

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT**  
**COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

**SPRING 2014**

**ENGL 1000, Section 1: Intro to Creative Writing**

**Nan Burton**

**MW 8:00-9:50 AM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

We will observe, discuss, listen to and question aspects of *presence, absence, photography and feral children*—how each informs our creative works and entangles itself in how we have come to know and recognize ourselves in the world. Careful readings and discussions of your work along with excerpts from our course reading list will be the primary focus of the class. In-class interviews with one or two visiting writers or translators of the works that we are considering, practices of erasures, in-class writing and activities, and a lot of play will motivate, inform, expand, or disrupt our writing efforts.

**ENGL 1000, Section 2**

**Introduction to Creative Writing**

**Rachel King**

**T, R 10-11:50 AM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is designed to provide a multi-faceted approach to the study of creative writing that emphasizes crossover between different genres rather than genres in isolation. Students will be expected to actively engage a variety of textual forms throughout the quarter, create a significant body of their own creative work, read a great deal outside of class, and be expected to entertain a variety of approaches to creative writing-- both inside and outside the academy. We will be less concerned with the "artfulness" of work produced and more concerned with the writing process itself.

**ENGL 1000, Section 3**

**Introduction to Creative Writing**

**TaraShea Nesbit**

**M, W 12-1:50 PM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

In this class celebrating the collapse of formal boundaries, students will read, view, and create works in several genres and modalities, from print and digital interpretations of the written word, to works whose tie to writing may be abstracted. We will look at the threshold between the internal and the external, consider how personal vulnerability may be the connection between the two, and the how the maps we make of the outside world may reveal the maps of our own imaginations.

**ENGL 1000, Section 4**  
**Introduction to Creative Writing**  
**Poupeh Missaghi**  
**T, R 8-9:50 AM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

What do we know about Iran and Iranians? Besides what we hear on news, if we hear anything, how much do we know of the daily lives of the men and women there, of the youth and the older generation, of their conflicts and dreams?

What journalism fails to give us, literature can: A closer look at and a deeper insight of a people and place.

The course is designed to help us learn more about a people who, despite the geographical separation, share many concerns and hopes with us, and about their ways of storytelling. It is through understanding them and their stories that we can also come to understand much about ourselves, as both individuals and a nation, and about our stories.

The course focuses on more modern and contemporary works of literature from Iran.

**ENGL 1000, Section 5**  
**Introduction to Creative Writing**  
**Kanika Argawal**  
**M, W 10-11:50 AM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

The science fiction writer Arthur C. Clarke proposed three “laws” of science and technology that can also be applied to the imagination and creative work:

1. When a distinguished but elderly scientist states that something is possible, he is almost certainly right. When he states that something is impossible, he is very probably wrong.
2. The only way of discovering the limits of the possible is to venture a little way past them into the impossible.

3. Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.

In this course, we will read speculative and hybrid works of poetry, fiction, and non-fiction that venture past the limits of what was previously thought possible. We will examine how writers create the illusion of magic through the practice of the technologies – processes, methods, techniques – of writing. In Lewis Carroll’s *Through the Looking Glass*, Alice tells the White Queen, “There’s no use trying . . . : one CAN’T believe impossible things.” The Queen responds that Alice hasn’t “had much practice”; when she was Alice’s age, she “did it for half-an-hour a day” and sometimes managed to believe “as many as six impossible things before breakfast.” By learning from the texts we read, by trying and practicing, we will work toward not only believing but also writing the impossible.

### **ENGL 1000, Section 6**

#### **Introduction to Creative Writing**

**Patrick Kelling**

**T, R 12-1:50 PM**

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This class will be a craft-based exploration of writing and literature. We will examine and explode realism by giving up our attachments to linear plots, clichéd language, and cookie cutter characters. Instead, we will investigate alternative ways in which language and syntax can be used to construct narrative. We will be examining the voice and style of already-established writers: Blake Butler, Robert Coover, Danielle Dutton, and Stephen Graham Jones.

### **ENGL 1000, Section 7**

#### **Introduction to Creative Writing**

**Nicholas Gulig**

**M, W 2-3:50 PM**

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

In this course we will look into the work of a wide variety of writers and poets in order to better understand the different ways creative language comes into, is related to, and affects the world surrounding it. We will focus in particular on the tension between our own subjective interiority as writers and the external objective context in which we are asked, both by the mysterious nature of that context, and by a need to somehow fill that world with meaning, to be creators. The course will be organized loosely around critical and creative readings, discussions of a variety of contemporary American poets, as well as a weekly workshop where we will examine the work of classmates in light of these discussions. Each week will focus on a specific writer in an attempt to experience directly a diversity of perspectives and ideas on what is and what isn’t

possible through artistic language. Student's will then be expected borrow from these discussions, implementing what is found there in their own creative work. While the class is oriented primarily around "poetry", we will also discuss ways the border between poetry and prose has been blurred in a contemporary context where it is no longer easy to distinguish between genres, looking to examples of fiction and non-fiction which borrow from and implement various poetic devices. Activities will include reading, writing exercises, the attendance of at least one out of class reading, written critical responses to other student's work, copious participation, presentations, a memorized recitation, and an end of semester writing portfolio.

**ENGL 1006, Section 1**

**Art of Fiction**

**Cyrus Frost**

**T, R 12-1:50 PM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

*The Art of Fiction* is, as its title implies, an introduction to short stories and novels that is intended to sharpen writing and analytic skills as it surveys a wide range of nineteenth and Twentieth-century literary texts. In addition to reading assignments in the neighborhood of 50 to 75 pages per week, students will be expected to write two formal papers of 5 to 7 pages, suffer through weekly quizzes, and take a final exam. These formal requirements will be balanced by a decidedly informal classroom environment. The model for the course will be an informed discussion, not a lecture. Therefore, careful preparation of reading assignments and classroom participation will be essential.!

**ENGL 1007, Section 1**

**Art of Poetry**

**Sarah Boyer**

**M, W 2-3:50 PM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Poetry is a multi-headed beast and getting a handle on it takes a lifetime of study; however, the Art of Poetry will offer a spring board. Taught in five modules each two weeks long, this course will establish poetic lineages: Lyn Hejinian and Gerard Manley Hopkins, Ted Berrigan and Shakespeare, Susan Howe and Emily Dickinson, and James Tate and Baudelaire. Through these pairings we will examine documentary work, sound and sense, prose poetry, and the evolution of formal verse.

**ENGL 1008, Section 1**

**The Art of Drama**

**Catherine Alber**

**T, R 8-9:50 AM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

What is tragedy? Why has it endured? How have our presentations and perceptions of tragedy changed through time? Through close readings of both texts and performances, this class explores the nature and structure of dramatic tragedy and how the genre has shifted through its roughly 2500 year history, from its origins with the ancient Greeks to the postmodern brutality of Sarah Kane. We will examine each text in terms of its literary, historical, and cultural significance as well as its contribution to the genre.

**ENGL 1009, Section 1**

**Art of Non-Fiction**

**Kameron Bashi**

**T, R 2-3:50 PM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Where do we draw the line between different kinds of literature? What is required for a narrative to be considered 'truthful'? How does a writer choose what to include and what to discard while always "sticking to the facts"? In this class we will look for differences and forge connections in hopes of uncovering an "art." Readings from James Schuyler, Joan Didion, Dave Eggers, Alphonso Lingis, and Carlos Castaneda. Writing assignments weekly.

**ENGL 1110, Section 1**

**Literary Inquiry- The Pastoral (Honors program students only)**

**Bin Ramke**

**T, R 10-11:50 AM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This is a course for those interested in questioning our continuing fascination with stories, images and myths about the virtues of "the country" and the vices of "the city." But it is also a celebration of both the virtues and the vices.

The term "pastoral" refers to an ancient literary form, primarily poetic, and it refers as well to content—descriptions of the rural with an implicit contrast to the urban. And there is a skeptical use of the term as pejorative; often in contemporary usage "pastoral" implies a failure to see current conditions, needs, and dangers. We will consider political, psychological, aesthetic, and historical uses of the term so we might come to understand how the binary oppositions of country and city have been contrasted and used to various purposes over time. But

notice also the book list—we will examine pastoral in its absence, by examining the imagined and the real authority of The City.

Even though this is a lecture course, it will involve intense, informed discussion by students.

### **ENGL 1110, Section 2**

#### **Literary Inquiry: She-Tragedies and Sex Comedies in English Restoration Theater**

**Jennifer Golightly**

**T,R 10-11:50 AM**

#### **COURSED DESCRIPTION:**

Upon his restoration to the English throne, Charles II reopened the theaters (closed at the behest of Oliver Cromwell and the Puritan Parliament that ruled England during the Interregnum) and opened the way for women to play female characters on the English stage for the first time in the history of the theater. A golden age of English drama followed, one that explored subjects that ranged from the various political upheavals of the period to sex and desire to the new, increased visibility of women in society. This course will explore two dramatic subgenres that flowered during the Restoration period, the she-tragedy and the sex comedy.

### **ENGL 2003, Section 1**

#### **Creative Writing: Poetry, PREREQ: ENGL 1000**

**Joe Lennon**

**M, W 2-3:50 PM**

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This class is called a poetry workshop, but we won't take for granted any preconceived definitions of either the word "poetry" or the word "workshop." In fact, this class will be a creative working debate about what poetry is, and what the heck it even means to shape and work with words poetically. During the quarter you'll read and write a lot of poems, and you'll share with your classmates a lot of what you've written. The main point will not be to make your poems better, or even to make you a better poet, but instead to make you better aware of what other poets have done, to encourage you think more critically about how and why they've done it, and most importantly, to show you how it feels to have the power of your own language tested through poetry. This is a **READING** and **WRITING INTENSIVE** course. Poetry demands a lot of attention and energy; be prepared to read about 5 full books of published poetry, plus 15-20 pages of supplementary reading each week, **PLUS** your classmates' work. Be prepared to engage boldly and openly, in class discussion and in writing, with everything you've read.

**ENGL 2013, Section 1**

**Creative Writing: Fiction, PREREQ: ENGL 1000**

**Katie Shinkle**

**T, R 10-11:50 AM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

In this intermediate workshop, we will explore and investigate the process, craft, and art of thinking and writing about fiction and prose through various writing rituals, practices, course readings, and lively discussion. Students are required to share their work with the workshop for feedback throughout the quarter.

**ENGL 2120, Section 1**

**Chaucer: Selected Poetry**

**Ann Dobyns**

**F 8-11:50 AM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

A study of the tales and the historical and philosophical context within which Chaucer wrote. In addition to reading the tales themselves, we will discuss critical studies of Chaucer's work and some medieval documents that provide background available to Chaucer and his first audience. We will look at the difficulties the text presents and how your struggle with those difficulties might help you to a better understanding and appreciation of the work, its language, cultural context, and literary conventions.

**ENGL 2300, Section 1**

**English Literature III**

**Jan Gorak**

**M, W 2-3:50 PM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Because the potential ground to be covered is immeasurably vast, our 'survey' will narrow itself down to an examination of 'the unhappy consciousness' and 'society: imaginary and real.' We shall concentrate chiefly on poetry, with a brief excursion into Victorian fiction via George Eliot and into modern drama. The form and the language these authors used to represent their unprecedented predicament will be at all times our primary concern.

**ENGL 2311, Section 1**

**English Novel to 1800**

**Jennifer Golightly**

**T, R 12-1:50 PM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

In his book *The English Novel: An Introduction*, Terry Eagleton writes, “The point about the novel...is not just that it eludes definitions, but that it actively undermines them. It is less a genre than an anti-genre. It cannibalizes other literary modes and mixes the bits and pieces promiscuously together.” In this course we’ll examine some early examples of the British novel and explore the “cannibalization” that was so much a part of the development of the form of the novel over the course of the long eighteenth century, situating this development within a cultural and historical context.

**ENGL 2752, Section 1**  
**American Literature III**  
**Billy Stratton**  
**T, R 10-11:50 AM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course will examine the development of major trends in American literature from the end of World War I to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The course texts were chosen to encourage the consideration of how changing conceptions of American identity, social hierarchies, race and ethnicity, as well as the contestation for social power have shaped and re-shaped conceptions of American nationhood, culture, and self. We will trace the major periods and artistic movements relevant to American literary production since 1918 through a selection of poetry, stories, prose, and novels beginning with the shift to Modernism in the wake of World War I to the emergence of postmodern aesthetics in the late 60s. Throughout the course we will place our texts in conversation with and against one another in order to address questions relating to agency, knowledge, and history. In addition, we will seek to scrutinize and question the ways in which canonical texts function to define and redefine these notions, while examining the significance of works that give voice to the concerns of historically marginalized groups. By the end of the semester students should have a firm understanding of the underlying tensions that continue to extend the boundaries of American literature into present and beyond.

**ENGL 2820, Section 1**  
**Philosophy and Literature**  
**Selah Saterstrom**  
**MW 10-11:50 AM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

In this course we will explore the relationship between philosophy and literature by investigating the history of reading and writing through the lens of hermeneutics, the study of interpretative theory. We will begin with Midrash and Rabbinic interpretation, making our way toward contemporary philosophical texts. Through close readings, discussion, and projects, we will consider the implications of how we read and what, in the light of our discoveries, it means to write.

**ENGL 2830, Section 1**  
**Representations of Women**



**Sarah Olivier**  
**M, W 10-11:50 AM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course will examine strong female leads in American novels throughout time. We will consider what qualities Americans have considered to be “heroic” for women throughout our nation’s history. In what ways do novelistic heroines embody ideals of American identity and in what ways do they challenge them? Do they uphold the nation’s values or are they figures of rebellion? We will learn about the relationships between gender, sexuality, race, and class in order to gain a better understanding of the major issues facing women throughout American history. How do some of America’s great authors address these issues? Along the way, we will think about what female heroines can tell us about the key features of the ever-changing American novel. Texts we may read: *The Scarlet Letter*, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, *The Awakening*, *Daisy Miller*, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, and one text we will choose together as a class.

**ENGL 3003, Section 1**  
**Advanced Creative Writing – Poetry**  
**Eleni Sikelianos**  
**F 2-5:50 PM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

TBD

**ENGL 3015, Section 1**  
**Doug Hesse**  
**Advanced Creative Writing – Non-Fiction**  
**T/R, 8-9:50 AM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This is a course in reading and, especially, writing creative nonfiction: artfully wrought fact-based writing. These works manifest in a host of genres, from memoirs and personal essays to literary journalism, place or travel writing, profiles, and more. You’ll grapple with short writing experiments to explore available writerly options, and you’ll complete three polished pieces (drafted, commented, workshopped, revised) that flex your writing muscles in at least two genres. We’ll read and discuss several contemporary pieces of creative nonfiction, but we’ll put as much time—or more—into discussing the writings produced by the class.

**ENGL 3017, Section 1**  
**Travel Writing: Fact and Fiction**  
**Brian Kiteley**  
**W 4-7:40 PM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Journalists, conquerors, missionaries, soldiers, runaways, historians, anthropologists, philosophers, poets, and novelists have done it. This course will take a look at prose written after travel. It's a genre as old as the epic but still alive and kicking. The course will attempt to pin down some definitions of the genre. Napoleon took several hundred scholars with him when he conquered Egypt, intent on a comprehensive literary, archeological, architectural, and pictorial record of the country—for what purpose: to freeze it in time, to organize (and colonize) its history, or perhaps to differentiate it from France and Europe? It was a routine of travel writers to take along a handful of unnamed and often unmentioned extras, though rarely as many as Napoleon did.

**ENGL 3711, Section 1**  
**20<sup>th</sup> Century American Fiction (Southern Gothic Literature)**  
**Billy Stratton**  
**T, R 2-3:50 PM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

The American South has had a historically contentious relationship to the rest of the nation having been viewed as place of crudeness, disorder, and toil. Inhabited by “savage” Indians and beset with conflict throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the legacy of Indian removal and the subsequent social upheavals related to slavery became frequent themes of Southern literature. By the 20<sup>th</sup> century writers had begun to meld elements of the sentimental romance and the gothic style of European fiction to develop a distinctive literary vision of a region haunted by racial division, class disparity, and cultural isolation. The literary texts we will be examining in this class respond in various ways to this deeply fraught social context and are distinguished by the common presence of grotesque elements, uncanny settings, social outcasts, and instances of chaotic violence that combine to generate a powerfully vivid sense of place. We will consider the narrative elements that comprise Southern gothic literature throughout the term and examine texts from a diverse group of writers to understand the ways in which storytelling has been employed to create and re-create the vernacular of Southern literature. Texts will span the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present and include the work of writers such as Ambrose Bierce, Robert Penn Warren, William Faulkner, Flannery O'Connor, Carson McCullers, James Dickey, Cormac McCarthy, William Gay, and Selah Saterstrom.

**ENGL 3733, Section 1**  
**Topics: Imagining American in the Age of Revolution**  
**Jennifer Golightly**

**T, R 2-3:50 PM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course will explore the ways in which literature of the late eighteenth century in Britain (beginning around 1760) imagined America in its colonial, revolutionary, and republican manifestations, in novels, poems, and plays, as well as the ways in which cultural influence was transferred between America and Britain. We'll read a variety of texts, including novels, poems, essays, and plays, written in Britain and America at the end of the eighteenth century and investigate the ways in which cultural lines of influence flowed between the two countries. How did British writers imagine America? How did their visions of America shift as America transformed itself from a British colonial possession into an independent republic? In what ways did writers in America respond to British depictions of them, their customs, and their land?

**ENGL 3744, Section 1**

**African American Literature**

**Tayana Hardin**

**T, R 12-1:50 PM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

In this course, we will examine fiction, drama, poetry, and criticism produced by black women writers from the nineteenth century to the present, with a special focus on works produced during the outpouring of black women's writing in the 1970s and 1980s. We will pay particular attention to the way black women writers and critics have utilized literature to meditate upon the meanings of survival, self-making, freedom, and the enduring question of how gender matters in black and American social, cultural, and literary contexts. Our exploration of black women's writing will be inspired by the works of Toni Morrison, Zora Neale Hurston, Gloria Naylor, Alice Walker, Ntozake Shange, and others. Requirements will include active class participation, critical writing and presentation exercises, and a major research project.

**ENGL 3852, Section 1**

**Topics in Poetics: 'After' Objectivism**

**W. Scott Howard**

**TR 10-11:50 AM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course concerns the poetry of William Carlos Williams, Lorine Niedecker, George Oppen, William Bronk, and Susan Howe, which we will study within and against the Objectivist tradition. How and why have these poets engaged with and departed from such an artistic movement? What were they after, and (perhaps more importantly) what else has come & gone 'after' Objectivism? How and why does the Objectivist tradition continue to influence

postmodern American poetics? We will celebrate the poetry of Williams, Niedecker, Oppen, Bronk, and Howe from readerly and writerly perspectives, following their works into artistic, cultural, and philosophical / theoretical contexts.

**ENGL 4001, Section 1**

**Creative Writing Poetry**

**Bin Ramke**

**M 4-7:50 PM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

I call this course a seminar in poetry in part to avoid the word “workshop” which might suggest the verb-form “workshopping.” I do not want the poems we examine during this term to be things to which we apply methods of completion, but rather to be linguistic projects that we contemplate within somewhat-specified contexts. I ask that each of you present that context when it is time for us to consider your poems. This context might very well be other poems (by other poets), or other writings, or bits of film, or music, or visual arts, or whatever context you might recall or imagine that your work arose out of, or is best experienced within. (When we read seriously we engage in some sort of re-enactment of the living circumstances of the material’s first arising in/out of the world—I am asking you to enable us to think of your own work similarly to how we read William Blake or Margaret Cavendish, for instances.)

I have selected four books for us to read together during the term: Thalia Field’s *Bird Lovers, Backyard* (New Directions) because it looks at the world and language in the act of looking; *The Image of the City* by Kevin Lynch, a pioneering work in how to see which examines the city as a dynamic structure (i.e. like poetry), which happens also to contextualize work arising within the city; Yona Wallach’s *Let the Words*, a selected poems (thus a comment on development of poetry over time) and in addition is a translation of work which was among the first attempts to create a literary language out of a recently revived language (Hebrew), and which re-examines the female body AS a context; Lisa Robertson’s *Nilling*, because it is beautiful and true; finally, *The Conscience of the Eye: the Design and Social Life of Cities* by Richard Sennett (Norton), because it is about seeing and understanding contexts, especially when the texts are physical structures.

**ENGL 4011, Section 1**

**Seminar-Creative Writing: Fiction**

**Laird Hunt**

**T 4-7:50 PM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

While careful examination/discussion of your work will be at the center of our weekly deliberations, we will also be exploring writings that have busted paradigms, interrupted orders, rewritten histories, and just generally upset the apple cart of standard received notions of the literary status quo. Risk-taking, groundbreaking writers from the ages that we will look at to fuel our conversation and inspire our own writing efforts will include Laurence Sterne (probably an excerpt), Virginia Woolf, Ann Quin, Thomas Bernhard, W.G. Sebald and Azareen Van Der Vliet Oloomi. 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 4220, Section 1**  
**Seminar-Studies in Shakespeare**  
**Linda Bensel-Meyers**  
**M, W 10-11:50 AM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Because he lived in a “barbaric” age, Shakespeare was often “excused” by later critics for violating the proprieties of dramatic form. This seminar will explore what enables his oft-described “problem plays” to achieve structural unity. After studying a nearly flawless tragedy from his middle period, we will turn our attention to the development of his tragicomedies and romances that are not unified by the rise and fall of generic expectations but through imagistic and thematic patterns. By the end of the term, we will hope to arrive at some new explanations for just how “easy is a bush supposed a bear!” Discussion, Commonplace Book, Critical Assessments, Seminar Paper.

**ENGL 4600, Section 1**  
**Advanced Studies: 20<sup>th</sup> Century Holocaust Literature**  
**Adam Rovner**  
**F 12-3:50 PM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

TBD

**ENGL 4650, Section 1**  
**Special Topics: 20<sup>th</sup> Century Literature**  
**Eric Gould**

**W 4-7:50 PM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

That the novel is transnational, global, multicultural and a key player in “world lit.” goes without saying. Furthermore, the comparative study of literature has been in place since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. In recent years, as globalization has intensified, the development of a “world republic of letters” (Pascale Casanova) has given fresh encouragement to comparative studies. This course examines the novel since the 1950s in the age of globalization and how it has developed as an experimental and exciting cultural text. We take up some theoretical topics (including feminism, magical realism, postcolonialism, postmodern, the social imaginary etc.). We will look at Milan Kundera’s “The Curtain,” an extended essay on the contemporary novel, and make reference to sociological theory by Charles Taylor, David Damrosch, Franco Moretti and Pascale Casanova among others. The primary texts are fiction by Edmond Jabes (extracts provided), Jose Donoso, Danilo Kis, Ivan Klima, Marie N’Diaye, Herta Muller, Ali Smith, David Malouf, and Haruki Murakami.

**ENGL 4701, Section 1**

**Topics in English**

**Maik Nwosu**

**R 4-7:50 PM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is an examination of the phenomenon of postcolonialism, taking into account the ways in which it has been conceptualized. Key interests include the contexts of imperialism and decolonization as well as critical readings of pertinent literature. The course will also incorporate our consideration of a postcolonial timeline. What, for instance, does it mean to be postcolonial today, and how does postcolonialism relate to globalization?

**ENGL 4701, Section 2**

**Topics: Melville and Faulkner**

**Clark Davis**

**T, R 12-1:50 PM**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

“No! in thunder”: Melville, Faulkner

“As a scribe who has stopped writing, Bartleby is the extreme figure of the Nothing from which all creation derives; and at the same time, he constitutes the most implacable vindication of this Nothing as pure, absolute potentiality. The scrivener has become the writing tablet; he is now nothing other than his white sheet.” – Giorgio Agamben, “Bartleby, or On Contingency”

There are superficial resemblances (whale: bear; Glendinning: Sutpen) between the works of these two colossal scribes, but I'm interested in exploring the "problem" of writing as it emerges for each, a la Bartleby, in the confrontation of the Nothing of blank, white sheet whiteness. Agamben's reading of the Wall-Street clerk will be one frame, but we will generally be interested in Bartleby's resonance in 20th century philosophy as a guide to thinking about these very big books and their astonishingly verbal creators.