

**UNDERGRADUATE FLYER**  
**FALL 2013**

**ENG. 2200: Intro to English Studies (75163)**

**MR 10:40-12:05 p.m.**

**Dr. John Lowney**

This course introduces the critical reading and writing practices that constitute the English major. Through the reading, interpretation, and criticism of primarily modern and contemporary prose fiction, poetry, drama, and literary nonfiction, it will foster an understanding of the methodologies of literary and cultural studies. While the course will introduce important theoretical problems and terms, it will emphasize the practical experience of writing within the English major, from the composition of brief essays to the development of a more extensive research paper. Writing assignments will include informal creative exercises as well as formal papers.

**ENG. 2200 Intro to English Studies (75162)**

**TF 10:40-12:05 p.m.**

**T/B/A**

A foundation course introducing English majors and minors to the disciplinary practices of the English major. Required of all majors and minors in their sophomore or junior years.

**ENG. 2300: Introduction to Literary Criticism and Theory (75140)**

**TF 9:05-10:30 a.m.**

**Dr. Gregory Maertz**

An immersion in the history of criticism and theory from classical antiquity (Plato and Aristotle) to the late twentieth century (Derrida and Zizek). Through discussion and analysis of assigned texts, we will examine fundamental antagonisms in Western aesthetic practice—between art and life, freedom of expression and political control, tradition and originality, classic and romantic, didacticism versus the pursuit of pleasure, canonical elitism and the recovery of marginalized texts.

**ENG. 2300: Introduction to Literary Criticism and Theory (75155)**

**MR 12:15-1:40 p.m.**

**Dr. Elda Tsou**

This course is an introduction to the range of texts called theory. It covers the major poststructuralist theorists and their philosophical antecedents. Beginning with Plato, Saussure, Marx and Freud, the course will then move into more recent theories, like deconstruction, postcolonial theory, and theories of race, gender, and sexuality. Other thinkers we will cover: Foucault, Spivak, Butler, Said.

**ENG 3100: Medieval English Literature (75156)**

**TF 12:15-1:40 p.m.**

**Dr. Nicole Rice**

This course introduces some of medieval England's major dramatic traditions, with their dynamic fusions of sacred and secular concerns. We begin with the urban cycles, collections of short plays dramatizing history from Creation to Doomsday, focusing primarily on plays from

York. We will also consider selected morality plays, in which the vices and the virtues battle for domination, and a play dedicated to the exploits of Saint Mary Magdalene. Topics will include the relations among bodies on stage, the social body, and the body of Christ; the drama's connections to social and religious controversy; questions of gender, performance, and spiritual authority. Students will work with glossed Middle English texts and learn to read and pronounce the original language. No prior knowledge of Middle English is necessary. Whenever possible, we will complement our readings with videos of recent performances. Class members will have the option of staging a performance as part of their final project.

**ENG. 3130: Shakespeare: Elizabethan Plays: Shakespeare's Rome (75139)**

**MR 9:05-10:30 a.m.**

**Dr. Steve Mentz**

What did the Eternal City mean to England's greatest playwright? This course explores Shakespeare's career-long fascination with Rome, which spans the city's multiple historical and symbolic meanings. Shakespeare's Rome was the birthplace of the Roman Republic, the origin of the world-dominating Roman Empire, the home of the Catholic Church, and the center of that Church's dramatic split with Protestant England after the Reformation. We'll read all five of Shakespeare's major Roman plays in rough historical order: *Coriolanus*, *Julius Caesar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *Cymbeline*. We'll also explore Shakespeare's classical and Renaissance sources about Roman history as well as early modern writing about Rome.

**ENG. 3230: The Nineteenth-Century Novel (75158)**

**TF 12:15-1:40 p.m.**

**Dr. Gregory Maertz**

This course will examine examples of major sub-genres of the nineteenth-century novel, including the realistic novel, the Gothic novel, science fiction, and the novel of adventure. Special emphasis will be placed on the impact of revolutionary ideas in ethics and philosophy on literary innovation. Texts to include Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines*, and Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.

**ENG. 3290: Special Topics in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century British Literature (75159)**

**Female Virtue and the Novel, 1778-1891**

**MR 9:05-10:30 a.m.**

**Dr. Amy King**

One way of approaching the eighteenth and nineteenth century novelistic tradition is to pay attention to the form's preoccupation with female innocence and the female body. As Henry James suggested, the novel is the form that studies the girl. The course will consider a set of novels across the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, primarily British and (in one case) French, charting the growth of the form of the novel alongside the increasing interest in and complication of the notion of female "virtue": fallenness, innocence, danger. Ideas of the possible embodiment of virtue, of a culture's dependence upon that (always imperiled) virtue, and of the novel's cultural role in the institutions of the category of female innocence, will be

explored. Texts will include: Frances Burney, *Evelina*; Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*; George Eliot, *Adam Bede*; Gustave Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*; Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*.

**ENG. 3350: American Women Writers (73284)**

**Grave Markers: American Women and Literary/Historical Archives**

**MR 10:40-12:05 p.m.**

**Dr. Jennifer Travis**

In her essay, "Looking for Zora," author Alice Walker describes her journey through waist-high weeds in a Florida swamp to find Zora Neal Hurston's grave. Hurston, out of print and largely forgotten by the mid-twentieth century might be said to have returned from the grave with Walker's commemoration, which ushered in a new era of scholarship on Hurston's work. This semester we will read several women writers who also were buried and forgotten—from Hannah Webster Foster and Fanny Fern to Harriet E. Wilson and Zora Neal Hurston—but with academic recovery efforts are now revived. Students in the course will also work as archivists by participating in a service-learning project that documents the lives of nineteenth and early twentieth-century women who lay buried at Maple Grove Cemetery here in Queens.

Maple Grove Cemetery is a, 65-acre [cemetery](#) located in Kew Gardens. The not-for-profit, non-sectarian Maple Grove Cemetery Association, which operates the cemetery, was organized in 1875. Over the years, Maple Grove has played a key role in the development of local Queens County communities. Now listed on the [National Register of Historic Places](#), Maple Grove is actively archiving the lives of those who have been laid to rest there. Together we will help build their archive by researching women who are laid to rest at the cemetery.

Academic Service-Learning at St. John's University is a classroom/experiential site-based program that involves students in some form of required community service that benefits the common (public) good and uses service as a means of understanding course concepts. The service activity meets course objectives, and through reflection students examine issues pertaining to social justice and responsibility.

Academic Service-Learning is a requirement of this course. All students must complete 6 number of hours of service at Maple Grove Cemeteries (details will be explained and schedules accommodated to the best of my ability). Reflection is an important component of AS-L since it provides the opportunity to link what students learn in the service project to what they learn in the classroom. Reflection of the AS-L experience will be in the form of a reflection essay and presentation.

Please email Dr. Jennifer Travis with questions: [travisj@stjohns.edu](mailto:travisj@stjohns.edu)

**ENG. 3375: Environmental Literature (75317)**

**TF 9:05-10:30 a.m.**

**Dr. Granville Ganter**

The course responds to sustained concern about the environmental future of the planet. Early American writing about the environment has been a salient element of American literary prose, from John Smith and John Bartram, to *Walden*, to John Muir's descriptions of the Sierra Nevada in the late 1800s. Not all environmental writing celebrates nature in the same way, and the goal of the course is to help students visualize the different meanings of keywords like environmentalism, ecology, resource, conservation, ecofeminism, and sustainability. The course will emphasize pre-1900 literature but contain modern readings as well.

**ENG. 3420: Contemporary Fiction (75138)**

**MR 3:25-4:50 p.m.**

**Prof. Gabriel Brownstein**

This class will look at North American fiction from roughly 1969 to the present, a period over which US literature has been frequently declared dead, marginal, or otherwise in decline. Publishing houses have closed and been consolidated; major magazines have stopped publishing stories. The novel has lost its central place in culture. But writers keep writing. As one character in Don DeLillo's 1977 novel, *Players*, says, "If I were a writer, how I would enjoy being told the novel is dead. How liberating to work in the margins, outside a central perception. You are the ghoul of literature. Lovely." In this class, we'll follow US and Canadian fiction through the crises of its last fifty years—crises in realism, post-modernism, and multi-culturalism. We'll read Philip Roth, Alice Munro, Toni Morrison, DeLillo, and Junot Diaz, and then we'll end with a novel-in-verse by Anne Carson.

**ENG. 3450: Modern Drama (75168)**

**MR 10:40-12:05 p.m.**

**Dr. Angela Belli**

In this course we will trace the development of the theater beginning with the work of the late 18th century dramatist Henrik Ibsen and continuing to the dramas of the mid-20th century.

A historical and critical survey of the aesthetic movements of the last century will acquaint students with such theoretical explorations as Realism, Naturalism, Symbolism, and Expressionism. Students will study the work of dramatists who revolutionized the theater of their time and ended by reflecting the world of our time. Among those to repossess the stage for a modern audience, in addition to Ibsen are Anton Chekhov, Luigi Pirandello, Eugene O'Neill, Arthur Miller, Tennessee Williams, Sean O'Casey, Robert Bolt, Lorraine Hansberry. The goal of the course is to help students to develop an appreciation of the theater, to understand the role of drama in reflecting a variety of cultures: Scandinavian, Russian, Italian, Irish, American, including African American.

**ENG. 3490: Special Topics in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Literature (75161)**

**MR 12:15-1:40 p.m.**

**Dr. Stephen Sicari**

The goal for this course is simple: to read and enjoy James Joyce's *Ulysses*. We will also read *Dubliners*, *A Portrait*, and *Exiles*, both for their own sake but especially as they set up *Ulysses*, which is one of the greatest and most important works of literature in the English language. As we make progress toward this goal, we will identify, and try out, various approaches to this seminal text of literary modernism: as the epitome of modernist experimentation in response to the conditions of modernity; as a self-conscious reflection on the history of the novel; as an attempt to write epic or allegory in the modern age; as a modern *Commedia*; as the great Irish postcolonial text. You will write a series of short papers on the primary texts, as well as develop a research proposal and paper in which you describe an approach to *Ulysses* and apply it.

**ENG. 3580: Postcolonial Literature (75169)**

**TF 1:50-3:15 p.m.**

**T/B/A**

A critical introduction to the study of postcolonial literature through selected readings from contemporary African, American, Australian, Caribbean, Indian and Latin American writers.

**ENG. 3590: Literature and the Other Arts (75167)**

**MR 10:40-12:05 p.m.**

**Dr. Scott Combs**

"Medium Specificity"

Cinema is nothing if not everything.

This course looks at what happens when cinema represents other art forms--painting, photography, theater, opera, and fiction (broadly defined). In 1911, Ricciotto Canudo declared cinema the "sixth art," by which he meant it did something different than previous forms of representation. To do this, he compared and contrasted film to these other forms. Like music, it was time-based, yet like painting, it was imagistic. But the question of what it does different still looms large (later Canudo declared it the "seventh" art, begging the question of what constitutes an art form in the first place), and this question is nowhere more fascinating than at cinema's intersections with other, often older, visual forms. Cinema has a fascination with technique that predates it, and objects that would seem to be outmoded, or indeed antiquated, in comparison to it. Likewise, it enjoys exploring current and future screen and visual technologies. To think about this question, we will develop a concern for medium specificity, drawing on Aristotle, Kant, and early film theorists like Canudo for help. But our main task will be to watch films in which visual and narrative meaning in one medium (cinema) is carved out of its dependence on another. We will look/listen/read multiple media at once, as cinema often asks us to do, and we will learn why the question of medium specificity continues to interest artists and theorists alike. Films screened, in part or in whole, might include such examples as *An Angel at my Table*, *Adaptation*, *Lola Montes*, *Passion*, *Dogville*, *Memento*, and *Vertigo*.

**ENG. 3720: Intro to Creative Writing (72158)**

**W. 1:50-4:40 p.m.**

**T/B/A**

A course designed to help develop creative writing skills, with emphasis on traditional and contemporary forms of poetry, fiction, drama.

**ENG. 3730: Poetry Workshop (75164)**

**TF 1:50-3:15 p.m.**

**Prof. Lee Ann Brown**

This course is a practicum in daily poetry writing. We will explore and enact both traditional and experimental poetic forms, the role reading plays in our work, the process from first draft to revision, as well as multidisciplinary approaches involving performance, collage and typographical scoring. There is an optional Academic Service Learning component to this course, as well as daily reading and writing culminating in mid semester and final portfolios of poetry and poetics essays.

**ENG. 3750: Advanced Writing Workshop (75172)**

**Writing Nonfiction From Archival Materials**

**MR 5:00-6:25 p.m.**

**Dr. Anne Geller**

Whether nonfiction writers are developing memoirs or more journalistic or academic investigations, they often turn to the primary texts of archives. In our everyday lives, these archives may be the un-curated collections within our homes – letters, scrapbooks, diaries, historical family documents. But New York City is also rich with a wide range of physical archives – from the many collections within the New York Public Library (<http://www.nypl.org/collections/nypl-collections/archival-materials>), including the Billy Rose Theatre Division and the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, to the Municipal Archives that record NYC history from the 17<sup>th</sup> century history to the Lesbian Herstory Archives in Park Slope, Brooklyn and the New York City Parks Library. And it is now possible to visit a wide range of digital archives – for example, US Presidential Libraries, the South Asian American Digital Archive, the September 11<sup>th</sup> Digital Archive, the Hurricane Digital Memory Bank, with materials from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the passenger records of ships that arrived through Ellis Island, and the NYPL's online archives of everything from historical menus to the 1940 NYC phonebook.

In this semester's Advanced Writing Workshop, students will develop their own non-fiction from archives – shorter exercises in the early part of the semester that will be written from materials in the St. John's University archives and a longer text through the second half of the semester that will grow from students' interests and will be written from archives of students' choosing. All archival materials must be read through their social, cultural, and historical context and interpreted, so required reading will include texts about the craft and ethics of writing nonfiction from archives, including issues of access, responsibility, accuracy, permissions and

the challenge of telling an enticing story from what can sometimes seem like very unexciting texts.

Through the semester the class's writers will regularly read and respond to one another's work and to one another's research approaches. As Lynee Lewis Gaillet has recently written: "By pointedly discussing the reasons they select particular research projects, their personal relationship to the materials at hand, and their prejudices and assumptions, archival researchers write truer narratives." This is a course for those interested in writing and researching true stories from primary documents and for those motivated to get mysteries, history, counter-narratives and storytelling on the page.

**ENG. 3770: Advanced Fiction Writing Workshop (75157)**

**MR 10:40-12:05 p.m.**

**Prof. Gabriel Brownstein**

This course is for undergraduates who would like to develop and deepen their work in writing fiction. It is conceived as a continuation of English 3740, the fiction writing workshop. In this class, students will write several independent projects—stories, sections of novels, and experiments of their own devising—and will show them to the class for discussion and critique. As we read and discuss our own fiction, we'll read some great contemporary writers, including Lydia Davis, Linh Dinh, Anthony Doerr, Edward P. Jones, Steven Milhauser, and Alice Munro.

**ENG. 3890: Topics in Film Genre (75154)**

**MR 3:25-4:50 p.m.**

**Dr. Scott Combs**

"The Horror Film"

This course follows the development of the horror film, from early European silent cinema to the early sound-era monster movie, the 1950s science-fiction/horror hybrid, the occult film, the slasher and zombie eras, and recent so-called "torture porn."

Traditionally considered "lowbrow" in cultural appeal, horror demonstrates to remarkable effect a critique of certain privileged positions afforded by race, class, gender, science, and technology. Besides being "scared," we will look closely at the cultural work these movies do. Weekly screenings from 12-2 are required for this course, along with weekly theoretical/scholarly readings.

**ENG. 4992: Seminar in American Literature (75165)**

**MR 3:25-4:50 p.m.**

**Dr. John Lowney**

During the past half decade of the "Great Recession," there has been renewed interest in the Great Depression of the 1930s. This seminar in American literature focuses on this decade of extraordinary social, political, and cultural change. The socioeconomic crisis of the Great Depression and the rise of fascism challenged writers to radically rethink their purpose and audience. While the Depression tends to evoke mythic images of social suffering and revolutionary struggle, the innovative arts of the 1930s have also had a lasting impact on American culture. Emphasizing the interaction of modernism with mass culture in the 1930s,

this course examines the relationship of literature to film, popular music, and the visual arts. Among the topics we will explore are ideology and the relation of aesthetics to politics; gender, race, and class consciousness; the metropolis and modernity; and ethnographic and documentary practice. Readings will include fiction by F. Scott Fitzgerald, William Faulkner, Tess Slesinger, Nathanael West, and Ann Petry; poetry by Langston Hughes, Kenneth Fearing, Sterling Brown, and Muriel Rukeyser; and selected documentary writing.

**ENG. 4994: Seminar in Themes/Genres (75166)**

**The Black Arts Movement--- Culture, Rhetoric, and New Literacies**

**TF 10:40-12:05 p.m.**

**Dr. Carmen Kynard**

This seminar will focus on the Black Arts Movement (BAM) and will connect with the newest scholarship and research that has both critiqued BAM's politics and history but also positioned it in more complicated ways than previous years' dismissive, mainstream scholarship. Delineated most commonly by the year 1964 with the establishment of Amiri Baraka's Black Arts Repertory Theater in New York and ending, as Kalamu ya Salaam suggests, in 1974, as part of the government-sanctioned demise of black activist groups, BAM bound together new collaborations between poets, musicians, theorists, dancers, painters, and photographers. Based on this definition of BAM, we will look at multiple institutions and collectives including: Free Southern Theater in Mississippi, BLKARTSOUTH in New Orleans, Organization of Black American Culture in Chicago, Black Arts West in San Francisco, Watts Writers' Workshop, Boone House in Detroit, Umbra Workshop in New York City, Black House Theater of Oakland. We will look at the ways BAM bound together artistic collaborations and political coalitions among: Puerto Rican artists and activists connected to the Nuyorican poetry movement, the Young Lords Party, Pocho-Che and Third World Communications; the community Mural Movement in Detroit, Boston, St. Louis, and Philadelphia; art centers like the Black Arts Council of Los Angeles and Women Students and Artists for Black Liberation; and new recording studios. We will examine the most famous poets and writers of BAM by looking most closely at Dudley Randall's Broadside Press in Detroit (begun with twelve dollars from his own paycheck as a Detroit librarian in a spare bedroom) and Haki Madhubuti's Third World Press (Chicago), the "most important American small presses publishing poetry ever."

In this seminar, you will be asked to think, write about, and research the ways that BAM's multiple aesthetic productions shifted the contours of who would count as audiences for black writers, what new literacies would look like and do, how new modes of persuasion/rhetoric were made possible. These cross-racial and multi-ethnic coalitions, calls for heightened visibility, and the platform of art for the people achieved an impact that led to the Public Broadcasting System, National Public Radio, and community-based art initiatives, making BAM what renown scholar, James Smethurst, calls "the most influential cultural movement the United States has ever seen."