ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
WINTER 2011

ASEM 2678, Section 1: The Slave Narrative Tradition
Jeffery Mack
M, W 12pm-1:50pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course examines the autobiographical impulse that has resulted in a continuous tradition of narrative literature. Now highly regarded for its literary, psychological, and socio-political distinctiveness, the American Slave Narrative has been the source of scholarly investigation by every literary generation and critical school. Why these works of African American autobiography and their novelistic successors have maintained their centrality in twentieth/twenty-first century intellectual thought and have become so crucial to our understanding of American and African American expressive culture are the questions that will frame our study. Freedom, individualism and collective identity, cultural dualism, political empowerment, manhood, womanhood, sexual and racial difference, literacy, and memory are some of the more obvious and powerful themes explored in these narratives with increasing complexity. Certainly, one of the challenges making African American autobiography, like American autobiography in general, more compelling is its link to changing interpretations of the autobiographical self, especially around conceptions of the self as unified and knowable. We will read chronologically and developmentally as we structure our dialogue around traditional and contemporary narratives, both autobiographical and fictional, to reflect the extent and diversity of the slave narrative’s influence. Three major periods will be covered: (1) 1760-1865, (2) 1865-1945, (3) 1945-present. The goal of this course is to provide special training in the use of cultural criticism and literary analysis for examining and teaching a distinct and often underrepresented body of American literature.

ASEM 2403, Section 1: Versions of Egypt
Brian Kiteley
T, R 12:00-1:50pm

Course page:
www.du.edu/~bkiteley/Core2403.html

ASEM 2633, Section 1: The Literature of Trauma
Billy J. Stratton
M, W 2pm-3:50pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will examine the relation between memory, trauma, and history in postwar American literature and culture. In recent years, the nature and meaning of historical trauma has become a major theme in numerous American novels and films. These narratives display the growing tensions between the memories and experiences of marginalized subjectivities and the conventional narratives of historical discourse. In this class, we will examine texts dealing with the effects of individual and communal psychic trauma, which often function to interrogate and challenge canonical histories that have tended to reinforce modernist ideas of order and progress.

ASEM 2609, Section 1: Nature and Apocalypse in American Literature
Billy J. Stratton
T, R 10am-11:50am

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Concern about the declining state of the environment has been a topic of longstanding interest in American literary discourse. Perhaps, nowhere is the controversial and hotly contested nature of this subject more apparent than in current debates regarding global warming and the consequences of our reliance upon fossil fuels. In this course we will examine and comment upon the work of a diverse group of writers from Muir to McCarthy who engage issues relating to the effectiveness of environmental activism and the long term viability of social structures predicated upon technological and consumer culture in the shadow of impending catastrophe.

ENGL 1000, Section 1: Introduction to Creative Writing
Broc Rossell
M, W 12:00-1:50 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

What is poetry, what is fiction, and what's in the middle? In this course we will read a novella, plenty of short fiction, and poetry as a way of working our way toward answering these questions; by the end of the course we may find ourselves asking questions like "what's poetic about this fiction?" and "why is this poem written in prose?" There will be regular writing assignments, mostly short and mostly creative, but you will also be required to craft some slightly longer, carefully-written and carefully-thought critical responses to the questions above. Be prepared to contribute to class discussions every week, and be prepared to work and think
outside of your comfort zone. Students will have the opportunity to submit their own work to the class for review.

ENGL 1000, Section 2: Introduction to Creative Writing – Fictions of the Non-heroic Landscape
Samuel Knights
T, R 8:00-9:50 a.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

"In the Midwest, around the lower Lakes, the sky in the winter is heavy and close, and it is a rare day, a day to remark on, when the sky lifts and allows the heart up. I am keeping count, and as I write this page, it is eleven days since I have seen the sun.”  – William Gass

The benefit and burden of drab landscapes seem monumental to one's writing; in this course we will privilege texts that emanate from such "non-heroic" surroundings. Interested students should note we will breach the notion of linear narratives and privilege the urgency of the text over genre (i.e. fictions: poetry, prose, & amalgams of both). Our aim is to engage a variety of writing strategies by way of contemplative readings and imaginations. Moreover, we will explore and rely on writing constraints to see how the subconscious still wrestles its way through intentionality.

ENGL 1000, Section 3: Introduction to Creative Writing
Seth Landman
M, W 2:00-3:50 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

“It would seem that one risks losing one’s talent in attempting to explore its infernos. But what of it? Would we not discover something else?”

– Paul Valéry

How can analysis lead to an unfolding of opportunities, potentialities, and possibilities in our own writing? What do we have to gain as writers when we examine the language and choices we make? Why do we write? What do we think we might figure out? In this course, we will discuss your own creative writing as well as outside texts, and we will see if we can come up with some useful ways to talk about our reactions to them. As much as possible, we will attempt to uncover the conditions which make us want to write and keep writing.

ENGL 1000, Section 4: Introduction to Creative Writing – Picturing Words
Joan Dickinson
T, R 12:00-1:50 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to examine the visual roots of writing and its application in contemporary forms. We’ll consider three areas of exploration starting with proto-writing and cave art, alphabets, hieroglyphs, and pictograms as well as the decoding of lost languages. Next up: artists painting words (word artists?) including Kay Rosen, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Jenny Holzer, Kerry James Marshall, Hollis Sigler, John Lurie, Paul Chan, and the Reverend Howard Finster. Finally, we’ll look at the work of artists who make books - artists’ books - and the concept of the book as a visual art. Class time is a mix of lecture, collaboration, studio and labs as well as trips into the field. Along the way, students create and decipher an original language, collaborate on word art and its presentation, and make their own artist book. Intended for writers at the beginning of their college careers and possibly at the beginning of their writing careers, this class offers a generative, explorative survey identifying the visual roots of writing with an emphasis on the collaborative nature of writing at its inception. Students participate through active listening, collaboration with fellow students and artists, and evolving their relationship to their work in response to class material.

ENGL 1005, Section 1: Introduction to Genre-Drama
Roger Green
T, R 12pm-1:50pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will look at aspects of drama in Rock and Roll music with a particular emphasis on the late sixties and early seventies and the transition from psychedelic rock to glam rock. We will look at a variety of texts from a variety of mediums. For example, Phil Auslander's Performing Glam Rock: Gender and Theatricality in Popular Music and Dick Hebdige's Subculture: The Meaning of Style. Other texts will be "rock" movies, operas, albums, and videos. We will discuss the relationship between the performance and the medium, be it stage, sound recording, or video. We will discuss character study and its relationship to authenticity. Our approach to drama, therefore will be in the ways Rock musicians and music performs culture.

Students will be expected to produce frequent written analyses of songs, albums, and videos as homework. Students do not need any background knowledge in either music or drama to take this course. While our primary focus will be on reading, I will be open to performance-based projects for some assignments.

ENGL 1002, Section 2: Introduction to Genre-Fiction
Leslie Anne Jennings
M, W 10:00-11:50 a.m.
COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course introduces students to fictions that are centered within or have become an object of popular culture. In academia, the notion of popular genre is often inflated by the terms “mass”, “low-brow”, “meta-literary”, etc. This class will seek to examine how race, gender, socio-economic class and politics are represented and reflected in works of popular fiction.

ENGL 1110: Literary Inquiry: Varieties of Comic Experience
Jan Gorak
T, R 2:00-3:50 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

What makes something comic either visually, verbally, or situationally? Does comedy know no boundaries or are their strict temporal and spatial barriers? How do we write about comedy, and why should anyone want to? These are just some of the questions to be aired and perhaps brought to some sort of resolution in our course. A course for people who like to put their ideas in order and will take some care to do so.

Teaching method: Some showings, discussion and analysis

ENGL 1110, Section 2: Literary Inquiry-Hybrid Genres
Scott Howard
T, R 10:00-11:50 a.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

What are literary genres and how do they change over time? How do we read innovative, new works that question or resist the status quo? This course involves interdisciplinary studies in literature, film, poetics, digital media, and contemporary culture. The class will investigate a series of inter-related topics—adaptation vs. translation; image/text; dialogue & heterogeneity; intertextuality & metafiction—that will inform close readings of and creative/critical responses to a selection of works from Shakespeare to Swensen.

ENGL 1110, Section 3: Literary Inquiry
Benjamin Kim
M, W 2:00-3:50 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will introduce students to the pleasures of literature and film and provide them with the basic tools of interpretation. We will read four novels and watch filmic adaptations of each:

**ENGL 1110, Section 4: Literary Inquiry**  
*Selah Saterstrom*  
T, R 8:00-9:50 a.m.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

In this course we will examine the relationship between the body of the text and actual bodies. Through the lens of theoretical and creative texts, as well as considering the history of the book, we will investigate questions such as: *Does the logic of the body inform language, and what are the implications of this possibility? Does a male/female/trans-colored body generate different textual bodies? How does language give voice and visibility to the body when the body is in pain, in repose, in joy?* This course is discussion based, with an emphasis on extensive reading and writing.

**ENGL 1110, Section 5: Literary Inquiry - Literary Landscapes of the New West**  
*Billy J. Stratton*  
T, R 2pm-3:50pm

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

The American West as landscape, myth, and symbol has played a central role in the development of the American canon. Since the earliest descriptions found in Spanish accounts the West has been associated with adventure and peril, while also representing an enduring symbol of hope as a mythical land of endless possibility. Encapsulating the shifting boundaries of the American frontier, which Frederick Jackson Turner identified as “the meeting point between savagery and civilization,” the literature of the West was instrumental in defining and redefining the contours of the American master narrative, the ideology of progress, and American identity. In this course, we will examine a diverse array of contemporary texts that seek to redefine and re-envision the cultural, social, historical, and artistic significance of the West in profound and imaginative ways.

**ENGL 2001, Section 1: Creative Writing-Poetry**  
*Danielle Vogel*  
T, R 10am-11:50am

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

*Book Arts & the Book-Length Poem —*
In this class we will engage with poems as relics, as surviving fragments of the past. A book and a poem are places to return to. We will meet in the space of the book and the poem, and while there, we will explore what it means to create such curiosities.

Workshops are often concerned with the production of creative work; in this class we will study the interaction between the text and its book. We will investigate book arts and the book-length poem through many avenues. The book-length poems we read in class will help us move toward creating our own book-length projects. There will be weekly presentations on the literature we read, as well as class discussions and workshops of one another’s creative work. There will also be hands-on work as we experiment with book design and binding. We will be going on class field trips to local book arts centers to learn about the history of the book and the printed word. The quarter will culminate in a final book arts presentation of your own book-length artistic endeavor.

ENGL 2011, Section 1: Creative Writing-Fiction
Maik Nwosu
T, R 12:00-2:00 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Techniques and forms of fiction. Prerequisite: ENGL 1000.

ENGL 2036, Section 1: History of Genre-Fiction
Selah Saterstrom
T, R 10:00-11:50 a.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
In this course we will investigate representations of gender and identity in contemporary literature through the lens of hermeneutics, or, the study of interpretative theory. Using the question as a mode of inquiry, engaging with a range of critical and creative texts, through our readings, conversations, and projects, we will consider the complexities of “reading and writing the self.”

ENGL 2200, Section 1: Literature II: Donne to Johnson
Jessica Munns
M,W 12:00-1:50 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course will examine major works of literature from the early seventeenth century to the late eighteenth century. We will focus on topics such as landscape (topographical) poetry, the rise of
journal and newspaper writing, the entry of women into the writing market place; genres such as the novel, modes such as satire and pastoral.


Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver’s Travels*.

**ENGL 2221: Shakespeare Seminar**  
Linda Bensel-Meyers  
M, W 10-11:50am

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This term we will study the sowing and growth of Shakespeare’s dramatic imagery. From the early comedies through the tragedies to the final romances, Shakespeare returned again and again to similar images to comment on our place as individuals within the world of imperfect but marvelous humanity. As drops of water intermingled within an ocean of other lives, we will find ourselves within an overview of Shakespeare’s plays, and eventually discover where he resides within us all.

**ENGL 2402, Section 1: Later Romantics**  
Benjamin Kim  
M, W 12:00-1:50 p.m.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is on the second generation of British Romantic writers, and covers the time period between 1812 and 1829. If the first-generation Romantics were formed by the American and French Revolutions, the second-generation Romantics were formed by the Napoleonic Wars and their aftermath. Tied less to Enlightenment thinking than their predecessors, the second-generation Romantics pushed the themes of the imagination, individuality, revolt, and revolution to extremes. In addition to poetry by John Keats, Percy Shelley, Lord Byron, Felicia Hemans, and John Clare, we will read prose by Thomas de Quincey and Mary Shelley.

**ENGL 2712, Section 1: American Short Story**  
William Zaranka  
M, W 2:00-3:50 p.m.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

We will begin by reading some works by early American masters of the short story—of all genres, the one held by many to be an American invention and an American specialty. The emphasis early on will be on the elements of fiction—plot, character, theme, conflict, point of view, tone, style, and so on—and how those elements may be shown to be formally integrated in
what we will call the “traditional” short story or short fiction. Having established a somewhat formal definition of the short story based on the writings of Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Charles Chesnutt, Henry James, and others, we will proceed to other works whose formal elements will either confirm or severely test our definition. Included will be realistic, naturalistic, impressionistic, expressionistic, and otherwise experimental stories by a rich variety of writers, including not only Chopin, Wharton, Crane, Cather, Fitzgerald, and Faulkner, but also Wright, Welty, Cheever, Baldwin, Coover, Barthelme, Erdrich, Oates, Jen, Alexi, Lahiri, Lydia Davis, and others.

Thus far the course will have centered mostly on the formal aspects and major modes of the short story. Later in the course, however, our emphasis will shift to other “genres,” or “hybrids,” somewhat far removed. I have in mind at least one longer work, perhaps not so long as a novella, and also some so-called experiments in “flash-fiction” and the prose-poem. I hope to examine with you how the traditional works we have read during the quarter, and how the more experimental works, cohere and reinforce, or subvert and disguise each other, and why.

Requirements: Strict attendance and participation. Students can also expect to write a short paper, a longer paper, and a take-home final examination, as well as to participate in exercises that clarify the fiction we will be reading.

Texts: To be announced

ENGL 2741, Section 1: American Jewish Literature
Adam Rovner
M, W 10:00-11:50 a.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course surveys over 100 years of American Jewish immigrant narratives beginning with the great exodus of Eastern European and Russian Jewry at the end of the 19th century and ending with the 1990s. Canonical works by central authors reveal the great successes of Jewish immigrants alongside their spiritual failures. A selection of memoir, novels, short stories, and poetry in English and in translation from Hebrew and Yiddish demonstrate the multilingual character of the Jewish experience in America. Ultimately, the story of Jewish immigration emerges as an American rags-to-riches story that all immigrant groups share. No knowledge of Jewish languages, religious tradition, or cultural practice is necessary to succeed in this course.

ENGL 2742, Section 1: Modern Hebrew Literature in Translation
Adam Rovner
M, W 2:00-3:50 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course offers a survey of significant works of modern Hebrew literary fiction by major authors in translation. Students will consider how the development of Hebrew literature has contributed to the formation of contemporary Israeli identity, and how the conflicts that define the turbulent history of Israel are treated in works of prose fiction by canonical authors. The selection of diverse voices and literary materials exposes students to the social, political, and historical changes wrought by the rise of modern day Israel. Through lectures, close-reading, and exercises, students will gain an appreciation for some of the fundamental tensions that define Hebrew literature and Israeli culture. No knowledge of Hebrew, Jewish tradition, or Israeli history is necessary.

ENGL 2751, Section 1: American Literature Survey  
Jeffery Mack  
M, W 8am-9:50am

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

TBA

ENGL 2815, Section 1: Principles of Rhetoric  
Ann Dobyns  
M, W 12:00-1:50

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

What is rhetoric? Why do first-year writing instructors talk about rhetoric, but philosophy professors do not? What do reporters mean when they talk about a politician’s rhetoric? What do we mean when we say something is just “rhetoric”? What is Burke talking about? Why is an English professor teaching a class in rhetoric?

This class will address these questions. In addition, we will discuss why studying rhetoric is worthwhile, why it was one of the primary liberal arts in classical education for over 2000 years, what its relationship is to the field of ethics, why it commonly used as a pejorative term, and why so few colleges and universities have Departments of Rhetoric? We will also learn the principles of rhetoric and the application of those principles to the discourses of politics, law, the media, and literature.

ENGL 3001, Section 1: Creative Writing-Poetry  
Lloyd Bin Ramke  
T, R 2:00-3:50 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

TBA

ENGL 3732, Section 1: American Romantics and Radicals, 1820-1865  
Clark Davis
T, R 12:00-1:50 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course covers the period of religious, philosophical, social, and political reform that runs from about 1820 to the beginning of the Civil War. In addition to the expected focus on romantic ideas about nature, self-reliance, etc., we will look at the volatile contexts that surround and nurture these ideas. Utopian social reform, the women’s rights movement, abolition, temperance, various health movements--this is a fascinating and extremely influential period that has given us many of the ideas we take for granted in America today.

English 3821, Section 1: Literary Criticism: 19th century to Present
Jan Gorak
T, R 2:00-3:50p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Our study will be of language in literature as explored by some leading figures from Coleridge and Newman to Jakobson and Barthes. The mysteries of literary language and the attempts to reduce those mysteries to a science have occupied some of the most ingenious wits in modern culture. Naturally, we shall need some literary works as our quarry so we shall at least three primary works to be chosen later.

Teaching Method: Lecture, Discussion
Assignments, Texts TBA

ENGL 3852 Section 1: Topics and Poetics: Meter and Form
William Zaranka
M 4pm-7:50pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This is a course in poetic meter and poetic form, for both graduate and undergraduate students. We’ll examine (very briefly) the organized and regulated patterns of metrical verse beginning with the quantitative, classical line; the accentual-alliterative line of Old English (and later accentual poetry); and the syllabic line. The real focus, however, will be on the accentual-syllabic line that dominates English poetry from Wyatt and Surrey into the 19th and much of the 20th century. Identifying these lines will necessarily require an examination of the foot—iambic, trochaic, anapestic, dactylic, spondaic, pyrrhic, ionic, and so on—as the basic unit of metrical verse, and the various techniques of scansion prosodists have quarreled about for centuries. From these fundamentals we’ll move to other considerations: relative stress as a technique of scansion, variations of the established (artificial) metrical norm and how these variations often contribute to meaning, abstract patterns of meter and their relationship (sometimes tense but telling) to actual speech rhythms, and how other poetic techniques of ordering, such as rhyme, caesural
pauses, line breaks, and stanza forms, may be said to be “projections and magnifications of the kind of formalizing repetition meter embodies,” or “meter writ large.” Because prosodic study is inexact and theoretical interpretations abound, we will be looking at not only graphic, but also alternative methods of scansion, and at arguments intended to “rethink” meter, abolishing the foot in favor of the syntactical unit as a way of reading traditional metrical verse, for example, or giving the pentameter the heave altogether in favor of free verse or “the variable foot,” or closing the circle by exhuming from some free verse the old three- or four-stress pattern said to be reasserting itself from English poetry’s accentual beginnings. Beyond recognition and identification of prosodic strategies, you will have the option of actually writing and scanning some of your own formal poems (see requirements, below) for the fun of it or, if not for the fun of it, for the experience it may provide as preparation for teaching our students what to look for in formal verse.


Requirements
Option 1: Two 10-page papers. In one, choose a poem (or two, or a group of poems) for analysis according to prosodic principles. In the second, add your voice to the debate in the entertaining Baker book.
Option 2: A 10-page paper adding your voice to the cacophony of debate in Baker’s entertaining Meter in English anthology (see Wallace’s essay and note the variety of responses to it), and a group of original metrical lines/stanzas/poems in various forms (mostly of your choosing, and some of which we’ll have a look at in class). I would hope to begin looking at poems during the third or fourth class, for more and more time each class. The paper probably should come quite late in the quarter, when we’ve covered most of the issues brought up by Wallace’s essay in the Baker book, and when we’ve read the responses by others to Wallace’s propositions.

ENGL 4000, Section 1: Graduate Colloquium
Scott Howard
W 6:00-7:50 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This is a graded class (not a Tutorial) required for all second-year doctoral students. Second-year MA students may also take this class. The primary aim for ENGL 4000 is to provide a lively introduction to a variety of professional development matters, including: departmental policies; preparing for comprehensive exams & the dissertation process; preparing for the job market; teaching/publication/service; making one’s work public; models for authorship, scholarship, and teaching; job opportunities beyond academia; disciplinary & interdisciplinary studies; theory & methodology; tenure & promotion; faculty & administrators; work & life, etc.

ENGL 4001, Section 1: Creative Writing-Poetry
COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In this workshop, we will write in class, read, discuss, and look at substantial pieces of your own work. The readings seem to have gathered around notions of the long poem or epic, which we will interrupt with questions of the lyric, the fragment, the song.

ENGL 4011, Section 1: Creative Writing-Fiction
Laird Hunt
M, 12pm-3:50pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

While careful examination/discussion of your work will be at the center of our weekly deliberations, we will also be exploring contemporary writings that (hopefully) bust paradigms, interrupt orders, rewrite histories, and just generally upset the apple cart of standard received notions of the literary status quo. Risk-taking, groundbreaking younger writers we will look at to fuel our conversation and inspire our own writing efforts will include Percival Everett, Harry Mathews, Ann Quin, Danielle Dutton, Marie Redonnet and Patrik Ourednik. Workshop participants will also be asked, over the course of the quarter, to make informal (but articulate!) presentations on their current writing interests, obsessions, providing, as they do so, some sense of the critical and contextual framework for their creative output.

ENGL 4213: Jacobean Tragedy
Linda Bensel-Meyers
T, R 10-11:50 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Using Marlowe’s iconoclastic drama as a touchstone, we will explore the development of Jacobean Tragedy as a rhetorical response to the cultural and socio-political crises of early seventeenth-century England. Testing modern critical assumptions about these plays, we will explore just how “postmodern” these tragedies are in temperament. How did the skepticism of the time shape dramatic character as an element of class and gender inquiry? As incipient forms of modern mimesis, representatives of early modern literature, how do they invite “postmodern” readings? Why do female figures arise as central to the inquiry? Dramatists include: Marlowe, Shakespeare, Webster, and Ford.

ENGL 4424: Special Topics 19th Century Literature
Eleanor McNees
T 4:00-7:50 p.m.
COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The Victorians and Italy

This graduate course will investigate the Victorians’ obsession with Italy and Italian history and culture from Dickens’s year-long stay in the 1840s to Henry James’s repeated visits from 1869 to the early 20th century. Through the lens of tourism theory we will explore how the Grand Tour of the 18th century was transformed in the 19th century with the advances in transportation, especially the railroad. We will also note how the Italian Risorgimento was interpreted in the British press and subsequently gave rise to a romanticized version of Italy. In addition to Dickens and James, authors will include Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning, George Eliot, Thomas Trollope, Anna Jameson, John Ruskin and Margaret Oliphant.