

## Spring 2019 Graduate Course Schedule

Course Number	Course Title	Professor	Day/time	Room
ENGL-GA. 1060.001	Old English: Language, Culture, and Institutional Contexts	Hal Momma	Tuesday 2:00-5:00pm	244G_306
ENGL-GA. 1084.001 x-listed with Irish Lit	Literature of Modern Ireland II	Kelly Sullivan	Tuesday 6:10-8:40pm	Ireland House
ENGL-GA. 1770.001 x-listed with American Studies	Ziggyology: On David Bowie	Sukhdev Sandhu	Thursday 9:30-12:15pm	20 Cooper Sq room 471
ENGL-GA.1957.001	The Animal Turn in Literature and Theory: Multi-Species Affinities	Una Chaudhuri and Yanoula Athanasakis	Thursday 6:30-9:00pm	244G_306
ENGL-GA. 1972.001	Topics in Digital Humanities: Digital Literary Studies	David Hoover	Thursday 6:20-9:20pm	Needs Registrar Space
ENGL-GA.2075.001	MA Thesis Writing Colloquium	Maureen McClane	Tuesday 2:45-4:45pm	244G_805
ENGL-GA.2075.002	MA Thesis Writing Colloquium	Lisa Gitelman	Thursday 9:30-11:30am	244G_105
ENGL-GA.2270.001	Medieval Eco-Criticisms	Heide Estes	Thursday 2:00-5:00pm	244G_306
ENGL-GA.2270.002 x-listed with Italian Studies	The Arts of Eloquence in Medieval & Renaissance Italy	Virginia Cox	Wednesday 3:30-6:10pm	Casa Library, room 203
ENGL-GA.2270.003 x-listed with Italian Studies	Paradiso	Alison Cornish	Wednesday 12:30-3:15pm	Casa room 306
ENGL-GA.2323.001	Spenser's "The Faerie Queene"	Susanne Wofford	Monday 2:00-5:00pm	244G_105
ENGL-GA.2650.001	The Sounds of Victorian Poetry	Annemarie Drury	Tuesday 6:20-9:20pm	244G_306
ENGL-GA.2838.001	Melville and Whitman at 200	Jennifer Baker and Karen Karbiener	Thursday 10:00-1:00pm	244G_306
ENGL-GA.2900.001	The Poetics of the Postcolonial Novel	Raji Sunder Rajan	Wednesday 6:20-9:20pm	244G_306

Spring 2019 Graduate Course Schedule

ENGL- GA.2902.001	Topics in Black Literature: Current Trends in African-Americanist Criticism	Phil Harper	Thursday 2:00-4:45pm	244G_805
ENGL- GA.2916.001	War Culture	Patrick Deer	Wednesday 10:00-12:45pm	244G_306
ENGL- GA.2917.001	Genealogies of Utopia	Pacharee Sudhinaraset	Monday 1:00-4:00pm	244G_306
ENGL- GA.2957.001	Introduction to Media Theory	John Guillory	Wednesday 3:00-6:00pm	244G_306
ENGL- GA.3626.001	Old and New Materialisms in Literary Studies	Lenora Hanson	Wednesday 1:00-4:00pm	244G_105
ENGL- GA.3629.001	Doing Literary History (Open to MA Students)	Cliff Siskin	Tuesday 11:00-2:00pm	244G_105

**ENGL-GA.1060.001**

**Old English: Language, Culture, and Institutional Contexts**

**Hal Momma**

This course is designed for students who are interested in the language, literature, and culture of England up to the Norman Conquest of 1066. It will provide solid practice in the language and close reading of texts, both canonical and new (and exciting), while introducing them to cultural and historical backgrounds and secondary material. Students will have access to one of the standard textbooks, Peter Baker's *Introduction to Old English*, but much of the teaching material, both grammar and reading, will be original. The overarching theme of this course is to re-examine the pedagogy and the canon of Old English literature and to consider if this re-evaluation may lead to a new approach to "Anglo-Saxon studies."

The course will be divided into three parts. In the first part, we will go over basic grammar and read passages from prose with the help of translations. Since Old English is different from its descendant Modern English, it needs to be approached almost as a foreign language: students will therefore be encouraged to memorize basic grammatical endings and core vocabulary. We will also have a quick tour of the cultural landscape of early medieval England, while considering the nature of "vernacular writing" (arguably an oxymoron back then). In the second part, we will read shorter Old English poems along with secondary material while studying more advanced grammar, syntax, and versification. In the last section we will read excerpts from *Beowulf*. The essay may be formed as a conference paper, together with an abstract. Students may also pursue any other project.

**Course Evaluation**

Class Attendance and Participation

: 20%

Grammar Quizzes (5)	: 15%
Translation Test (grammar, translation, comments)	: 30%
Essay (a conference style; open topic)	: 35%

**ENGL-GA. 1084.001 x-listed with Irish Lit**

**Literature of Modern Ireland II**

**Kelly Sullivan**

Male writers often dominate courses in Irish literature, and have dominated the Irish literary canon. Women, as the poet Eavan Boland points out, were more frequently enlisted as emblems of the nation, not as literary creators. Perhaps precisely because of this tension, Irish women writers have created some of the country's most daring and complex works. This class will survey a range of women's writing in Ireland from the Act of Union (1800) to the present, including poems, novels, short stories, plays, cultural history, and criticism. Some concerns that will organize our discussions include the Protestant "Big House" and its decline, the influence of religion and the state on women's lives in a newly independent Ireland, the dazzling changes and persistent stereotypes in a radically modernized, demographically transformed twenty-first century Ireland, and the persistent mythic, cultural, and literary trope of woman-as-nation—an image bound up with Ireland's colonial history. We will supplement our literary reading with academic scholarship including postcolonial theory, Irish feminist theory, and other relevant literary and cultural criticism.

**ENGL-GA.1770.001 x-listed with American Studies**

**Ziggyology: On David Bowie OPEN TO UNDERGRAD**

**Sukhdev Sandhu**

"David Bowie is dada dandy...

David Bowie is thinking ways for us to become what we should have been but never were...

David Bowie is who knows...

David Bowie is just the ghost of a story."

(Paul Morley)

Working class refusenik, plastic soulboy, Afrofuturist, poseur, postmodernist, bisexual, alien, semiotician....

Major Tom, Ziggy Stardust, Thin White Duke, Aladdin Sane, The Goblin King....

Who was David Bowie? What could he be?

This class looks at David Bowie, around David Bowie, with David Bowie. It treats Bowie as an alternative art school, as a space of queer para-academia, as offering a toolkit for how to dream and create and live.

We will read books, watch films and converse with visiting speakers about topics such as medieval heretics, Sun Ra, Krautrock, cultural tranvestism, the importance of pretentiousness, the art of dressing up, the uses of failure.

"Critics I don't understand. They get too intellectual." (David Bowie)

**ENGL-1957.001.001**

**The Animal Turn in Literature and Theory: Multi-Species Affinities**

**Una Chaudhuri and Yanoula Athanasakis**

Using J.M. Coetzee's academic novella *The Lives of Animals* (1999) as a point of departure, this course will explore modern and contemporary theoretical and literary engagements with the question of "the animal" as framed by the interdisciplinary field of Animal Studies. After encountering key topics (anthropomorphism, interspecies understanding, agency, empathy, suffering, and cruelty) in Coetzee's text and its several classical pre-texts (especially Kafka) we will step back to consider key intellectual discourses (Nietzsche, Darwin, Freud) that shaped thinking about human-animal relations at the threshold of modernity. Following that, we will study how animals have appeared in—and altered—a variety of literary and filmic genres in recent decades, and how they illuminate vital contemporary cultural and ecological imperatives, including social justice, species preservation, industrial agriculture, and climate change. The latter part of the course will consider literary and artistic engagements with the multi-species perspectives that are increasingly being centered by Anthropocene studies.

**This course welcomes students from all disciplines who are interested in exploring how Animal Studies can inform their areas of study.**

Works to be studied include Derrida's *The Animal that Therefore I Am*, Deleuze and Guattari's "Becoming Animal," Donna Haraway's *Companion Species Manifesto*, Edward Albee's *The Goat*, Caryl Churchill's *Far Away*, Marian Engel's *Bear*, Karen Jay Fowler's *We Are Completely Besides Ourselves*, Ruth Ozeki's *My Year of Meats*, H.G. Wells's *The Island of Doctor Moreau*, and Virginia Woolf's *Flush: A Biography*.

**ENGL-GA. 1972.001**

**Topics in Digital Humanities: Digital Literary Studies**

**David Hoover**

The availability of digital resources has significantly changed literary studies, especially because of the rapid increase the accessibility of literary and critical texts that were previously very difficult to locate or access, or were extremely rare. Because of their digital form, such texts can be searched and can be transferred almost instantaneously from place to place. Yet locating, accessing, searching, and easily distributing digital texts are not the only ways of taking advantage of their digital nature.

This course will investigate some of the ways that manipulation and analysis can more fully exploit the nature of digital literary texts. We will consider some methods of distant reading, such as those recently practiced by Franco Moretti in *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for a Literary History*—methods possible only since the advent of huge collections of publicly available digital texts. We will also study related work, like Matthew Jockers's *Macroanalysis: Digital Methods and Literary History*, and take a look at some recent discussions in Matthew K. Gold and Lauren F. Klein, *Debates in the Digital Humanities 2016*. The course will concentrate mainly, however, on methods of very close reading that digital texts and tools make possible for the first time, including those most associated with John F. Burrows (for example, his recent "A Second Opinion on "Shakespeare and Authorship

Studies in the Twenty-First Century,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 63(3), 2012: 355-392), and recently promoted by Hugh Craig and Brett Greatly-Hirsch in *Style, Computers, and Early Modern Drama* (2017). Along the way, we will work with individual digital literary texts, specially constructed literary corpora, online portals, databases, natural language corpora, text collections, and single-author sites, and with digital archives, including some, like the Willa Cather Digital Archive, and the Brown Women Writers Project, that include their own analytical tools. We will also work with Minitab (a statistical analysis program), with The Intelligent Archive (a free JAVA program for archiving and analyzing texts), and with some of my own text-analysis tools built in Microsoft Excel and Python.

Finally, we will take a searching look at Stephen Ramsay’s influential recent book *Reading Machines: Toward an Algorithmic Criticism*, mainly in relation to his provocative thesis that computational analysis must further the kinds of open-ended and innovative thinking favored by literary critics if it is to become influential. This thesis is a direct challenge to the long-established tradition of textual analysis and computational stylistics that aims to limit the subjectivity of critical claims and to bring defensible evidence to bear on questions for which it was previously unavailable. Specifically, we will take Virginia Woolf’s *The Waves* and Ramsay’s algorithmic provocations concerning this experimental text as a case study through which to examine this complex issue.

Our goal will be to apply innovative techniques to long-standing literary questions and to explore kinds of inquiries that digital texts and tools have made possible for the first time. We will focus on a fairly wide range of literature in English from about 1800 to 1923, to avoid copyright problems, but students can study texts from any period and in many different languages in their own projects. The course assumes no advanced computational background, but it will take place in a computer lab (PC computers; some of the software does not run on Macs), and will involve extensive hands-on computational analysis.

### **ENGL-GA.2270.001**

#### **Medieval Ecocriticisms**

##### **Heide Estes**

This course will explore ecocriticism in the context of medieval literature in England, investigating different ways that selected literary texts depict and construct non-human as well as built environments in their interactions with people and animals. The plural is intentional: scholars have engaged with environmental issues in relationship to literatures in a variety of different ways, and we will investigate how ecocritical readings can open new readings of medieval texts as well as how medieval literature can challenge contemporary ideas about the environment. We will also consider how human differences including gender and religious identity affect how humans are depicted with respect to the environment. Texts in Old and Middle English, in translation as appropriate, will include *Beowulf*, *The Seafarer*, the Exeter Book Riddles, *The Ruin*, *The Owl and the Nightingale*, *Sir Orfeo*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, and selections from the *Canterbury Tales*.

### **ENGL-GA.2270.002 x-listed with Italian Studies**

#### **The Arts of Eloquence in Medieval & Renaissance Italy**

##### **Virginia Cox**

Recent scholarship in medieval and early modern culture has increasingly stressed the centrality of the study of rhetoric in these periods and the range of its influence, not simply on literature but on everything from art, music, and architecture to political thought. This course serves as an introduction to medieval and early modern rhetoric in Italy, conceived of broadly as a global art of persuasive discourse, spanning both verbal and nonverbal uses.

**ENGL-GA.2270.003 x-listed with Italian Studies**

**Paradiso**

**Alison Cornish**

A rereading of Dante's *Paradiso* that focuses on the interaction between the medieval mystical-theological culture and the encyclopedia of secular learning as it takes place in the *Commedia*. Dante utilizes the philosophical and scientific knowledge of his time, but relives it in light of the evangelical message. A text of the Christian "paideia" par excellence, *Paradiso*, is also an extraordinary modern work. Organized on the patrimony of values formulated by western monastic culture, by the Christian ascetic practice of the desert, the *Paradiso* is a journey towards awareness, in which knowledge implies the mystical rediscovery of the self. All these themes will be investigated in the course along with the central issue of the *Commedia* as a discourse about the "other world" which implies the unveiling of the meaning of "this world". Dante's *Paradiso* will be read in light of Dante's minor works.

**ENGL-GA.2323.001**

**Spenser's "The Faerie Queene"**

**Susanne Wofford**

And here's the course description: This course will focus on *The Faerie Queene* in its wider literary context, including selections from classical epic (Vergil, Ovid), Ariosto, Tasso, and Cervantes. Readings in theory of allegory and ideology will complement a focus on epic. We will explore the relation of pastoral and epic, placing pastoral moments in *The Faerie Queene* against selections from *The Shepheardes Calendar* and from Vergil and Theocritus. Some attention will be paid to the visual tradition of representing epic and allegory, including mythological paintings, emblem books, iconography and Renaissance mythography (Cartari, Conti and others). We will rethink the convergences and divergences of epic, allegory and romance as they help to shape questions of gender, nation, ideology and ethics.

**ENGL-GA.2650.001**

**The Sounds of Victorian Poetry**

**Annmarie Drury**

In this course, we will approach Victorian poetry through the ear. In the first place, and most familiarly, we will consider the meaning-making, poem by poem, of such sound-based formal elements as rhyme, meter, alliteration, and assonance; and we will experiment with thinking about the spectacular formal diversity of Victorian poetry in terms of the access poets sought to multitudinous *ways of sounding*. We will also ponder Victorian ideas about poetic voice.

Conjoined with this exploration – and for the most part running alongside it – will be an investigation into the sound cultures of Victorian Britain: the emergence of new sound technologies often presented in the era as having special affinities with poetry; dialect poetry (especially of the Dorset poet William Barnes) and its role in defining aural communities; and

the significance of sound within the imperialist project, particularly as it connected to translation. While we depend upon brief readings from contemporary sound studies and aural anthropology for our entrée to questions about sound broadly understood, our theoretical framework will be eclectic (and open to our innovations), including nineteenth-century and contemporary discussions of poetry and poetics and excerpts from Victorian “sound studies” such as Charles Hindley’s *History of the Cries of London* (1881). Poets include Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Tennyson, Robert Browning, Christina Rossetti, D.G. Rossetti, Matthew Arnold, George Meredith, Michael Field, G.M. Hopkins, and A.C. Swinburne.

**ENGL-GA.2838.001**

**Melville & Whitman at 200**

**Jennifer Baker and Karen Karbiener**

The year 2019 will mark the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the births of Walt Whitman and Herman Melville. Almost exact contemporaries (born two months apart in 1819 and deceased within six months of each other at age 72), Whitman and Melville were New Yorkers shaped by a city that was a center of literary and artistic culture, popular entertainment, finance, industry, transoceanic trade, and global migration. Unlike Emerson and American Transcendentalists, they were profoundly affected by the physicality of urban life and refused to subordinate matter to spirit: Whitman announced himself as both the “poet of the body” and the “poet of the soul,” and Melville believed in the power of material objects to elicit aesthetic responses in the human observer. Both were poets of the Civil War, drawing upon elegiac and meditative poetic forms in their attempts to reckon with the crisis of slavery and the nation’s grief. They envisioned same-sex love as a basis for democratic cohesion and an alternative to the bourgeois family. Their most distinctive literary personae, Ishmael and the Whitmanian “I,” were at once proxies for themselves and disembodied observers inhabiting multiple points of view. They were intellectual and social outliers to the literary and broader cultural movements of their day, and this status stifled their immediate success and canonization yet has become a key feature of their enduring popular appeal. And both are today credited for their incipient modernism and generic experimentation, most evident in Whitman’s free verse and the fragmentary, non-linear narrative of Melville’s *Moby-Dick*.

This seminar will not attempt a chronological survey of each writer’s life and works, but, rather, will generate discussion around these and other points of contact. Beginning with Whitman’s “Song of Myself” and Melville’s *Moby-Dick*, we will range throughout their respective oeuvres and take up questions about American democracy, religion, gender and sexuality, slavery and abolitionism, literary production, and self-curation.

In thinking about Melville and Whitman at 200, we will reflect on the histories of their reception, the current state of Whitman and Melville studies, and the place of these literary figures in contemporary popular culture. We will consider the processes by which these writers were canonized in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and rather than adopt a teleological understanding of their works as prescient, we will explore the role that changing literary taste as well as Cold War politics and the formation of American Studies played in that canonization.

Texts by Whitman will include “Song of Myself,” “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry,” the “Calamus” and “Live Oak, with Moss” poem clusters, *Drum-Taps* (and *Sequel*), his early best-selling novel,

*Franklin Evans*, and the autobiographical *Specimen Days*. Texts by Melville will include his epic *Moby-Dick*, the poetry collection *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War*, and the stories “Bartleby, the Scrivener,” “Benito Cereno,” “Rip Van Winkle’s Lilac,” and “Billy Budd.”

We hope to make use of the city’s rich resources whenever logistically feasible. Our wish-list of supplemental activities includes a trip to the New York Public Library, where significant archives for both authors are housed, a viewing of one of the world’s finest private collections of Whitman materials, walking tours of Whitman’s Brooklyn and Melville’s Manhattan, and class visits by John Bryant, author of the forthcoming *Herman Melville: Biography of a Half-Known Life*, and Brian Selznick, Caldecott-winning illustrator who with Karen Karbiener will release a visual narrative and new edition of Whitman’s “Live Oak, with Moss” poems in 2019.

The class will be co-taught by Jennifer Baker (English), co-organizer of the Melville Society’s bicentennial conference at NYU in June (<https://melville2019.weebly.com/>), and Karen Karbiener (Liberal Studies), organizer of the Transatlantic Walt Whitman Association’s bicentennial Whitman Week at NYU in May (<http://waltwhitmaninitiative.org/international-whitman-week-2019/>).

### **ENGL.GA-2900.001**

#### **Postcolonial Poetics**

#### **Rajeswari Sunder Rajan**

This course on Postcolonial Poetics is an attempt to take seriously a question often posed in the classroom by students: should we not read postcolonial texts through the lens of ‘their own’ poetics? This question assumes the radical difference of non-western cultures and reflects the liberal anxiety to therefore respect that difference. We will begin with an inquiry into the nature and extent of the ‘difference’ that marks postcolonial literature, while at the same time remaining open to finding similarities, connections, influences, dialogue and dispute among the many literatures of the modern world. The tension between the two aspects –sameness and difference—will enable us to explore postcolonial poetics in terms of a *dialectic* (rather than attempt to arrive at a *definition* of it). This will also mean sidestepping the framing of the question of a postcolonial poetics exclusively in terms of a debate between aesthetics and politics.

We will adopt a comparative methodology in discussing theoretical issues relating to form, genre, periodization, and language, selectively focusing on the postcolonial novel and tragedy (as genres), realism (as narrative form), and modernism (as internationalist movement). We will also examine the genealogy of aesthetic terms that have been specifically associated with postcolonial writing (or identified as specifically postcolonial) like magical realism, hybridity, creolism, and negritude. Finally, we will explore the terms in which postcolonial ‘themes’ and ideologies like nationalism, reform and modernity, history and Marxism have been invoked in the literature.

Our readings will include a small sampling of representative postcolonial literary texts, in addition to a range of theoretical writings which include manifestoes, prefaces, conference papers, and agendas, from the Caribbean, South Asia, Latin America and Africa. A tentative reading list includes: Fanon’s ‘The Negro and his Language,’ from *Black Skins, White Masks*, Abiola Irele, ‘Negritude-Literature and Ideology’, essays from *Refusal of the Shadow*:

*Surrealism and the Caribbean*, Edouard Glissant's *Poetics of Relation*, Patrick Chamiseou et al, 'In Praise of Creoleness', Robert Schwarz's *Two Girls and Other Essays*, Raja Rao's preface to *Kanthapura*, essays from Arun Mukherjee's edited volume, *Towards an Aesthetic of Dalit Literature*, Meenakshi Mukherjee's *Realism and Reality*, Simona Sawhney's *The Modernity of Sanskrit*, Anjali Nerlekar's *Bombay Modern*, essays from Arindam Chakravarti's volume on *Indian Aesthetics* (2016), Achebe and Ngugi on the question of writing in English, Ato Quayson's 'Tragedy and the Postcolonial Novel', Frederic Jameson and Aijaz Ahmad on nationalism and 'Third World' literature, and the 'litterature- monde' manifesto of 2007, among others.

### **ENGL-GA 2902 (and AMST-GA 3213.002)**

#### **Topics in Black Literature: Current Trends in African-Americanist Criticism**

##### **Phil Harper**

In this course we will review a selection of recent book-length works of African-Americanist literary and cultural criticism in conjunction with a number of the key primary texts they address. Our objective will be to identify some of the overarching concerns and motivations that currently characterize the field, while simultaneously sketching a working history of African American literature from the early twentieth century to the present.

We will consider the following scholarly volumes: Darieck Scott, *Extravagant Abjection* (2010); Erica Edwards, *Charisma and the Fictions of Black Leadership* (2012); Kevin Quashie, *The Sovereignty of Quiet* (2012); Aida Levy-Hussen, *How to Read African American Literature* (2016); and Stephen Best, *None Like Us* (2018). Among our literary readings will be works by James Weldon Johnson, Marita Bonner, W. E. B. Du Bois, George Schuyler, Gwendolyn Brooks, William Melvin Kelley, James Baldwin, Gayl Jones, Octavia Butler, Charles Johnson, Toni Morrison, and Samuel R. Delany.

##### **War Culture**

### **ENGL-GA.2916.001**

##### **Patrick Deer**

What impact has war and violence had on literature and culture? How have writers, intellectuals and citizens struggled to find a voice during wartime in the face of censorship, war culture, propaganda, trauma and the technologies of violence? What does it mean to live in a culture of war? This course explores representations of war and violence in a range of British, American and postcolonial novels, poems, and films and in critical theory from the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century. Focusing in particular on questions of gender, race and ethnicity, imperialism and resistance, we will read novels, poetry, memoirs, military writings and theoretical texts, film and documentary, and popular culture. Beginning with some foundational representations of modern war, we will chart the transformations and mutations of modern war literature, culture and theories of violence from the era of colonial warfare, total warfare during the First World War and the "People's War" of World War Two. We will then explore the ways that writers, artists, film-makers and anti-war activists have responded to the apocalyptic imaginary of Cold War, the Vietnam war, guerilla warfare and counterinsurgency, to the mythology of "high tech warfare" in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the militarization of policing and surveillance. Readings may be drawn from the work of: Virginia Woolf, Ernest Hemingway, Vera Brittain, Ernst Junger, Primo Levi, George Orwell, Elizabeth Bowen, Tim O'Brien, Joan Didion, Pat Barker, Michael

Ondaatje, Anthony Swofford, Riverbend, Kevin Powers, Sinan Antoon, Ben Fountain, Ahmed Saadawi, and Viet Thanh Nguyen. Theoretical texts may include: Sigmund Freud, Hannah Arendt, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Giorgio Agamben, Achille Mbembe, Michel DeCerteau, Elaine Scarry, Klaus Theweleit, Cathy Caruth, Edward Said, Jacques Ranciere, Jean Baudrillard, Deleuze and Guattari, Judith Butler, and Sianne Ngai. The course will also include visits by several war writers, veterans and activists.

**ENGL-GA.2917.001**

**Genealogies of Utopia**

**Pacharee Sudhinaraset**

This course takes an ethnic studies approach to the study of utopian writings. As such, we will situate what Lisa Lowe has called “one of the most important genres of modernity” in relationship to histories of colonialism, colonization, modernity, Marxism, feminism, race, and queer studies. We will explore the ways utopia has mediated the contradictions of colonial capital and colonized labor; notions of freedom and unfreedom; universality and particularity; political movement; Black, Chicano, and Asian American nationalisms; revolution; and collective organizing. We will study the potential and various approaches to utopia, as an empty signifier; wish dreams of a better world; form; text; genre; impulse; political practice; interpretive method; a feeling of the not-yet-conscious; and a spatial imaginary.

List of possible writers with which we might engage: Leslie Marmon Silko, Samuel Delaney, Octavia Butler, Karen Tei Yamashita, Larissa Lai, Kim Stanley Robinson, Ursula K. Le Guin, Thomas More, Ernest Callenbach, Charlotte Perkins Gilman; Theodor Adorno, Dylan Miner, Lyman Tower Sargeant, John Winthrop, Philip Wegner, Lisa Lowe, Ernst Bloch, Ruth Levitas, José Esteban Muñoz Tom Moylan, Raffaella Baccolini, Walter Benjamin, and Fredric Jameson.

We will also consider the visual politics of utopia. Here is a list of possible films we might watch: *Children of Men* (Alfonso Cuarón), *The Handmaid’s Tale* (Volker Schlöndorff), *Black Panther* (Ryan Coogler), *Embrace of the Serpent* (Ciro Guerra).

**ENGL-GA.2957.001**

**Introduction to Media Theory**

**John Guillory**

This course is an introduction to media theory designed for students of literature. The course has two purposes, first to survey some of the principal contributions to the theory of media from Lessing’s *Laocoön* to the major twentieth-century statements of Benjamin, McLuhan, and Kittler, concluding with recent examples of media theory; and second, to establish a theoretical position for resisting the intellectual division of labor that separates media study from literary study. Accordingly, we will attempt to assemble a theoretical framework that is inclusive of all media forms, and that specifically constructs literature as one media form among many. The course sets out from Lessing’s prescient argument for what we now call “media specificity,” with readings to follow from G.W.F Hegel, Percy Shelley, Oscar Wilde, I. A. Richards, Martin Heidegger, Walter Benjamin, Marshall McLuhan, Walter Ong, Jack Goody, Claude Shannon, Roman Jakobson, Eric Havelock, Friedrich Kittler, Bernard Stiegler, André Leroi-Gourhan, Robert Darnton, JoAnne Yates, J. David Bolter/Richard Grusin, Johanna Drucker, N. Katherine

Hayles, Lisa Gitelman, Paula McDowell, Jerome McGann, Paul Duguid/John Seely Brown, Michael Giesecke, Mark Hansen, Alan Liu, Lev Manovich, Andrew Piper, Lydia Liu.

**ENGL-GA.3626.001**

**Old and New Materialisms in Literary Studies**

**Lenora Hanson**

What is the status of materialism in literary studies and humanistic inquiry more generally today? What methods of reading give us the best tools for describing the relationship between language and knowledge, bodies and matter(ing), phenomena and poiesis?

This methods-based course will inquire into the relationship between the recent “post-critical turn” and a longer history of materialist methods in literary studies. Recent work by Bruno Latour, Rita Felski, Jane Bennett, Heather Love, Catherine Malabou and others, and the literary methods inspired by them, have turned decidedly against the materialisms of Marxism, deconstruction, Black studies, and Ethnic studies. But why, we will ask, does materialism remain a structuring term for anti-critical methods in literary studies?

We will grapple with the new materialisms of today by engaging with those other materialisms from which we are encouraged to turn away. And we will take up the challenge presented by the recent methodological turn to think explicitly about the social, political, and disciplinary effects of both critical and anti-critical methods.

The syllabus will include work by some but not all of the following: Bruno Latour, Louis Althusser, Paul de Man, Jacques Derrida, Judith Butler, Catherine Malabou, Rita Felski, Jane Bennett, Christopher Nealon, Alberto Toscano, Jodi Melamed, Kyla Wazana Thompkins, Alfred Sohn-Rethel, Walter Benjamin, Cedric Robinson, Eve Sedgwick, Denise Ferreira da Silva and Stuart Hall.

**ENGL-GA.3629.001**

**Doing Literary History (Open to MA Students)**

**Clifford Siskin**

We go to graduate school not just to study something but to learn how to **do** something—something that those who don’t earn a higher degree can’t. What is our earned expertise? The more challenged our profession, the more we need a good answer. “I’m in the humanities” isn’t enough to convey what we can distinctively do. In this course, we’ll stake a claim to doing literary history. We’ll ask what literary history is and what specific strategies, skills, and kinds of materials it requires. Most importantly, we’ll show what it can do when we do it. Our test case will be to ask what a literary history can tell us about a problem that all disciplines and society at large now face: the relationship of information to knowledge. We know they are connected but we don’t know how. Can we in the English Department play a role in sorting out their interrelations? Our inquiries will span four centuries, from 1600 to the present, as well as a wide range of genres and concepts, from the rise of the newspaper and modern science through the advent of novels and the aesthetic to our own field’s current encounter with the digital. While we do this particular literary history together, each of you will also have the opportunity to put your expertise to work on topics of your own.