ENGLISH AND CREATIVE WRITING

Department Chair: Jessica Harkins

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The department of English and Creative Writing offers traditional and innovative courses to meet the needs of both liberal arts and pre-professional students. We offer three distinct Major pathways, allowing students to choose between concentrations in Literature, Creative Writing, and Education. Our program prepares majors for a wide range of careers and for further study of literature and the literary arts. We also work closely with the education department to help English majors with education minors meet state licensing requirements. The department encourages students to participate in a wide range of enriching, supplemental opportunities including the college's International Studies Programs, independent studies abroad, internships, clinical experiences (for Pre-Health Majors), journalism, editorial training, volunteerism, and more.

By studying literature in English, students gain insight into experiences and ways of thinking and feeling different from their own. As a result, they perceive the shared humanity of people and the differences determined by such circumstances as gender, race, and class. These insights foster cooperation and community, both in the classroom and in the larger world.

By studying creating writing, students gain fundamental writing skills in multiple literary genres (including poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, screenwriting) and learn to read widely and deeply. By working with practicing writers, both faculty and visiting writers brought to campus through our Literary Arts Institute, students learn to write with sustained feedback and inspiration. As a result, they gain insight into and confidence in joining the diverse world of contemporary writing.

The English and Creative Writing Department teaches students to read thoughtfully and perceptively, to listen carefully, to analyze critically, and to express their ideas logically, clearly, and precisely. Through exposure to theoretical and critical debates, students learn various ways of interpreting and analyzing literature. By exploring literature, film and other forms of discourse, students develop an understanding of the growing and rapidly changing world of contemporary English studies. Courses include excellent writers who have been excluded from the literary mainstream in addition to traditionally respected British and American authors.

Through analytical and creative writing, students practice a variety of literary forms and develop their own talent. Through reading, writing, and discussing, students discover the values inherent in literary works and the theories which shape our interpretation of them. Students also come to a clearer and deeper awareness of their own values as they develop an individual voice to express them.

Assessment

The English Department conducts regular assessment of student learning in the major. Methods of assessment include: a yearly analysis of student sample essays.

Major

The English department offers concentrations in literature, creative writing, and English communication arts/literature for 5-12 education.

Majors

- English Major (https://catalog.csbsju.edu/catalog/academic-departments/english/english-major/)
- English Major with a Concentration in Creative Writing (https://catalog.csbsju.edu/catalog/academic-departments/english/english-major-concentration-creative-writing/)

Minors

- English Minor (https://catalog.csbsju.edu/catalog/academic-departments/english/english-minor/)
- Narrative Practice Minor (https://catalog.csbsju.edu/catalog/academic-departments/english/narrative-practice-minor/)
- Writing Minor (https://catalog.csbsju.edu/catalog/academic-departments/english/writing-minor/)

ENGL 101A Introduction to Reading literature: The Hero's Trek: An Expedition Through Literature (4 Credits)
Heroes are easy to find in REALLY good books, right? However, have you ever wondered what makes those heroes "heroic"? What makes heroic characters relatable and unreachable at the same time? Can villains be heroic? Can heroes be bad? Throughout your semester-long literary expedition, we'll look at MANY types of heroic characters—some characters you might like and some you won't; some you can relate to and some you can't. We'll begin our expedition by creating a literary guide and a literary roadmap in order to figure-out how to effectively identify heroic characters. As we navigate through myriad literary worlds, the following is a list of "heroes" we'll likely bump-into (not in any particular order): Gilgamesh, Lisbeth Salander, Guinevere, Esther, Aragorn, Odysseus, Aeneas, Laura Ingalls, Beowulf, Harry Potter, Natty Bumpoo/Hawkeye, Wife of Bath, Dracula, Sherlock Holmes, Lucy Pevensie, Achilles, Katniss Everdeen. Who knows, you might even encounter an Ironman or a Black Widow or a Rick Grimes or an Aladdin or a Xena along the way. Join us as we travel vast literary worlds in search of the sometimes elusive but always interesting literary hero.
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: ENGL 120G
Attributes: Human Experience (HE), Thematic Encounter1/2-Movement

ENGL 101B Introduction to Reading literature: Reading Science and Fiction: From Known to Unknown—& Back Again (4 Credits)
Imagine asking your Smart-device to continue reading Isaac Asimov's book "I, Robot." Imagine attending a history lecture on The Plague. Imagine listening to a speaker on catastrophic climate change and its impact on humans in North America. Imagine having a discussion with a psychology professor or colleague about changing gender roles and expectations. Imagine watching an anti-gravity football game with your teammates. The common link between these "imaginings" is this: Fiction helps discuss science AND science helps inform fiction. In this introduction to reading fiction course, students will have the opportunity to explore intersections between worlds of fiction and worlds of science by reading and discussing works by authors, thinkers, and scholars such as Leonardo DaVinci, George Orwell, HG Wells, Stephen Hawking, Sun Tzu, Marie Curie, Margaret Atwood, Philip K. Dick, Isaac Asimov (among others). Students will have opportunities to seek out places where new life might emerge, to explore strange new (and old) worlds, and to go boldly where they may not have gone before in their reading and collegiate experience.
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: ENGL 120I
Attributes: Human Experience (HE), Thematic Encounter1/2-Movement

ENGL 101C Introduction to Reading literature: Modes of Allegory (4 Credits)
What does literature mean? So often, a story or a poem means more than one thing at the same time: and what they are really all about can seem to elude us. In this course we read poems and stories that clearly mean two things at once. But when is a snake just a snake, and when is it Satan? By reading medieval to contemporary texts, we learn to decipher this form of "double-speaking" otherwise known as "allegory." The works we read for class will often be about shape-shifting characters (such as Pinocchio and Gregor Samsa), while all of the stories themselves will appear to shape-shift before our eyes as they start out about one thing and turn into another. By the end of the course, students attain the skills to read these transformations with confidence and delight. Coursework involves attentive reading, reflective and analytical writing, and rigorous participation in class discussions.
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: ENGL 122G
Attributes: Human Experience (HE)

ENGL 111A Introduction to Narrative Practice: Health (4 Credits)
Introduction to Narrative Practice develops creative-writing skills in service of students' professional pursuits. Applying skills from creative-writing to their future careers allows students to develop their own imaginative lives, explore questions of identity, amplify underrepresented voices in their professional fields, and to develop programming utilizing creative-writing and close-reading to benefit their future colleagues, clients, and patients. This course employs community-based experiential learning to meaningfully connect narrative practices to systems change outside of the classroom. Intended for Health majors. Instructor Permission required.
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: ENGL 111, ENGL 111B
Attributes: CSD: Identity (CI)

ENGL 111B Introduction to Narrative Practice: Business (4 Credits)
Introduction to Narrative Practice develops creative-writing skills in service of students' professional pursuits. Applying skills from creative-writing to their future careers allows students to develop their own imaginative lives, explore questions of identity, amplify underrepresented voices in their professional fields, and to develop programming utilizing creative-writing and close-reading to benefit their future colleagues, clients, and patients. This course employs community-based experiential learning to meaningfully connect narrative practices to systems change outside of the classroom. Intended for Business majors. Permission of instructor required.
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: ENGL 111, ENGL 111A
Attributes: CSD: Identity (CI)

ENGL 122F Modern Irish Literature (4 Credits)
This course will both hone and investigate our literary interpretive practices, focusing on some of the most inventive and influential literature to emerge from Ireland in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. We'll read both past masters and current practitioners of the literary arts (some in translation), including, W.B. Yates, Elizabeth Bowen, James Joyce, Flann O'Brien, Thomas Kinsella, Seamus Heaney, Evan Boland, Medbh McGuckian, Paul Muldoon, and Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill. We will pay particular attention to the way these and other writers imagine(d) their work in conversation with that of their peers, creating and complicating notions of cultural and artistic identity.
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: ENGL 233
Attributes: Human Experience (HE), Thematic Encounter1/2 - Truth

ENGL 124A Cultural and Social Difference - Identity: Narrative Identities (4 Credits)
Women, men, and aliens. This sounds more like a reality tv show than a college class, but in fact, it is a popular culture course that offers students a way to explore their personal identities. Through the critical examination of novels, short stories, and movies, students will be asked to think about their own gendered, racial, and ethnic identities. This discussion-based class will also push students to examine the influence of society and culture on identity.
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: HONR 120E
Attributes: CSD: Identity (CI)

ENGL 124C Cultural and Social Difference - Identity: Nonfiction of Identity (4 Credits)
In this course we will read multiple modern essayists whose work explores ideas of cultural and social difference and identity in our contemporary American culture(s). Writers will include Claudia Rankine, Kao Kalia Yang, Kiese Laymon, and others.
Prerequisites: None
Attributes: CSD: Identity (CI)

ENGL 124D Cultural and Social Difference - Identity: Fiction of Identity (4 Credits)
Years ago, TV cop Joe Friday left a permanent imprint on our nation's sensibility with his signature phrase, "Just the facts, Ma'am." In other words, he was only interested in the truth, the details that really mattered, as he endeavored to solve a case, to figure things out. Fiction, on the other hand, is not dependent upon facts as we generally understand them. (You want talking pigs? Meet Wilbur or Snowball. Ten-year-old wizards? Hello, Harry Potter.) And yet, for those interested in Truth with a capital T, fiction is the best source for questions such as What is Love? Or Loss? How does a mountain FEEL? Who am I? In this course, students will read fiction – specifically short stories from contemporary masters like Jhumpa Lahiri, George Saunders, ZZ Packer, and Jamel Brinkley – in an effort to better understand concepts of gender, race and ethnicity, and culture.
Prerequisites: None
Attributes: CSD: Identity (CI)

ENGL 124E Cultural and Social Difference - Identity: Our Monsters, Our Selves (4 Credits)
Monsters are an integral part of our narrative experience, from childhood ghost stories to contemporary tales of vampires and zombies. We are fascinated with monsters, the creatures that are like us but not us. This course will examine representations of the monstrous in a variety of genres in order to examine identity in the contemporary United States, with a particular focus on race, ethnicity, and gender. We will ask: How do we conceive of the monster and the monstrous? Who decides who (or what) is monstrous and why? And above all, what does the monster reveal or show us about ourselves?
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: HONR 120L
Attributes: CSD: Identity (CI)

ENGL 124F Cultural and Social Difference - Identity: Detecting Identity (4 Credits)
American mystery stories take a hard look not only at the scene of the crime but also at society. By bringing individual lawbreaking to public view, the detective reveals the tension, hypocrisy, and corruption of the surrounding society. This class introduces you to the detective fiction genre. We will focus on how American crime fiction explores and critiques social identities, especially race, ethnicity, and gender. Readings will include a variety of contemporary detective fiction by writers such as Tony Hillerman, Walter Mosley, and Barbara Neely.
Prerequisites: None
Attributes: CSD: Identity (CI)

ENGL 124G Cultural and Social Difference - Identity: Border Crossings (4 Credits)
What narratives do literature and film provide for understanding the complex ways that border crossing affects human identity? This course explores stories about how people are transformed by crossing the United States border; and, how these changes relate directly to their gender, race, and ethnicity (and the way each of those may be perceived and valued in the United States). Through our reading, we will endeavor to better understand social constructions of gender, race, and ethnicity. We will foster awareness of how dominant group features such as whiteness, heterosexuality, and citizenship status interplay with intersectional aspects of identity in meaningful and transformative ways. Together we will endeavor to better understand power dynamics surrounding the constructions and impositions of identity within United States culture.
Prerequisites: None
Attributes: CSD: Identity (CI)

ENGL 124H Cultural and Social Difference - Identity: Tragedy, Passion and Sacrifice (4 Credits)
Bloody murder, illicit sex, martyrdom, guts and gore: This course is a pleasure tour through some of the noisiest transgressions in the Western Literary Canon. After a brief grounding in the patricide and fratricide of Greek theatre, the Bible, and Shakespeare, we'll see what shape these themes take in modern U.S. fiction. Expect Wise Guys and Men in Pink Suits. We'll also consider, occasionally, what happens when women take these matters in hand. Not for weak stomachs.
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: ENGL 120D, HONR 120L
Attributes: CSD: Identity (CI)

ENGL 124I Cultural and Social Difference - Identity: The Recent Invention of White People (4 Credits)
Whiteness as a racial category is a highly variable identity that has not carried the current definition for a long stable stretch of historical time. Rather, Whiteness is an imaginary racial marker that is only activated when it it placed in opposition to other "non-white" classifications for specific political, social, institutional, and emotional investments for those who fall inside or outside the category. This course will interrogate the imaginary uses of "whiteness" in fictional or imaginary films, literature, and essays, to try to determine how such a slippery term has come to dominate our social imaginary for various ends and means. Film screenings will be included in the course, as well as literature and essays, in order to give us room to place a frame around "whiteness" so that it does not seem as natural as we might think it is.
Prerequisites: None
Attributes: CSD: Identity (CI)

ENGL 201A Introduction to English Studies: Games and Fiction (4 Credits)
This course serves as an introduction to studies in English and focuses on the many roles that literature plays in games and gaming. We study the construction of games and play in fictional narratives including novels such as The Hunger Games, graphic novels, short stories, and films. we examine video games ranging from AAAs like The Last of Us to indie titles like Undertale. We discuss the ins and outs of the growing phenomenon of "gamification," game theory, and how the ludic (play) operates in multiple aspects of our daily life. Students receive foundational training in reading and writing about literature as we explore how games are constructed and imagined in different literary worlds, changing concepts of games, and current forms of gameplay in US culture.
Prerequisites: None
Attributes: Human Experience (HE)

ENGL 201B Introduction to English Studies: Robots/AI/Technology and Fiction (4 Credits)
This course serves as an introduction to studies in English and focuses on the critical roles that literature plays in our understanding of robots, AI, and technology more broadly. In the future, there will be devices to clean your house, devices to entertain and care for your children, devices to help you sleep, devices to drive you to work and school, devices to create art, devices to do your homework, devices to do mundane tasks so you don't have to, things that will make our lives better, right? In this section of ENGL201B, students will explore these "strange new worlds" by reading and discovering old and new literary texts and plays and radio and video from both the past and present which might inform student futures. Literary and cinematic characters students are likely to encounter in this class are the many forms of Frankenstein, all types of C3POs, versions of Data, clones of HAL, descendants of Sunny—all addressing themes of joy, sorrow, attachment, longing, community, calculation, logic and, above all, the insatiable HUMAN needs of want and learning. Do androids "sleep"? Can artificial intelligence "feel"? Do robots "play"? Is there a "place" for humanity in a technological world? What comes next?
Prerequisites: None
Attributes: Human Experience (HE)

ENGL 202A Studies in pre-1800s English Literature: Medieval Literature (4 Credits)
This course explores the earliest stories written in English. Funny, brutal, and mesmerizing, these tales from the medieval period--spanning 1,000 years—seem strange and yet oddly familiar. We'll divide the course into three sections, early, middle, and late medieval, reading foundational texts from each era, such as the extraordinary Beowulf, The Lais of Marie de France, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, and The Canterbury Tales. While we approach each text historically, we remain mindful of how medieval works exist in dialogue with literature from across the world and with later literature even into our present day. Students further enhance their study of manuscript culture and early literary production through hands-on visits to our HMML library and Book Arts Studio.
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: ENGL 221F
Attributes: Human Experience (HE)

ENGL 202B Studies in pre-1800s English Literature: Literature of the English Renaissance (4 Credits)
From 1580's to the 1680's England experienced an unprecedented literary renaissance, as writers resurrected and re-imagined classical literary forms to fit new cultural, political, and social pressures. We'll read and consider texts within this historical content, from the sonnet sequences of Lady Mary Wroth and Sir Philip Sidney, to epics such as Edmund Spenser's The Faerie Queene and John Milton's Paradise Lost, pastoral and country house poems by Aemilia Lanyer, Ben Johnson, and Andrew Marvell, the religious lyrics of John Donne and George Herbert, the occasional verse of Mary Herbert and Katherine Philips, and the Restoration era work of John Wilmot (the Earl of Rochester) and Aphra Behn.
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: ENGL 222A
Attributes: Human Experience (HE), Thematic Encounter1/2 - Truth

ENGL 202C Studies in pre-1800s English Literature: Pirates and Puritans (4 Credits)
Ahoy Matey! Would ye like t' learn about danger on the high seas? Yarr, I can spin a yarn dat would freeze yer blood! But why be ye so keen on we pirates? This class explores why the pirates of the 1600s and 1700s have such a strong hold on our imagination. We will compare stories about pirates with the stories, poetry, and sermons of the pirates' enemies: puritans! Both puritans and pirates rebelled against traditional forms of hierarchy and authority. And both wrestled with big questions: What is freedom? What makes authority legitimate? How can ordinary people gain control over their lives? They came to very different conclusions, but their literature helps us imagine our world differently and think critically about our own choices.
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: ENGL 223F
Attributes: Human Experience (HE), Thematic Encounter1/2-Justice, Writing Requirement (WR)

ENGL 203A Studies in post-1800s English Literature: Revolutionary Americas (4 Credits)
This course offers you a fresh perspective on the American Revolution —through the eyes of women as well as men, ordinary people as well as founding fathers, and enslaved as well as free Americans. We will examine how ideas about race, masculinity, and femininity shape concepts of liberty from the late eighteenth-century Atlantic revolutions to the US Civil War. Our discussions will focus on the messy and incomplete processes of social and personal transformation using a wide range of readings that trace experiences of escape and failure in early America, including Benjamin Franklin's Autobiography, the novel Charlotte Temple, and Mary Prince's freedom narrative.
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: ENGL 223C
Attributes: Human Experience (HE), Thematic Encounter1/2-Justice

ENGL 203B Studies in post-1800s English Literature: Haunted Americas (4 Credits)
This course introduces you to the literary culture of the nineteenth-century Americas by introducing you to its ghosts. Literary forms, like the poetic elegy, cultural movements, such as gothicism and romanticism, and new technologies, like the photograph, combined to make the Americas very ghostly places in the 1800s. The course will feature works by and about three of the most significant groups of ghostly Americans: Native Americans, enslaved Americans, and women. We will consider theoretical approaches to haunting from psychological, sociological, historical, and literary perspectives and the historical contexts of imperialism and war that contributed to the haunting of the Americas. Readings for this class may include short stories, poems, and narratives by writers including Edgar Allan Poe, Emily Dickinson, Harriet Jacobs, Charles Chesnutt, and Henry James.
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: ENGL 223D
Attributes: Human Experience (HE), Thematic Encounter1/2-Justice, Writing Requirement (WR)

ENGL 203C Studies in post-1800s English Literature: American Outsiders: American Literature 1945 - present (4 Credits)
In this course we will consider the role of the outsider (socially, politically, culturally, ethnically, aesthetically, and more) in the literature of the Americas from World War II to the present. The outsider has long figured in American literature, an oft celebrated figure, such as Henry David Thoreau writing alone in his cabin at Walden Pond. In this class we will study writers and artists who have chosen to work outside expected norms and others who have not had the choice, whose outsider status is determined by the dominant culture. We will carefully read poetry, drama, fiction, cultural criticism, and nonfiction to understand: What does it mean to be an outsider? Who decides who belongs and who does not? How does the literature and art-making of this period demonstrate how individuals and groups agitate for belonging, create new communities of belonging, and/or challenge artistic and social norms? Authors and artists may include: James Baldwin, Flannery O'Connor, Leslie Marmon Silko, Toni Morrison, Gloria Anzaldúa, Sandra Cisneros, Junot Diaz, Claudia Rankine, John Cage, the Beat Poets, the Guerilla Girls, Kathy Acker, and more.
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: ENGL 223E
Attributes: Human Experience (HE), Thematic Encounter1/2-Movement, Writing Requirement (WR)

ENGL 206 Creative Writing: Clinical Encounters I (4 Credits)
English 206 is a creative writing course for pre-health science majors. Students participate in a sustained clinical experience, delivering creative writing sessions to a clinical population, while developing their own writing lives. This course helps students increase their capacity for working with ambiguity (moral, creative and narrative), while helping them see "patients" as people who are not defined by their diseases. Additionally, this course helps future clinicians learn to communicate with precise imagery and metaphors, while revealing connections between the practice of medicine and the arts of poetry and fiction.
Prerequisites: None
Attributes: Artistic Expression (AE), Experiential Engagement (EX)

ENGL 207 Creative Writing: Clinical Encounters II (4 Credits)
English 207 is a creative writing course for pre-health science majors. Students participate in a sustained clinical experience, delivering creative writing sessions to a clinical population, while developing their own writing lives. This course helps students increase their capacity for working with ambiguity (moral, creative and narrative), while helping them see "patients" as people who are not defined by their diseases. Additionally, this course helps future clinicians learn to communicate with precise imagery and metaphors, while revealing connections between the practice of medicine and the arts of poetry and fiction.
Prerequisites: ENGL 206
Attributes: Human Experience (HE)

ENGL 213 Creative Writing: Fiction and Poetry (4 Credits)
Craft and practice of writing short fiction and poetry. Students write original works of fiction and poetry, closely examine published short stories and poems, and participate in peer-review workshops. This course prepares students for advanced creative writing workshops at the 300 level. Consult the English Department Course Description Booklet for a specific description of each semester's offering.
Prerequisites: None
Attributes: Artistic Engagement (AR), Artistic Expression (AE), Thematic Encounter1/2 - Truth

ENGL 216 Introduction to Screenwriting & Playwriting (4 Credits)
This class presents a unique, real-world opportunity for students to express themselves while also building key writing, creativity, and problem-solving skills needed for life. This course is designed to give students the opportunity to learn the skills of writing both plays and screenplays. It will explore the skills and qualities of effective stage and film craft by both reading and watching plays and films as well as having students write their own scripts in a supportive and challenging environment, with the goal being to create one short play and one short screenplay.
Prerequisites: None
Attributes: Artistic Expression (AE)

ENGL 217 Data and Narrative Writing (4 Credits)
Exploration and incorporation of research into creative and critical works of original writing. Students examine research as a part of the creative and critical processes of writing-in genres including poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction. Students evaluate and experiment with approaches to research as well as ways of incorporating it into their writing. This course is an excellent preparation for an Honors Thesis in the humanities.
Prerequisites: Learning Foundations(LF), Cultural and Social Difference: Identity (CI). CI course may be taken prior to or concurrently with Focus Course.
Equivalent courses: ENGL 220
Attributes: Artistic Expression (AE), Thematic Focus - Truth

ENGL 224 Leadership Through Literature (4 Credits)
Professional development of leaders takes many forms; however, there is a common thread: Leaders read. Leaders read not only self-help texts, they read fiction. Lots of fiction. Professional texts on leadership are written to give us specific strategies to deal with many types of situations in the world beyond the academic, whereas reading and experiencing fiction puts into context how those specific professional tools work with power, understanding, and empathy. This class aims to balance these tools, inviting students to make their own personal leadership journey. Leaders you might encounter on this journey include historical figures of ancient literature and religious texts, medical leaders of all historical ages, historical and modern leaders of exploration, current leaders of political movements, business leaders vying for wealth, and future leaders in the vast unknown.
Prerequisites: None
Attributes: Human Experience (HE)

ENGL 230 Early Western Literature: Homer to Dante (4 Credits)
This literature course starts in the ancient world and travels to the medieval as we read foundational works of world literature. We read the famous Greek poets Homer and Sappho, and the later Roman poets Virgil and Ovid. We see how Virgil changes Homer in his later version to fit with the values of the Roman Empire. (We also look at some contemporary poems to see how modern writers retell Ovid's classical myths.) In the Medieval period we see how Dante and other Christian writers transform the ancient, "pagan" stories into Christianized versions. Students see how a story changes over time as each writer turns old material into something new—Students in this course may expect to learn ways of reading literary texts, how to conduct literary research and analysis, as well as how to recognize allusions in later literature—a strong basis for future literary study.
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: ENGL 221A, ENGL 221B, HONR 250M, HONR 250O
Attributes: Human Experience (HE), Thematic Encounter1/2-Movement, Writing Requirement (WR)

ENGL 231 The Love Affair in Western Literature (4 Credits)
This is a course about the Love Affair in modern western literature from the 19th and 20th centuries. In this course, you will meet some of literature's most famous heroines, often from censored works--Emma Bovary, Anna Karenina, and Sister Carrie--along with others you may not yet have heard of, like Helga Crane and Mei Oi. We explore the various ways in which our authors both figure the longing of these heroines and challenge the social norms that contain that longing; how it may be similar to and different from their male counterparts; and how it looks across a range of cultural contexts. Texts under study are subject to change.
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: ENGL 221C, HONR 250Q
Attributes: Human Experience (HE), Thematic Encounter1/2 - Truth, Writing Requirement (WR)

ENGL 232 Myth in World Literature (4 Credits)
In this course we will read fiction and poetry written by a variety of modern and contemporary authors who incorporate mythology and/or legends into their writing. As we begin each piece of fiction or poetry, we will simultaneously read versions of the myths or legends being accessed in the writing; in this way, we can see how the author may be re-imagining and translating the myth into his or her contemporary social, political, and artistic contexts. Students may expect to read writers from several different cultures and countries, to gain skills and confidence reading both poetry and fiction, and to explore the imaginative and critical dynamics of re-writing myth—both in our course readings and in multiple creative and critical writing exercises that we will undertake throughout the semester.
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: ENGL 122A
Attributes: Human Experience (HE)

ENGL 233 Modern Irish Literature (4 Credits)
This course will both hone and investigate our literary interpretive practices, focusing on some of the most inventive and influential literature to emerge from Ireland in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. We'll read both past masters and current practitioners of the literary arts (some in translation), including, W.B. Yeats, Elizabeth Bowen, James Joyce, Flann O'Brien, Thomas Kinsella, Seamus Heaney, Evan Boland, Medbh McGuckian, Paul Muldoon, and Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill. We will pay particular attention to the way these and other writers imagine(d) their work in conversation with that of their peers, creating and complicating notions of cultural and artistic identity.
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: ENGL 122F
Attributes: Human Experience (HE), Thematic Encounter1/2 - Truth

ENGL 246 Introduction to Literary Theory and Criticism (4 Credits)
Introduction to literary and cultural theory. Students apply theoretical texts or concepts to literary or cultural texts (e.g., novels, films, television, popular arts, clothing, architecture, and public spaces).
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: ENGL 243, ENGL 279A
Attributes: CSD: Systems (CS)

ENGL 271 Individual Learning Project (1-4 Credits)
Supervised reading or research at the lower-division level. Permission of department chair required. Consult department for applicability towards major requirements. Not available to first-year students.
Prerequisites: None

ENGL 280A Creative Writing: Italy (4 Credits)
On this May term, CSBSJU students travel to Pavia, Italy for an intercultural writing workshop to develop writing skills and intercultural competencies. While living in a beautiful and historical residential college, CSBSJU students take this course together with English-speaking students at the University of Pavia. Our creative writing course centers on writing exercises and workshops within a larger thematic framework: the ethics of creative writing. What ethical crises—moral, political, ecological—do American and Italian poets write about? What concerns do our cultures share and in what ways might we approach the same concerns differently? Through reading and discussion, we examine our diverse perspectives about challenges we share as humans in the modern age. Through generous support from the CSB Literary Arts Institute, the course incorporates a visiting Italian writer who meets with our class to discuss writing and to host us for a tour of Pavia to discuss its literary past and relationship to the writer's own work. Students workshop together in small groups to help one another negotiate a foreign language (reading a few poems in English and a few in Italian); undertake creative writing exercises; and discuss one another's work in a context the promotes intercultural writing and communication skills. Each student is supported in developing a writing portfolio in which they explore their own concerns in their own words.
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: COLG 280K
Attributes: Global Engagement (GL)

ENGL 286 Introduction to Film Studies (4 Credits)
Introduction to film as a medium of communication and representation. Possible topics include but are not limited to a survey of the development of film and the movie business, techniques of acting, directing, cinematography, narrative style, and film theory. The vocabulary of cinema and representative films of the first hundred years of filmmaking is covered. Recent titles have included "An Introductory Guide to Active Spectatorship" and "Introduction to Film Techniques, Meanings, and Pleasures."
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: COMM 286
Attributes: Human Experience (HE), Thematic Encounter1/2 - Truth

ENGL 311 Creative Nonfiction (4 Credits)
Theory and practice of writing longer nonfiction forms (essays, articles) dealing with complex subject matter. This course explores the rhetorical strategies used in non-technical writing drawn from a variety of disciplines. Students focus on the development of their own voices and styles.
Prerequisites: Learning Foundations(LF), Cultural and Social Difference: Identity (CI). CI course may be taken prior to or concurrently with Focus Course.
Restrictions: Students with the 2026-2027 Registration Cohort attribute may not enroll.
Attributes: Artistic Engagement (AR), Artistic Expression (AE), Thematic Focus - Truth

ENGL 312 Community-based Narrative Practice (4 Credits)
Advanced Narrative Practice centers the exploration of race, gender, and ethnicity--and their intersectionality--by exploring narrative practice responses to healthcare inequities,based in identity. Students develop their imaginative lives--through poetry and fiction writing--as a means to engage, deeply and meaningfully, with art's power to change thought and action. Moreover, students will regularly design, develop, and deliver narrative practice activities--which aim to undercut unjust social structures--in the classroom, in community settings, and in their future clinical practices. This class employs solution-based thinking--privileging readings, activities, and discussions which encourage future clinicians to embrace an active role in pursuing social-justice.
Prerequisites: Learning Foundations (LF), Theological Encounter (TE), and Cultural and Social Difference: identity (CI).
Attributes: CSD: Systems (CS)

ENGL 313A Advanced Creative Writing: Poetry (4 Credits)
This creative writing workshop course offers a careful study of the art of poetry and the writing life. Together, we read a wide variety of styles and forms of poetry as we write original poetry throughout the semester. Students may expect readings and writing exercises to supplement their study and to stretch their writing. Regular writing workshops will provide sustained feedback on student writing, as well as exercise in reading and editing skills. As part of the course each student will read the major works of an individual poet in a guided study of that author's achievements, and each student will produce a revised portfolio of creative work, meet with visiting writers, and participate in a poetry reading. The course primarily aims to develop creative writing skills and to help students grow as writers; additionally though, the course enhances students' ability to read and discuss poetry, provides practice revising and editing written work, and expands students' knowledge of poets writing in English.
Prerequisites: ENGL 213
Restrictions: Students with the 2026-2027 Registration Cohort attribute may not enroll.
Attributes: Artistic Engagement (AR)

ENGL 313B Advanced Creative Writing: Fiction (4 Credits)
In this semester of Advanced Creative Writing: Fiction, we will delve deeply into reading and writing fiction with even greater attention to language, voice, and form. You will explore and better understand the practice of your own fiction writing, as well as study and attempt together to understand why a particular story works in a particular way. What makes this character engaging? Why does dialogue in this piece leap off the page while in another story the dialogue feels static? We will also expand our expectations of narrative and narrative conventions, while asking what makes a good story. You will strive to, as Lidia Yuknavitch writes in The Chronology of Water, "Make up stories until you find one you can live with. Make up stories as if life depended on it." Workshop will be an essential component of the class. We will also perform writing exercises based on the readings, experiment with our texts, and work to stay present in the world and in the word.
Prerequisites: ENGL 213
Restrictions: Students with the 2026-2027 Registration Cohort attribute may not enroll.
Attributes: Artistic Engagement (AR)

ENGL 316 Editing and Publishing (4 Credits)
With literary publishing in rapid flux, book publishers knit their brows and try to forecast demand for printed books and e-books. Every prediction prompts a new round of hand-wringing about the future of the book. The shift from print to electronic formats has had—and continues to have —enormous consequences for the publishing industry. Claims that this shift spells the death of books, however, demand careful examination. In English 315, we'll explore the rapidly changing book-publishing industry, looking closely at the ways in which industry developments and new technologies affect writers, readers, and publishing companies. We'll begin by studying the traditional book-publishing model, and then we'll study the effects of digital technologies on the transmission of writers' works to audiences of readers. By the end of the semester, we may not arrive at certain answers about the future of literary publishing, but we'll understand many of the forces that will shape that future.
Prerequisites: None
Restrictions: Students with the 2026-2027 Registration Cohort attribute may not enroll.
Equivalent courses: ENGL 315B
Attributes: Experiential Engagement (EX)

ENGL 317 Writing in Business (4 Credits)
Successfully navigating a business is tricky business; however, with planning, research, and execution, it is not an impossible task. This class is structured to give the student practice writing and communicating in four types of business climates: government, for-profit, non-profit, and education. This "practice" includes resumes, cover letters, formal reports, professional presentations, grant proposals, advertising copy for TV and radio, communications for emerging social media outlets, business plans, formal and informal memos, various forms of print media, etc. In the process, students will have opportunities to consider various career options and look ahead to professional life after college. In addition to the academic work in the classroom, students will hear from a number of business professionals as those professionals will come to class to share their collective wisdom about writing and communicating in the business environment. All in all, this class will help students realize that the theory and "book-learnin'" they experience in the academic arena really do have practical applications and a place in the world outside of academia.
Prerequisites: None
Restrictions: Students with the 2026-2027 Registration Cohort attribute may not enroll.
Equivalent courses: ENGL 315A
Attributes: Human Experience (HE), Writing Requirement (WR)

ENGL 330 Medieval Quests (4 Credits)
In Arthurian Romances and medieval epics, the heroic knight commonly encounters dangerous folk and creatures that pose threats to his life and virtue. These monstrous figures threaten the knight with violence and with the allure of their otherworldly difference. Yet these monsters also reflect fears and attitudes about historical "Others" such as women, the Islamic East, Judaism, and the Orient. In this course we will examine these encounters with an eye to cultural anxieties surrounding difference. To better understand these anxieties, we will read and discuss the history and culture of the Middle Ages in relationship to our primary texts: Le Morte D'Arthur; Sir Gawain and the Green Knight; The Romances of Chrétien de Troyes; The Lais of Marie De France; Tristan and Isolde; and The Song of Roland. Reading critical texts such as Said's Orientalism and Frye's The Secular Scripture, we will explore the "line between 'the West' and 'the Other'," the quest as nightmare, the uncanny, and fears surrounding mixed blood. (If you are a fan of Game of Thrones, dragons, Lancelot and Guinevere, or medieval mystics, you'll be among your people).
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: ENGL 340A
Attributes: Human Experience (HE), Thematic Encounter3 - Justice, Writing Requirement (WR)

ENGL 333 Chaucer (4 Credits)
Geoffrey Chaucer, legendary author of The Canterbury Tales, is considered to be the "father" of English Literature, English Poetry, and even the English Language. But who was he, and why is he important to us? This course explores Chaucer's life and writing, examining the paradoxes and mysteries that surround his identity: what is known about his contemporaries, social networks, and political intrigues. We discover Chaucer writes about concerns pressing in the medieval period that remain relevant today: marriage; sex; political corruption and tyranny; Christianity and Islam; the mistreatment of women; anti-Semitism; refugees; loss; and the human longing for consolation. We read and listen to his writings in Middle English so we can appreciate the humor, beauty, and brilliance of his verse. We tour the genres that Chaucer incorporates into his Tales—including the fabliau (bawdy tale), saint's lives, beast tales, and romances—both to deepen our understanding of medieval literature and to gain a clearer view of Chaucer's innovations. The course also examines manuscript culture (looking at how his poems were first collected) as well as the most recent commentaries on his work, such as "Chaucer at Ground Zero," to understand why his writing still matters now. In-class discussions and readings will support student learning throughout the course, and students will receive individual guidance in a critical and/or creative research project designed around their interests.
Prerequisites: None
Restrictions: Students with the 2026-2027 Registration Cohort attribute may not enroll.
Equivalent courses: ENGL 351

ENGL 334 Medieval Women (4 Credits)
During the Middle Ages, commonplace depictions of women portrayed them as all-powerful temptresses or husband-destroying nags. Yet women enjoyed little to no sexual freedom or legal authority in marriage. In this course, students examine the gap between these images and gendered realities as we study complex relationships between women and power in medieval literature. We look carefully at women as writers of and as subjects in medieval texts, reading for instance the romances of Marie de France and the defense of women written by Christine de Pizan. We read medieval women Christian mystics as well, Julian of Norwich among other, often surprisingly powerful, female visionaries. The course provides historical context for reading these figures and specifically draws attention to the material conditions in which different genders were able to write. Students explore how gender affects a writer's ability to communicate in writing and to make their voice heard.
Prerequisites: None
Restrictions: Students with the 2026-2027 Registration Cohort attribute may not enroll.
Equivalent courses: ENGL 385J
Attributes: Human Experience (HE), Thematic Focus - Truth

ENGL 335 Shakespeare (4 Credits)
This course will focus on reading closely, discussing, and writing about key representative plays from Shakespeare's career. We'll consider how his work both contributed to, and moved past, the conventions of Elizabethan and Jacobean theatrical genres. We will move in a roughly chronological order, in order to consider the trajectory of the plays as well as historical and cultural shifts. Plays will likely include The Merchant of Venice, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Henry IV Part One, As You Like It, Hamlet, King Lear, Macbeth, and The Winter's Tale.
Prerequisites: None
Restrictions: Students with the 2026-2027 Registration Cohort attribute may not enroll.
Equivalent courses: ENGL 352
Attributes: Human Experience (HE)

ENGL 342 American Deception: Frauds, Cons, and Social Climbers (4 Credits)
Here's the truth: fake news wasn't invented in the run-up to the 2016 American presidential election. This course uses nineteenth-century fiction to explore the United States' love-hate relationship with fakes, frauds, and cons. On the one hand, the American Dream of social mobility seems to always entail a little bit of "fake it 'till you make it." Some class climbers and tricksters who deceive their way to success, like Benjamin Franklin, are our cultural heroes. On the other hand, writers have explored how deception and hypocrisy threaten democratic social order and the possibility of faith in something larger than our selves. This class explores how nineteenth-century American literature examined both its own practices of deception and those of the culture around it. Readings may include Native trickster stories and works by Charles Brockden Brown, Edgar Allan Poe, Herman Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Fanny Fern, Anna Cora Mowatt, and Charles Chesnutt. Students in this class can expect to gain a better understanding of the historical context for contemporary debates over authenticity in media. We will also debate the role of self-invention in religion, race, gender, and capitalist democracy in America.
Prerequisites: None
Restrictions: Students with the 2026-2027 Registration Cohort attribute may not enroll.
Equivalent courses: ENGL 379A
Attributes: Human Experience (HE), Thematic Focus - Truth, Writing Requirement (WR)

ENGL 356 The Illicit in Modernist Literature (4 Credits)
This course traces recurrent subtexts of illicit desire, the dreamwork of the forbidden, in the American Modernist Novel from the turn of the 19th to the mid-20th century. We meet outrageous dreamers, ambitious climbers, plotting lovers, and would-be tycoons for whom illicit desires are set against social prescription, with generally violent results: think body panic and revenge, American style. These novels are a punch to the gut, and sometimes darkly funny. We will read a wide sampling of the most brilliant writers of this literary period and watch as they invent new ways to describe the precise anatomy of the thing just out of reach. We explore both well-known works and more recently celebrated works written by writers variously marked by race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and class, toggling between them to see how they echo and transform one another. Readings may include Chopin, James, Wharton, Wright, Larsen, Fitzgerald, West, McCoy, Baldwin, Faulkner, DiDonato, and Ellison.
Prerequisites: None
Attributes: CSD: Systems (CS), Writing Requirement (WR)

ENGL 357 The Lost Generation: Literature between the World Wars (4 Credits)
The term "Lost Generation" refers to those who came of age during World War I and helps describe the upheaval and loss experienced by an entire generation for whom the world had changed forever. This course focuses on American and British writers working in the period between the world wars, a period known as literary modernism. In the face of world war, a global pandemic, and more, these writers were breaking away from past models of writing and challenging social and political norms. You will read carefully, write argumentative literary analyses, and conduct scholarly research. Readings by such authors as Virginia Woolf, Jean Toomer, T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, Zora Neale Hurston, Gertrude Stein, William Faulkner, Nella Larsen, and others.
Prerequisites: None
Equivalent courses: ENGL 366A
Attributes: CSD: Systems (CS), Writing Requirement (WR)

ENGL 361 Gender & Sexuality in Literature (4 Credits)
This course undertakes advanced exploration of how literary works represent, construct, and challenge norms around gender and sexuality.
Prerequisites: None
Restrictions: Students with the 2026-2027 Registration Cohort attribute may not enroll.
Equivalent courses: ENGL 381, GEND 360N
Attributes: CSD: Systems (CS)

ENGL 362 Race and Ethnicity in American Literature (4 Credits)
This class undertakes advanced exploration of how literary works represent, construct, and evolve to respond to race and ethnicity in the Americas. We will examine how constructions of race and ethnicity in literary works intersect with similar constructions of gender, sexuality, or class, and how these constructions vary across time, cultures, and societies. Coursework will critically analyze the way that these forms of identity dynamically connect to systems of power and raise questions of justice. Prerequisite: Sophomore standing.
Prerequisites: None
Restrictions: Students with the 2026-2027 Registration Cohort attribute may not enroll.
Equivalent courses: ENGL 382
Attributes: CSD: Systems (CS)

ENGL 371 Individual Learning Project (1-4 Credits)
Supervised reading or research at the upper-division level. Permission of department chair and completion and/or concurrent registration of 12 credits within the department required. Consult department for applicability towards major requirements. Not available to first-year students.
Prerequisites: None

ENGL 386 Studies in Film (4 Credits)
This course analyzes film through one or more theoretical aspects. Psychoanalytical, feminist, cultural studies, and reader-response theories are among possible approaches offered. Prerequisite: Sophomore standing. COMM 286 or ENGL 286 recommended.
Prerequisites: Learning Foundations(LF), Cultural and Social Difference: Identity (CI). CI course may be taken prior to or concurrently with Focus Course.
Restrictions: Students with the 2026-2027 Registration Cohort attribute may not enroll.
Equivalent courses: COMM 386
Attributes: Human Experience (HE), Thematic Focus - Justice

ENGL 387 Introduction to Linguistics (4 Credits)
Linguistics, as a discipline, is the scientific study of human language. This course will cover the core of linguistic study: phonetics and phonology (sounds and sound systems), morphology (word shapes), syntax (sentence structure), semantics (the meanings of linguistic forms), and pragmatics (meaning in context). We'll also look at a wide variety of other topics including sociolinguistics (language and identity), language contact, change, death, and revitalization; and writing systems. This challenging but fascinating topic area will prove relevant not only to students of English and education but also to those majoring in foreign languages, philosophy, psychology, or computer science. Prerequisite: Sophomore standing.
Prerequisites: None
Restrictions: Students with the 2026-2027 Registration Cohort attribute may not enroll.
Attributes: Abstract Structures (AS)

ENGL 390 English Capstone (4 Credits)
Analysis and discussion of significant literary texts. Students will complete a substantial research project designed to facilitate the transition to work or study beyond the undergraduate English degree. Thematic focus of the course varies with instructor.
Prerequisites: None
Restrictions: Students with the 2025-2026 Registration Cohort or 2026-2027 Registration Cohort attributes may not enroll.

ENGL 397 Internship (1-4 Credits)
Integration of the skills of the English major, a liberal arts background and the expectations of a career. Individually tailored by the student with the advice and approval of a department advisor and the college's director of internships. S/U grading only.
Prerequisites: None
Attributes: Experiential Engagement (EX)