

Queens College Department of English

Graduate Courses for the Spring 2008 Semester

You can contact the Director of Graduate Studies in English, Professor Talia Schaffer at talia.schaffer@qc.cuny.edu or go to the office hours of any member of the graduate committee (list available in English department).

Students admitted in September 2004 and later must use the new requirements for the M.A. and the M.S. in Education/English. Students admitted earlier may use either the old or the new requirements. To make sure you are taking the right sequence of courses, be sure to consult the department website at <http://qcpages.qc.edu/ENGLISH/Graduate/degreerequirements.html>

636: History of Literary Criticism

E6T2A 0354 T 6:30 - 8:20 PM KY/326 Lew, J.

This course will explore the history of literary theory and criticism from Plato to the present. It will consider key orientations in literary criticism such as the mimetic, pragmatic, expressive and objective. It will also consider some major theoretical influences and their applications on the study of literature. Readings will include such authors as Cleanth Brooks, Wolfgang Iser, Stanley Fish, Ferdinand de Saussure, Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan, Karl Marx, Louis Althusser, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Edward W. Said, Donna Haraway and others.

662: The English Language

E6W2A 0186 W 6:30 - 8:20 PM KY/283 Sargent, M.

701: Seminar in Graduate Methodology

E4W2A 0355 W 4:30 - 6:20 PM KY/326 Schaffer, T.

When your graduate instructors tell you to do a research paper, what do they mean and how can you do it? This course will tell you. We'll investigate which websites are reliable, discuss how to find useful on-line resources, and explore how to find the best printed articles and books. Not only will we learn how to find the right sources, we will also study how to read and use them properly. We'll figure out what makes an article good (and how to tell if it's good at a glance), and we'll discuss how criticism has changed over the last few decades. Finally, we will talk about how to develop your master's thesis. You'll design your own research project, and also do some shorter assignments to learn how to use various research techniques. This project will give you a chance to explore your own interests and imagine working them through on a larger scale, and in greater depth, than you've ever had a chance to do before

702: Graduate Methodology for Education Students.

E6R2A 0872 TH 6:30 - 8:20 PM KY/283 Cassidy, J.

As a course in the aims and means of graduate research with an eye towards secondary education in

examine the basic topics associated with the choice of an appropriate text for the curriculum. Covering such topics as copy text, bibliography, annotations, historical contexts, contemporary reception, (post)modern criticism, and pedagogical suitability, the course will focus on *The Secret Garden*. Students are expected to have a working knowledge of various literary criticisms such as historical, gender, psychological, and reader reaction.

703: Comp Theory and Lit SD

E4M2A 0357 M 4:30 - 6:20 PM KP/708 Wan, A.

Most students in the process of earning an advanced degree in English are strong writers. But even the most skilled writer may be puzzled about how to teach others to write well. This course has three primary goals: 1. to reflect on our own writing practices in the context of literacy learning and teaching; 2. to investigate contemporary scholarship in composition and writing studies; and 3. to situate composition scholarship within the field of literacy studies. Students will be expected to examine the curricular, pedagogical, and theoretical contexts that shape teaching and learning as a way to begin developing their own composition pedagogies. The course focuses on teaching practices (course and assignment design, conferences and peer workshopping, feedback and evaluation) and larger scale issues like the circulation of literacy, formulaic writing, creative writing, language standards, and technology.

720: Studies in Renaissance Literature

E4W2A 0849 W 4:30 - 6:20 PM RA/208 Walkden, A.

Absolutism, Revolution, Restoration
British Literature, 1603-1688

Addressing a broad range of writers, this seminar will consider the literature that shaped and was shaped by the mid-century upheavals variously known as the English Civil War, the Great Rebellion, or the English Revolution. Our central theme will be the transformation and politicization of genres, modes, and forms: how texts come into contention with one another and how they question and order the world around them. In particular, we will consider the contribution of literary works to contemporary (and intersecting) debates over religious radicalism and toleration, the future of the monarchy, the freedom of the press and the rise of journalism, the commercial revolution, the scientific revolution, and the changing status of women.

Readings will include works by John Milton, Andrew Marvell, Margaret Cavendish, Thomas Hobbes, Katherine Philips, and Samuel Pepys.

723: Studies in Romantic Literature

E6W2A 0359 W 6:30 - 8:20 PM RA/208 Marotta, R.

For many romantic writers, the traces "of that first Paradise whence man was driven" could be found in the imaginative and mimetic structures surrounding them.

Wordsworth and Shelley found these traces in nature; Byron in irony; Keats in aesthetics; Blake in myth and Coleridge in ethics. This course will examine how the search for these images of paradise, or as McGann said, of the idea "that poetry...can set one free of the ruins of history and culture is the grand illusion of every Romantic poet," forms the central core of belief that shapes the romantic imagination. Our readings from these poets will concentrate on how each of the major poets explores and imagines the exteriors and the interiors of this vision. Active participation and two papers are required.

724: Studies in Victorian Literature

E6R2A 0360 TH 6:30 - 8:20 PM KY/326 Sipe, M.

Taking Raymond Williams' groundbreaking study *The Country and the City* as our point of departure, we will explore how shifting Victorian attitudes towards urban and rural modes of life contribute to a broader reflection on the very nature of space in British culture. Through readings of representative novelists of the period we will investigate how new conceptions of country and city life open up onto larger questions concerning the politics of landscape and national identity, the rise of industrialization and urbanism, and the development of suburbia. At the same time, we will pay special attention to the ways in which Victorian reconceptions of urban and rural space are intimately tied to issues of gender and class and the construction of domesticity. Providing students with a rigorous survey of the nineteenth-century novel, this course also offers an overview of recent scholarship on questions of space in Victorian culture. Course readings will include the works of authors such as Austen, Dickens, George Eliot, Elizabeth Gaskell, and William Morris, as well as theoretical writings ranging from Michel Foucault and Henri Lefebvre to Edward Said and Sharon Marcus.

727: The Poetry and Letters of Emily Dickinson

E6M2A 0639 M 6:30 - 8:20 PM KY/244 Weidman, B.

This course examines the life and work of Emily Dickinson, widely regarded as one of the two greatest 19th century American poets. We will read the most recent biography, the newest edition of Dickinson's poems, re-edited from the manuscripts, a selection of her letters and some critical studies. The students' written work will be based on the "fascicles," or manuscript books, which served as Dickinson's original form of publication.

729: Jewish-American Literature

E6T2A 0362 T 6:30 - 8:20 PM RZ/224 Nysenholc, J.

We will examine how the Jewish-American experience is represented in literature from the beginning of the 20th c. until today. In particular, we will discuss how these texts have been shaped by the cultural and historical contexts and how they have informed changing definitions of Jewish-American identity, especially in their responses to immigration and assimilation, antisemitism, other ethnic minorities, the Holocaust, the State of Israel, religion, and the place of women in Jewish-American life. Authors will include Anzia Yezierska, Philip Roth, Woody Allen, I.B. Singer, and Adrienne Rich.

729: Studies in Modern Literature

E6M2A 0081 M 6:30 - 8:20 PM KP/708 English, H.

We will consider modern American (i.e., United States) poetry written in English from the beginning to the middle of the previous century (i.e. the 20th)—that is, from the period generally imagined as literary, cultural, artistic “modernism.” Our attention will be primarily focused on poems, framed by a few poets’ essayistic articulations—often in prose--of their poetic projects. The poets we will read include Frost, Stein, Pound, Eliot, Stevens, Moore, Williams, Millay, Cummings, Hughes and Bishop. Some of the questions we will consider are: What is modernity and when is a sense of being “modern” meaningful in relation to cultural work? What do “modern” or “modernist” mean? When does it become meaningful to think about poets’ engagements with ideas of being new, and/or with a sense of participating in a larger “modernist” movement of cultural transformation? What, if any, American (i.e., United States) particularities emerge within a larger international artistic movement called “modernism”? As we allow ourselves to consider such

larger issues, we will consistently return to particular instances of poetic language and form in early 20th century poetry in English by poets who are, in varied ways, both modern and American.

742: Studies in Shakespeare's Plays: Shakespeare and Company

E6T2A 0098 T 6:30 - 8:20 PM RA/102 Green, W.

The course will center on a study of selected plays of Shakespeare from the genres of tragedy, comedy, and history presented during the reign of Queen Elizabeth (with one exception) alongside those of several of his outstanding contemporaries for comparison and/or contrast. These contemporaries will include Christopher Marlowe, Thomas Kyd, Thomas Heywood, Ben Jonson and John Webster. Thus we will gain insight into the richness of the Elizabethan theater that nurtured Shakespeare.

751: Workshop in Fiction

E6T2A 0063 T 6:30 - 8:20 PM RA/208 Allen, J.

This is a graduate level fiction writing workshop. Over the course of the semester, students will submit work for the review of the class. As well, the class will read and discuss several short works of fiction and non-fiction related to different aspects of the craft and which address a range of matters concerning the development of a voice.

For MFA students only.

753: Poetry Workshop

E6M2A 0076 M 6:30 - 8:20 PM KP/304 Cooley, N.

In this poetry workshop, we will focus on poetic form and the challenges and freedoms that it offers. We will explore pantoums, villanelles and other fixed forms as well as prose poems, collage and the page as a visual field. Early in the semester, you will devise an individual final project that you will work on throughout the semester—a long poem, a cross-genre work, a related sequence of poems. The project will allow you to consider theoretical and practical problems of form and structure. Each week, we will workshop both individual poems and groups of poems from your projects. We will read single volumes of twentieth century American poetry that raise questions about form in a variety of ways, from Gertrude Stein's *Tender Buttons* to DA Powell's *Cocktails*.

We will also spend several weeks reading several contemporary chapbooks and discussing the chapbook as a genre.

For MFA students only

757: Translation Workshop

E4W2A 0086 W 4:30 - 6:20 PM KP/708 Gonzalez, R.

This course is an introduction to the art and craft of translation. Through a series of collaborative and individual writing exercises, students will learn to examine and dissect language, experiment with tone, shape cultural context, and appreciate writing at the rudimentary levels, from word choice to rhythm and sound. This class will culminate with a public presentation of translation projects undertaken throughout the

and that we will be focused, but not limited to, translating prose and poetry from the Spanish, French and Italian literatures.

For all MFA and MA students

759: Adv Writing Proj

Z 0188 ** Hours to be announced ** Schaffer, T.

760: Craft and Theory of Fiction / Style Court: The Extreme Makeover Course for Everyday Prose

E6R2A 0363 TH 6:30 - 8:20 PM KP/304 Weir, J.

What do we mean when we talk about a writer's "style?" Or "tone," or "voice," or "sound?" Is it true that every writer has a single and singular, immaculate, and distinctive voice resonating through each of his/her sentences? Or is "voice" constructed, manipulated, ever-changing, always calculated, and carefully modulated in order to create specific local effects? Leading to global effects? How do sentences work? What's the use of a paragraph? How do we manage the relationship between long/short sentences inside a paragraph? Where do we want the "money word" to land in our various sentences? What is the effect of the tension in English between Latinate and Anglo-Saxon words? How the hell are we supposed to deal with grammar? Why does everybody get so bent out of shape over clichés? What is a cliché? Is it never a good thing? In this course, we will submit all our assumptions about "prose style" to a rigorous cross-examination by the jury of Style Experts we shall pretend to be and hope to become. This will involve our reading many examples of prose styles by many different writers, ranging from Jane Austen to Paul Auster and including such writers as Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Virginia Woolf, O. Henry, Sherwood Anderson, Ernest Hemingway, Gertrude Stein, Jean Toomer, John Cheever, James Baldwin, Joan Didion, Toni Morrison. . . and basically every writer who has ever published English prose, plus maybe some poets to keep us feeling hectic and transcendental. Our task will be to perform close readings upon the various texts, with the help of input from critics and theorists and novelists-writing-about-themselves, and with an approach that focuses on the aesthetics of prose, the sound of a sentence, the manipulation of diction and syntax and grammar in order to create a voice or tone. Assignments will include much reading, and lots of imitations. We will do our best to imitate every piece of fiction that comes our way, and to see how we can incorporate the most useful and thrilling fictional effects into our own work. The aim of the course is to focus our attention with crippling self-consciousness onto our own meager prose, and to consider how micro-managing our words and sentences will give us more control over larger stylistic and structural issues, like how to manage time and space, how to get characters in and out of rooms, what to do with transitions, whom to choose to tell a story, how to create the illusion of there being a "character" on the page, and how to write so scaldingly or hilariously or profoundly – or all three at once! – or just with such devastating simplicity and directness, "in plain American that dogs and cats can read," to quote Randall Jarrell, that we run the risk of ruining – at the very least! – our reader's day, if not in fact his or her life.

For MFA students and others by permission

762: Craft and Theory of Playwriting / Wrighting the Play: A Craft Course in Playwriting

E4R2A 0364 TH 4:30 - 6:20 PM RA/208 Schotter, R.

As the word playwright implies, bringing a play to life on the stage (which is the goal of all playwrights) means that, in addition to being a poet and visionary, one must be a craftsman (or woman), an artisan, an architect of a complex dramatic artifice: a molder and shaper of scenes, characters and dialogue into a

nuts and bolts of play construction—how and why a scene, character or moment works, how to create dramatic rhythm, an emotional arc. This course aims to give playwrights the essential dramatic tools they need to write (and wright) successful plays.

We will read several books of dramatic theory—such as Eric Bentley’s *The Life of the Drama*—as well as a number of plays by classical and contemporary playwrights. In addition, there will be a number of exercises designed to teach such essential skills as developing exposition, writing dramatic dialogue, building tension, creating character, thinking theatrically, understanding subtext. Students will write one ten-minute play by the end of the semester.

For MFA students and others by permission

781: Special Seminar: Texts of Discovery and Conquest

E4T2A 0365 T 4:30 - 6:20 PM KP/304 Song, E.

This seminar will focus on a select number of texts dealing with the long history of European discovery and expansion. We will cover an enormous range of historical and generic terrain; our texts will include travel writings by Marco Polo, “Sir John Mandeville,” Columbus, and Walter Raleigh; Thomas More’s *Utopia*; Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*; and selections from the epics *Os Lusíadas* and *Paradise Lost*. Our course will conclude with a unit on the transatlantic slave trade of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; the final primary text in the class, the purported autobiography of Olaudah Equiano, tells the story of a young African boy abducted and sold into slavery. Our readings of the primary texts will be supplemented by a selection of critical works. Assignments will include an oral presentation, a short essay, and a seminar paper at the end of the semester.

781: Shakespeare, Nature, and the Supernatural

E6M2A 0366 M 6:30 - 8:20 PM RA/208 Abeles, J.

The relationship between Nature and what lays beyond it has been one of constant negotiation, discovery, and re-definition. In order to identify supernatural entities and events, one must know where the boundaries of nature lay, and these can be difficult to locate with precision, even harder to agree on. In this course, we will investigate into the discourses of the Renaissance--theological, philosophical, and scientific--engaged in this enterprise, as well as observe how these discourses appear in a selection of Shakespeare's plays. We will likely be reading *_A Midsummer Night's Dream_*, *Hamlet_*, and *_A Winter's Tale_*, and I encourage students to come by my office hours on Monday afternoons to discuss other potential texts for the course.

781: The Nymph Talks Back

E6W2A 3126 W 6:30 - 8:20 PM KP/708 Hahn, K.

No sooner does one writer compose, than another responds, in a literary call-and-response. The most famous example in the Western canon is Marlowe’s “*The Passionate Shepherd to His Love*” and Raleigh’s “*The Nymph’s Reply to the Shepherd*.” And other writers continued to moved to add their own versions. In a collection of such responses, “the poems argue with, update, elaborate upon, mock, parody or pay tribute to their originals.” This course will use *Conversation Pieces* and explore these variations.

Each student will make a presentation, write a midterm essay, as well as respond to a favorite poem. We will also examine how editors fashion anthologies and hear from a guest editor. As a final project, students can write a second paper, create a short anthology, or write a sequence of poems responding to published

Text: Kurt Brown and Harold Schechter, eds. Conversation Pieces: poems that talk to other poems (Knopf, Everyman's Library, 2007)

*MA creative writing students may take this for workshop credit. They will need to meet in conference with Prof. Hahn and fulfill all the creative writing assignments rather than the two-paper option.

781: Street Kids: New York City in Children's Literature

E6R2A 0199 TH 6:30 - 8:20 PM KY/244 Schanoes, V.

Some parents move out to the suburbs as soon as their children are old enough to toddle, but what about those of us whose parents couldn't or wouldn't leave? New York City has inspired some of the greatest literature of all time, and children's literature is no exception! In this class, we'll read picture books as well as chapter books geared toward children in order to gain a complex understanding of the relationship between the city and its youngest dwellers. We'll read books about children from families both rich and poor from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present day, and we'll consider the opportunities, dangers, and adventures the city has to offer. We'll use historical readings to supplement our knowledge of the city, and visit sites and landmarks of importance. All along we'll be considering the following questions: what does it mean to be a New York child? What do children need to know in order to survive and thrive in the city? how does New York look to a child? Texts may include: Roller Skates, All-of-a-Kind Family, From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler, Freaky Friday, The Bronze King, Changeling, Harriet the Spy, The Pushcart War, Eloise, and Crooklyn.

791: Thesis Course

Z 0189 ** Hours to be announced ** Schaffer, T.

792: Thesis Workshop

Z 0190 ** Hours to be announced ** Schaffer, T.

795: Independent Study

Z 0191 ** Hours to be announced ** Schaffer, T.