, popular culture offers some interesting avenues for exploring the rhythmic, musical, and ritualistic use of language in ways that could be considered poetic. The voice that emerged from ritual poetry is a voice of vision and prophesy. Beginning with The Beatles’ Sergeant Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band (often cited as the first album where the songs are integrated as a work of art), popular music begins to do the work of ritual poetry. The visions of popular musicians, like those of poets, became important aspects in a culture’s understanding of itself. This course will investigate popular culture manifestations of the visionary tradition in poetry.

This course carries an HM designation.
Gateway Courses

English 221D: Fictions of Empire (HM) (IC)

Days: MWF
Time: 9:30-10:25
Professor: Madhu Mitra
Office: RICH P28
Campus: CSB

“The world of imperialism came crashing through the walls of the nineteenth-century novel. Old conflicts were terminated, old boundaries were destroyed, old characters were banished. A new universe of fiction was set down in their place. A revolution in the novel was effected.”
—Jonah Raskin, The Mythology of Imperialism

This course will focus on literature (mostly novels) produced in response to the historical experience of Empire. We will look at the ways in which literature has enabled the Empire, justifying its "civilizing mission," reinforcing racial stereotypes, and normalizing European Superiority. We will also look at the ways in which literature has criticized and opposed the ideologies of Empire, garnering support for anticolonial movements, and contributing to nationalist struggles. Finally, taking out cue from Raskin's comment (quoted above), we will investigate whether the operations of today's Empire (some call it globalization) have generated another "new universe of fiction."

This course carries an HM and IC designation.

Writing Courses: Upper Division

English 311-01A: Writing Essays

Days: TR
Time: 9:35-10:55
Professor: Mathew Callahan
Office: QUAD 355D
Campus: SJU

Simply stated, the goal in Writing Essays is to write well, to place one word after another in a unique and careful way so that not only will the reader understand the message conveyed in a given essay, but they might understand something of the messenger as well. How is this done?

It is not an easy task or one that is undertaken lightly. There are many aspects a writer must consider and some of these will be explored during the semester. Word choice will be discussed and examined since, like fingerprints, each word leaves an individual imprint along an essay’s path. Style, the unmistakable scent of a writer, will be developed too since it is often the case that how an essayist writes is every bit as important as what an essayist writes. Focus, consistency, authority and self-discovery all must be factored into the equation, too. Indeed, it is the process of self-discovery or self-exploration that can be at once the most maddening and most rewarding aspect of the essay writing experience.

The class format will be a blend of reading and discussion of our texts, brief writing exercises, peer workshops, in class readings and conferences with the instructor. Our readings will provide examples of some of the finer essayists of our time and will serve as guides for what a truly great essay can do. But the primary concern of the class will be on the creation and refinement of our own work so that, by the semester’s end, each student will be able to trace back, word by word, their own unique and carefully crafted written landscape.
English 214-01A: Writing the Experience (EL)

Days: TR  
Time: 8:00-9:20  
Campus: SJU  

Professor: Christopher Bolin  
Office: QUAD 359D

In this course, students explore their own poetry and fiction while getting to teach creative writing to local fifth-graders. This course helps students better their writing of poetry and fiction and helps them develop the skills to teach creative writing. Students participate in writing workshops and closely examine published stories and poems. Additionally, we spend a number of our class meetings leading creative-writing sessions at a local, elementary school. Ultimately, this course helps students see how "service" and "art" complement one another. This course helps students write stronger poems and stories and connects them with a community of engaged peers.

This course carries an EL designation.

This course has a $35 supplemental fee for background checks and transportation costs.

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English 221F: Medieval Literature (HM)

Days: MWF  
Time: 12:40-1:35  
Campus: SJU  

Professor: Jessica Harkins  
Office: QUAD 350B

This course explores the earliest stories written in English. Funny, brutal, and mesmerizing, these tales from the medieval period--spanning 1,000 years--seem strange and yet oddly familiar. We'll divide the course into three sections, early, middle, and late medieval, reading foundational texts from each era, such as the extraordinary Beowulf, The Knight and the Lion, The Canterbury Tales, and The Dream Vision of Piers Plowman. While we approach each text historically, we remain mindful of how medieval works exist in dialogue with literature from across the world and with later literature even into our present day. Students further enhance their study of manuscript culture and early literary production through hands-on visits to our HMML library and Book Arts Studio.

This course carries an HM designation.
**English 223C-01A: Revolutionary Americas (HM) (GE)**

Days: MWF  
Time: 12:40-1:35  
Campus: SJU  
Professor: Yvette Piggush  
Office: QUAD 352B  

This course offers you a fresh perspective on the American Revolution—through the eyes of Loyalists as well as Revolutionaries and through the experiences of enslaved Americans. We will examine how ideas about race, masculinity, and femininity shape ideas about liberty in the United States and the Caribbean from the late eighteenth-century Atlantic revolutions to the US Civil War. Our discussions will focus on the messy and incomplete processes of social and personal transformation using a wide range of readings, from the histories by Loyalist Peter Oliver and ex-slave Mary Prince, to political pamphlets like Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense* (1776), to fictional works that shed light on revolutionary roads not taken, such as Leonora Sansay’s *Secret History* (1808) of the Haitian Revolution.

This course carries an HM and a GE designation.

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**English 213-01A: Creative Writing: Poetry and Fiction**

Days: MWF  
Time: 1:50-2:45  
Campus: SJU  
Professor: Rachel Marston  
Office: QUAD 357A  

“Writing has so much to give, so much to teach, so many surprises. That thing you had to force yourself to do—the actual act of writing—turns out to be the best part. It’s like discovering that while you thought you needed the tea ceremony for the caffeine, what you really needed was the tea ceremony. The act of writing turns out to be its own reward. “

— Anne Lamott, *Bird by Bird*

...in order to write, one must not be lazy, and that is precisely one of the difficulties of writing...because it must span zones of very hard work, with the risks that that entails; the longings and threats of idleness…

— Roland Barthes, “Dare to be Lazy”

In Creative Writing: Fiction and Poetry, we will delve deeply into the act of writing. We will explore poetry and fiction through the reading of published work and the writing (and revising) of poems and stories. We will discuss language, voice, and form. We will investigate how poems and stories work. And, most importantly, we will write. A LOT. The class will include daily writing exercises, discussion of craft and construction, and writing homework, as well as larger creative projects in poetry and fiction.

The class will enable you to participate in a community of writers, situate yourself in a tradition of other writings, and practice the important and exciting art of revision.

Together we will create a space where imagination, play, and exploration through language take precedence in our daily lives and keep us present in the world and in the word.
Writing Courses:
Lower Division

English 206-01A: Creative Writing:
Clinical Encounters (HM) (EL)

Days: TR
Time: 9:35-10:55
Professor: Christopher Bolin
Office: QUAD 359D
Campus: SJU

English 206 is a year-long, creative-writing course for pre-health science majors, which offers a sustained, clinical experience. Students learn to guide patients through creative-writing exercises, at local clinics, while developing their own writing lives. This course helps future clinicians learn to communicate with precise imagery and metaphors, while revealing connections between the practice of medicine and the arts of poetry and fiction. Additionally, this course helps students see “patients” as people who are not defined by their diseases while increasing students’ capacity for working with ambiguity (moral, creative, and narrative).

This course carries an HM and an EL designation.

English 243:
Literary Theory & Criticism:
From Reading the Word to Reading the World

Days: MWF
Time: 3:00-3:55
Professor: Yvette Piggush
Office: QUAD 352B
Campus: SJU

This course introduces you to strategies for and debates over interpretation. We will examine theories for interpreting literary texts and how these apply to the wider world of signs and symbols that produces us and that we produce and consume. We will ask how practices of reading and writing shape our responses to everyday life. We will look at the relationship between technologies—such as books and film—and our reading and interpretation of the world. We will also ask how the symbolic systems of race, gender, nation, and class frame our interpretive strategies. Our texts will range from Sendak’s Where the Wild Things Are, to Vertov’s Man With a Movie Camera, to critical theory by Benjamin, Barthes, Foucault, and Butler.