

## **Lower Division DeCals**

### **Censorship! Literature and Rhetoric of Modern Book Restrictions**

**[English 98-001 \[32122\] 2-Units](#)**

Student Facilitator: **Elizabeth Goldman**

Email: **[elizabeth23@berkeley.edu](mailto:elizabeth23@berkeley.edu)**

**Time: Monday 5 - 6:30 PM**

**Location: Dwinelle 106**

**Enrollment Cap: 20**

#### **Description:**

This course will examine contemporary book bans from literary, legal and political lenses and encourage students to engage in critical discussions surrounding educational censorship and the importance of diverse literature. The course will begin by providing the necessary context to have critical discussions on book bans looking at book banning throughout history, examining current political conversations surrounding book banning and aiming to understand relevant legal precedent. The rest of the course will approach banned books from various literary angles, including nonfiction, fiction, children's literature, and graphic novels. Each work should provide nuance to the issue of book bans and spark engaging and meaningful class discussions. This course should require, on average, five to six hours of outside work per week.

The class will mainly be conducted through class discussions but will be complemented by occasional brief informational lectures and potentially guest speakers.

***If you are interested in enrolling in the course, please complete this interest form:***

**<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdvSLvOY4Eokyz84WIWpwSFODXStfwWN YzW cinkK1KAaDUIQ/viewform>**

## **SwingCal**

**[English 98-002 \[34772\] 1-Unit](#)**

Student Facilitator: **Zoe Steele**

Email: **[zsteele252@berkeley.edu](mailto:zsteele252@berkeley.edu)**

**Time: Monday 7-9 PM**

**Location: Social Science Building Room 126**

**Enrollment Cap: 60**

### **Description:**

SwingCal is a one unit, pass no pass, dance elective course. We teach the basics of the Lindy Hop, a partnered swing dance that originated in Harlem, New York in the late 1920s. Class time is split between short lectures on swing culture and history, and practical lessons. We start with the basic six-count steps, progress to the Charleston, and work our way up to more layered eight-count moves and line dances. Lessons will be taught by Cal students and guest instructors from around the bay!

**If you have questions about the course or want to learn more about the local Lindy Hop scene, please email [swingcal@gmail.com](mailto:swingcal@gmail.com).**

**Students must attend during the first week (DeCal Info session) in order to receive a course enrollment code.**

**Main Characters Only: Archetypes, Tropes, and Delusions in Literature and Film**  
**[English 98-003 \[34884\] 1-Unit](#)**

Student Facilitator: **Anaaya Jogani**

Email: [anayaajogani@berkeley.edu](mailto:anayaajogani@berkeley.edu)

**Time: Wednesday 6:30 - 8 PM**

**Location: Dwinelle 130**

**Enrollment Cap: 30**

**Description:**

We're surrounded by stories - on screens, in books, and even in the way we present ourselves online. But what defines a "main character," and why are certain roles so familiar across time and media?

In this course, you'll explore how characters are constructed - and how those roles influence the ways we understand identity and narrative in the world around us. We'll look at a range of texts, from Shakespeare and modern novels to TV shows and internet culture, and ask how tropes reflect (and challenge) cultural norms.

Expect open discussions, creative assignments, and the chance to think critically about the roles you see - and maybe the ones you play. No previous experience in English is required - just curiosity and a willingness to engage.

**To enroll in this course, please attend the first class meeting to receive a permission code from the student instructor. Questions? Please email the student facilitator: Anaaya Jogani [anayaajogani@berkeley.edu](mailto:anayaajogani@berkeley.edu).**

## Upper Division DeCals

### **Percy Jackson and the Olympians**

[English 198-001 \[28230\] 2-Units](#)

Student Facilitator: **Nevya Patel**

Email: [nevyia2004@berkeley.edu](mailto:nevyia2004@berkeley.edu)

**Time: Wednesdays 6:30 - 8 PM**

**Location: Dwinelle 251**

**Enrollment Cap: 30**

#### **Description:**

The objective of this class is to read through and analyze Rick Riordan's first series: Percy Jackson and the Olympians and discover what has made the series a Young Adult classic. We will read through the full first series and read excerpts of the myths as they are recorded in classical literature. We will also investigate how Percy Jackson interacts with our socio-cultural beliefs with the help of supplemental theory, such as disability theory and gender theory, to understand what makes Percy Jackson such a captivating and unique hero.

Each book will be read over a period of two weeks, allowing ample time for discussion and reading. Each week there will also be supplemental readings to help students make more informed analyses of the series and how it makes use of classical myths. We will also have a week to discuss the controversial movie adaptation.

**To enroll in the course, please complete the following form:**

<https://forms.gle/yqD2eCSXQRHgDB5K7>

## **Small Press Publishing: Berkeley Fiction Review**

**[English 198-002 \[28230\] 2-Units](#)**

Student Facilitator: **Bianca Sandoval**

Email: **[bsandoval@berkeley.edu](mailto:bsandoval@berkeley.edu)**

**Time: Thursday 6:30 - 8 PM**

**Location: Wheeler 204**

**Enrollment Cap: 50**

### **Description:**

The Berkeley Fiction Review is a student-run, ASUC-sponsored, annual publication that publishes artwork and 12-15 short stories from around the world. We publish innovative short stories from every genre. Established in 1981, BFR is the second-oldest literary journal on campus. This spring, we will publish Issue 46!

As members of this DeCal, students read, discuss, and vote on submissions for publication. In addition, members have the chance to have their own work published through our Student Story Week. Occasionally, we have guest speakers from the creative writing or publishing fields. As a student in the class, you will play an integral role in the production of the journal from reading and voting on stories for publication, completing Reader's Reports, and completing a personal project varying from opportunities to get further involved in the creation of our issue such as editing, design, or writing for our magazine!

By the end of the semester, staff members should have in-depth knowledge of the editorial selection process and a broader appreciation for small-press publishing. Staff members will practice providing concise comments on the qualities of a wide variety of genres and styles of short stories regarding their selection for publishing.

The course emphasizes practical experience as the preferred educational method. Small group discussions and experience reading submissions are underscored by occasional lectures.

Since the publication is run through a DeCal, there will be a limit on the number of staff members each semester, and enrollment will be decided based on applications, which will be assessed for enthusiasm and interest.

**Application link: <https://tinyurl.com/BFRSP26>.**

## **Bad Artists: The Ethics of Supporting Your Idol**

**[English 198-003 \[34756\] 1-Unit](#)**

Student Facilitator: **Blue Burkett**

Email: **[blueburkett@berkeley.edu](mailto:blueburkett@berkeley.edu)**

**Time: Monday 4 - 5 PM**

**Location: Dwinelle 234**

**Enrollment Cap: 20**

### **Description:**

It is all too often that we find ourselves markedly starstruck by an artist. Be it by their prose, musical composition, act or illustration, exposure to such art can be transformative; enlightening; illuminating, so much so that many (and we ourselves) cannot help but place them upon pedestals of pure light. But in the internet age, it's near impossible to not know of their wrongs—where do we draw the line? Why, and when do we allow the wool to be pulled over our eyes?

This course is an exploration of the morals and ethics in the consumption of work by problematic artists through a spectrum of artistic mediums, for there is a question that has plagued the human condition from its fateful inception: what the hell is up with Kanye West?

The goal of this class is to aid students in establishing their own personal system of parameters that they can then utilize to examine their responses to the art they read, watch, listen and look at by these perpetrators of societal conduct.

Together, we will investigate artists from the pantheon of violation (racism, sexism, hypocrisy, etc.) and attempt to decipher on a case-by-case basis the psychic degradation that occurs when we violate our principles through consumption. Creatives include, but are not limited to, Ronald Dahl, Alice Munroe, Woody Allen, Morrissey, and others.

In this class, we will not be asking “What’s up with Kanye?” but rather, “What’s up with us?”

**For enrollment in this course, please fill out the following link:**

**<https://forms.gle/uCRMYSvMVHsxSqFE7>**

**Visual Narratives and Storytelling**

**[English 198-004 \[34757\] 2-Units](#)**

Student Facilitator: **Shelby Chung**

Email: **[shelby\\_chung@berkeley.edu](mailto:shelby_chung@berkeley.edu)**

**Time: Monday 6:30 - 8:30 PM**

**Location: Anthropology and Art Practice Room, 155**

**Enrollment Cap: 50**

**Description:**

Do you like reading comics, analyzing films, or just storytelling in general? Our DeCal is dedicated to examining various visual narrative texts in order to teach ourselves, as creators, how to construct our own fictional stories. We'll be looking at films, animation, graphic novels, video games, and other miscellaneous fun things! All students welcome! Email us at [visualnarrativesdecal@gmail.com](mailto:visualnarrativesdecal@gmail.com) with any questions.

**In order to enroll, interested students must fill out an online application form:**

**<https://tinyurl.com/vnstspring2026app> and attend the first day of class. Enrollment codes are then distributed soon after the first day to students who have fulfilled both requirements.**

## **Wielding Stoicism in an Age of Dystopia**

**[English 198-005 \[34578\] 2-Units](#)**

Student Facilitator: **Miriam Klaczynska**

Email: [mkatklaczynska@berkeley.edu](mailto:mkatklaczynska@berkeley.edu)

**Time: 5 - 6:30 PM**

**Location: Dwinelle 263**

**Enrollment Cap: 20**

### **Description:**

This course will examine concepts of dystopia through literature and film, and will consider how we might utilize Stoic thought in coming to terms with these futures. In the digital age, we are constantly kept aware of global disasters, which forces us to confront these dystopian futures daily. We will discuss how we can wield the tools of philosophy in understanding and accepting these realities. The aim of this course is to redirect feelings of helplessness in the face of these catastrophes to weigh, through Stoicism, what is and is not in our control as individuals. We will contrast dystopian themes with our lived reality, and discuss what we as individuals can do to mitigate these outcomes.

Our focus will be on the various avenues for the emergence of dystopian realities—whether by AI takeover, nuclear annihilation, the dissolution of democracy, or through biological or epidemiological catastrophes (the zombie apocalypse!). We will consider dystopia in literature, film, and critical theory, and we will analyze where and how dystopia takes root in society. Then, we will consider how we can apply Stoic techniques in accepting what is in and is not in our control concerning the trajectory of dystopian development. After developing a firm understanding of dystopia and Stoicism, we will culminate the course by discussing actionable steps individuals can take in preventing dystopian developments of civilization.

Upon completion of this course, you should have developed a deep understanding of the basic factors that exacerbate or mitigate dystopian futures and be able to apply your insights to the literature and films we explore. You will have the opportunity to demonstrate your understanding of dystopia and Stoicism in your final project.

**To enroll in the course, please fill out the following Google Form:**

**<https://forms.gle/ubxH86axMpgcYEbc8>**

## **Bending Literary Canon — A Critical Analysis of Avatar: The Last Airbender**

**[English 198-006 \[34579\] 1-Unit](#)**

Student Facilitator: **Taylor Cross**

Email: [taylrcross@berkeley.edu](mailto:taylrcross@berkeley.edu)

**Time: Wednesdays 6 - 8 PM**

**Location: Dwinelle 246**

**Enrollment Cap: 30**

### **Description:**

"It is important to draw wisdom from many different places. If we take it from only one place, it becomes rigid and stale." - Uncle Iroh

Does Avatar: The Last Airbender (ATLA) belong in the literary canon? Should it be counted among the classics—Romeo and Juliet, Pride and Prejudice, or The Tale of Genji—in terms of prestige, cultural significance, and artistic merit? Moreover, can a children's animated series even constitute literature? In this course, we'll be bending the literary canon, examining ATLA with the same care, rigor, and curiosity we apply to traditional canonical texts.

Students will use the series as a text for critical, thematic, and sociopolitical analysis, evaluating how effectively the series addresses complex issues such as genocide, colonialism, and imperialism. They will learn about the real-world cultural and historical inspirations behind ATLA, and discuss how these elements are blended and reimagined within the series. Students will also engage in light-hearted fandom discourse, share "hot takes," and dive into the series' lore in depth.

Students should expect to spend approximately 1.5 hours completing course activities each week, which consists of watching assigned episodes, participating in discussion posts, and reviewing supplementary materials such as video essays and articles that provide theoretical frameworks for interpreting the series.

**Students from all areas of study are encouraged to apply!**

### **Application Link:**

**<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfajlNEYIRa8cSJjKAC3TqtbvjW46ijrrUOSilaGDf5ttea6Q/viewform?usp=sharing&oid=108354804958903453648>**

## **Young Adult Literature**

**[English 198-007 \[34760\] 2-Units](#)**

Student Facilitator: **Maia Krusee-Leaver**

Email: **[maiaavl@berkeley.edu](mailto:maiaavl@berkeley.edu)**

**Time: Wednesday, 7-9 PM**

**Location: Dwinelle 223**

**Enrollment Cap: 40**

### **Description:**

The objective of the Young Adult Literature Decal is to analyze literary devices used within “Young Adult” literature and the manner in which they facilitate discussion within their intended audience about the socio-political and economic environment of their creation. We will be exploring the rise and fall of specific trends, archetypes and themes unique to this genre, and recognize the psychological motivations behind characters that make them appealing to the target audience. The course will also investigate the publishing industry behind the books and the process to publication. Ultimately, students should gain an appreciation for the great nuance within the genre and an in-depth understanding of the literary value that the “Young Adult” genre offers.

***If you are interested in enrolling in this course, please fill out the following form:***

**[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfpf\\_vOb69st4IXUruVx58jV\\_4r9GpoeJcfcxaIU85V2gwM\\_w/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfpf_vOb69st4IXUruVx58jV_4r9GpoeJcfcxaIU85V2gwM_w/viewform)**

## **Exploring Ecotopia**

**[English 198-008 \[35043\] 1-Unit](#)**

Student Facilitator: **Robin Eubank**

Email: [robineubank@berkeley.edu](mailto:robineubank@berkeley.edu)

**Time: Monday, 4:30-5:30 PM**

**Location: 2424 Haste St**

**Enrollment Cap: 20**

### **Description:**

The streets of San Francisco are two-laned and wild life runs, abundant and free through the outskirts of the city. California, and its people, have been re-wilded: cooperating, co-living, and creating, divorced from the emotionally oppressive and globally polluting U.S. empire. The Pacific Northwest, now Ecotopia, nests a peculiar, fair, technologically advanced society. "Rumors abound of barbaric war games, tree worship, revolutionary politics, sexual extravagance" They are happy and in balance with the natural world; interactions are intimate or none at all; labor is egalitarian and fair. Can you see it—Berkeley, reimagined? Can you see yourself there? You will after reading American investigative reporter William Westin's journal as moves through Ecotopia; as Ecotopia moves in him. Ernest Callenbach's novel, Ecotopia is teeming with spirit and hope. It is also, in the tradition of revolutionary, utopian, and science fiction literature, a handbook. I suggest, under the radical shade of the Berkeley Student Cooperative, we should read this nifty guide and see what we can learn from it. What elements can we adopt?

In this course, we will closely read the rich and gripping novel, as well as supplemental articles and stories that will contextualize, and deepen our desire for Utopia. We will thoroughly construct this fictional imagining of a better world—so local and maddeningly relevant—and confront our dark times to find light in them. The class, held at the Rochdale Village co-op on southside, pushes the boundaries of learning by merging literary analysis with practical skills such as gardening, skill-sharing and co-living. Ecotopians mend their belongings, they are one with nature, they smoke and dance and have sex without stigma. We will read our lived experience through an Ecotopian eye.

[see next page for remaining course description]

[Cont] **Exploring Ecotopia**

[English 198-008 \[35043\] 1-Unit](#)

Student Facilitator: **Robin Eubank**

Email: [robineubank@berkeley.edu](mailto:robineubank@berkeley.edu)

**Time: Monday, 4:30-5:30 PM**

**Location: 2424 Haste St**

**Enrollment Cap: 20**

**Description:**

Rochdale/Fenwick Villagers can get workshift from participating in this course. Co-ops getting workshift for the Decal must enact a project for our community as a council member. Ecotopians will produce a final commonplace book on how Ecotopia emerges in them. Ecotopia will guide our class culture: we will develop our awareness of how capitalism informs our behavior, limits, and filters. We will ask: How can we peer into Ecotopia so as to understand the past, illuminate our present moment and reimagine our future? It is among my very favorite books and I would be grateful beyond measure to share it with you!"

**If you are interested in enrolling in this course, please attend the first class meeting**

## **The Art of You: Intersections of Psychology, Creativity and Expression**

**[English 198-009 \[34771\] 2-Units](#)**

Student Facilitator: **Bini Sebastian**

Email: **[bsebastian@berkeley.edu](mailto:bsebastian@berkeley.edu)**

**Time: Tuesdays 4-6 pm**

**Location: Anna Head room 210**

**Enrollment Cap: 25**

### **Description:**

This course is designed to help you gain insight into how your inner world emotions, thoughts, & experiences - shapes your artistic process. Through a psychological lens, we will delve into the nature of creative blocks & introspect on how past experiences can hinder your expressive flow. You will engage in holistic, contemplative practices to transform inner obstacles, such as fear & self-doubt, into sources of inspiration. The course format includes experiential exercises, group discussions, journaling, & artistic practices.

\*This course is not a substitute for therapy."

***If you are interested in enrolling in the course, please complete this interest form:***

**<https://forms.gle/dhaYQBpxDLr4rsuq6>**

**sports, music and media**

**[English 198-010 \[34885\] 2-Units](#)**

Student Facilitator: **Blythe Powaga**

Email: **[bpow@berkeley.edu](mailto:bpow@berkeley.edu)**

**Time: Thursdays 2 - 4 PM**

**Location: Morgan 109**

**Enrollment Cap: 40**

**Description:**

Being adjacent to San Francisco allows us to explore a complex world of the entertainment industries, bringing together sports, music, film, and digital media. We will focus on how leagues, artists, streaming platforms, and studios build global audiences, curate marketing campaigns, and adapt to new technologies. Key topics include label-side music distribution, athlete and artist branding, diversity in media representation, global marketing campaigns, emerging and advice from current professionals. Furthermore, the course also brings in industry experts including, but not limited to, Netflix, Dolby, Wasserman, Universal Music Group, Pixar and many other senior leaders in music and film. Through guest lectures, case studies, and discussions, students will develop an economic and entertainment-centric understanding of how sports and popular culture intersect to shape global entertainment.

**If you are interested in enrolling in this course, please attend the first class meeting**

## **Children's Literature and Illustration**

**[English 198-011 \[35005\] 2-Units](#)**

Student Facilitator: **Ellya Kim**

Email: **[ellyakim@berkeley.edu](mailto:ellyakim@berkeley.edu)**

**Time: Thursday 6 - 8 PM**

**Location: Dwinelle 246**

**Enrollment Cap: 30**

### **Description:**

How does one go about starting a career in children's literature?" Our DeCal is molded out of this question, and we will seek to find an answer under the guidance of these three pillars: Inspiration, Creation, and Publication.

This is a project-based class where students will experience creating their own children's book and learn more about the publishing industry.

This DeCal is perfect for writers who dream of publishing a children's book, artists who want hands-on experience in illustrating a project, and anyone who just wants to have fun, learn something new and make their inner child shine through!

**If you are interested in enrolling in this course, please attend the first class meeting**

## **UC Hogwarts**

**[English 198-012 \[35088\] 2-Units](#)**

Student Facilitator: **Lyric Octavia Hooker-Hearne**

**Email:** [scholar22leaf@berkeley.edu](mailto:scholar22leaf@berkeley.edu)

**Time:** Wednesday 6:30 - 8:30 PM

**Location:** GPBB 103

**Enrollment Cap:** 40

### **Description:**

The objective of this course is to explore J.K. Rowling's world in the Harry Potter series through book discussions and activities. In this course, we will help legitimize the genre of fantasy by exploring topics, themes, and issues brought about by this series. In addition, we will try to understand what makes the series so compelling to generations of readers and what has made it the best-selling book series of all time. We hope to prove that Harry Potter is a work of academic merit to our students.

**If you are interested in enrolling in this course, please attend the first class meeting**