

Spring 2026 Course Descriptions
Updated 10.14.25

Undergraduate

ENLS 2000-02: Literary Investigations

Adam Mckeown
TR 3:30pm-4:45pm

ENLS 2000-03: Literary Investigations

Cheryl Narumi Naruse
TR 11am-12:15pm

ENLS 2010-02: British Literature I

Michael Kuczynski
TR 11am-12:15pm

This course will explore the development of British Literature from its origins, during the Old English period (700-1000) through the eighteenth century. We will survey the predominant genres of writing, such as epic and satire, by way of major texts and the relationships between these. We will also explore the cultural background to the Middle Ages, the Early Modern Period (previously called by scholars the Renaissance), and the Eighteenth Century, especially the visual arts and music. In all, we will read about ten major texts (some shorter and others longer) and consider other texts adjacent to these. Assignments: short in-class papers and a final exam.

ENLS 2030-01: Intro to American Literature

Katherine Adams
MWF 1pm-1:50pm

ENLS 2150-01: Intro Fiction: Race & Inclusion

Nghana Lewis
MWF 8am-8:50am

This course introduces students to modes of writing and analyzing fiction through close readings of works by well- and less(er)-known 20th and 21st century American writers, including Zora Neale Hurston, Langston Hughes, Richard Wright, Ralph Ellison, Alice Childress, James Baldwin, Dorothy West, Toni Cade Bambara, Colson Whitehead, and N.K. Jemisin. Assignments include responses and a final essay.

ENLS 2230-01: Introduction to Shakespeare

Scott Oldenburg
MWF 2pm-2:50pm

How do we read plays like *Hamlet* or *The Winter's Tale* in terms of Renaissance culture? What happens to these plays when read or performed in a contemporary context? How does adaptation to a new medium-- the graphic novel or film--affect how we read these plays? In this introduction to Shakespeare studies, we will read several texts by Shakespeare including *Hamlet*, *1 Henry IV*, and the sonnets. We'll practice close reading of the plays aiming at the

innerworkings of gender, race, and class and the politics of the 16th and 17th centuries as well as contemporary politics. Assignments include several papers and a video performance.

Satisfies the literature before 1800 requirement in the English major.

ENLS 3010-01: Thinking with Poems

Michelle Kohler

TR 2pm-3:15pm

This course is an introduction to reading poetry. We will consider in particular how poems think, how we think about poems, and how we might think *with* poems. When we encounter the cognitive discomfort of reading lines we don't fully understand, how can we work within the discomfort rather than trying to undo it? How can we work with poems without flattening their strangeness? We'll experience and learn to play with the strange and special kinds of thinking processes built into the structure of metaphor; of poetic sounds, rhythms, and shapes; and poetry's difficult compression, disjunction, repetitions, patterns, and anomalies. We will look together at the ways poems puzzle through the most profound problems and questions, how they try to think in unfamiliar ways about concepts that resist logical or empirical understanding—grief, racial violence, death, environmental devastation, joy, afterlives, etc.

Texts will likely include Kiki Petrosino's collection *White Blood: A Lyric of Virginia*; sonnets by Claude McKay, Gwendolyn Brooks, Terrance Hayes, Patricia Smith, and others; and poems by various poets, including Jericho Brown, Eduardo C. Corral, Sylvia Plath, Sonia Sanchez, Diane Seuss, John Yau, Linda Gregg, Zeina Hashem Beck, Harryette Mullen, Evie Shockley, Tracy K. Smith, Danez Smith, Donika Kelly, Franny Choi, and others.

No prior coursework or experience with poetry is necessary. We'll devote the semester's early weeks to learning how to read and work with poems, including where they are most difficult or cryptic.

ENLS 3610-01: Introduction to Creative Writing

Zachary Lazar

R 12:30pm-3pm

ENLS 3610-02: Introduction to Creative Writing

Thomas Beller

W 3pm-5:30pm

English 3610 is a workshop course in creative writing. We will be reading and writing fiction, creative non-fiction, and poetry. Classes are primarily devoted to roundtable discussion of both outside reading and student work. Class participation is essential to the workshop process. Close reading, in which we note structure, style, tone, and the development of individual voice and point of view, will be the hallmark of the class.

The reading list may include work by J.D. Salinger, Lois Gluck, David Berman, Z.Z. Packer, Ann Beattie, Robert Stone, Meghan Daum, Mary Gaitskill, David Foster Wallace, Mary McCarthy, and Jhumpa Lahiri.

ENLS 3610-03: Introduction to Creative Writing

TBA

M 3pm-5:30pm

ENLS 3610-04: Introduction to Creative Writing

TBA

TR 9:30am-10:45am

ENLS 3610-05: Introduction to Creative Writing

Karisma Price

T 12:30pm-3pm

This course is designed to give students an introduction to creative writing through weekly readings, assignments, class discussions, and a safe space that allows students to produce their own pieces of creative writing and submit to workshop. This course will primarily focus on contemporary poetry and fiction while also exposing students to hybrid genre texts to show the wide variety of writing that is a part of both the literary and cross-genre fields.

ENLS 3630-01/02: Film, History and Writing

MWF 9am-9:50am

MWF 10am-10:50am

Elad Wexler

This course explores the art of writing about cinema, with a particular focus on the intersection between film and history. Its primary goal is to equip students with the tools and methods necessary to craft thoughtful, analytical essays on cinema.

While students are encouraged to engage with a variety of theoretical approaches to film, the course places special emphasis on writing about cinema in historical context. We will examine how films shape collective memory, reflect the historical periods in which they were made, and contribute to public understandings of the past.

Through close analysis of selected films and critical texts, students will develop a deeper understanding of the relationship between cinema and history. At the same time, they will refine their academic writing skills, gaining experience in crafting clear, persuasive, and well-structured film analyses.

Students will complete a series of writing assignments throughout the semester, culminating in a final essay that demonstrates their ability to critically engage with cinema through historical and theoretical lenses.

By the end of the course, students will have gained not only a stronger grasp of film as a cultural and historical artifact, but also the confidence and ability to write about cinema in an informed, nuanced, and compelling way.

ENLS 3650-01: Persuasive Writing

Matthew P. Smith

TR 8am-9:15am

We rarely find the words *virtue* and *New Orleans* written next to each other. Given how often popular culture associates our city with a hedonistic vision of “the good life,” we’re accustomed to stereotypes of New Orleans as a space of vice and excess rather than an exemplar of virtue and moderation. This course, however, offers a rare pairing – a deep engagement with the city of

New Orleans and a sustained philosophical consideration of what it means to think, speak, and act in accordance with virtue. We'll convene for seminar classes here at Tulane during which we'll discuss how Plato, Aristotle, Quintilian, and Seneca the Younger grappled with the nature of wisdom, right action, and proper speech. We'll study contemporary work by Tania Mitchell and bell hooks on race, education, and the extent to which service learning is (or isn't) a productive or ethical pedagogical practice. Then, a few weeks into the semester, you'll begin coaching New Orleans middle-school students in the art of speech and debate – taking what you've discussed in the seminar room and applying it to your on-the-ground experience as an educator. Ideally, theory and praxis will mutually inform one another: (1) your readings of Aristotle & co. will shape the ways you think about your work coaching debate and (2) your work coaching debate will influence how you interpret (and reinterpret) ancient rhetoric and philosophy about what constitutes a good or virtuous life.

ENLS 3650-02: Persuasive Writing

Ryan McBride

TR 9:30am-10:45am

ENLS 4010-01: Victorian Hauntings

Thomas Albrecht

MWF 9am-9:50am

In this course, we will read some great Victorian ghost stories and some great Victorian stories about haunted narrators and characters. The course is not designed to be a genre course, a literary-historical or narratological study of the ghost story genre as such. Rather, it examines how during the Victorian period (1837-1901), British, European, and American writers use the idea of ghosts or hauntings, and the literary conventions of the ghost story genre, to reflect on a broad range of important topics. Those topics are existential and psychological, sexual and erotic, racial and colonial, literary and aesthetic, philosophical and ethical, economic and materialist, social and political, spiritual and religious, historical and genealogical. In looking at these diverse topics as they are evoked in the ghost stories we read, we will not only be appreciating these stories for their compelling mystery and uncanniness, but also be attempting to *interpret* the spirits that haunt them.

Authors we will read include Edgar Allan Poe, Emily Brontë, Charles Dickens, Henry James, Oscar Wilde, Violet Paget (“Vernon Lee”), George Eliot, Theodor Storm, Robert Louis Stevenson, Guy de Maupassant, Walter Pater, Sigmund Freud, and Bram Stoker. This course fulfills Newcomb-Tulane College’s Requirement in Textual & Historical Perspectives.

ENLS 4012-01: Literature and Revolution

Kathryn Baldwin

R 3:30pm-5:55pm

ENLS 4013-01: Hot Wars in Asia

Cheryl Narumi Naruse

TR 9:30am-10:45am

ENLS 4030-01: Literary New Orleans

T.R. Johnson

MW 6pm-7:15pm

New Orleans is among the most storied cities in the world. Over the course of the semester, we will survey the ways – through novels, short stories, memoirs, poetry, plays, movies and music - it has come to occupy its singular place in the human imagination. The course will be divided into three units. The first will explore the dynamics between Creoles and Americans from roughly the Louisiana Purchase of 1803 to the dawn of the 20th century; the second unit will explore the dynamics of music and memory through the first half of the 20th century; and the final unit will take up questions of “politricks” in the 1960s, the Katrina era, and the contemporary literary scene. At the end of each unit, students must either write a five-page paper or take an exam, and are free to choose which, as long as they take two exams and write one paper. Students must also serve five times as a Discussion Leader.

ENLS 4390-01: Literature of the 1830s

Edward White

TR 2pm-3:15pm

This course offers an introduction to the literature and culture of the 1830s. In the early 30s, the British abolished slavery in their territories and the US abolition movement achieved a level of organization and mobilization not yet seen. A pro-slavery backlash to the so-called Nat Turner insurrection (1831) worsened the harsh conditions of chattel slavery. The US government, under the Jackson administration, democratized politics for white men, while undertaking a massive removal program against Native Americans (what we today call the Trail of Tears).

All of these movements led to a sharper focus on race in US discourse, evident in many of the decade's publications, including: a powerful new wave of fugitive slave narratives; significant early stories by Edgar Allen Poe, Catharine Maria Sedgwick, and Nathaniel Hawthorne; a major autobiography by the Sauk leader Black Hawk; important Transcendentalist essays by Emerson and others; new genres of popular humor and song; literature celebrating western expansion and frontiersman (e.g. Davy Crockett); and what became known as “Fireside Poetry.”

We'll explore the conflicting, racially-charged works of the 1830s from Nat Turner (1831) to the Amistad uprising (1839), thinking about the long-term legacy of the 1830s.

ENLS 4490-01: Early Major Authors *BLAKE AND THE MIDDLE AGES*

Michael Kuczynski

TR 12:30pm-1:45pm

This course will explore the influence of medieval art, literature, and ideas on the visionary poet and artist William Blake (1757-1827). Among these influences, we will consider physical monuments (for example, Stonehenge and the tomb sculptures in Westminster Abbey), medieval manuscripts (for example, Books of Hours and the famous Ellesmere manuscript of the *Canterbury Tales*, which Blake might have seen), incunables (early printed books), the Bible (especially its prophetic books and the Book of Job, which Blake illustrated toward the end of his life), and the poetry of Chaucer and Dante. We will be especially concerned with Blake's concept of the “Gothic” in its development and application, both in his writings and pictures. Students will also have the opportunity to have hands-on experiences of Blake's engraving, etching, and other painting and print techniques. All biblical and medieval texts will be read in modern English translation. Assignments: short in-class papers and a final exam.

ENLS 4620-01: Adv. Poetry Writing Workshop

Karisma Price

R 3pm-5:30pm

This workshop is designed for students who'd like to sharpen their poetry writing skills. This class will focus on the production and revision of original works of poetry and special emphasis will be placed on developing students' personal voice and style.

In addition to workshopping, students will spend parts of class discussing assigned reading materials and participating in writing exercises to get in the habit of writing more frequently and learning how to better incorporate craft and figurative language in their work. By the end of the semester, students should expect to write enough poems to produce a final portfolio that is representative of their revision skills

ENLS 4660-01: The Personal Essay

Thomas Beller

W 12pm-2:30pm

This writing workshop will explore the personal essay. We will read examples of the form as well as the adjacent forms of the short story, memoir, and novel in the cause of insight into ways of telling stories from life. The workshop will offer the chance for a writer who wants to draw on their personal history, experience, imagination, and reportage. The reading list will include contemporary authors such as Philip Lopate, Vivian Gornick, Stephen Crane, Said Sayafiezadeh, Jonathan Ames, Mary McCarthy, Zadie Smith, Edmund White, and Jesmyn Ward. Close reading will be the central practice of this course. Class time will be divided between discussion of the assigned reading and a writing workshop.

ENLS 4854-01: The History of Cool

Joel Dinerstein

TR 2pm-3:15pm

Cool is one of America's most influential exports within globalization -- as a concept, an aesthetic, and a password of rebellion. The modern usage of "cool" starts after World War II, as manifested in Black culture and Black culture, Beat literature and popular music, celebrity and sports, style (fashion) and drug use. We will explore five generations' worth of cool in youth culture, Black culture, and consumer culture, as well as its commodification through marketing, advertising and cultural appropriation. Major texts include the following: Patti Smith, *Just Kids*; Jay-Z, *Decoded*; Tom Wolfe, *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*; Jack Kerouac, *On the Road*; Joel Dinerstein, *The Origins of Cool in Postwar America*; Thomas Frank, *The Conquest of Cool*. Films include *Pulp Fiction*, *Heathers*, and *Casablanca*.

ENLS 5010-01: Capstone Seminars

Katherine Adams

W 3pm-5:30pm

ENLS 5010-02: The Graveyard Poets

Melissa Bailes

F 3pm-5:30pm

The Graveyard Poets of 18th-century Britain wrote meditations on mortality—often set in a churchyard—that could be, by turns, darkly profound, full of horror or terror at the supernatural,

deeply devotional, sentimental, and even campy and humorous. These poets were immensely popular and important forerunners of the Romantic period, and a major influence on the development of the Gothic novel. Their contemplations of death also bring insights about the meanings of life, and its possible physical and metaphysical continuances. Since New Orleans is a beautiful setting for such haunting explorations, we also will spend at least one class session in one of this city's historic cemeteries to learn about its past and soak in the ambiance while enjoying these poets' writings. Course assignments may include weekly responses, oral presentations, as well as midterm and final research papers. This course fulfills the Pre-1800 Requirement for English Minors and Majors.

English 5010-03: Psychoanalysis, Literature and Writing

T.R. Johnson

M 3pm-5:30pm

This seminar will acquaint students with a fund of psychoanalytic thought and the ways it can illuminate the writing process and the domain of the literary. We will come to know some of Freud's most important ideas, and we will also engage key texts by some of his most powerful descendants: Christopher Bollas, Helene Cixous, Catherine Clement, Shoshana Felman, Bruce Fink, Jacques Lacan, Jacques-Alain Miller, Adam Phillips, Colette Solers, D. W. Winnicott and Slavoj Zizek, among others. Many weeks, we will consider some literary or cinematic work that can illustrate these ideas. And we will connect these ideas, every step of the way, to questions about writing, particularly literary writing: its mysterious origins, its therapeutic value, its intermittent compulsion or prohibition, its centrality to notions of the mad, the body, and the feminine, the ways it is learned and the ways, through it, we can teach ourselves to look its opposite – in a quite precise sense -- in the eye. Students will produce two shorter papers of five pages each, serve on five separate days as one of the seminar's discussion leaders, develop an annotated bibliography, and then use all of this work as the basis for creating, at the end of the semester, a long paper of fifteen pages.

English 5010-04: James Joyces' Ulysses

Karen Zumhagen-Yekplé

T 3:30pm-5:55pm

Graduate

ENLS 7090-01: Pro American Lit since 1865

Joel Dinerstein

R 3:30pm-5:55pm

ENLS 7100-01: Pro Modern & Contemporary Lit

Zorimar Rivera-Montes

TR 12:30pm-1:45pm

ENLS 7130-01: Feminist Writing Africa

Z'étoile Imma

T 3:30pm-5:55pm

In this graduate seminar, we will study some of the most critically acclaimed texts within the evolving literary canon of modern and contemporary African feminist writing in English. Traversing various discursive landscapes through African fiction authored by feminist writers will allow us to critically examine Global South-centered formulations of history, experience, subjectivity, and power. Undoubtedly, questions regarding feminism(s), coloniality, gender, sexuality, race, nation, class, modernity, violence, resistance, imperialism, and decolonization will arise. Informed by various theories, we will grapple with and attempt to trace a few of the central debates that reproduce these terms. Specifically, we will examine how feminists from Africa write the postcolonial as a gendered experience, study various perspectives on African feminisms, and learn to recognize significant themes that appear intertextually. As we focus on fiction as the primary genre of our study, we will reflect on how African feminist novelists, short-story writers, and filmmakers employ form and aesthetics to convey their political and cultural concerns.

ENLS 7450-01: Graveyard Poets

Melissa Bailes

W 3pm-5:30pm

The Graveyard Poets of 18th-century Britain wrote meditations on mortality—often set in a churchyard—that could be, by turns, darkly profound, full of horror or terror at the supernatural, deeply devotional, sentimental, and even campy and humorous. These poets were immensely popular and important forerunners of the Romantic period, and a major influence on the development of the Gothic novel. Their contemplations of death also bring insights about the meanings of life, and its possible physical and metaphysical continuances. Since New Orleans is a beautiful setting for such haunting explorations, we also will spend at least one class session in one of this city's historic cemeteries to learn about its past and soak in the ambiance while enjoying these poets' writings. Course assignments may include weekly responses, oral presentations, as well as midterm and final research papers.

ENLS 7090-01: Proseminar: Whiteness and Race in American Literature

Here's a key fact about race that is kept well-hidden: no person identified as white before the late 1600s. It was during the slave trade that Europeans first created the modern racial schema of skin color through laws of exclusion. Starting in the Harlem Renaissance, American authors began to challenge the political and psychological oppression of white supremacy and all claims of racial

difference. What was the basis for white supremacy and white privilege? We will read theories of whiteness and racial formation to guide us through stories and novels that illuminate race as a concept that is much more political and ideological than biological or scientific.

Major works include: Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark* and Robin D'Angelo, *White Fragility* (theories of whiteness); James Weldon Johnson, *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* and Nella Larsen, *Passing*; William Faulkner, *Light in August* Chester Himes, *If He Hollers Let Him Go* and Danzy Senna, *Caucasia*; George Schuyler, *Black No More* and Philip Roth, *The Human Stain*; short stories by James Baldwin, Ann Petry, Ralph Ellison and Herman Melville.

ENLS 7890-01: Fundamentals of Literary Theory

Scott Oldenburg

M 3pm-5:30pm

This course is required for the English M.A. degree. We will survey the major approaches to literary texts from early 20th century formalism/New Criticism, Marxism, and Psychoanalysis to later Feminism and Queer Theory and more recent developments like Afro-pessimism, Disability Studies, Ecocriticism, and Postcritique. The goal will be to develop a flexible sense of the critical moves we can make as readers and writers. Moreover, each theory necessarily shapes how we understand texts, culture, and politics, so we will also examine how different approaches fit with our individual and collective commitments as readers and writers.