VCU English Course Descriptions Spring 2027

Last updated 10/13/2026

Notice: This document is fluid and all course numbers, instructors, times, CRNs, & modalities are subject to change.

These course descriptions reflect the decisions as of October 13, 2026. Please know that changes in university policy or considerations of public health may subsequently affect the modality of a course.

A Face-to-Face course will meet on-campus, in-person barring any public health concerns. Students must follow university guidelines (e.g. be masked, social distance) in participating in the class. Face-to-face classes are listed in orange. Face-to-face classes will not be recorded or streamed and the expectation is that students will attend the class in person.

Hybrid classes will have a combination of in-person and online interactions. Not all hybrid classes will be streamed live; some will be a combination of in-person and online interaction, so please read course descriptions carefully.

Online classes will take place purely in a virtual format. Some will combine synchronous (everyone meeting simultaneously) and asynchronous (individuals working on their own time) interactions. Online classes are listed in blue.

Our faculty are committed to offering classes that will work with students' schedules and learning styles. Although we are teaching in different modalities, our mission to be an engaged community of teachers and learners remains unchanged. If you have concerns or questions, please contact the

instructor directly, Associate Chair Gretchen Comba (s2gccomb@vcu.edu) or Department Chair Dr. Les Harrison (hlharrison@vcu.edu).

Credit Distribution

Ancillary Requirements:
English Ancillary - 206, 291, AMST 312*
AI Literacy Ancillary - NEXT 275, NEXT 375

*course will need advisor to submit subwaiver for application

Major Requirements:
Writing - 303, 304, 305, 307, 309, 310, 367, 368, 435, 437, 491
Linguistics - 451
Criticism - 445, 391-003
Pre-1700 Literature Courses - 325, 326, 349, 371, 402, 411, 482-001
1700-1945 Literature Courses - 331, 337, 480-001, 483-001
Literature of Diversity - 355, 366, 378, 391-002, 391-003, 480-002, 482-002, 483-001, 483-002

Prerequisites

Prerequisite for 300-level creative writing courses: 200-level literature (or equivalent).

Prerequisite for 300-level professional writing courses: UNIV 200.

Prerequisite for all 300- and 400-level literature courses: Three credits in a 200-level literature course (or equivalent).

Intersession

ENGL 215-V01

Reading Literature: Pirates in Literature ONLINE ASYNCHRONOUS

Asynchronous / Matteo Pangallo / CRN:47051

What is it about the archetypal figure of the pirate that both attracts and repels us? How does piracy, and the conventions with which it is often associated, serve paradoxically to represent both major western values (liberty, democracy, rugged individualism, multiculturalism) and taboos (murder, theft, waste, indolence, anarchism)? How do literary depictions of the pirate navigate the border between the criminal and the rebel? What do they have to tell us about cultural perceptions of coming-of-age and maturity? Why, in short, have romanticized perceptions of the pirate's life captivated readers for centuries, and what does that appeal suggest about the broader value and purpose of piracy narratives? This course is an introduction to the scholarly reading of literature, undertaken through the exploration of representations of pirates in poems, short stories, novels, and plays; as such, **it requires a significant amount of reading** and that students share their own original critical insights and interpretive ideas about that reading.

ENGL 215-V02

Reading Literature: What's Wrong with Us? Ten writers on society's big problems ONLINE ASYNCHRONOUS

Asynchronous / Geoff Bouvier / CRN:52996

Society faces some big problems these days: AI, patriarchy, capitalism, racism, illness, loss of a sense of our own history, loss of a sense of meaning, death, and perhaps simply our own inherent human nature. Thinking critically about these issues – reading about them, and writing about them – can give each of us a handle on how to deal with reality. In this class, students will read and write about society's big problems, and speculate about what's wrong with humanity.

ENGL 215-V03

Reading Literature ONLINE ASYNCHRONOUS

Asynchronous / Kathy Graber / CRN:53001

ENGL 236-V01

Women in Literature ONLINE ASYNCHRONOUS

Asynchronous / SJ Sindu / CRN:53043

In this class, we will explore literature written by and about women, with a focus on graphic novels published in the last fifty years. We will explore how notions of womanhood and femininity have changed over the years, and also push on what the category of "woman" actually means in our shifting cultural landscape.

200-Level Courses

ENGL 206-001

American Literature II FACE TO FACE

TR 11:00AM-12:15PM/ Catherine Seltzer / CRN:51438 / HIBBS 262

Most definitions of the American Dream run along these lines: no matter who you are, if you are ambitious and work hard, you can be successful. It's an idealistic narrative, irresistible for generations, and there's evidence that we are still deeply invested in it. At the same time, though, we tend to view the American Dream skeptically: a 2024 Pew Research Poll found that 41% of Americans say the American Dream is no longer possible to achieve, and 6% of poll respondents said it was never possible. As we look at literature from the end of the Civil War to the present day over the course of this semester, we'll consider how American writers have reflected on the "dream" of success, and, more broadly, how they approach the paradoxes inherent in the American Dream. We'll ask some big questions: How does the Dream serve people differently? How does our understanding of "success" address (or elide) issues of race, gender, sexuality, class, and region? How has literature challenged (and/or perpetuated) narratives of a distinctly American form of success? Finally, how does the Dream remain a subject of artistic preoccupation?

ENGL 215-001

Reading Literature: Black Memoir FACE TO FACE

MWF 11:00AM-11:50AM / Ariel Lawrence / CRN:47888 / HIBBS B024

Black writers have long embraced the "autobiographical impulse" as a means of writing

themselves, and their communities, into the pages of History. This course will focus on contemporary memoir written by Black American authors exploring themes of interiority, desire, longing, trauma, and community. While many see memoir as a diminutive of Autobiography, the term has been in usage for longer and encompasses a wide array of stylistic, experimental, and expressive forms of lifewriting outside of traditional "cradle-to-grave" texts. Looking at writers like bell hooks, James Baldwin, Margo Jefferson, and Natasha Trethewey, we will consider the ways that Black life, in all its diversity and complexity, is carefully narrated on the page as both loud spectacles of violence, as well as quiet and quotidian moments of radical resistance.

ENGL 215-002

Reading Literature: The Redshifting Web FACE TO FACE

TR 2:00PM-3:15PM / Colin Bailes / CRN:48554 / MCALC 1104

This course takes its title from Arthur Sze's poetry collection The Redshifting Web and asks students to question and examine the tangled relationship between humans and the environment. We will begin our study with a brief overview of the origins of environmental literature in the United States by looking at the Transcendentalists (Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson) and Naturalism (Jack London and Stephen Crane) before moving on to the eco-conscious writing of Rachel Carson, Margaret Atwood, and Mary Oliver. We will explore the beginnings of ecopoetry in the work of Muriel Rukeyser and W.S. Merwin, and our course will close with a look at contemporary ecopoetics and eco-justice poetry, with a focus on poets such as Joy Harjo, Arthur Sze, Camille Dungy, Jane Hirschfield, and Jericho Brown. Overall, this course will teach you the basic skills of literary criticism: close reading, critical thinking, and formal analysis, as well as theoretical and historical analysis of primary texts.

This is a low-cost course.

ENGL 215-003

Reading Literature: Animals in Literature FACE TO FACE

MWF 10:00AM-10:50AM / Lindgren Johnson / CRN:49783 / HIBBS 441

This course will explore representations of animals primarily in literature but also in film and visual art. We'll ask how and why animals are represented in genres ranging from children's literature and scientific writing to documentary film and poetry. We'll also consider material culture along the way. Your thoughts and experiences of the literature will ground our class discussions.

This is a no-cost course.

ENGL 215-004

Reading Literature ONLINE ASYNCHRONOUS

Asynchronous / Keith Hollowell/ CRN:52257

In times of upheaval, escapism pulls us toward a better understanding of what we are escaping from and hopefully teaches us a little of how we can all do more to improve our lives and communities. Readings will include works by Tommy Orange, Joan Didion, Brit Bennett, Jennifer Egan with a splash of David Bowie!

The selected works among others will center upon characters that either invent or are thrown into altered forms of reality as a way of breaking from realism. Ultimately, we will explore the question of how escapism is indeed an art form, a lesson in social reform, and the importance of invented realities in literature

This is a no-cost course.

ENGL 215-009

Reading Literature FACE TO FACE

MWF 11:00AM-11:50AM / Geoff Bouvier / CRN:46296 / HHALL 2122

This introductory literature class extends an invitation to challenge the conventional. Through studies of radical texts, we'll ask such questions as, "How radical is too radical? What is language, anyway? What does it mean to write, and to read, and how do we do those things well? What is form, and how do we break form beautifully?" We'll embrace rule-breaking, weirdness, newness, and subversion, with the ultimate goal of developing the ability to think way outside the box. Classmates will discuss (and even imitate) experimental writing, always paying close attention to craft and technique.

This is a no-cost course.

ENGL 215-010

Reading Literature: Space, Place, & Identity FACE TO FACE

MWF 1:00PM-1:50PM / April Sopkin / CRN:51477 / HIBBS 326

In this no-cost course, we will explore how space, place, and identity contribute to our perceptions of our world and our personal belief systems. Students will venture outside of their personal frame of reference—in pop culture, in foundational knowledge, in lived experience—as we read an eclectic library of texts in fiction and creative nonfiction. Our reading list may include, for example, selections from A Measure of Belonging: Twenty-One Writers of Color on the New American South by Cinelle Barnes, fiction by renowned sci-fi writer Ted Chiang, work by the late astronomer Carl Sagan, excerpts from the graphic memoir Seek You by Kristen Radtke, and much more, perhaps including a couple of podcast episodes, photo essays, and travel narratives.

Students will be challenged to critically read, discuss, and write in genres beyond their previous experience and outside of their individual frame of reference. We will seek to hold conflicting ideas at the same time and to take joy in expanding our personal curiosity about the world.

This is a discussion-based course with related writing assignments, considerable reading, (very) informal presentations, and possible quizzes and tests. All course content/reading materials will be provided by the instructor. This class will meet three times a week, in-person.

This is a no-cost course.

NEXT 240-001

Reading Tech, Media, & Culture FACE TO FACE

MWF 2:00PM-2:50PM / Michael Keller / CRN:46667 / HIBBS 407

This course asks you to examine the idea and history of "Artificial Bodies" in texts such as short stories, novel excerpts, essays, poems, photographs, films, songs, animation, sculpture, children's literature, and speculative fiction. Students may be given reading, film viewing, listening, or writing tasks to perform outside of class each week. We begin by discussing and

refining a taxonomy of what does, or does not, fit our working definition of an artificial humanoid body. Students will be asked to write about artificial bodies they have encountered materially or virtually, including examples from literature or pop culture.

Beginning with the ~~Venus~~ [Figure] of Hohle Fels, the oldest known depiction of a human being carved of mammoth tusk 40,000 years ago, we look at varying contemporary examples of material and fictional artificial bodies. We study articulated self-portraiture by VCU professor emerita Elizabeth King, and how illness and machinery related to family illness in her childhood influenced her art. We also hear from King on the distinction between sculpture and puppetry, between viewing a static (if poseable) sculpture and viewing a performance. We read from Josef Čapek's *Artificial Man* (1925) from the only available Czech-to-English translation, published in VCU's legacy *Blackbird* journal.

We hear the myth of the Golem of Prague and the idea of a clay body brought to life through Jewish ritual as a protector who morphs into a destroyer. We examine the assembled organic body of Frankenstein's creature in prose and film. The study of the human corpse and the procurement of "materials" in *Frankenstein* and its retellings bring us to images of medical "Venus figures," seductive wax models of women created to teach internal anatomy. We also look at the history of the procurement of bodies (illegally at first, and including the history of this practice at the Medical College of Virginia), and new technologies such as digital bodies and hand-built synthetic corpses for medical study

Sculpture and puppetry come back into play including excerpts from Carlos Collodi's children's novel *Pinocchio*. We will watch Matteo Garrone's film *Pinocchio* as well as clips from, and process videos of, Guillermo del Toro's stop-motion treatment in his version, all with meta awareness of del Toro's use of stop-motion puppets to tell the story of an animate and sentient puppet.

Among other ABs, we look at figures of straw, or empty (and heartless) tin in the figure of the former Nick Chopper, the Tin Man of Oz. We read Karel Čapek's 1920 Czech play *Rossum's Universal Robots*, which introduces the word "roboti" to 20th century culture and imagines an army of assembled, but organic, beings–and the end of the world. After *R.U.R* the robot quickly departs its organic origins in the play. to become a mechanized body in fiction, as well as in material reality. We will also study the question of gendered artificial bodies with artificial intelligence that have been designed to also function as physical partners in films such as *Ex*

Machina.

Virtual heavens and bodiless consciousness close our study as we consider the bodiless "other" tirelessly performing servitude in the voice of Siri or Alexa who begin, when first commercially released, as gendered female voices.

(No cost; in person class; attendance and participation are essential.)

NEXT 240-002

Reading Tech, Media, & Culture FACE TO FACE

MWF 1:00PM-1:50PM / Michael Keller / CRN:47865 / HIBBS 403

This course asks you to examine the idea and history of "Artificial Bodies" in texts such as short stories, novel excerpts, essays, poems, photographs, films, songs, animation, sculpture, children's literature, and speculative fiction. Students may be given reading, film viewing, listening, or writing tasks to perform outside of class each week. We begin by discussing and refining a taxonomy of what does, or does not, fit our working definition of an artificial humanoid body. Students will be asked to write about artificial bodies they have encountered materially or virtually, including examples from literature or pop culture.

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NEXT 240-003

Reading Tech, Media, & Culture FACE TO FACE

MWF 12:00PM-12:50PM / Maggie Bertsche / CRN:50332 / HIBBS 430

NEXT 240 is a creative, interdisciplinary course designed to strengthen the critical thinking skills students need to navigate a media-saturated world. Whether you are studying the sciences or creative arts, the course asks you to become more aware of how you read information. Applying Source Credibility Theory, we examine how expertise, trustworthiness, and

attractiveness shape our responses to social media and other contemporary media.

Designed as a Media Lab, the course combines reading and writing with visual thinking, collaborative investigation, and media analysis. Students develop awareness of cognitive processes such as attention, perception, affect, inference, and metacognition while learning to ask better questions, evaluate sources, work with uncertainty, and revise their thinking. The goal is to prepare students across disciplines to become creative, thoughtful, and critical researchers.

This is a low-cost course.

NEXT 240-004
Reading Tech, Media, & Culture: Visual Culture and Aging FACE TO FACE
TR 11:00AM - 12:15PM / Brian Battle / CRN:51424 / HIBBS 427

Aging is an experience that we all have in common, but within that commonality there are an infinite variety of experiences. That is to say, no two experiences of aging are ever identical;

and our individual perceptions of aging can never be separated or disaggregated from societal perceptions, discourses, and narratives related to the subject. In the age of social media, societal discourses around aging are invariably and heavily mediated. In this course we will explore the ways in which visual culture and aging intersect, in order to make legible those cultural and societal narratives of aging that may have become illegible or implicit. We will be investigating depictions and representations of the subject of aging in a variety of mediums, including film, photography, painting, sculpture, advertising, and poetry. Aging is never done in isolation from other aspects of life, but rather in concert with all aspects of life. Thus, the visual, artistic, and media representations of aging that we explore in this course will also speak to the intersections of aging and race, gender, and health.

This is a No-Cost course.

ENGL 250-001
Reading Film FACE TO FACE

TR 11:00AM-12:15PM /Charlotte Addison / CRN:51476 / HHALL 2114

Why do some films make us laugh, fear, desire, or identify with characters, and how do filmmakers elicit those responses? Films shape what we see, what we feel, and how we understand the world around us. In this course, we will encounter a range of major Hollywood and international film genres, with attention given to their representations of gender and intersectional identities. There are many ways to read a film, and no single critical approach can tell us everything we might want to know. We will therefore draw on a variety of critical and theoretical perspectives (e.g., feminism, representation, psychoanalysis, etc.). This is where we will meet, then, at the intersection of cinema and the human experience, and develop fluency in analyzing, contextualizing, and examining the forms through which cinema creates meaning.

This is a low-cost course.

ENGL 250-002

Reading Film FACE TO FACE

TR 12:30PM-1:45PM / Alex Jones / CRN:36128 / LFSCB 253

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Develops students' visual literacy by exploring the structural, narrative, and cultural elements of film. Examples will be drawn from both U.S. and world cinema and from all eras of filmmaking.

This is a No-Cost Course.

ENGL 250-003

Reading Film FACE TO FACE

TR 2:00PM-3:15PM / Alex Jones / CRN:44376 / MCALC 2201

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Develops students' visual literacy by exploring the structural, narrative, and cultural elements of film. Examples will be drawn from both U.S. and world cinema and from all eras of filmmaking.

This is a No-Cost Course.

ENGL 250-004

Reading Film FACE TO FACE

MWF 12:00PM-12:50PM/ Bernardo Piciche/ CRN:52256 /HIBBS 441

TBD

ENGL 250-901

Reading Film FACE TO FACE

W 4:00PM-6:40PM / Alex Jones / CRN:51439 / HIBBS 262

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Develops students' visual literacy by exploring the structural, narrative, and cultural elements of film. Examples will be drawn from both U.S. and world cinema and from all eras of filmmaking.

This is a No-Cost Course

NEXT 275-002

AI, Texts and Cultures: AI in Literature and Film FACE TO FACE

TR 9:30am-10:45am / Oliver Speck / CRN:51281 / HIBBS 327

This interdisciplinary course examines how Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been imagined and critiqued in literature and film. Through a selection of texts and cinematic works that portray magical, natural or digital objects as sentient beings, able to think like and interact with humans, students will explore the cultural, philosophical, and ethical dimensions of AI, including themes such as consciousness, identity, autonomy, and human-machine relationships. The course will consider how these representations reflect societal hopes and anxieties about technology, and how they shape public understanding of AI. Students will engage in critical analysis and discussion, to deepen their understanding of the narrative and symbolic roles AI plays in society.

Texts under discussion (depending on availability): "The Sandman" by E. T. A. Hoffmann (1817) and Sigmund Freud's interpretation of this short story; Frankenstein by Mary Shelley (1818), Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? by Philip K. Dick (1968 - the source for Blade

Runner), I, Robot by Isaac Asimov (1950); The Golem/Der Golem, wie er in die Welt kam (1920, by Paul Wegener), Metropolis (1927, by Fritz Lang), 2001: A Space Odyssey (1968, by Stanley Kubrick), Blade Runner (1982, dir. Ridley Scott), Her (2013, by Spike Jonze), Ex Machina (2014, dir. Alex Garland), The Matrix (1999, by The Wachowskis), Ghost in the Shell (1995, by Mamoru Oshii), A.I. Artificial Intelligence (2001, by Steven Spielberg), The Terminator (1984, by James Cameron).

This is a no-cost course.

ENGL 291-001
Topics in Literature: Cold Close Reading: Poetry FACE TO FACE
MWF 10:00am-10:50am / Rivka Swenson / CRN:51440 / HIBBS 206

Why bury the lede? This is a no-homework course.*

We will have a blast engaging in a semester's worth of cold close readings of poems from a range of forms, eras, and contexts.

COLD: no required reading before class. We will discover the poems together in discussion.
CLOSE: we will read closely to reveal how form and content work together to create meaning, pressing on every aspect relevant to the specific poem: diction, semantics, syntax, lineation, stanza arrangement, sound/rhythm, meter, denotation, connotation.

Low-cost course.

*There may be a few days with a little take-home-reading homework.

ENGL 295-001
Intro to Creative Writing FACE TO FACE
MWF 9:00am-9:50am / TBD / CRN:37190 / HHALL 2113

Add description

ENGL 295-002
Intro to Creative Writing FACE TO FACE

TR 11:00AM-12:15PM / TBD / CRN:35325 / H HALL 2104

Add description

ENGL 295-003

Intro to Creative Writing FACE TO FACE

MWF 2:00PM-2:50PM / TBD / CRN:35323 / HIBBS 216

Add description

ENGL 295-005

Intro to Creative Writing FACE TO FACE

MWF 12:00PM-12:50PM / TBD / CRN:50894 / HIBBS 329

Add description

ENGL 295-006

Into to Creative Writing FACE TO FACE

TR 12:30PM-1:45PM / TBD / CRN:42119 / HIBBS 440

Add description

ENGL 295-007

Intro to Creative Writing FACE TO FACE

TR 9:30AM-10:45AM / TBD / CRN:50845 / HIBBS 260

Add description

300-Level Courses

ENGL 301-001

Intro to the English Major FACE TO FACE

TR 11:00AM-12:15PM / Adin Lears / CRN:46698 / HIBBS B024

In her essay "The Gender of Sound" (1992) Anne Carson writes "It is in large part according to the sounds people make that we judge them sane or insane, male or female, good, evil, trustworthy, depressive...little better than animals, inspired by God." What is eloquence and who gets to speak it? What is 'literature' and why should we read it? How does the critical reading we do in the English major us to engage, explain, and persuade others in our own critical writing? This course takes up these and other similar questions as a basis for exploring some of the core elements of close reading and critical writing about literature. We will read across a range of genres (e.g. poetry, fiction, essays) and historical periods (e.g. medieval, Victorian, contemporary), exploring literary philosophies of voice, noise, and language from Chaucer to Anne Carson. Emphasizing the highly personal nature of interpretation, written assignments will begin with short informal close readings expressed in tones often forbidden in critical analysis (rants, pleas, jokes, etc.). From this basis we will build longer and more formal critical arguments that position your voice in relation to that of other cultural and literary interpreters. Over the course of the semester, attending to questions of voice, noise, and language will enable us to think deeply about the purpose of literary study and how to translate the skills we develop in the major into a range of professional situations.

ENGL 301-002

Intro to the English Major ONLINE

TR 3:30PM-4:45PM / Jennifer Rhee / CRN:46700

This class is a required course for English majors. In this class we will focus on skills helpful in the English major, introducing the ways in which language is used in literary texts and the practice of writing responses to those texts. We will discuss important terms for the study of literature and various critical approaches to literature. Drawing on these terms and approaches, we will emphasize careful close readings of texts; sophisticated analyses of themes, form, and

style; and clear, elegant writing about literature. We will read novels such as Kazuo Ishiguro's Never Let Me Go and Karen Joy Fowler's We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves; short stories by authors such as N. K. Jemisin, Ursula LeGuin, Teju Cole, Toni Morrison, and Ted Chiang; and poems by poets such as Natalie Diaz, Laura Da', Charles Simic, Ada Limón, Rafael Campo, and Solmaz Sharif.

This class will be held online. We will meet synchronously in a combination of full class meetings, small group sessions, and individual sessions with the instructor. This course will emphasize discussion and active student participation during our class meetings.

This is a low-cost course.

ENGL 301-003

Intro to the English Major FACE TO FACE

MWF 12:00PM-12:50PM / Michael Hall / CRN:47866 / HIBBS 326

A requirement for English majors, this course introduces students to the practice of reading literature and writing about literary works. We will discuss important terms and critical approaches useful in shaping compelling arguments in relation to literary texts. For this purpose, our focus will be on the short story and novel as genres, and the selection of texts we read will center primarily on 20th century works produced by writers in the US .Emphasis will be on developing vocabulary key to literary studies and its various critical approaches as well as the use of literary terms and approaches to inform oral and written analysis. Class will be discussion-based. In addition to mastery of course content, emphasis is on the development of analytical ability and skills in relation to primary and secondary texts.

This is a no-cost course.

ENGL 303-001

Writing for Stage &/Or Screen FACE TO FACE

TR 2:00PM-3:15PM / Nichole Palmer / CRN:48148 / HIBBS 331

Students will learn the language and art of screenwriting while reading and analyzing scripts as well as through watching and discussing film. Emphasis placed on visual storytelling, story

structure, and character development. Students will learn to write original, short script with or without dialogue.

ENGL 304-902

Persuasive Writing FACE TO FACE

TR 5:30PM-6:45PM / Emily Csukardi / CRN:46751 / HIBBS 260

Music industry and culture in 2026 is in an ongoing state of rupture. When SZA discovered her music had been used to train AI platforms without her consent earlier this year, she posted, "If you're a musician and you support this [...] there's NOTHING YOU COULD EVER SAY TO ME TO MAKE THIS OKAY." Meanwhile, the CEO & Co-Founder of Suno, a data-scraping AI music startup, says, "I think the majority of people don't enjoy the majority of time they spend making music." Suno has been in countless lawsuits with major labels for lifting millions of copyrighted songs from YouTube and the like. And yet, rather than banning AI-generated music from streaming platforms, Spotify and its competitors are keeping it in play, opting for guardrails such as labeling AI-generated tracks, much like an album cover's "Parental Advisory: Explicit Content" predecessor. But is that what musicians and listeners are asking for? Writer Liz Pelly states that streaming platforms and their endless mood playlists want us all to be chilled-out passive listeners, anyway.

It isn't all doom and gloom. Music journalists, listeners, musicians, and community spaces are adapting their facilitation of the discovery, circulation, and social affordances of music for hungry audiences. There are endless ways for us to meaningfully engage with all types of music; we just need to know where to look. The recent turn to collecting and trading physical media may reveal something to us about listeners' shifting values and investments, too.

All of this is a robust starting point for comprehending rhetoric's ability to shape social understanding, values, and behavior. We can recognize persuasive intentions at play in all of the above, but what's also important is how we analyze the ongoing evidence and communicate our interventions. This persuasive writing course explores what we, as critical thinkers and developing writers, can make of music's expansive rhetorical ecology. An important goal of this course is to help you develop your authorial voice through speech and writing. You'll study and practice various genres and forms of music writing such as professional reviews, criticisms, personal narratives, and analog modalities. Readings include

selections from: Liz Pelly's Mood Machine: The Rise of Spotify and the Costs of the Perfect Playlist, Jessica Hopper's The First Collection of Criticism By A Living Female Rock Critic, Hanif Abdurraqib's music essays, David Byrne, as well as visual and sonic media such as NPR's Tiny Desk, and A24's re-release of the Talking Heads' 1984 concert film, Stop Making Sense. This course offers you the opportunity to develop a keen eye for revealing rhetorical encounters and persuasive strategies while deepening your relationship to music through the practice of critical thinking, discussion, and writing.

This is a no-cost course.

ENGL 304-903

Persuasive Writing ONLINE

Asynchronous / Colin Balies / CRN:48029

Our human world is inarguably intertwined with the natural world—human behavior impacts the environment while changes in the environment influence, for better or worse, our human existence. In this course, we will look closely at ecological and nature writing that explores this tangled relationship. We will read from a variety of texts that address climate change, sustainability, and conservation efforts, analyzing their informative and persuasive techniques and applying what we learn more broadly to our own writing.

Possible texts include Elizabeth Rush's Rising: Dispatches from the New American Shore, Robin Wall Kimmerer's The Serviceberry, and Rebecca Dunham's Cold Pastoral. Assignments will include two short papers of 3–5 pages each, a final paper of 8–12 pages, and weekly discussions of model texts posted to Canvas.

This is a low-cost course.

ENGL 305-001

Writing Poetry FACE TO FACE

TR 11:00AM-12:15PM / Colin Bailes / CRN:51481 / HHALL 2113

This course will introduce students to the foundational elements of writing poetry and, more broadly, to the vast landscape of contemporary poetry. Our coursework will essentially be

divided into two parts. First, we will explore key elements of poetic theory, looking to specific texts as examples. By reading and analyzing poems from Louise Glück, Eduardo C. Corral, Ada Limón, Victoria Chang, Carl Phillips, Leila Chatti, and Jake Skeets, among others, we will learn to read with a poetic eye and ear. The second portion of our course will be dedicated to workshop discussion of our own original compositions. Students will write and turn in for discussion about one poem a week and are expected to read and respond, both orally and in writing, to the work of their peers. Because writing is an ongoing process, students are expected to edit and revise work, compiling them at the end of the semester into a portfolio. Overall, students will write at least 6 poems and a few close reading essays.

This is a low-cost course.

ENGL 305-002

Writing Poetry FACE TO FACE

MWF 1:00PM-1:50PM / Geoff Bouvier / CRN:46754 / ANDRS 101

This course is for undergraduate students interested in learning how to write poetry. We will read poems out loud, discuss poetic craft and poetic theory, explore imaginative ways of using language to create unique linguistic experiences, and then we'll put specific poetic techniques into practice and write and workshop our own poems.

This is a no-cost course.

ENGL 305-902

Writing Poetry FACE TO FACE

MW 4:00PM-5:15PM / Leslie Shiel / CRN:45200 / HIBBS 326

English 305 is a creative writing workshop; students will write drafts of poems—many started as assignments—and bring to class, copies for discussion and critique. The class includes a thorough reading component of mostly contemporary poems, as well as essays and book chapters about poetry. The final grade is based on studio work (attendance, free writes, assignments, imitations, image lists, written reading responses, drafts, memos, written and oral critiques, seminar discussion, conferences, small group meetings) and a Final Daybook of Revisions.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of one of these 200-level courses: ENGL 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 211, 215, 236, 250, 291, 295, or NEXT 240.

This is a low-cost course.

ENGL 307-002
Writing Fiction FACE TO FACE
TR 12:30PM-1:45PM / Jay Fowler / CRN:48093 / HIBBS 430

Welcome to English 307: Writing Fiction! In this course students will work within specific craft elements of fiction writing such as character, plot, setting, and narration, in order to present a final portfolio of creative writing by the end of the semester. To this end students will read a series of short stories as well as a series of chapters on craft in order to give life to our own creative pieces and foster each other's artistic growth through in-class workshops. Through discussion and open dialogue, we will be exploring the art of writing through the lens of craft; to an extent we will be exploring what a literary text means but more so how a text has been made and how that composition contributes to meaning. Students will write and submit two short stories for the workshop and will use feedback from peers and the instructor as a guide for a revision and self-assessment at the end of the course.

Our class deeply emphasizes the growth of an artistic community so please be prepared to read and discuss published fiction as well as your own creative work with your peers through in-class discussion.

This is a no-cost course.

ENGL 307-003
Writing Fiction FACE TO FACE
MWF 12:00PM-12:50PM / April Sopkin / CRN:37819 / LFSCB 156

This class will be part workshop, part literature discussion, part generative experience. In this no-cost course, we will read contemporary authors such as Farah Ali, Dantiel W. Moniz, and Laura van den Berg, among others. We'll analyze the intentionality behind the mechanics of creative writing, and, through generative prompts, practice that same intentionality in our

own original work. Students should expect to write in and outside of class, submit at least one short story to small group feedback, and at least one short story to the larger class for workshop. Students will practice forms of revision as well. This is a discussion-based course with related writing assignments and informal presentations. All materials will be provided by the instructor. This class will meet three times a week, in-person, synchronously.

This is a no-cost course

ENGL 307-005

Writing Fiction FACE TO FACE

MWF 2:00PM-2:50PM / Sam Schieren / CRN:48149 / HIBBS 247

This fiction writing course aims to cultivate students' storytelling skills through ample reading and a diverse series of writing experiences. Students will read a varied selection of short stories and two novels. They will engage in regular in-class exercises and produce a variety of works, including several flash fictions, and two complete short stories or novel chapters. The course emphasizes active participation, close reading of exemplary fiction, and experimentation with different narrative forms. Weekly workshops, reading quizzes, and writing exercises form the core of the class, culminating in a final portfolio showcasing the students' range of original works. This intensive, hands-on class requires consistent attendance and engagement across multiple fiction formats to succeed.

This is a low-cost course.

ENGL 307-006

Writing Fiction FACE TO FACE

MWF 11:00AM-11:50AM / Dina Folgia / CRN:48165 / HIBBS 327

In this workshop- and discussion-based course, students will explore the many facets of modern short fiction and ask themselves how their own work might slot into this current conversation of writers. Students will walk away from this class with a working knowledge and appreciation of plot, setting, narration, character, tone, and audience, but along with these skills, they will also hone the other most important tool in a fiction writer’s arsenal: the ability to have fun, dream big, and let their imagination run wild.

In addition to discussing the assigned short stories and critiquing personal creative work, we will delve into auxiliary topics such as equity in writerly spaces, diversity in publishing, career paths in the literary and creative sectors, and how to participate responsibly in a writing workshop. This class will be an open forum to respectfully and enthusiastically engage with other writers, develop your creative skills, and learn about what takes a work of fiction from good, to great, to absolutely fantastic.

This is a no-cost course.

ENGL 309-001

Writing Creative Nonfiction FACE TO FACE

MW 2:00PM-3:15PM / Geoff Bouvier / CRN:32354 / ANDRS 101

The bread-and-butter of nonfiction literature is the personal lyric essay, wherein the writer takes their own life experience as the subject matter, but they do so in creative and unusual ways. The Seneca Review defines the lyric essay as "combining prose and poetry, constructed from a distillation of ideas, mentions but does not expound, suggestive but not exhaustive, relies on associations, imagery, and connotation, makes references to other genres such as film, music, and literature, arranged in fragments as a mosaic, based on stories that are metaphors, based on intimate voice, crafted with lyrical language." (Tall, D'Agata) For this craft-based class, you will write about yourself, and your own life experience, in the lyrical, metaphorical, intimate form of a lyric essay.

This is a low-cost course.

ENGL 310-001

Professional Writing FACE TO FACE

MWF 1:00PM - 1:50PM / Sam Schieren / CRN:46871 / HHALL 2107

This course introduces students to the fundamental elements of writing for the workplace: clarity, concision, and effective communication with a target audience. The course will start with the basics: resumes, cover letters, and statements of purpose. Once we get you "hired" we will shift our focus to practicing writing techniques necessary in for-profit and nonprofit organizations, including inter-office email, writing promotional materials, improvement

proposals and basic grant writing, and presentation techniques. This will include several group and solo projects. In the final weeks of class we will practice using AI Chatbots, looking at strengths and weaknesses for professional writing tasks. Then we'll finish with a collaborative group "Inventions" project that uses a variety of the skills addressed throughout the course. This course emphasizes deepening and broadening students' writing, speaking, and thinking abilities in a non-lecture-based, hands-on, discussion-centered classroom.

This is a no-cost course.

ENGL 310-002
Professional Writing FACE TO FACE
MWF 12:00PM-12:50PM / Caddie Alford / CRN:48506 / MCALC 2107

In February 2025, federal workers received an email from the Office of Personnel Management with the vague, almost spam-like subject line, "What did you do last week?" Elon Musk elaborated on this email in a tweet, stating that "failure to respond will be taken as a resignation." About eight hours later, he clarified in another tweet: "To be clear, the bar is very low here. An email with some bullet points that make any sense at all is acceptable! Should take less than 5 mins to write." This is not the first time that Musk has had to follow up on professional correspondence with a second, even third correspondence ("to be super clear" comes to mind from the viral email he sent Tesla employees in 2022). These examples exemplify ineffective professional writing. Beyond the fact that a second (or third!) follow-up should not be necessary, the rhetorical choices in the examples above are clunky and unethical because they are not audience centered.

When it comes to performing effective professional writing, it is crucial to develop rhetorical capacities for tone, genre, primary and secondary audiences, design, ethos, and UX principles. In this course, we will learn how to perform effective professional writing and critical analysis vis-à-vis digital media and platforms, networks, ecosystems, logics, and tools, from mobile app writing to crisis management statements to how brain rot is inspiring different aesthetic and marketing appeals. We will familiarize ourselves with the formats and conventions of genres that many professional settings require us to know, evaluate, and revise, such as emails, staff-wide memos, TikToks, parsing AI-generated content, and so on. Ultimately, students in this course will hone writing, design, and rhetorical skills by learning how to communicate

ethically to broader publics while strategically navigating the affordances and constraints of digitality.

This is a no-cost course.

AMST 312-001

Intro to Health Humanities HYBRID

TR 12:30PM-1:45PM / Christine Cynn / CRN:49577 / HIBBS 407

This course provides students with an overview of the Health Humanities. The class will consider the structures and systems underpinning the foundation of Western medicine and producing contemporary health and healthcare inequities. We will also examine the larger sociopolitical, economic, cultural, and environmental contexts informing individual and community health, and the roles of empathy and critical thinking in clinical encounters. The class is team taught and includes faculty from across VCU, including from the Humanities, Arts, and Health (such as Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, and Pharmacy).

This is a no-cost course.

AMST 312-701

(HONORS) Intro to Health Humanities HYBRID

TR 12:30PM-1:45PM / Christine Cynn / CRN:50755 / HIBBS 407

This course provides students with an overview of the Health Humanities. The class will consider the structures and systems underpinning the foundation of Western medicine and producing contemporary health and healthcare inequities. We will also examine the larger sociopolitical, economic, cultural, and environmental contexts informing individual and community health, and the roles of empathy and critical thinking in clinical encounters. The class is team taught and includes faculty from across VCU, including from the Humanities, Arts, and Health (such as Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, and Pharmacy).

This is a no-cost course.

ENGL 313-001

Popular Culture Studies: Death in the Public Eye FACE TO FACE
TR 2:00PM-3:15PM / Amy Tudor / CRN:51651 / HHALL 2137

Death is everywhere in popular culture, but we do not always stop to think about how it is being presented to us—or why. In this interdisciplinary course, we'll examine how death, dying, and the dead are represented, interpreted, remembered, and consumed in public culture. Drawing on writers and theorists such as Roland Barthes, Susan Sontag, Joan Didion, Ocean Vuong, and Seamus Heaney, we'll consider how literature and popular media shape the stories we tell about mortality and the people who have died.

We'll explore a wide range of materials, including elegy and memoir, photography, film and television, true crime, memorials and headstones, and digital and social media. Along the way, we'll ask who gets remembered, who gets forgotten, who gets to tell someone else's story, and what happens when death and grief become public, marketable, or entertaining.

In addition to class discussions and weekly assignments, students will complete two major assignments, including a multimodal project and a presentation. Classes will typically combine lectures, discussions with relevant community and media experts, full-class discussions, small-group activities, and close analysis of images and media. The class may be of particular interest to fine arts, cinema, digital media, journalism, forensics, and health science students.

CONTENT WARNING: Some course materials will include graphic or disturbing images, including images of dead bodies, bodily injury, and violence.

Prerequisite: One of ENGL 201–206, 211, 215, 217, 236, 250, 291, 295, or NEXT 240.

This is a low-cost course.

ENGL 313-701
(HONR) Popular Culture Studies: Death in the Public Eye FACE TO FACE
TR 2:00PM-3:15PM / Amy Tudor / CRN:51659 / HHALL 2137

Death is everywhere in popular culture, but we do not always stop to think about how it is being presented to us—or why. In this interdisciplinary course, we'll examine how death, dying, and the dead are represented, interpreted, remembered, and consumed in public culture. Drawing on writers and theorists such as Roland Barthes, Susan Sontag, Joan Didion,

Ocean Vuong, and Seamus Heaney, we'll consider how literature and popular media shape the stories we tell about mortality and the people who have died.

We'll explore a wide range of materials, including elegy and memoir, photography, film and television, true crime, memorials and headstones, and digital and social media. Along the way, we'll ask who gets remembered, who gets forgotten, who gets to tell someone else's story, and what happens when death and grief become public, marketable, or entertaining.

In addition to class discussions and weekly assignments, students will complete two major assignments, including a multimodal project and a presentation. Classes will typically combine lectures, discussions with relevant community and media experts, full-class discussions, small-group activities, and close analysis of images and media. The class may be of particular interest to fine arts, cinema, digital media, journalism, forensics, and health science students.

CONTENT WARNING: Some course materials will include graphic or disturbing images, including images of dead bodies, bodily injury, and violence.

Prerequisite: One of ENGL 201–206, 211, 215, 217, 236, 250, 291, 295, or NEXT 240.

This is a Low-Cost Course

AMST 314-001

Health & Community: Death in the Public Eye FACE TO FACE

TR 2:00PM-3:15PM / Amy Tudor / CRN:51480 / HHALL 2137

Death is everywhere in public life, but we do not always stop to think about how communities encounter, represent, remember, and respond to it. In this interdisciplinary course, we'll examine how death, dying, and the dead are made visible through public culture, institutions, media, and shared spaces. Drawing on writers and theorists such as Thomas Laqueur, Caitlin Doughty, Susan Sontag, Victor Turner, and Atul Gawande, we'll consider how communities create meaning around mortality, grief, remembrance, violence, and the body.

We'll explore a wide range of materials and sites, including photography, documentary and narrative film, true crime, memorials and monuments, cemeteries and headstones, public rituals, journalism, and digital and social media. Along the way, we'll ask whose deaths become publicly visible, whose are overlooked, how communities remember the dead, and what responsibilities come with representing someone else's suffering or death.

In addition to class discussions and weekly assignments, students will complete two major assignments, including a community-facing research project and a presentation on their work.

Classes will typically combine lectures, discussions with relevant community and media experts, full-class discussions, small-group activities, and close analysis of im` ages and media. The class may be of particular interest to students in health sciences, public health, social work, anthropology, history, journalism, fine arts, cinema, digital media, and related fields.

CONTENT WARNING: Some course materials will include graphic or disturbing images, including images of dead bodies, bodily injury, and violence.

This is a low-cost course.

ENGL 325-001

Early Modern Literature ONLINE

TR 11:00AM-12:15PM / Matteo Pangallo / CRN:51459

Through an exploration of a diverse range of works in prose, poetry, and drama, this course introduces you to the some of the masterpieces of English literature from 1500–1660, when English culture and society underwent a series of profound changes. During this period, writers and readers grappled with new "early modern" ideas about almost everything in themselves and their world, such as self and society, literature and learning, salvation and damnation, science and faith, power and rebellion, empire and race, and gender and sex.

In this reading-intensive, discussion-centered course, we analyze and discuss major, canonical literary works as well as some lesser-known literary works and historical documents that engage with these and other important themes and subjects and serve as good examples of key literary forms, genres, and styles in the period. Throughout the course, we think about how literary texts relate to their contexts as well as to one another.

ENGL 326-001

Shakespeare on Film FACE TO FACE

TR 12:30PM-1:45PM / Constance Relihan / CRN:46340 / HIBBS 428

This course will study six plays by Shakespeare –probably Taming of the Shrew, Merchant of Venice, Twelfth Night, Hamlet, King Lear, and Othello – both in their original form and as they have been adapted into twentieth- and twenty-first-century movies. We will consider two film versions of each play. The adaptations we will consider range from such classics as Kiss Me

Kate (a 1953 musical adaptation of Taming of the Shrew), Ran (a 1985 Japanese version of King Lear), and All Night Long (a jazzy 1962 revision of Othello), to more recent films, such as Ophelia (2018), Haidir (2014), and Merchant of Venice (2004). Our study will consider both why Shakespeare's works remain popular and how his works have been reappropriated on film.

This is a low-cost course.

ENGL 331-001
Restoration & 18th Century Literature FACE TO FACE
MWF 11:00AM-11:50AM / Rivka Swenson / CRN:51441 / HIBBS 328

This section of 331 will focus on the 18th-century aesthetic and political novelistic roots of the Gothic, ancestor of modern horror, concluding with a foray into the Gothic inheritance in modern film.

This is a low-cost course.

Class discussion, homework in the form of reading, quizzes, in-class writing, final exam.

ENGL 337-001
Victorian Poetry FACE TO FACE
MWF 1:00PM - 1:50PM / Nicholas Frankel / CRN: 51442 / HIBBS 440

This course will introduce you to British poetry written during the Victorian period (1837-1901) while also paying close attention to the time and culture of Victorian Britain. We will read male and female poets in roughly equal proportions, including Alfred Lord Tennyson, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Robert Browning, Christina Rossetti, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Morris, A. C. Swinburne, Mary Elizabeth Coleridge, Thomas Hardy, and "Michael Field" [Katherine Bradley and Edith Cooper]. Class assignments will include two persuasive essay papers, biweekly informal written responses, and one live oral recitation of a memorized poem, as well as the option to edit and introduce an anthology of poems by a neglected Victorian poet.

Class will meet in person and face-to-face. No cost for the eBook version of the course

textbook (downloadable for free from VCU libraries), although I urge you to consider laying hands on a print copy (ordered at VCU bookstore).

ENGL 349-002 Same as AMST 391

Care, Ethics, & Literature FACE TO FACE

TR 9:30am - 10:45am / Adin Lears / CRN: 51443 / HIBBS 326

From the practices of "self-care" populating TikTok and Instagram to the "care culture" pervading business leadership programming: "care" is among the most significant cultural buzzwords of the moment. But what does it actually mean to feel and/or give care? This course probes this and related questions in the context of late-medieval literature and religious culture, which we will find is deeply concerned with creating the interior conditions that enable one to feel care and to act with care. Our focus will be on medieval visionary literature, a genre associated with consolation and healing, which took on new meaning in the wake of the Black Death (1348-49). By exploring understandings of affliction and care as they appear in medieval dream poetry and divine visions, this course will open up the idea of contemporary care in its manifold aspects as emotion, labor, and ethics or politics. Readings and course discussion will ask students to read deeply in excerpts from longer texts and to compare the perspectives in each to what emerges from various arenas of care in contemporary culture (e.g. institutionalized healthcare, wellness influencers, "Dr. Google"). The culminating assignment series for the course will ask students to interview a care-worker (broadly defined) and bring what they learn from this interview—and their own experience, if they wish—into meaningful contact with the ways of reading and critical perspectives we develop in class discussion.

ENGL 349-703 Same as AMST 391

(HONORS) Care, Ethics, & Literature FACE TO FACE

TR 9:30AM-10:45AM/ Adin Lears / CRN: 51444 / HIBBS 326

From the practices of "self-care" populating TikTok and Instagram to the "care culture" pervading business leadership programming: "care" is among the most significant cultural buzzwords of the moment. But what does it actually mean to feel and/or give care? This course

probes this and related questions in the context of late-medieval literature and religious culture, which we will find is deeply concerned with creating the interior conditions that enable one to feel care and to act with care. Our focus will be on medieval visionary literature, a genre associated with consolation and healing, which took on new meaning in the wake of the Black Death (1348-49). By exploring understandings of affliction and care as they appear in medieval dream poetry and divine visions, this course will open up the idea of contemporary care in its manifold aspects as emotion, labor, and ethics or politics. Readings and course discussion will ask students to read deeply in excerpts from longer texts and to compare the perspectives in each to what emerges from various arenas of care in contemporary culture (e.g. institutionalized healthcare, wellness influencers, "Dr. Google"). The culminating assignment series for the course will ask students to interview a care-worker (broadly defined) and bring what they learn from this interview—and their own experience, if they wish—into meaningful contact with the ways of reading and critical perspectives we develop in class discussion.

ENGL 355-001

Black Women Writers of the Diaspora FACE TO FACE

TR 11:00AM-12:15PM / Shermaine Jones / CRN: 49793 / HIBBS 328

Challenging the national boundaries that commonly define literary studies, this course offers a survey of 20th century and contemporary Black women writers to locate a traditionally marginal group at the center of discussions of race, gender, and nation. We will examine works of African, Afro Caribbean/Latina, African American, and Black British women identified writers through Black feminist and post-colonial frameworks. We will not only examine the similarities and thematic commonalities in these works but also the differences due to distinct historical, spatial, and cultural imperatives. Central concerns of the course include: sexuality, motherhood, violence against women, resistance, identity, and transgenerational trauma.

ENGL 366-901

Writing & Social Change FACE TO FACE

TR 5:30PM-6:45PM / David Coogan / CRN: 46404 / ANDERSON 101

If you have ever turned to writing at a difficult time in your life, you know that it can be

healing. Writing is a way of spending time with yourself, taking care of yourself. Writing raises the question of self – how it came to be and what it needs to become. What if you went further? What if you wrote a memoir, taking readers through your past, the problems that you have encountered, the consequences you endured, and your sense of life's possibilities now? What do you think you would learn about yourself?

I first discovered the healing power of memoir in a class I taught at the Richmond City Jail. I started that class to help people understand the story that had led them to jail so that they could change the narrative and stay out of jail. Together, we developed a method of working. They read aloud their drafts and we would analyze them in a supportive, nonjudgemental way, searching for common ground in our experiences and, with it, shared insight about how to move forward in life. That class at the jail led to a book, Writing Our Way Out: Memoirs from Jail and, more recently, a criminal justice diversion program based on the book, which enables low-level offenders who would otherwise be sent to the jail to take this course with you instead.

The set-up here is simple. After a discussion of Writing Our Way Out, which establishes for us some common themes in memoir and the main elements of craft, we will settle into a routine where everyone takes turns reading aloud and discussing their evolving memoirs in a spirit of vulnerability and creativity. This is an emotionally demanding course. It can be hard to open up but it can also be hard to hear other people sharing intense and sometimes traumatic experiences. It can also be deeply fulfilling to heal as you support the people around you doing the same.

This course only works if together we create an inclusive, supportive, confidential, safe space. For these reasons, I need you to apply for a spot in the course. I need to know that you have read this course description and that you understand what you are being asked to do. I would also like to learn a little bit about what you hope to learn by writing your story and what you hope to learn from hearing other people's stories. To apply, email to set up an appointment to meet. Or write a few pages explaining your understanding of the course and what you hope to learn in it. My email is dcoogan@vcu.edu. My office hours for Fall 2026 are Mon/Wed/Fri from 11 – 12 and again from 2 – 3 and by appointment Tue/Thu. Please feel free to email me if you have any questions or just stop by during office hours.

Enrollment in this course is by permission of the instructor only.

ENGL 367-001

Writing Process & Practice FACE TO FACE

TR 12:30PM-1:45PM / Brian McTague / CRN: 38907 / MCALC 4110

Writing Process and Practice is a discussion-based, seminar-style course that focuses on the study of writing, including theory and pedagogy. Your learning is based on active engagement and experience with our readings, discussions, assignments, and activities. By exploring and applying new writing concepts and strategies, you will strengthen your individual writing process and style.

In the second half of the semester, you will help fellow students do the same, as well as test your newfound knowledge, during an internship at the VCU Writing Center. Upon successful completion of the internship and overall course, you will be eligible to apply for a paid position as a Writing Center consultant, as available. Students will be graded on their internship performance, three formal essays, in-class writing prompts, and their overall engagement in the class (attendance and participation). Please feel free to email the instructor with questions.

This is a no-cost course.

ENGL 368-001

Nature Writing FACE TO FACE

MWF 10:00AM-10:50AM/ Michael Keller / CRN: 51445 / HIBBS 430

Thirty or more years ago, we might have started by discussing the difference between "wild" and "wilderness." But in the Anthropocene era, we start pretty much with the understanding that human influence on the planet's environment, even the remotest locations, is an unarguable fact. Readings for this course will be a study of essays from the required *Norton Book of Nature Writing College Edition* supplemented with web and instructor-provided texts, possibly including poems, songs, short stories, videos, art work, multimodal work, games, (and digital tools) outside of the traditional canon. We will also talk about the role of radio and podcasting as an addition to, or extension of, the traditional "nature essay." Students will be asked to recommend external texts and resources which they will collect over the semester into their final annotated list of recommendations.

This will not be a sequential "history" of nature writing through the centuries, though we will

set select historical texts against contemporary texts. Students will engage with reading/viewing/listening weekly and will post weekly written responses as preparation for seminar comments in face-to-face discussion.

We will discuss who has ready access to "nature." What is the current state of that access and the history of it? Whose voices dominate the genre? Who is less represented or missing?

The course is **not**, despite the word "writing" in the course title, a creative writing workshop. That said, students will write and revise two first person essays. The degree to which we may be able to incorporate group critique is entirely dependent on the enrollment numbers. Students will submit a final portfolio of revised work; they also will submit a list of annotated recommendations of texts or resources related to the course of study. The final exam, a reading of student revised work, is in person and required.

Instruction is face-to-face. Attendance and participation are essential to success.

ENGL 371-001

American Literary Beginnings FACE TO FACE

MWF 12:00PM-12:50PM / Joshua Eckhardt / CRN: 51446 / HIBBS 407

This course offers an introductory survey of the earliest surviving writing from and about the Americas. It features the original writing of European explorers and colonizers, including Columbus, Las Casas, and Ralegh; the skilled handiwork of indigenous people, some of which may challenge our definition of writing; and early modern translations of some of the ancient literature that European colonizers brought with them or made on the journey, from the Bible and Ovid's /Metamorphoses/. Given our location, our survey will come to focus on the early modern English writing that the Virginia Company of London brought to America up the James River and through the land that our university now occupies.

This is a no-cost course.

NEXT 375-001

Critical AI Studies FACE TO FACE

MWF 1:00PM-1:50PM/ Caddie Alford / CRN:51425 / HIBBS 428

This course is built on the premise that one of the most radical things you can do in response to "AI" hype and Big Tech "AI" products is practice critical thinking. The word "critical" in "critical AI" gets conflated with the idea that "critical" means ignore, fear, or otherwise blow out of proportion, but actually critical AI studies entail considering context, historicizing claims, gathering evidence, and forming community with experts. This collective labor is important: with public deliberation, we can create futures that reject weaponized binaries between suspect utopias and absurd dystopias.

In this course, we will explore such research inquiries as:

1. What are the technosocial effects of habitual use and exposure to Big Tech products and messaging? What are some of the environmental and local consequences? Are these effects largely intended? How can we find out?

2. How might researchers, workers, activists, creatives, and/or professionals assemble and disseminate evidence about what these technologies do and not do?

3. What does art reveal about "AI"? What does film reveal? How are imaginative texts modalities for public deliberation? What about resistance?

4. What are the connections between post-2022 harms and pre-2022 choices?

5. How is "AI" entangled with the history of the internet?

6. Besides NVIDIA and consultancies, who benefits? Who thinks they're benefitting?

7. Should a handful of companies and group of computing infrastructure companies decide how these technologies become a part of our lives? What about their integration into such industries as higher education, medicine, celebrity influence, music.... Almost every app? Almost every website? Many political campaigns?

This course is designed for those who are interested in and receptive to the fact that the technical is not separate from the social and that technologies can't be separated from power. In this course, you will learn about how social media platforms extend and intensify "AI" hype and product diffusion, while also coming to terms with intersectional histories involving professional proceedings, conversational chatbots, reports, advertisements, viral consumer products, internet communities, and ideologies. We will carefully put these histories and evidentiary proofs into conversation with thoughtful responses from scholars, engineers, tech

workers, artists, and everyday social media users. You can expect to engage a wide range of perspectives, texts, and case studies. Some specific directions include: scholarship from such experts as Jennifer Rhee, Damien Williams, Mél Hogan, Alexander Galloway, and Dustin Edwards; fiction such as the novel Yesteryear; documentaries such as Ghost in the Machine; technologies such as virtual reality and 2D scanners, as well as secondhand outputs such as subreddit discourse and tutorials on YouTube; periodicals such as tech magazines from the early nineties (Upside and User Mag); marketing such as data center commercials; and public writing from Timnit Gebru and Brian Merchant.

Ultimately, practicing both critical research skills and creative problem-solving, we will pursue, in the words of the upcoming Aaron Sorkin film, a social reckoning.

A note on expertise: I think it's important to be transparent about what training and expertise people have and don't have in this area. As a digital rhetoric scholar, I've been actively researching and teaching algorithms, Big Tech, and critical media and digital studies since 2014.

This is a low-cost course.

ENGL 378-001

20th Century U.S. Novels & Narratives FACE TO FACE

TR 9:30AM-10:45AM/ Catherine Seltzer / CRN: 51447 / HIBBS 407

In this course, we'll be considering the short story cycle (or "linked stories.") It's a genre that is often defined in terms of what it is not: Malcolm Cowley once identified it as "something more than a mere collection," for instance, while Richard Russo has suggested that it's "the perfect genre for a writer who can't plot a novel." Over the course of the semester, we'll read a variety of twentieth-century and twentieth-century American works, considering the opportunities created in a genre that both embraces and rejects the generic expectations of the novel and the short story, In our reading, we'll return to a series of central questions, including, how (if at all) does the short story cycle invite the inclusion of often marginalized voices? How do the absences and disruptions inherent to the form complicate considerations of individual and collective identity? How does each work respond to traditional structural devices/strategies such as chronology, geography, character, and narrative voice? Grades will be based on reading

quizzes, several short(ish) papers, and a presentation.

ENGL 391-002

TOPICS: Queer Comics FACE TO FACE

MWF 10:00AM-10:50AM/ Francesca Lyn / CRN: 51474/ HHALL 4153

TBD

ENGL 391-003

TOPICS: Critical Correspondence HYBRID SYNCHRONOUS

TR 12:30PM-1:45PM / Liz Canfield / CRN: 51475/ HHALL 4153

This is an upper-level course that will explore letter-writing as a personal, literary and political act. We will be exploring the prison letters and correspondence between incarcerated people and their comrades, community members, and loved ones, and will be treating such correspondence as literature, as the correspondence we will explore is intentional, dialogic, culturally and historically valuable, thematically rich, and has distinct narrative voices. The selected correspondence for this course explores social and political themes such as love and struggle (letters between George Jackson and Angela Davis), political and spiritual awakening (letters between Malcolm X and his family), political repression (letters of Mahmoud Khalil, Mumia Abu Jamal, and Rashid Johnson), feminism

(the letters of Assata Shakur and Kathy Boudin), and structural racism (correspondence between Angela Davis and James Baldwin), to name a few. We will explore the genre-hybridity of letters (autobiography, political/rhetorical writing, manifesto, creative non-fiction, poetry, journalism) as well as raise critical questions about ephemerality vs. permanence, purpose and audience, and the impact of these letters on the people and political movements of their time and what meaning we get from them today. In addition to being a course about literature, the U.S. prison system, and systemic oppression, this course will also invite students to engage in the art of letter writing. Students will be paired with currently incarcerated people and will write to them regularly, building community, learning about the prison system from those who are living through it, and about how writing empowers us. At the end of the semester, students will write a reflective essay about their experiences and learning, as well as submit a portfolio of selected letters.

A note about course modality: This course will be taught IN PERSON with a synchronous online option via Zoom. While people are strongly encouraged to show up in person, the Zoom option is for accessibility. I've found that I have near 100% attendance with this particular format, and students being able to access my classes is one of my top priorities.

This is a no-cost course.

ENGL 391-901

Editing *plain china* FACE TO FACE

MW 5:30PM-6:45PM / Rebecca Poynor / CRN: 51449 / HHALL 5167

plain china is an online anthology of the best undergraduate writing in the country. Started at Bennington College in 2009, the anthology was adopted here at Virginia Commonwealth University in 2015. In this course, you will comprise the editorial staff of plain china for the duration of the semester. Students will take on the roles of editor-in-chief, lead copyeditor, art editor, social media editor, among other positions. You will learn the skills necessary to run an online anthology, including copy editing, website editing, and critical reading. You will learn how to communicate effectively with editors at literary journals, work with writers, and present ideas on how to expand or modify our anthology.

This is a no-cost course.

400-Level Courses

ENGL 402-001

Chaucer FACE TO FACE

TR 11:00AM-12:15PM / John Brinegar / CRN: 49798/ GRACS 1004H

We'll start with some of Chaucer's short lyric poems in order to get a feel for Middle English, and then move on to the General Prologue, Chaucer's introduction to the Canterbury Tales. Next , we'll read approximately fifteen of the Canterbury Tales in order to get a good idea of the range of Chaucer's various approaches to storytelling. Finally, we'll read most of Chaucer's great finished poem, Troilus and Criseyde. As mentioned, we will read Chaucer's works in Middle English; though this may be difficult at first, you will get better with practice. Chaucer's stories are among the most enjoyable pieces of medieval literature; have fun reading them.

The main goals of this course are:

- To become familiar with Chaucer's language and rhetorical style
- To develop skills in close reading of medieval literature
- To examine the variety of medieval literary genres represented by Chaucer's works
- To place Chaucer's writings in their social and historical context

ENGL 411-001

Early Modern Studies: English Renaissance Drama ONLINE SYNCHRONOUS

TR 3:30PM-4:45PM/ Matteo Pangallo / CRN: 51461

In 1637, William Prynne's ears were cut off as punishment for condemning the idea of women acting in plays...around the same time that Queen Henrietta Maria was acting in plays at court. Forty years earlier, in 1597, playwright Ben Jonson and several actors were jailed for staging a play that seemed to slander Queen Elizabeth. During the English Renaissance, theater was more than just popular entertainment and pastime: the stakes underlying the staging of plays could be extremely high and were relevant to matters of politics, identity, culture, society, faith, and more. English Renaissance drama thus both shaped and was shaped by the world in which it existed.

This reading-intensive, discussion-centered synchronous online course explores ten plays written by Shakespeare's contemporaries from the start of Elizabeth's reign in 1558 through the closure of the public theaters at the start of the English Civil War in 1642. Our semester unfolds over four units—Magic & Knowledge, Revenge & Justice, Gender & Agency, and Carnival & Chaos—and will include ten plays, covering the major genres of comedy, tragedy, and tragicomedy, written for a range of different contexts, including the public stage, court performance, and private reading.

Our focus is on three broad questions: How and why did the use of formal elements, such as generic conventions and dramatic structure, evolve over the period? How did specific contexts, such as audiences, actors, and venues, influence the development of dramatic writing? And in what ways did plays both reflect and inflect ideas in the period—including gender roles, governance of the household and nation, the moral tension between justice and vengeance,

and the place and purpose of the theater itself.

This is a no-cost course.

ENGL 435-001

Advanced Poetry Writing Workshop FACE TO FACE

TR 3:30PM-4:45PM / Devon Walker-Figueroa / CRN: 46460/ HIBBS 330

In this workshop-based course, we will write, share, and revise new poems, offering one another feedback that is both constructive and compassionate. We will also respond to writing prompts, participate in in-class craft exercises, and closely read an array of assigned poems meant to exemplify the level of artistry and technique to which we aspire. Whether the poem in front of us is by Tommy Pico, Jorie Graham, or a classmate, we will study the choices its writer has made and the effects (emotional, intellectual, aesthetic, and otherwise) those choices engender.

This is a no-cost course.

ENGL 437-901 FACE TO FACE

Advanced Fiction Writing

MW 4:00PM-5:15PM / SJ Sindu / CRN: 51450 / HIBBS 331

Study the craft of fiction writing, with instruction and guidance toward constructive self-criticism. Workshop members will be expected to produce a substantial volume of short stories or portions of a novel and to become proficient in the critical analysis of fiction in order to evaluate and articulate the strength of their own work.

This is a low-cost course.

ENGL 445-001

Form & Theory of Poetry FACE TO FACE

TR 12:30PM-1:45PM / Kathy Graber / CRN: 51451/ HIBBS 331

All poems are embodied in form. This is true not only of poems written in traditional meter and rhyme, but it is also true of contemporary poems written in free verse, including found

poems, erasure poems, and those composed in genre-bending prose blocks or in ever more innovative, experimental open forms. While we will review common traditional forms (sonnet, sestina, villanelle, etc.), we will also consider the many other means by which patterns of sound, repetition, and silence, including patterns of syntax and lineation, generate poetic effects, for at the root of poetry is a tension between the sentence and the poetic line. In this class, you will be both polishing your skills as a reader—by applying your evolving knowledge of poetic devices and effects, traditional forms and modes to your generous consideration of specific poems—while also drafting a few poems of your own.

ENGL 451-001

History of the English Language FACE TO FACE

TR 9:30AM-10:45AM / John Brinegar / CRN: 49802 / GRACS 1004H

In English 451, you will learn about the origins, development, and present state of the English language. We will begin with a look at English's distant roots in Proto-Indo-European. We will then follow the myriad changes the language undergoes in moving from Old English to Middle English to Modern English, and look at how early Modern English differs from the language we speak now. Next, we will examine the history of English (or Englishes) in America. We will end the course with an overview of English as a world language and some speculations on its future. Throughout the course, we will focus not only on formal linguistic changes, but also on the various social roles English has played through the centuries.

By the end of this course, students will be able:

-- to identify the various formal and structural changes English has undergone.

-- to discuss English's effect on cultural and social history, especially as revealed in literature.

-- to analyze the language in both a past and present state.

ENGL 480-001

AUTHORS: The Poetry and Fiction of Thomas Hardy FACE TO FACE

MWF 10:00AM-10:50AM / Nicholas Frankel / CRN: 51452/ANDERSON 101

Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) was one of the most brilliant fiction writers and poets of the past 200 years. Born the son of a stonemason in a rural district of England, he was largely

self-educated and quickly determined upon a writing career. A lifelong poet, he achieved both popular and critical success as a novelist and short story writer from the mid-1870s onwards, on both sides of the Atlantic. But his fiction became increasingly controversial, partly on account of its growing sexual frankness, its sympathy for rural working folk, and its deep sensitivity to the limited opportunities facing women; and in his mid-50s, fed up with the reception his fiction often met with from interfering editors and reviewers, Hardy vowed to write only poetry henceforth. From 1898 until his death in 1928, he issued no less than nine poetry collections as well as a three-part verse drama. His poetry, reflecting a deep respect for the natural world and an ironically-expressed despair at the vanity of human behavior, was a major influence on the American poets Robert Frost and Wendell Berry among many others.

In this class we will read three or four of Hardy's finest novels -- including *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscur*e, the two novels that proved most controversial in Hardy's lifetime -- as well as a selection of his best short-stories and poems. Together with a substantial amount of required reading, class assignments will include two persuasive critical essays, weekly informal written responses, regular pop-quizzes, and a final exam.

ENGL 480-002

AUTHORS: Bulgakov FACE TO FACE

TR 12:30pm - 1:45pm / Thom Didato / CRN: 52553 / HHALL 3133

Did you know a Russian masterpiece written nearly a century ago anticipated the war in Ukraine? Presently, Russia and Ukraine are engaged in a war on multiple fronts, one that also includes the nationality of one of the world's most celebrated writers: Mikhail Bulgakov. Nationality issues aside, this Russian born in Ukraine was an equal opportunist when it came to ridiculing country, nationality, authority, faith and faithlessness. Moreover, he had a clear affinity for dogs and cats. Bulgakov began his adult life as a doctor, but gave up medicine for writing. His skills combining realism and fantasy, along with absurd humor, would posthumously mark him as one of the greatest authors of the century. Yet, his scathing criticism of the given political climate was increasingly unacceptable to the Soviet/Russian authorities.

Bulgakov's initial works dealt with contemporary/historical issues, but others focused upon far

more absurd settings/situations: a city under attack by giant reptiles, an operation to turn a dog into a super being, or a visit by the devil and his murderous black cat. Eventually he was prohibited from publishing....and as literary historians like to say, Bulgakov "spent his days writing for the drawer." His plea for permission to emigrate was rejected by Joseph Stalin – and yet, Stalin liked him enough to keep him alive. During the remaining period of literary banishment, Bulgakov created his masterpiece, The Master & Margarita, that only saw the light of day decades after the author's death. Strangely enough, Bulgakov's work outlasted the country that prevented its publication... and now, both the man and his work is of great debate amidst the international turmoil taking place today.

This course will focus on five of his best-known works: A Country Doctor's Notebook, The White Guard, The Fatal Eggs, Heart of a Dog and The Master and Margarita.

ENGL 482-001

Literary Topics: Sappho FACE TO FACE

MWF 11:00AM-11:50AM/ Joshua Eckhardt / CRN: 51453/ TBD

This course offers a thorough introduction to the writing of Sappho, paying particular attention to the history of translating her work into English. Held in the Book Lab, it turns some attention to the earliest surviving media of Sappho's writing: papyrus rolls inscribed with reed pen in Aeolic Greek. Students can expect to trace Greek letters, to learn the Greek alphabet(a), and to replicate a papyrus fragment. These introductory projects require no knowledge of the Greek language. Instead of ancient Greek, the course focuses on what readers of English have been able to learn of Sappho's writing over the past 500 years.

This is a no-cost course.

ENGL 482-002

Literary Topics: Literary Topics: Black Speculative Fictions FACE TO FACE

MW 2:00PM-3:15PM / Michael Hall / CRN: 51454/ HIBBS 331

This advanced literary studies seminar explores major themes and concerns of black speculative fictions from the early 20th century to the present. Reading a range of writers including W. E. B. Du Bois, Octavia Butler, Jewelle Gomez, Samuel R. Delaney, Nnedi Okorafor, and P. Djèlí Clark (in addition to viewing popular films and series episodes), students will gain a deep understanding of major themes and concerns from social and environmental justice to the complex intersections of race, gender, and technology as well as develop a critical vocabulary to strengthen verbal and written analysis and communication. Students will be required to submit regular, weekly reading responses and produce two researched essays for which students will participate in several writing workshops over the semester. This advanced seminar is student-centered and discussion-based. As such, **preparation of readings and participation in in-class discussions and workshops is critical to success in this course. Students who enrolled in my Fall 2026 ENGL 417 should NOT take this course.**

This is a low-cost course.

ENGL 483-001
Bad Girls Club FACE TO FACE
TR 12:30PM-1:45PM/ Kate Nash / CRN: 51455/ ANDERSON 101

Unruly, unpredictable, unconventional women dominate the four novels we're reading this semester: George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, Charlotte Bronte's *Villette*, Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations*, and Mary Elizabeth Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret*. We will discover what, exactly, makes these women unconventional through lectures and student presentations about ladies' conduct manuals, lessons on contemporary religious practices, popular assumptions about how women's minds worked, female psychology as it was understood at the time, and more. This course will entail more reading and discussion than writing.

This is a low-cost course.

ENGL 483-701
HONORS: Bad Girls Club FACE TO FACE
TR 12:30PM-1:45PM/ Kate Nash / CRN: 51482/ ANDERSON 101

Unruly, unpredictable, unconventional women dominate the four novels we're reading this

semester: George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, Charlotte Bronte's *Villette*, Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations*, and Mary Elizabeth Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret.* We will discover what, exactly, makes these women unconventional through lectures and student presentations about ladies' conduct manuals, lessons on contemporary religious practices, popular assumptions about how women's minds worked, female psychology as it was understood at the time, and more. This course will entail more reading and discussion than writing.

This is a low-cost course.

ENGL 483-002
Prison Memoirs FACE TO FACE
TR 3:30PM-4:45PM / David Coogan / CRN: 51456 / ANDERSON 101

This course tells the story of mass incarceration through writers who witnessed it first-hand. This is not how the story is typically told. The problem, in part, has to do with that phrase, mass incarceration. In physics, mass refers to the total amount of matter in an object. The grains of sand in a glass. The amount of water in that glass. A drop of water or grain of sand does not matter. It's the total mass that matters. So too with histories or critiques of mass incarceration. Individuals become a part of the adjective modifying the noun describing the thing being done to them through politics and policies. But unlike other mass experiences that we choose—a show, a game—no one chooses mass incarceration. Anonymity only explains captivity.

To write in prison (or after your release, to write about your time in prison), is to break rank with the masses. It is a radical act of claiming your agency in a system designed to block it—to sign your name in a system that assigns you a number. The story that this course tells begins in the 1960s with revolutionary writers like Assata Shakur seeking liberation not just from prison but the oppressive structure of society that sustains it. It then shifts to witnesses in the 1980s like Jimmy Santiago Baca seeking self-determination and justice from these increasingly cavernous prison warehouses. And it ends with survivors like Shaka Senghor in the 21st century seeking healing from the psychological trauma that led to prison as well as the trauma of prison. We will supplement our study of these memoirs with scholarship on other key

memoirists, poets, political theorists, and journalists who were imprisoned during this time. You will write three essays on these three eras of mass incarceration and will have considerable freedom to shape these essays in relation to the supplemental scholarship provided or your own research.

You will also have an opportunity to help me help a person in prison with his memoir. For six months, I have been corresponding with Israel "Izzy" Nelson, a trans man in a women's prison in North Carolina and a graduate of VCU (class of 2002). He sent me his memoir—four, hand-written composition books—seeking advice on how to improve it after learning about my book, Writing Our Way Out: Memoirs from Jail, which describes a memoir writing class I taught at the Richmond City Jail. Izzy needs help getting the hand-written drafts typed up and, like any writer, could use some feedback to help him develop the story. This is an optional part of the course. But it is an opportunity to experience more directly what you'll be studying in the books. It may even draw you closer to it.

ENGL 491-001

Topics in Writing: Micro Memoir FACE TO FACE

MWF 1:00PM-1:50PM / Sonja Livingston / CRN: 49804/ HIBBS 331

Whether it's called Flash Nonfiction, Micro-Memoir, or Brief CNF, this short literary form illuminates and interrogates the material of our real lives. Ranging in length from 100 to 1000 words, the micro-memoir manages a balancing act between revelation and restraint. In this Topics in Writing course, we'll read a variety of contemporary micro-memoirs featuring wide-ranging voices and approaches. We'll discuss elements of creative nonfiction writing, including questions of ethics and craft. We'll also write weekly micros that reflect our unique experiences, interests, voice and style. Through these readings, writings and discussions, we will explore the surprising power of nonfiction "snapshots" to cut through the noise and to highlight the extraordinary in our ordinary lives.

This is a no-cost course.

ENGL 499-001

Senior Seminar: Slow Reading: Twice-Told Tales FACE TO FACE

MWF 2:00PM-3:15PM/ Rivka Swenson / CRN: 46505 / HIBBS 330

In this alternative seminar form, we will practice slow reading, taking our time with well-crafted contemporary prose fiction that yields most pleasure when ample time is taken for unfolding. Our material will consist of radical retellings: for example, novelistic revisions of children's stories (e.g., transformations of Grimm's fairy tales) or of "weird" tales (e.g., transformations of H.P. Lovecraft's canon), or novels that perform their own retellings as they go (e.g., Ian McEwan's Atonement). We will consider the transformative limitations and possibilities of radical appropriation and revision.

Homework will consist of reading. Class time will consist of in-class writing – and vigorous discussion, as befitting the small class size. In lieu of a standard seminar paper, students will build on in-class writing to produce a final within the classroom during the exam period.

Reading, class discussion, quizzes, final exam with essay component.

This is a no-cost course

ENGL 499-002

Senior Seminar: British Modernism FACE TO FACE

TR 11:00AM-12:15PM / Kate Nash / CRN: 46506/ HIBBS 441

A study of British narrative written between 1890 and 1940. We will pay special attention to popular and professional notions of experience, focusing on perceptions of depression, love, fear, jealousy, curiosity, uncertainty, and longing. What it meant to experience something changed dramatically at the end of the Victorian era and then changed again during World War I. Students will get to write and revise a short essay before writing a capstone essay (3500 words) on any literary work from this time period. We are likely to read and discuss works by Woolf, James, Conrad, West, and/or Forster.

This is a low-cost course.

ENGL 499-003

Senior Seminar: On Blackness & Feeling FACE TO FACE

TR 12:30PM-1:45PM/ Shermaine Jones / CRN: 46507/ HHALL 2113

This course pairs affect theory and literary criticism with representative literary works of

African American literature to explore the ways that race, feeling and citizenship have been integrally related in the American cultural imaginary since the foundation of the nation. We will examine the ways that Black people mediate, challenge, and resist whiteness as "an affective code" through their own modes of feeling. We question, how do Black people mobilize feelings to bear witness to their humanity, challenge injustice, and work towards individual and collective healing?

This is a low-cost course.

500-Level Courses

ENGL 560-001 FACE TO FACE

Brit Lit & Culture: Sappho

MWF 11:00AM-11:50AM/ Joshua Eckhardt / CRN: 50959/ TBD

This course offers a thorough introduction to the writing of Sappho, paying particular attention to the history of translating her work into English. Held in the Book Lab, it turns some attention to the earliest surviving media of Sappho's writing: papyrus rolls inscribed with reed pen in Aeolic Greek. Students can expect to trace Greek letters, to learn the Greek alphabet(a), and to replicate a papyrus fragment. These introductory projects require no knowledge of the Greek language. Instead of ancient Greek, the course focuses on what readers of English have been able to learn of Sappho's writing over the past 500 years.

This is a no-cost course.

600-Level Courses

ENGL 606-901

Literary Criticism: Hope, Refusal, and Futurity ONLINE SYNCHRONOUS

R 7:00PM-9:00PM / Jennifer Rhee / CRN: 46678/ Online

This course is a comparative study of critical approaches to literary texts. This class will examine key theoretical approaches to literary studies including those developed from Marxist theory, postcolonial theory, feminist theory, queer theory, Black feminist theory, Asian American theory, and the environmental humanities. This course is loosely organized around the interconnected themes of hope, refusal, and possibility, which all of our theoretical texts foreground as they ask urgent questions about how to build more livable worlds amidst bleak presents.

This class will be held online and will meet synchronously. This course will emphasize discussion, small group work, and active student participation during our class meetings.

This is a no-cost course.

ENGL 614-001 FACE TO FACE

Intertextuality: Poetics of Duration: The Art of the Long Poem

T 7:00PM-9:40PM / Devon Walker-Figueroa / CRN: 51457 / HIBBS 308

Cutting against the grain of hypermodernity's byte-sized informatics and shortening attention spans, this course proposes a poetics of duration and durability, a slowing down and elongating of perception as expressed through language and, especially, through the poetic line. Where the feed trains us to devour hasty, largely contextless language, the long poem asks that we linger, observe, sit with our questions, and dare to witness a thought metamorphose over time into something strange and memorable, rich with implication and renewed to our senses. Grounding our writing practice in close reading and rigorous discussion, we will delve into the work of poets such as Dante Alighieri, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Inger Christensen, Tommy Pico, Shane McCrae, and Maggie Millner, considering throughout how we might charge the at-times dilatory poetics of the epic tradition with lyric immediacy, and culminating in original poems as well as an experimental essay.

ENGL 624-902

Texts and Contexts: Exploring Early Modern Prose Fiction FACE TO FACE

R 4:00PM-6:40PM /Constance Relihan / CRN: 51458 / HIBBS 308

This course should be of interest to students interested in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English literature and those interested in the history of English fiction and the novel. We will read and discuss works spanning the early modern period from Thomas More's Utopia (1516) to Margaret Cavendish's The Blazing World (1666). Along the way we will consider texts such as John Lyly's Euphues, Sir Philip Sidney's The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia, Thomas Nashe's The Unfortunate Traveler, Margaret Tyler's The Mirror of Princely Deeds and Knighthood, Lady Mary Wroth's Urania, Thomas Lodge's Rosalynde, Robert Greene's Pandosto, Thomas Deloney's The Gentle Craft, and the essentially anonymous Westward for Smelts (reportedly authored by 'Kinde Kit of Kingstone'). We'll consider what these texts tell us about early modern English culture and about the language we use to describe and define types of early fiction.

ENGL 629-001

Short Story Cycles FACE TO FACE

TR 3:30PM-4:45PM /Gretchen Comba / CRN: 47874 / HIBBS 331

Arguably rooted in antiquity, the short story cycle in its contemporary form comes into focus in the latter part of the 19^{tth} century with the publication of works by so-called Regionalists such as Charles W. Chestnutt, Sarah Orne Jewett, and Alice Dunbar Nelson. Nevertheless, the genre did not garner critical appreciation or distinction until the publication of Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919), with Malcolm Cowley noting mid-century, much as he did earlier in a discussion of Faulkner's *Go Down, Moses* (1942), that the text "lies midway between the novel proper and the mere collection of stories." In 1971, Forrest Ingram published *Short Story Cycles of the Twentieth Century: Studies in a Literary Genre*, the first book-length scholarly text on the genre, marking the advent of academic interest in critically examining what defines the genre, how it should be termed, and how it is constructed.

We will begin our study with a historical review of the genre, as well as a consideration of the nomenclature. We will then examine the major book-length treatments of the genre alongside contemporary short story cycles in an effort to understand a variety of techniques that appear in the individual collections and how these techniques reflect a structural pattern distinctive to the genre.

ENGL 666-901

Creative Writing: Nonfiction FACE TO FACE

W 4:00PM-6:40PM / Jessica Hendry Nelson / CRN:46679 / ANDERSON 101

This workshop is for writers working in all genres who want to cultivate a sustainable creative life. Rather than focusing solely on technique, this class confronts the ways our relationships with ourselves—and the limiting stories we tell about ourselves—can create seemingly impossible barriers. Decades of teaching and writing have revealed a pattern: the writers who continue to produce and publish are not necessarily the most "talented," but those who learn to trust their creative voices and challenge self-doubt, anxiety, and creative blocks. This isn't simply a matter of dedication, but devotion. Deadlines, community, grit, skill, and even passion can sustain us through a project, a class, perhaps even a few years. But navigating the perils of capitalism, distraction, obligation, politics, grief, and all that both threatens and necessitates art-making requires cultivating a different—and, thankfully, learnable—set of skills. We'll dig into and draw from current research on neuroplasticity, creativity, and habit formation. We'll explore how practices such as meditation and visualization affect the brain, and how consistent engagement can help establish patterns that support creative flow. We'll draw from psychology, somatic awareness, embodied cognition, and neuroscience to better understand—and reshape—the conditions under which we create. You will also work with a smaller cohort to write and revise a short portfolio of creative work in the genre or genres of your choosing. During the latter half of the semester, pieces from this portfolio will be workshopped by the class. This work is not for the faint of heart, but neither is a writer's life. Welcome.

This is a low-cost course.

ENGL 666-902 FACE TO FACE

Creative Writing: Novel

M 7:00PM-9:40PM / SJ Sindu / CRN:46680 / HIBBS 308

A year-long graduate-level class focusing on the novel. In this writing-intensive class, students will spend the fall semester writing a full draft of a novel and studying the craft of novel

writing. In the spring semester, students will workshop their entire complete novel draft all at once with the whole class. Students are highly encouraged to begin their novels ahead of the fall semester. The class will also cover the publication process for novels, including information about agents and how to get one.

This is a low-cost course.

ENGL 666-903 FACE TO FACE

Creative Writing: Poetry FACE TO FACE

R 4:00PM-6:40PM / Kathy Graber / CRN:46681 / HIBBS 408

ENGL 694-003

Blackbird Internship FACE TO FACE

TBD / Jessica Hendry Nelson / CRN:46853 / TBD

For over two decades, Blackbird: an online journal of literature and the arts has been one of the country's premiere literary magazines, earning accolades and attracting an expansive readership for its diverse range of award-winning and emerging writers and visual artists. Interns serve on one of six teams based on their interest—Fiction, Creative Nonfiction, Poetry, Copyediting, Media, Art—to ensure the timely publication of four annual "Flights" (issues). Graduate students serve in Lead or Associate Editorial positions and collaborate with undergraduate interns. Depending on the team to which the intern is assigned, duties include reading, soliciting, and assessing (collaboratively) creative submissions; fact-checking and copyediting; designing and producing social media posts and other promotional materials, including short audio, video, and newsletters; soliciting and interviewing artists, etc.

MATX 603-901

Mass Media HYBRID

T 7:00PM-9:40PM/ Mariam Alkazemi / CRN:51436 / MCALC 2107

MATX 690-903

Cinematic Visitations: Film, Philosophy and Aesthetics FACE TO FACE

W 7:00PM-9:40PM/ Rohan Kalyan / CRN:51437 / HIBBS 308

This seminar explores a range of philosophical and theoretical approaches to the form and content of cinematic art. Beginning with the premise that film is a medium that thinks, it asks: How does cinema help us think about and understand the world? What kinds of ideas and perspectives can films communicate, and how do different genres and styles of filmmaking shape the ways these ideas are expressed?

The seminar aims to develop students' ability to critically analyze cinema as both an artistic medium and a form of thought. Students will learn to engage with major debates in film theory and philosophy, examine how cinematic forms and genres produce meaning, and situate films within broader cultural, historical, and global contexts. While the course will feature several film screenings, it will be primarily text-based, engaging with interdisciplinary scholarship on the relationship between film and philosophy, genre studies, visual media cultures, and the history of world cinema.

This is a low-cost course.