GRADUATE COURSES IN ENGLISH

Summer Session 2014
Fall Session 2014

COURSE OFFERINGS FOR:
Master of Arts
Doctor of Philosophy
Non-Degree Study

DEPARTMENT OF
ENGLISH COLLEGE OF
ARTS AND SCIENCES
Room HU 336
518 442-4099

Jennifer Greiman, Director of Graduate Studies
Courses are by Permission of Instructor as noted, otherwise by Permission of Department only. Please Contact Jennifer Greiman (jgreiman@albany.edu)) with questions.
FACULTY TEACHING SUMMER & FALL 2014

RONALD A. BOSCO, Distinguished Professor – Ph.D., Maryland

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THOMAS D. COHEN, Professor – Ph.D., Yale University

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TERESA EBERT, Professor – Ph.D., University of Minnesota

JENNIFER GREIMAN, Associate Professor – Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley

JILL E. HANIFAN, Full-time Lecturer – D.A., University at Albany

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MARTHA T. ROZETT, Professor – PH.D., University of Michigan

EDWARD SCHWARZSCHILD, Associate Professor – Ph.D., Washington University

PAUL STASI, Associate Professor – Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley

CAROLYN YALKUT, Associate Professor – Ph.D., University of Denver
SUMMER SESSION COURSES

Four Week 1 (May 27 – June 20, 2014)

ENG 581—Modernist Women Writers

1745 ARRANGED On-Line P. Chu

This course offered online through the Blackboard Learning System. The primary texts for this course will be shorter works of British and American women modernists; we will read these stories and novellas in their sociopolitical contexts. We will, therefore, read literary criticism and history as well as fiction and essays. Authors may include Katherine Mansfield, Rebecca West, Virginia Woolf, Sara Jeannette Duncan, May Sinclair, Nella Larsen, Kay Boyle. The modernist period, roughly 1900-1945, was a time during which people experienced urbanization, the rise of fascism, world war, the development of open cultural configurations outside the bourgeois family, empire and its decline, progressive social movements such as those for suffrage and worker’s rights and the rise of the modern social sciences (psychoanalysis, eugenics, anthropology). Conflicting reactions to these experiences of modernity manifest, many argue, in the writing of the period as the experimental literature called “modernist.” Women writers had complicated relationships to the new artistic circles even as this period marks a time when women’s writing increased markedly and women had more access than ever before to publishing venues, collaboration with other artists, and lifestyles that allowed for creative work. Reading for this course will be quite heavy and the four-week length of the course does not allow for any incompletes or late work (including postings to the discussion and the completion of quizzes/exams/essays) for any reason. Students will be expected to participate in online discussion frequently. (2240) Chu, Patricia 4 Week 1: May 28-June 21 Online course in Blackboard

Four Week 3 (July 21 – August 15, 2014)

ENG 581—Modern American Poets

2574 ARRANGED On-Line J. Hanifan

Focused examination of Modern American Poetry and Poetics after the Turn of the Twentieth Century. The course will invite students to read important works of American poets of the period closely and in context. The online format of this course offers a unique opportunity for advanced students to explore the impact of developing media on modern poetry, and its social, political and aesthetic frames. The online structure of the course will provide ample opportunities for discussion, and as well as advanced critical analysis and theoretical explorations.
FALL COURSES

ENG 500—Textual Practices I
(Open Only to English MA & MALS Students) - Permission of Department is required.

1911 M 4:15-7:05 p.m. BA0223 R. Craig

Textual practices fall into two broad categories: production and consumption. The former includes factors such as the material conditions of production, the concept of the author, and the historical and biographical connections between writers and works. The latter includes issues such as the history of reception and the roles of readers. A consideration of textual practices necessarily entails issues of literary and critical theory. A third category of textual practice relevant to graduate students in English is pedagogy, which extends theoretical questions into the sphere of praxis.

The emphasis of this course will be upon hermeneutics, narrative theory, and nineteenth-century British fiction.

ENG 516—Fiction Workshop

1912 T 7:15-10:05 p.m. HU0027 E. Schwarzschild

Permission of Instructor required. Please submit a sample of your fiction writing with a brief cover letter about yourself and your writing to Prof. Schwarzschild (eschwarzschild@albany.edu). Any student who is an undergraduate or who is a graduate student from a department other than English should e-mail the Director of Graduate Studies <jgreiman@albany.edu> to inquire about workshop eligibility requirements (please include your student ID# in this e-mail).

In this course, each student will be expected to complete and revise two or three pieces of fiction (short stories or novel excerpts) during the semester, to be submitted for workshop discussion. Most of each class period will be devoted to this workshop discussion (for which prepared written comments will be expected). Time will also be spent studying and discussing isolated aspects of effective writing, such as description, dialogue, character depiction, openings, endings, vocabulary and syntax. There will be various texts for reading, as well as occasional in-class writing exercises and supplemental brief assignments.

ENG 581—Early American Poetry (Reading Course)

8362 TH 7:15-10:05 p.m. ES0139 W. Roberts

David Shield’s anthology of early American verse (2007) officially inaugurated the newly reinvigorated field of early American poetry. This reading course will provide students with the opportunity to cover an expansive array of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century North America poetry. From the first epic poem of European origin written in the Americas—Gaspar Perez de Villagra’s The History of New Mexico (1610) in which he defended his military crimes against natives in an attempt to escape punishment from the Spanish crown—to Phillis Wheatley’s poems that instigated her emancipation, early American poetry was often explicitly political and practiced as a social form. The course will explore the relationship between the forms of early American poetry and its multiple uses through close attention to the primary sources, while also providing a survey of the state of the field and recent methodological developments. We will cover various categories and forms: Spanish poetry in translation; foundational British poets; Puritan poetry; Atlantic verse; Christian bellestrism; hymns and revival poetry; southern poetry; revolutionary poetry; national epics; national poetry; popular broadsides; newspaper poetry; and manuscript verse. Though the course will stop with the first anthology of United States poetry in 1829, we will think about the connections and differences between pre-1800 poetry and the major mid-nineteenth-century movements, as well as the advantages and
disadvantages of quarantining pre-1800 poetry from later developments. It is expected that most students will have no previous knowledge of this earliest American poetry and should feel welcome. The course will be most useful for students who intend to teach American literature and/or poetry, who want to investigate early America as a research field, or who are ready to pinpoint a specific long-term research project—though students working outside of early American studies will benefit from the discussion of transnational models and genre. Students will be encouraged to apply their own methodological interests and to conduct original research as they develop substantive annotated bibliographies and state of the field narratives. Arrangements will be made to visit the American Antiquarian Society to introduce students to archival resources. Students will read Villagra’s *The History of New Mexico* (a long epic poem) in translation prior to the first class meeting.

**ENG 582—Shakespeare, Marlowe, and the Challenges of Biographical Speculation**

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This course has two linked objectives: to read Shakespeare's and Marlowe's plays against one another with an eye to influences, echoes, and the development of dramatic strategies from the late 1580s to 1600; and to investigate the ways in which scholars have attempted to reconstruct the lives of Shakespeare and Marlowe from the fragments of evidence and imaginative speculation that have surrounded these two dramatists for four centuries. Readings will include *Doctor Faustus*, *Tamburlaine*, *The Jew of Malta*, *Edward II* by Marlowe, and *Hamlet*, *Henry V*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Richard II* by Shakespeare. Also, parts of *The Reckoning* by Charles Nicholl, *Will in the World* by Stephen Greenblatt, *Contested Will* and *1599* by James Shapiro, *The Genius of Shakespeare* by Jonathan Bate, *Shakespeare's Wife* by Germaine Greer, and other recent critical biographies.

**ENG 582—Melville’s Reading, Melville’s Readers**

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An extensive survey of Herman Melville’s prose and poetry from the 1840s through the 1880s, this course will also pursue an intensive study of Melville as a rigorous reader of philosophy whose work has, in turn, fundamentally shaped literary and political theory into the 21st century. Put another way, this course will study Melville as a thinker, whose experiments in prose and poetry continue to animate questions of ontology, ethics, politics, and aesthetics. To establish a sense of Melville’s broad influence over contemporary critical and literary theory, the course will begin where the academic study of Melville did (and in many ways, where the institutionalization of American literary studies began) – with the discovery of Melville’s *Billy-Budd* in 1924. Taking a brief survey of that text’s influence on theorists from F.O. Mathiessen and Hannah Arendt to Sharon Cameron, we will then go back and read Melville’s work in order of its publication, beginning with two of his early novels, *Typee* and *Redburn*, and following (in highly abridged form) Melville’s own readings in state-of-nature theory and political philosophy. We will spend the middle weeks of the semester with *Moby-Dick*, first dipping into Melville’s studies in epistemology and natural history, and then beginning our more sustained readings in the work of those theorists who have built on Melville’s intellectual work, including C.L.R. James, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, and Peter Szendy. As we continue through Melville’s *Bartleby* and *The Confidence-Man*, we will study his place in the development of more recent literary critical turns toward affect theory, impersonality, and the posthuman. Finally, we will end the course with select readings from the most under-read of Melville’s works—the 18,000 line epic poem, *Clarel*. Works by Melville will include: *Typee*, *Redburn*, *Moby-Dick*, *The Confidence-Man*, *Billy-Budd*, along with selections from *The Piazza Tales*, *Battle-Pieces*, and *Clarel*. Other authors will likely include: T. Hobbes, J-J Rousseau, T. Paine, E. Burke, R. Descartes, J. Edwards, R.W. Emerson, C.L.R. James, C. Olson, F.O. Mathiessen, H. Arendt, G. Deleuze, F. Guattari, J. Rancière, P. Szendy, S. Cameron, and S. Ngai. The requirements for the course will include a presentation, a scholarly book review, and a final seminar paper. For our first class meeting, be sure to have read *Billy-Budd*. 
This seminar explores African Americans’ persuasive and strategic use of discourse as a rhetorical tradition. While our primary framework draws upon the work of scholars in the field of rhetoric and composition, our exploration is interdisciplinary by necessity. The nearly fifty-year long project of recovering and theorizing African American rhetorics includes scholarship in Speech Communication, Literary Studies, Literacy Studies and incorporates insights from Critical Race Theory and Black feminism. Drawing upon these frameworks, we will read a variety of book-length and short-critical works and consider such questions as: what constitutes “freedom” in African American struggle and how definitions of freedom influenced epistemologies and language practices? How have African American leaders and laypeople engaged in collective struggle against racism and racist exclusions confronted the problem of access—access to technologies, access to media, access to audiences? What rhetorics have Black women cultivated to struggle with and within their communities? And, how can the study of African American rhetorical traditions inform and influence conversations about writing and literacy instruction? In taking up these questions, we’ll pursue the broad goal of the course, which is to gain a historical, critical and cultural perspective on the development of African American Rhetorical Traditions as a knowledge-making enterprise. Texts under consideration include: Keith Gilyard’s *True to the Language Game: African American Discourse, Cultural Politics, and Pedagogy*; Shirley Wilson Logan’s *We Are Coming: The Persuasive Discourse of Nineteenth-Century Black Women*; James Cone’s *The Spirituals and the Blues*; Adam Banks’ *Digital Griots: African American Rhetoric in a Multimedia Age*; Elaine Richardson and Ronald Jackson’s *African American Rhetorics: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* and others. Assignments may include: a course presentation; weekly writing assignments; and a seminar-length essay.

As a theoretical prelude, we will start with theories of culture and ask whether culture, as Descartes, Diderot, Hume, Condorcet, Rousseau and Kant, among others argue, is a universal that unfolds by what Kant calls “Coherence according to one principle” (Critique of Pure Reason) or is it the “unspeakable difficulty” of knowing actuality and the singularity of the differences of “habits, wants, characteristics of land and sky” which cannot be understood without “feeling sympathy with a nation if one is to feel a single one of its inclinations or acts, or all of them together” (Herder). For Herder culture is always in the plural and in difference. These views have radically different implications for cultural theory: should, for example, “reason” (Kant) be the logic of cultural critique or “language” (Herder) or class (Marx) or…? Are these oppositions? Are oppositions the effects of a will-to-Truth or reproductions of class contradictions in cultural theory? How does Herder’s idea of culture relate to Negri and Hardt’s anti-dialectics of the "common" as affirmation of singularities and the suspension of the negative in contemporary cultural theory (e.g. Deleuze, Nietzsche and Philosophy)? Along these lines, we will carefully read Derrida’s suggestion: “what is proper to a culture is not to be identical to itself. Not to not have an identity, but not to be able to identify itself, to be able to say, ‘me’ or ‘we’; to be able to take the form of a subject only in the non-identity to itself or,…only in the difference with itself [avec soi]. There is no culture or cultural identity without this difference with itself” (The Other Heading: Reflections on Today’s Europe). We place these theories in relation to Marx’s statement that “This much, however, is clear, that the middle ages could not live on Catholicism, nor the ancient world on politics. On the contrary, it is the mode in which they gained a livelihood that explains why here politics, and there Catholicism, played the chief part. For the rest, it requires but a slight acquaintance with the history of the Roman republic, for example, to be aware that its secret history is the history of its landed property. On the other hand, Don Quixote long ago paid the penalty for wrongly imagining that knight errantry was compatible with all economic forms of society”(Capital, I)
One of the main questions raised by the course is how Marx's concept of "general intellect" (Grundrisse) has re-fashioned contemporary digital cultural theory. We will examine the question through analysis of such concepts as "the law of value," "species-being," "bio-communism," "base and superstructure," "turn to ontology," the "Common," "commune" (as in the Paris Commune), "the idea of communism," "dialectics," "immaterial labor," "vitalism," "new materialisms," the "specter," and "communization." We will read these concepts in relation to class and ask whether the emergence of immaterial property has transformed property relations and dissolved class in what Mario Tronti calls the "social factory." We will read a variety of texts such as selections from Marx's Grundrisse, Capital, and Critique of the Gotha Program; Lenin's texts on militant materialism; Adorno's writings on the culture industry; Althusser's writings on "aleatory materialism"; "Negri's Time for Revolution; Badiou's The Communist Hypothesis; Zizek's collection on The Idea of Communism; as well as writings by Raymond Williams, E.P. Thompson, Marcuse, Walter Benjamin, Agamben, Paolo Virno, Carlo Vercellone and Maurizio Lazzarato, and discuss Deleuze's project ("the Grandeur of Marx").

Throughout the course, we will return to Marx's reading of Balzac's novel, The Peasants, in Capital and examine how his reading of cultural texts is grounded in a theory of reading as use-value. We will ask whether contemporary cultural theory has displaced reading as use-value with interpretation as exchange-value—that is, interpretation with a market value. What are the relations of the popularity of cultural theory and its market value with the dominant social relations that they normalize? Marx’s reading is a militant defamiliarization that reads culture in relation to the conflicts of social relations and the forces of production. How effective is such a reading? What is the place of language in it? This question leads us to a discussion of Jacques Lecercle's A Marxist Philosophy of Language.

The discussion of the common (in communism) raises the question: should cultural theory be militant and take sides in the struggles of our times (around class, ecology, labor relations, sexualities,....) and produce transformative interpretations of texts of culture? Why (not)? Are we in a post-political time—the end of political imagining? How are these questions fought out in contemporary discourses? Here we open a parenthesis to examine Marx's maxim, “Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it,” and its re-signification by Vattimo and Zabla as "the philosophers have only described the world in various ways; the moment now has arrived to interpret it" (Hermeneutic Communism). In The Parallax View, Zizek writes, “the Derridean fashion is fading away.” Within this space, Jeffrey Nealon claims (in Post-postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Just-in-Time Capitalism) that “The last ‘big thing’ on the North American theory horizon, arguably, has been the work of Antonio Negri. Among all the provocations contained in Negri ’s recent work (with and without Michael Hardt), perhaps none is more memorable than a series of polemical provocations concerning postmodern thought in general, and the legacy of deconstruction in particular. Recall Hardt and Negri’s assessment of the contemporary, post-postmodern state of “theory” in Empire: ‘When we begin to consider the ideologies of corporate capitalism and the world market, it certainly appears that the postmodern and postcolonialist theorists who advocate a politics of difference, fluidity, and hybridity in order to challenge the binaries and essentialism of modern sovereignty have been outflanked by the strategies of power. Power has evaporated the bastion they are attacking and has circled around to their rear to join them in the assault in the name of difference. These theorists thus find themselves pushing against an open door’.”

In the struggles over the role of cultural critique and social change, this reading of Negri is countered by another that states: “Negri and Hardt’s work hides a subtle apology for capital and constitutes an inverted version of the traditional Marxism that it was set to oppose” (“Keep on Smiling—Questions on Immaterial Labour,” Aufheben no.14). We return to a second reading of Balzac's novel, this time by Lukacs (Studies in European Realism). Lukacs extends Marx's reading and proposes a theory of realism which we will discuss in relation to Fredric Jameson's The Antinomies Of Realism. There will be no conventional examinations. Students are required to actively participate in seminar discussions every week; write one short paper (about 10 pages); present a seminar report on specific theoretical problems, and write a long theory paper (20-25 pages). All students will have an opportunity to participate in the end of semester "Theory Conference."
This course will explore the recent proliferation of critical theories of sovereignty, focusing on the question of the persistence of the religious in recent developments, particularly the apparent “religious turn” of a number of recent theorists (Agamben, Derrida, and Badiou among others). If Carl Schmitt, at the beginning of the last century, defined modern sovereignty in terms of a break with, and secularization of, political theology, what then accounts for the persistence of the religious in formations of sovereignty in the present century? How and why has the public space (defined since the enlightenment as separate from the “private” domain of religion) been required to accommodate questions of spirit, faith and dogma? In the wake of 20th century critiques of onto-theology (Marx and Heidegger, among others), and the secularizing discourses of the enlightenment, how and why has the figure of the religious managed to survive at the heart of those discourses, and at the heart of modern theorizations of sovereignty? The course will begin by exploring the advent of the secular model of sovereignty (in late 18th and early 19th century texts), moving on to explore arguments about ways in which those discourses appropriated certain theological motifs in their re-construction of the problem of sovereignty. It will then turn to more recent texts to discern whether, how, and why the current theoretical attention to the problem of sovereignty has been forced to take account of the persistence of the religious in the wake of (or because of) the weakening of modern sovereignty’s most trenchant institution: the modern nation-state. Authors studied will include Hobbes, Hegel, Marx, Benjamin, Agamben, Derrida and Badiou. Assignments will include a presentation and seminar paper.

This seminar will examine “canons” and “periodization” as theoretical problems in the 21st century—an “era” of hyper-industrial globalization, digital transformation of the era of the Book, and the intrusion of catastrophic climate change, which increasingly engages non-anthropic agency (so called “post-human” studies). While we will put the last category into question, the seminar will begin by reviewing how these critical terms had been debated and defined in the 20th century management of literary history, temporality and value. We will then explore several case studies in the paradoxes defining “modernism,” with special attention to how the figure of blackness evolves within it. The seminar will turn, finally, to explore alternative trans-historical and trans-referential practices that are emerging in a 21st century increasingly oriented toward non-anthropic agencies and time (the Anthropocene, the era of climate change, extinction, etc). Throughout, we will be mindful that these categories are shaped by (d)evolving techniques of reading and interpretation. Selected readings will be drawn from late 20th century critical debates, textual episodes (Morrison, Hitchcock, Faulkner, Fitzgerald, Von Trier, Stevens, McCarthy, etc.), and theoretical shifts (Plato, Nietzsche, Stiegler, Benjamin, Colebrook, Derrida, Adorno, de Man, de Landa, Zizek, Sloterdijik, N. Clark, Morton, Charabarty). Students will be expected choose topics from the syllabus to prepare short presentations on and, in addition to a short mid-term paper, will be responsible for an end term essay (12-15 pp).

Justifying his highly selective appropriation and interpretation of historical fact to suit his artistic purposes when writing The Crucible, the American playwright Arthur Miller remarked, “One finds I suppose what one seeks.” Miller’s comment is one individual’s acknowledgment of how the intellectual, imaginative, and aesthetic predispositions of creative writers and readers exert a significant influence on their disposition toward historical materials, and it is as instructive for biographical and critical writing and theories of textual editing as it is for fiction, poetry, and drama that nominally locate their sources in history. It is especially instructive in accounting for the variety of ways in which biographers, literary editors, and critics have treated the respective lives, writings, and thought of Americans Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Margaret Fuller, and Henry David Thoreau.
The thesis governing this seminar is that, regardless of the theory informing their practice(s), no biographer, textual editor, or critic ever “objectively” or “disinterestedly” approaches the subject of his or her research. It is a thesis admirably demonstrated by the enormous range of revisionist biographical, textual, and critical studies on Emerson, Hawthorne, Fuller, and Thoreau produced over the last twenty-to-thirty years as well as by print and online arguments presently advanced concerning the “authority” and “accessibility” of ongoing and recent editions of their public and private (personal) writings. During Fall 2014, the emphasis of the seminar will be on biography, although on occasion our discussions will necessarily take us into considerations of the work of editors and critics as well.

Each of these writers enjoys reasonably sound canonical status today, yet a question rarely asked about that status, but which we will ask in the seminar, is, “What personal or cultural needs have driven the canonical standing of these four writers?” To begin answering that question, initial seminar readings and discussions on each writer will be equally divided among that person’s primary texts and biographical works devoted to him or her. Seminar requirements include two brief in-class presentations on assigned topics that will involve current biographies devoted to the featured writers and, by the end of the semester, a substantial “working paper” together with a presentation on a topic related to the explicit thesis of the seminar.

Required texts:


For primary writings by each author: A definitive list is forthcoming; however, for now, either a relatively recent edition of the Norton Anthology of American Literature or volumes in the Library of America series devoted to each writer is a good place to start for those unfamiliar with one or more of these writers.

ENG 681—Contemporary Authors and their Critics

8812 W 4:15-7:05 p.m. ES0245 C. Yalkut

Students taking this course will enjoy the extraordinary opportunity of meeting the authors they study: some of the writers you will have read before, some will be new to you, but all will be authors appearing on campus with the Writers Institute Visiting Writers Series. We will concentrate on the work of at least six, whose works on the global stage range from fiction and nonfiction to poetry, playwriting and screenwriting. Recent visiting writers have included Pulitzer Prize-winners (Gilbert King), MacArthur Prize-winners (Junot Diaz), and Nobel Prize-winners (J. M. Coetzee). By doing independent research, writing literary criticism, and sharing their findings in oral presentations, students will be introduced to contending critical perspectives as well as the historical, cultural, geopolitical, biographical, and literary contexts in which these writers have worked. There will also be opportunities for creative writing modeled on the authors’ work, or on particular influences apparent in (or named by) the writers themselves. The final project will be a sustained critical essay (with a creative option).

Note: Students enrolling in this course should reserve time in their schedules to attend a sufficient number of the Tuesday and Thursday afternoon seminars at 4:15 p.m. as well as several Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evening readings at 8. The actual list of authors will be announced as the Visiting Writers Series schedule is confirmed, sometime over the summer. Updates can be found on the New York State Writers Institute website (www.albany.edu/writers-inst).
Theory and philosophy are discursive tools we might engage, think through and alongside, and make use of to discover our own new points of entry into analyses of literary and cultural texts and practices. They can help us articulate why texts “matter,” how they engage (or fail to engage) the world beyond them. It helps us discern and argue why our work and the texts we study are worth engaging now.

The first two-thirds of the semester will be devoted to a weekly cluster of readings in short selections, complemented by one longer selection or full text, from foundational texts in several philosophical genealogies: historical materialism and critical theory; phenomenology and existentialism; psychoanalysis; structuralism and structuralist linguistics; vitalist metaphysics and creative evolution; pragmatism and process philosophy; deconstruction and other post-structuralisms; and contemporary thought. One broad question will govern our engagement of this wide range of source-texts: How have philosophy and literary theory conceptualized the imaginative and symbolic work of literary and other cultural texts, in their capacity to act as bridges connecting the aesthetic and other realms of experience? As we progress, we will strive to articulate differences and similarities between the thinkers’ treatments of the literary and cultural work of language, writing, the imagination, and (in)communication. During this unit, we also will discuss (and practice) strategies for writing focused, detailed critical summaries about philosophical and theoretic arguments, such as summaries you might use to frame a seminar paper, a dissertation chapter, or publishable essay. How much information is enough to orient general but informed readers? How many details are too much? What are the costs and the benefits of not trying to convey everything articulated in a theoretic source? How might summary be used productively not as a demonstration of mastery of theory but as a critical engagement of, thinking with and through, theorists so as to open new questions about texts? When is it advantageous to mix multiple thinkers, perhaps from different genealogies, in one study? When is such a move possibly detrimental to the integrity of an analysis?

Two weeks of the last third of the semester will consist of our investigation of key texts from one particular contemporary subfield in English Studies whose critics deploy such philosophical and theoretic source-texts as starting points in their critical methodologies. Although that subfield is likely to be one of my own specialties—queer theory and queer studies—the objective is to have a shared ground on which to test your ideas. How might new approaches or questions be opened in that field by rethinking prominent critics’ ideas in light of our earlier readings of their foundational philosophical sources? How might one shift ongoing critical conversations by looking elsewhere for new theoretic foundations than what surfaces explicitly current discussions or implicitly informs them? What traditions are not used or cited? What problems or limits could emerge in trying to incorporate a new genealogy into an ongoing field discussion just for the sake of critical innovation?

This brief unit will provide methodological tools for using “theory” to pose new interventions in your final project, the basis of your work and our meetings in the last three weeks of the semester. Each of you will prepare annotated bibliographies of 10-15 sources to identify trends in criticism from your prospective literary period (such as early modern drama, modernist poetry, or antebellum fiction) or prospective field (such as Composition and Rhetoric, African American studies, globalization studies, film studies, creative writing/poetics, ecocriticism), or the intersection of both. Based on those biographies, you will write a 15- to 20-page position paper fulfilling two major objectives: (1) that starts to articulate an original intervention in your field by working with a new theoretic foundation or working a given foundation anew; and (2) argues the value of your theoretic approach through a brief analysis of a major primary literary or cultural text from your field.

Two or three chapters from intellectual histories about the discipline’s relationship to theory will be available via Blackboard before the semester begins and will be the basis for our first class meeting’s discussion. A complete list of required books will be emailed to students registered for the course in early August.
Writing under the rubric “Peripheral Realisms Now,” Jed Esty and Colleen Lye have recently called for an unseating of the “familiar pattern whereby national realisms compete on unfavorable terms with international modernisms” (MLQ 73 (3): 283). This work proceeds, in part, through a revalorization of the realist impulse present in many postcolonial texts, an impulse, they contend, that a modernist methodology emphasizing rupture, defamiliarization and hybridity has failed to properly acknowledge. In this course we will examine this argument by looking at the tension between “modernist” and “realist” modes within select texts from the mid-19th to the late 20th century. We will begin with Flaubert’s Sentimental Education, which encodes the birth of modernist narrative in response to the events of 1848. We will then address the emergence of an early modernism (Henry James) out of canonical realism (George Eliot), before turning to a series of realist “episodes” within modernism proper, (works will include Dubliners, The Years, “Owl’s Clover,” stories by Katharine Mansfield). Our course will (likely) end with one or two more contemporary postmodern and postcolonial works yet to be determined. Readings will, at times, be paired with theory (Adorno, Lukacs, Jameson, Moretti) and select critical essays, but our emphasis will largely be on the literary works themselves and their formal structures.

ENG 771 — Practicum in Teaching Writing and Literature

This course builds on AENG 770 Teaching Writing & Literature (which is a prerequisite) by providing a forum for dealing with the practical challenges of teaching undergraduate English courses at the University at Albany. Your own current syllabi and handouts, as well as classroom experiences and samples of student writing will be the primary texts used to identify pedagogical problems and consider how to solve them. We will discuss classroom dynamics, develop paper topics, assess grading methods in workshop by focusing on sample student papers, and explore various techniques for developing student skills in reading and writing. We will also discuss professional issues such as teaching evaluations, classroom observation, and documents required for professional files such as a statement of your teaching philosophy. Overall this course will increase your confidence as a teacher of English Writing and Literature as well as your understanding of professional obligation in the field. Prior to the first day of class, course participants should send their current course syllabi to: lana.cable@albany.edu
Course Concentration Distribution

Literature, Modernity, and the Contemporary

ENG 581—Early American Poetry (Reading Course)—Roberts
ENG 582—Shakespeare and Marlow—Rozett
ENG 582—Melville’s Reading, Melville’s Readers—Greiman
ENG 680—The Modernist Parentheses—Cohen
ENG 681—The Politics of American Literary Reputation—Bosco
ENG 681—Contemporary Authors and Their Critics—Yalkut

Writing Practices

ENG 516—Fiction Workshop
ENG 621—African American Rhetorical Traditions

Cultural, Transcultural, and Global Studies

ENG 580—Staging Empire
ENG 621—Feminist Rhetoric(s)

Theoretical Constructs

ENG 582—Melville’s Reading, Melville’s Readers—Greiman
ENG 641—Marxism and Cultural Theory
ENG 642—Sovereignty and Religion

Spring 2015 DRAFT Graduate Course Schedule*

Courses
500 Textual Practices
515 Poetry Workshop
516 Fiction Workshop
580 Anglophone Caribbean
581 Recovering Reconstruction
581 Enlightenment & Peripheries (Reading)
615 African-American Poetry (Reading)
641 ‘Life’ Studies: Vitalism & the Arts
651 Theories of Language & Translation
720 Textual Practices II: Literature of the Vital:
   Philosophies of Nature, Ontologies of Matter
North
Noel
Tillman
Griffith
Fretwell
Hill
Smith
Barney
Elam
Lilley