

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
Washington State University

Graduate Studies Bulletin 5
March 25, 2016

Graduate Course Offerings
Fall 2016

The following 500-level courses will be offered by the Department of English during the fall semester of 2016.

Note:

MA students in their second semester must register for one credit of ENGL 598 and one credit of ENGL 600.

PhD students teaching ENGL 101 or other composition courses must register for one credit of ENGL 600.

All MA and PhD students holding Teaching Assistantships must register for a total of 10 and no more than 12 credits. For more information, see details below for ENGL 598, 600, 700, 702, and 800.

501 Seminar in the Teaching of Writing: Methodology of Composition (3)

Description not available; please contact the instructor for information about this seminar. P. Ericsson (Tu 14.50-17.20)

507 Shakespeare: Knowing and Believing in Shakespeare's England (3)

Unknown to Europeans until its rediscovery in 1417 by the Italian scholar Poggio Bracciolini, Lucretius's *De Rerum Natura* ("On the Nature of Things") became one of the most widely read poems in the Renaissance. Montaigne quoted huge portions of it in his *Essays*, and in England several translators prepared vernacular renditions. Yet the poem, with its vehement materialism and anti-religious ethos, seems an unlikely candidate to have moved beyond cult-classic status in the early modern world. Meanwhile, in northern Italy at the close of the sixteenth century, an obscure miller and autodidact called Menocchio argued that God and the angels had first emerged, maggot-like, from an enormous mass of putrefying matter that had existed for all eternity. Despite earnestly explaining his ideas to Roman Catholic inquisitors, he was deemed an irrecoverable heretic and burned at the stake.

I mention the rediscovery of Lucretius and the story of Menocchio because they serve as marquee examples for any discussion of knowledge and belief in the Renaissance. But this seminar will be somewhat more restricted in focus, dealing mainly with the intersections of religious and gender ideology, epistemological presupposition, and theatrical representation in Elizabethan/Jacobean England. How do early modern accounts of perception, knowledge,

certainty, and belief manifest themselves in plays traversed by varied forms of doubt? What criteria are understood to be relevant in ascertaining the status of truth-claims within fictional discourse? How are the plays that early modern writers called "histories" or "tragedies" shaped from historical narratives and evidence? What cultural presuppositions — about gender, class, literary form, aesthetic value, reception — enable this to happen? How do tragic representations of "history" exploit and/or explode transcendental assumptions ascribed to characters within plays or held by audience members viewing those plays? Is tragedy incompatible with Christian providentialism, as scholars have often argued? In the end, how do we gauge and evaluate the moral, political, and metaphysical assumptions of fictional characters — or, to use Althusserian jargon, how do we assess their ideological "interpellation"? And can we extrapolate from such assessments to claims about the opinions, say, of Marlowe or Shakespeare?

We'll study a range of plays by Shakespeare and his near-contemporaries, and we'll juxtapose these plays against important selections of non-fictional prose by Michel de Montaigne and Francis Bacon, particularly from the *Essays* (Montaigne) and *The Advancement of Learning and the Essays* (Bacon). We'll also spend time with other relevant historical, philosophical, and/or devotional materials (events, practices, homilies, chronicles, theological polemics, ethical and epistemological treatises, etc.). Plays will be drawn from the following list: *Gorboduc* (Norton and Sackville); *The Spanish Tragedy* (Kyd); *Tamburlaine*, *Doctor Faustus*, *The Jew of Malta* (Marlowe); *Titus Andronicus*, *Richard II*, *Henry V*, *Julius Caesar*, *Hamlet*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Measure for Measure*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Timon of Athens*, *Coriolanus* (Shakespeare); *The Tragedy of Mariam* (Cary); *Sejanus*, *Bartholomew Fair*, *Epicoene* (Jonson); *The Duchess of Malfi* (Webster); *The Revenger's Tragedy*, *The Changeling*, *Women Beware Women* (Middleton); and *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (Ford). Basic familiarity with Erasmus, Machiavelli, Descartes, and Pascal will be helpful, as will an acquaintance with the central debates of the Reformation and the theoretical opinions of Sidney in his *Defense of Poesy*. Other readings will include Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms*; Étienne de la Boétie, *A Discourse of Voluntary Servitude*; short passages from Lucretius, Plutarch, Josephus, Saxo Grammaticus, and Holinshed; selections from Wiesner-Hanks' *Gender in History* (2nd ed.); discussions of ideology by Marx, Gramsci, Althusser, Williams, Eagleton, David Hawkes, and Michael Freedon; and the *Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Tragedy*. Contemporary criticism will include articles and book chapters representing a spectrum of methodologies and theoretical orientations. Issues of censorship, anti-theatricalism, resistance theory (Huguenot, Catholic, etc.), social discipline, and early modern masculinity and femininity will figure centrally in class discussion. Students should expect to pose questions for class discussion, to give two brief oral presentations, and to write two short essays (roughly 6-8 pages apiece), a book review (4-5 pages), and one longer essay (15-20 pages). **W. Hamlin (TTH 10:35-11:50)**

508 Seminar in Assessment of Writing (3) Increasingly, our professional lives are infused with assessment, from testing, to grading, to course and program evaluation. Thus, knowledge of this field benefits the teacher who wants to improve her performance, the program administrator who needs to advance new initiatives or defend existing ones, or

any professional who needs to be able to join in local, statewide, or national conversations about assessment in a field.

While we will focus on writing assessment, our deliberations are contextualized within the field of evaluation generally. We will look at the history of writing assessment, as well as its methods and research practices. Most important, we will devote considerable time to classroom forms of assessment. The course pursues several important objectives:

1. To explore the history of writing assessment.
2. To establish a context for writing assessment within the larger context of assessment in general.
3. To relate concepts and practices of writing assessment to classroom grading and evaluation practices.
4. To examine recent developments in course and program evaluation.
5. To develop a series of assessment-friendly assignments and implement them in the classroom.
6. To develop an independent project in writing assessment, program assessment, or self-assessment that an individual student may present as a conference paper and, eventually, publish as a journal essay.

We focus on praxis—on the application of theory to practice—in order to develop an understanding of assessment as a form of research that focuses on improvement. Much of class discussion will concentrate on how assessment plays into teaching and grading practices.

W. Condon (W14:50-17:20)

514 Seminar in 20th Century American Literature: African American Writing after the Renaissance, 1938-1960 (3) African American Literature and the Rhetorics of Hip Hop introduces students to the architecture of language that serves as the foundation for the African American literary tradition. The literature within the field makes use of several impulses and cultural influences ranging from spirituals, sermons, and blues to folklore and jazz. The first goal is to forge an understanding of these antecedents as they function in the literature as rhetorical strategies that part and parcel of African American literary tradition and then influence what is produced in hip hop culture. We learn that hip hop's rhetorical devices do not exist in a vacuum but are modern iterations of the folklore figures like the bad man, trickster, and John Henry or Shine. This course examines not only the core components of hip hop and the particular aesthetic representations driving it, but also iterations of the aforementioned antecedents at work in the language of rap music and other core elements. An additional point will be to draw connections between the literary expressions of Black Aesthetic as giving rise to late 1970s hip hop.

We will examine critical essays (by Houston A. Baker, Jr., Bakari Kitwana, Imani Perry), novels (such as *A Cold Winter*, *The Rage is Back*, and *WhiteBoy Shuffle*), poems, music, and

visual material to help us understand the archeology of knowledge required to better understand the rhetorics of hip hop literature and culture. **T. Lewis (M 15:10-17:40)**

543 Phonology (3): Description not available; please contact the instructor for information about this seminar. **Lynn Gordon (TUTH 12:00-13:15)**

554 History of English Language (3) Description not available; please contact the instructor for information about this seminar. **Lynn Gordon (TUTH 13:25-14:40)**

590 Research in English Studies (1-3) English 590 is a graded independent study designed to provide directed research in English studies for individuals (or small groups) in conjunction with one or more faculty members. Students are normally expected to prepare a bibliography on a specific research field; this should be done with the approval of both the English 590 supervisor and the student's advisor (often this will be the same person).

The student will then read selected works from the bibliography and produce detailed annotations along with an accompanying critical narrative about key issues or significant patterns reflected in the bibliography. Typically the student will meet with the 590 supervisor once a week or once every other week in order to discuss the readings. English 590 is graded and may be taken for 1 credit per semester up to a total of 3 credits altogether. Students will be graded on the following criteria: quality of the annotated bibliography, the critical narrative, and the discussion sessions. For each credit of English 590, students should present at least a one-page bibliography (typed and double-spaced) of key primary and secondary works in the chosen field.

All doctoral students must take at least 1 credit of English 590, but no more than 3 credits total are allowed. English 590 is not intended to be a substitute for a viable graduate seminar.

595 Topics in English: Nonhumanisms (3) In 1974, the philosopher Thomas Nagel posed the question "What is it like to be a bat?" in an essay of the same name. Can we answer this question in such a way that inhabits the perceptual and cognitive otherness of this creature, or are any attempts to do so inevitably pressed into human frames of reference? This seemingly innocent philosophical question opens onto a rich and varied tradition in literature, philosophy, and art that explores how, and indeed, if, it is possible for humans to conceive of and represent nonhuman otherness. Though literary and cultural artifacts will anchor our inquiry into these broad questions of the nonhuman, this course will engage a number of disciplinary fields, including biology, philosophy, media studies, ecocriticism, and science/technology studies.

While the course title features "nonhumans" as objects, forces, and entities of interest, this in no way implies that humans are simply diminished, devalued, or disappeared from the scene. Rather, we will explore the uncanny and ubiquitous interfaces between the human and the nonhuman, and the ways in which these encounters change the shape of the human subject past the point of recognizability. Nonhumans are quite literally everywhere, so it will not be difficult to find them in the literature and culture of the past two hundred years. What will be different, however, are the ways in which nonhuman forces are placed on equal or comparable footing with human agency—with nonhumans endowed with life and agency, and humans reconceived as things, material, and matter.

This approach aims to accomplish the following: 1) to trace the rise of ideas that decenter the human subject as part of a larger recognition of (to use Levi Bryant's felicitous phrase) the "democracy of objects," 2) to identify and explore alliances and affinities between the nonhuman and particularized, politicized human groups, including racial, sexual, and class minorities, and 3) to take part in larger conversations about the special (specie-al) exceptionalism of the human in the face of decisive material transformations brought about by modernity and its anthropogenic transformation of "nature" and the world.

We'll begin with precursors such as Darwin, Freud, and Heidegger along with early 20th-century literature, art, and film, before we get to the bulk of the course, which will center on more recent philosophy, ecocriticism, animal studies, narrative theory, science and technology studies, and theories of the body. While there will be a good deal of theory in the course, we will be pairing our theoretical readings with examples from popular culture as well as literature and art--much of which will be determined by the interests of the individual members of the class.

Over the course, we'll discuss the work of these thinkers and artists: Charles Darwin, Sigmund Freud, H.P. Lovecraft, Virginia Woolf, H.G. Wells, André Breton, Djuna Barnes, Martin Heidegger, Maya Deren, Bruno Latour, Ursula Leguin, Thomas Nagel, Andrei Tarkovsky, Donna Haraway, Jane Bennett, Tim Morton, William Connolly, Jason Moore, Jeffrey Cohen, Stacey Alaimo, Jeff VanderMeer, and others. Work will include weekly readings, assigned discussion openers and responses several times during the semester, two brief "position" papers of 2-3 pages each, and a conference-length paper of roughly 10-12 pages. **J. Hegglund (Th 14:50-17:20)**

- 597 Special Topics in Rhetoric and Composition: Rhetorics of the Western Hemisphere (3)** A part of Kenneth Burke's definition of "rhetoric" is that it "is rooted in an essential function of language itself, a function that is wholly realistic and continually born anew." In so saying, he is arguing here (and in other places) that rhetoric is basic to the creature, at the very least epistemological and maybe ontological. If that's the case, then every culture, every cooperating group of people, would have its own rhetorical history, would not have to have been introduced to rhetoric by the people of Athens or Rome. It is with this line of thought that we will look in this course, not at "alternative

rhetorics," but at the rhetorics that obtained and continue to obtain on this part of the world, from the pre-Columbian to contemporary people of color, groups with their own ways of navigating different linguistic heritages and the kind of colonialism that is a part of racism, reflected in unique rhetorical ways. Short reading responses and two short papers. Villanueva (W 15:10-17:40)

598 Teaching Apprenticeship (pass/fail) All graduate students holding Teaching Assistantships must sign up for a total of **three** credits of English 598; normally **one** credit is taken during each of the first three semesters. The responsibilities for English 598 are as follows:

First Semester: Directed Study in the Writing Center (English 102); arrangements will be made by the Director of the Writing Center. Students attend several tutor-training sessions at the Writing Center, and they participate in English 102 meetings (normally held every other week).

Second Semester: Weekly Colloquium on Freshman Composition, to be attended by all first-time Teaching Assistants (normally held on Mondays from 12:10 - 1:00 p.m.). Arrangements will be made by the Director of Composition.

Third or Fourth Semester: Mentored Teaching - students work as apprentice teachers with a faculty member of their choice who is currently teaching an undergraduate course. They attend classes, discuss pedagogical strategies, plan assignments, teach occasionally, etc. Precise arrangements are negotiated by the student and faculty member.

Exceptions to the 598 sequence must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.

600 Special Projects or Independent Study (pass/fail) Graduate students may enroll in an ungraded independent study with a faculty member of their choice. In order to do this they must submit an independent study proposal to the Director of Graduate Studies; the proposal should previously have been signed by the faculty member in question. Forms for this proposal are available from the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Otherwise, there is only one reason to sign up for English 600:

All new Teaching Assistants and returning graduate students who are currently teaching English 101 must sign up for **one** credit of English 600. This credit compensates their participation in a weekly staff meeting on the teaching of English 101. The meeting normally takes place on Wednesdays from 12:10 - 1:00 p.m.

- 700 **Master's Research, Thesis and/or Examination** (Variable credit) English 700 is for a **THESIS DEGREE** program **ONLY** and must consist of at least 4 hours on the M.A. program. Time, place, and instructor by arrangement.
- 702 **Master's Special Problems, Directed Study, and/or Examination** (Variable credit) English 702 is for a **NON-THESIS DEGREE** program **ONLY** and must consist of 4 hours on the M.A. program, 2 of which must be in the semester of written and final exams. Time, place, and instructor by arrangement.
- 800 **Doctoral Research, Dissertation, and/or Examination** (Variable credit) Time, place, and instructor by arrangement; at least 20 hours are required on the program.