

**English Graduate Course Descriptions
Spring 2022**

ENGL 5029: British Literature & Culture Before 1800

The Queer Renaissance

Dianne Mitchell

This course turns to sixteenth and seventeenth century England as a site of intimate imaginings. In the first part of the class, we'll explore how Renaissance lyrics, plays (Hamlet and The Tragedy of Mariam), account books, diaries, and material objects described and theorized intimacies among family members, friends, and households - as well as between humans and the plants or objects around them. In the second part of the class, we'll try out intimacy as a critical method. Together we'll explore a range of contemporary writings (essays, blogs, digital editions, podcasts) that invite us to get close and personal with the past. Inspired by these approaches, you'll execute an intimate project of your own design.

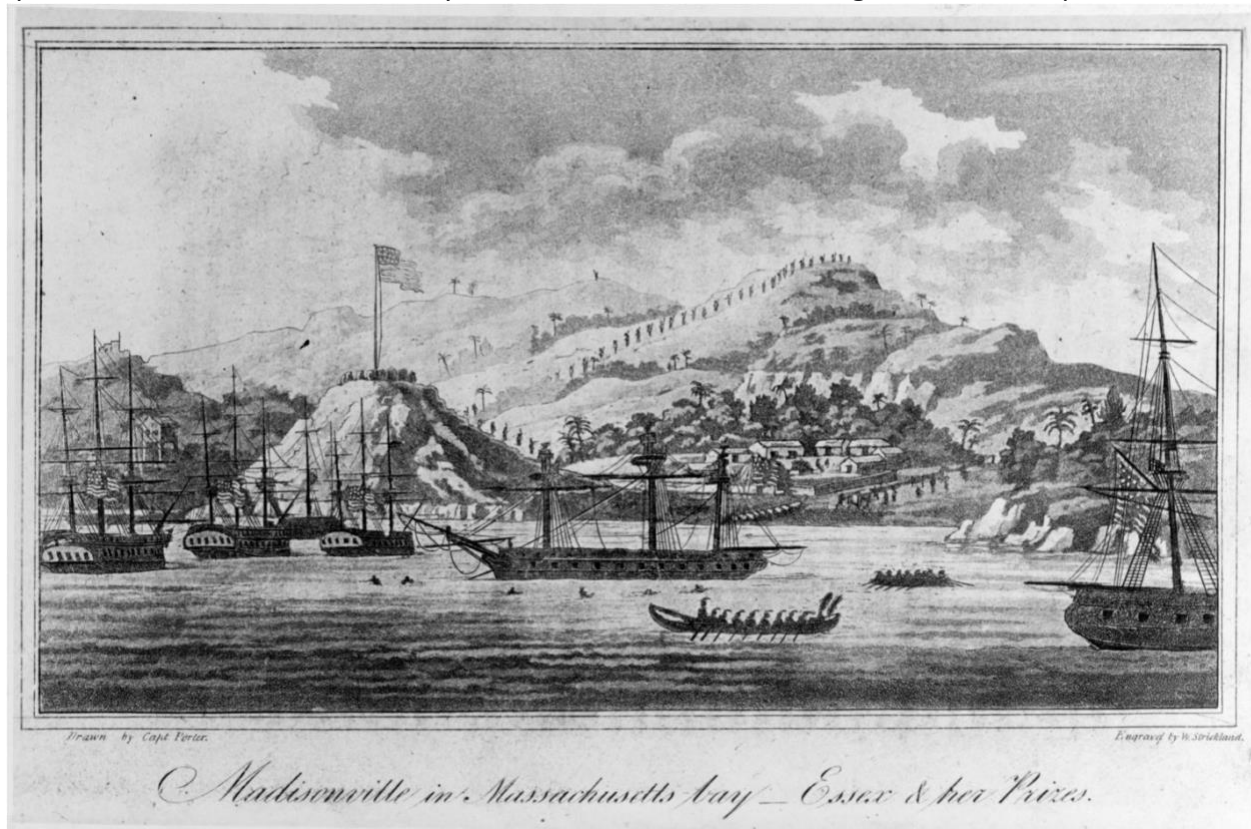


ENGL 5109: Literature & Culture of the United States

Americans at Sea

Maria Windell

War. Piracy. Slave Revolt. Smuggling. When those from the early US went to sea, adventure often followed. During the early years of the republic, the high seas made evident the US's vulnerability as a new nation—it lacked the military strength and naval resources to protect US merchants and travelers. At the same time, the sea novel was a key element in the development of a national literary tradition (“invented” by none other than James Fenimore Cooper). Yet both the seas and writings set at sea created myriad opportunities for those who challenged the nation: rebelling slaves, smugglers, and pirates, among others. The class will begin with canonical sea writings by Cooper and Melville before turning to less familiar narratives of shipboard slave revolt, cross-dressing at sea, and piracy, all while traveling through both the Atlantic and the Pacific. We will end the semester with a contemporary novel, Steven C. Dunn's *Water and Power*, which draws into the present many of the questions our nineteenth-century texts ask about nation, race, gender, and empire.



ENGL 5169: Multicultural/Postcolonial Studies
Race and Environment
Laura Winkiel

Tiffany Lethabo King writes that, “To become or ‘ascend’ to Whiteness is to enact a self—or self-actualize—in a way that requires the death of others. [. . .] The brutal violence required to distinguish the human conquistador from the Black and Indian continues into the current moment.” This course is devoted to exploring this statement and to tracing how non-white peoples have fought back against this structure of life and death. This racial biopolitics includes geographies of environmental toxicity and precarity, incarceration, poverty, and violence. We begin with the fact that forced migrants of African descent as well as Native Americans were never considered full persons under the law. Their exclusion from liberal subjectivity is a starting point from which to explore how these “nonpersons” created a poetics of relation with the environments in which they found themselves. We will use literature to provide counter-histories and aesthetics as resources for rethinking planetary futures. To do this, we’ll be spending some time reading about and exploring the politics of the archive. What do they reveal and what do they erase? How can we read against the grain of official history? How can we attend to overlooked archives following the lead of the imaginative work of literary texts? These overlooked or counter-archives might take the shape of music, film, art, pop culture, and ephemera.

Novels may include: Teju Cole "Open City," Erna Brodber "Louisiana," Zora Neale Hurston "Their Eyes Were Watching God," M. NourbeSe Philip "Zong!" and Jesmyn Ward "Salvage the Bones."

Students will be expected to participate actively in class, including presenting on a reading on the course syllabus and on an archive. There is a 10 page mid-term paper and a final research paper/project that students will develop in stages over the course of the term, with time in class devoted to workshopping work in progress.

Students from outside of English who would like to enroll in this class should email gsengl@colorado.edu with the request and their student ID number.



ENGL 5459: Introduction to the Profession

John Stevenson

Introduces purposes, methods and techniques of professional scholarship in English. Provides an overview of the discipline, including traditional areas of research and recent developments. Teaches students how to use research, bibliographic, and reference tools to prepare papers for conferences and publication.

ENGL 5529: Studies in Special Topics 1

Teaching English

Teresa Nugent

* This seminar will be taught in conjunction with two classes of ENGL 1001: Reading, Writing, Culture: one in-person and one online class. Graduate students are required to attend the undergraduate class (MWF 9:05-9:55) and the graduate seminar (MWF, 10:10-11am), and they will participate in the online, asynchronous class that will run from Feb. 14 – Apr 28.

Course Overview:

This course conjoins pedagogical theory and practice. We will review foundational theoretical approaches to instructional practice and study current research on cognition and learning. Our discussions on pedagogy will guide our instructional methods and design of assignments and assessments, and we will practice, reflect, and evaluate teaching methods throughout the semester as we work with undergraduate students in both in-person and online classes.

How do we create engaging and academically challenging learning experiences for students in each of these modalities? What are we teaching, how are we teaching, and why? How might we teach differently? How do we assess what our students are learning? What are the implications of our curriculum and assessment design choices? We will explore answers to these questions, examine how educational institutions and technologies influence pedagogy, and weigh the benefits and weaknesses of specific learning environments, tools, and practices.

Course requirements:

Each student will develop a teaching portfolio, which will include or be informed by the following assignments:

1. Actively engage in undergraduate classes and seminar discussions (10%)
2. Create, facilitate, and reflect on two teaching lessons, one in each section of 1001 (20%)
3. Lead discussion on two pedagogy articles (5%)
4. Contribute to Collaborative Annotated Bibliography (10%)
5. Literature Review of scholarship on pedagogy (15%)
6. Teaching Portfolio, including teaching philosophy statement, syllabus and rationale, c.v., sample lesson (40%)



**ENGL 7119: Advanced Literature & Culture of the United States
Towards a New Humanism: The American University in Dark Times**

Karim Mattar

What should a humanities curriculum for the 21st century look like? In its latest manifestation, the perennial “crisis” of the humanities might be summed up as one of legitimacy. Exacerbated by the pandemic, the perception – not entirely inaccurate – among students and their families that humanities degrees offer no clear through-line towards realistic career opportunities and are thus disconnected from social reality comprises perhaps the single greatest threat that we are facing. Directly or indirectly, and with our universities deprived of adequate state support, it has contributed to a generational decline in enrollments in our programs, the collapse of the academic job market, the administrative push towards adjunct as opposed to tenure-track labor, the shrinking and even elimination of our graduate programs, and in some instances, the closure of our departments in their entirety. This circumstance strikes me as profoundly ironic, as in our present context of seemingly insurmountable social antagonism, the humanities and the values of reason, dialogue, negotiation, compromise, and empathy – of critical, creative thinking and engagement – that they might impart to our crumbling democracy seem to me more important than ever before. A fundamental reconfiguration of the values, institutions, and practices of the humanities has become somewhat akin to an existential imperative, and not just for us.

This course seeks to develop a positive vision of the humanities for the 21st century. It is structured in three units, “Values,” “Institutions,” and “Practices.” In Unit One, we trace a genealogy of humanist reason from the Enlightenment to the present. Attentive to the imbrication of the concepts of “the human” and “reason” themselves with the project of colonial modernity, we weigh their pivotal role in shaping modern liberalism against the critiques levelled by “post-” and “trans-humanists.” How, we ask, might the values of humanist reason help guide us through current debates on our campuses and in our society at large about free speech, cancel culture and deplatforming, systemic inequality, political difference, and civil discourse? In Unit Two, we trace the evolution of the modern American research university from Daniel Coit Gilman’s appointment as President of Johns Hopkins in 1875 to the present. We look into how his adoption of the Wissenschaftsmodel of disciplinary organization contributed to the instrumentalization of humanist reason for modern political economy, and so helped lay the groundwork for the corporatization of the humanities and of higher education more generally in recent years. Against Gilman, we read Max Horkheimer’s inaugural address as Director of the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research for its model of a dialectical, interdisciplinary research program oriented around pressing real-world issues. In Unit Three, we build a new humanities curriculum. Following Horkheimer, we collectively identify five transdisciplinary nodes of immediate social relevance around which the humanities might be restructured. Then in working groups we design and briefly describe a series of courses for each. Based on the values of humanist reason, attentive to the institutional settings of the humanities, and attuned to the crises of our time, these courses and the curriculum they embody are intended to channel the wealth

of knowledge and expertise currently distributed across artificial disciplinary boundaries towards a new project of collective human – and planetary – emancipation.

Throughout the semester, our discussions and exercises draw on CU Boulder as a microcosm of broader national trends pertaining to higher education. Our new humanities curriculum is pitched in relation to the “Common Curriculum” currently being drafted by the university’s Academic Futures team. Our engagement with questions of campus politics across the nation is informed by current debates, controversies, and initiatives at our home institution. As we proceed, this local emphasis will be supplemented by key secondary readings on the state of the humanities from the emergent field of Critical University Studies. Authors might include: Thelin, Graff, Giroux, Chaterjee & Maira, Abraham, Davidson, Fitzpatrick, Cassuto & Weisbuch, Wellmon, Reitter, Hayot, Chow, Ahmed, Mufti, Haidt & Lukanioff, Felski, Pluckrose & Lindsay, Brooks.

Assignments include: a weekly mini-presentation on the readings; an essay on “Values”; an essay on “Institutions”; in working groups, an annotated curriculum for the group’s selected new humanities node; a final writing project (tbd); and regular contributions to a class blog.

This course is open to graduate students from all humanities departments.

**ENGL 7489: Advanced Special Topics
Interdisciplinary Colloquium
Tiffany Beechy**

This course is for PhD students (and possibly MA students writing theses) in the humanities who are working on writing projects. The course involves reading in one another's fields and reading and critiquing one another's work. Projects range from dissertation chapters to articles to conference papers.



**ENGL 5229: Poetry Workshop
Vi Khi Nao**

This is a graduate poetry workshop. In this course, we will read and explore the work of T'ai Freedom Ford, Sawako Nakayasu, Sarah Ruhl, Jackie Wang, and other poets of unreasonably piquant literary palette. We will use the play form to embrace, emulate, edit and produce

exciting, innovative, and captivatingly sonic poetic material for obsolescence and recreational posterity. We will build our very own literary ice sculptures in the high desert.

ENGL 5239: Fiction Workshop

Elisabeth Sheffield

The primary activity in this class will be the reading and discussion of student work, in a workshop format. The workshop will be “craft-driven,” which means we will try to regard each other’s work with writerly eyes, looking at the “how” as rigorously as the “what.” In order to keep the workshop from becoming too hermetic, we will also examine several recently published innovative novels and story collections, again with strong attention to craft and form. I will emphasize technique and knowledge of form in this class partly because it is difficult to be original without them—to play with form you need to know it, to recognize its possibilities. There are many ways to tell a story and it is my hope we will explore some of the more interesting ones this next semester.

ENGL 5279: Studies in Poetry

Contemporary Vietnamese Poets

Vi Khi Nao

This is a literature course for poets. In this course, we will read, discuss, explore, and consider the work of the collective from She Who Has No Master(s) —poets such as Dao Strom, Diana Khoi Nguyen, Barbara Tran, Cathy Linh Che, Jessica Q Stark, Hoa Nguyen, Lan Duong, etc. The collective is composed of Vietnamese and Vietnamese diasporic women, gender-fluid poets/writers whose work are often genre-defying and coetaneous.

ENGL 5299: Studies in Fiction

Found-Footage Fiction

Stephen Graham Jones

MFA students only. This is an exploration and investigation into the techniques and methods and sleight-of-hand writers use to fake that their fiction is non-fiction. How do stories and novels get us to believe not in their reality, but that they're actually, verifiably, "real?" Expect to write your own found-footage fiction.