

Department of English

Undergraduate Course Descriptions

Spring 2023

English 2100: Film Interpretation

Modality: In-person

CRN: 10780

Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:00—3:15

CRN: 12041

Mondays, 6:30—9:00

CRN: 12042

Tuesdays, 6:30—9:00

Mr. Cody Harrison

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 2: Exploration and Discovery – Artistic Theory and Practice Category.

Film interpretation will be about just that: the cinema and interpretation of pieces of cinematic art. I ask for any student who loves movies, and wants to watch many of them, and then discuss



them in class, to sign up. It is my intention to show as many movies as I can, ranging from the silent era to the modern day; most of the class time will be reserved for wide-ranging and lively discussion about them. I plan to show well-known films such as Hitchcock's *Vertigo* and *The Birds*, and Tarkovsky's *Solaris*, as well as lesser-known films like the Ethiopian dystopian thriller *Crumbs*, the British documentary *Night Mail*, the silent stop-motion classic *The Cameraman's Revenge*. The organizing principle is environment and milieu

in film; but this an organizing principle for the film list and not necessarily a dominating theme. The main textbook will be *Looking at Movies: An Introduction to Film* by Richard Barsam and Dave Monahan and others.

English 2110: Folklore and Mythology

CRN: 11839

Mode: Asynchronous Online

Dr. Mustafa Mirzeler

In this course students will explore the folklore and mythology of people who live in disparate parts of the world, in Africa, Central Asia, Mesopotamia, the ancient shores of the Mediterranean Sea and Western Europe. Drawing from the contemporary folklore and mythology, this course historicizes and conceptualizes cultural and social contexts that produce folklore and myths around the world.

English 2660: Writing Fiction and Poetry

Modality: Various
CRN: Various
Schedule: Various
Instructors: Various

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 2: Exploration and Discovery – Artistic Theory and Practice Category.

This is an introductory creative writing course that covers both fiction and poetry. It is a reading as well as a writing course; students will learn the basic elements of fiction and poetry, read selections of work in each genre, complete critical and creative writing exercises and assignments, and participate in workshop sessions that focus on discussion of their own work and the work of their peers.

English 2790: Introduction to English Education

Modality: In-person
CRN: 14625
Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:30—1:45
Ms. Shelley Esman

This course offers an introduction to the responsibilities, aspirations, and professional knowledge of secondary English language arts teachers.

The course will include students: reflecting on their own experiences learning to read and write, examining the representation of English teachers in popular culture, studying and presenting about current professional issues in teaching English, observing and interviewing secondary English teachers, learning about the program and requirements for teacher certification, becoming familiar with new technologies and developing their own teacher website and online portfolio, and reflecting on the decision to pursue a career as an English teacher.

English 2810: Youth Literature and Culture

Modality: In-person
CRN: 14016
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:00 – 1:40
Ms. Heather Sanford

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 2: Exploration and Discovery – Artistic Theory and Practice Category.



In this course, we will explore counterstorying, restorying, and adaptation in children's literature with a particular emphasis on historical and contemporary iterations of Peter Pan, The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, and Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. We will critically consider how restorying and adaptation open, or fail to open, opportunities for the re-centering of historically marginalized voices through counterstorying.

English 3050: Professional Writing: Work and Culture

Modality: In-person

CRN: 15449

Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:00—3:40

Dr. Brian Gogan

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 3: Connections – Local and National Perspectives Category.

English 3050 is a course designed to develop your confidence and competency in written communication. Whatever your future career plans or your current, favorite media for communicating (print, digital, twitter, Facebook or other social media), you are likely to need strong writing skills. Numerous studies, for example, show that in many professions, communication skills are ranked at the top (first or second place) of the most valued qualities for success. Many of you might be surprised at how central writing is in the day-to-day life of most professionals. To help prepare you for the challenges ahead, this class will expand your writing repertoires beyond the academic essay or research paper. Through various class projects, you will

- Become familiar with the formats and rhetorical challenges of various practical genres and document formats (memos, reports, manuals, web text, visual displays and designs, etc.)
- Develop skill for anticipating (and addressing) the needs and reactions of audiences to communications in different contexts
- Learn the fundamentals of reader-centered communication, including the fundamentals of document design and readability used to create well-crafted documents
- Learn about some documents and communication habits typical for professionals in your discipline

The course is held in a computer lab with plenty of opportunity for personalized help with course projects.

English 3080: Quest for Self

Modality: In-person

CRN: 14178

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:30—1:45

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 2: Exploration and Discovery – Personal Wellness Category.

Catalog Description: Exploration of the perennial quest for the self through the special perspective provided by literature. The literary perspectives may be supplemented by materials from other arts or disciplines. A non-technical course for the general student rather than the student specializing in the study of literature; does not count as credit towards an English major or minor.

English 3140: African Literature

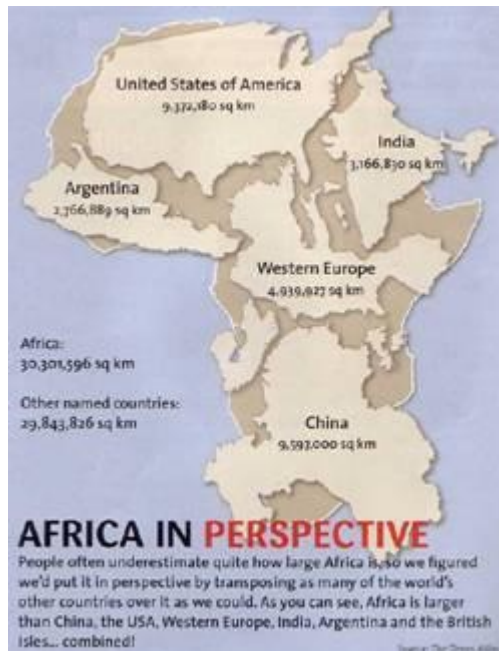
Modality: In-person

CRN: 14624

Mondays and Wednesdays, 11:00—12:15

Dr. Allen Webb

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 2: Exploration and Discovery – World Language and Culture Category.



Today there are 1 billion people living in Africa, speaking perhaps 2000 languages. The continent comprises 20% of the land of the planet, is enormously rich in resources, yet much of Africa is desperately poor with vast populations attempting to live on less than \$2 per day.

This course seeks to use African literature, memoir, film, biography, autobiography, history, library and on-line sources to begin to understand the enormous complexity of Africa and the challenges facing the continent. A cornerstone of this course is the idea that knowledge creates responsibility. Students will be expected to address what they are learning by research, collaboration, and action.

We begin our study of the current crisis in Africa by looking at the colonial and early national period. Turning to literature from the present we will encounter issues such as economic and political corruption and collapse, resource

exploitation, poverty, education, the condition of women, the environment, warfare and child soldiers, AIDS, immigration, etc.

As we learn about challenges in Africa we will also explore solutions. Africa is young; in some countries half of the population is under 25. Most of our reading will be about young people, many college age, their life experience and how they are making a positive difference. After extensive reading and study as a class, students will form groups focused on specific issues to engage in additional reading, research, action, and work with African and international organizations dedicated to a brighter future for the continent.

For further information consult allenwebb.net.

English 3160: Storytellers

Modality: Asynchronous Online

CRN: 12303

Dr. Mustafa Mirzeler

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 2: Exploration and Discovery – World Language and Culture Category.

Relying on oral tradition and the written word, the storytellers work imaginatively within the

realms of fantasy and reality. The fantasy element of their oral tradition and written literature is the link to a fabulous and grandly mythicized past created in oral epic tales, stories, and novels. In the world of the storytellers, what assuage the pain and suffering of people are the stories, the myths, and the imaginary worlds of the ancient past. In every age, human societies have produced their master storytellers who have moved tradition into new dispensations through the magic of words. In reading the accounts of these storytellers, the students will enter into their magical worlds and experience the magical truth of storytelling as well as the magic of the words.

English 3200: American Literature I

Modality: In-person

CRN: 14626

Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:30—1:45

Dr. Scott Slawinski

In this course students will read literature from the Age of Discovery and Exploration, texts from colonial America, and eventually pieces from the early United States up to the Civil War. While short stories, poems, and plays will be on the syllabus, class participants will also read diaries and journals, Puritan sermons and Transcendental



essays, personal narratives and epic histories.

Authors will include Captain John Smith, William Bradford, Anne Bradstreet, Jonathan Edwards, Benjamin Franklin, Phillis Wheatley, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Lydia Sigourney, and Walt Whitman, to name a few.

Longer works likely include Sukey Vickery's *Emily Hamilton*, Frederick Douglass's *Narrative of the Life*, and Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*. We will be looking at issues like the nature of freedom,

shifting religious beliefs, the growth of authorship and the publishing industry, appreciation of the natural environment, and the growing problem of American slavery. At minimum, class assignments will likely include two long essays, a final examination, and frequent reading quizzes.

English 3310: British Literature I

Modality: In-person

CRN: 14855

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:00—1:45

Dr. Grace Tiffany

This class is a broad survey of the first eight hundred years of English literature, starting with Anglo-Saxon poetry (in translation, c. 900), continuing through the Middle English poetry of Chaucer (late 14th century), progressing through the ages of Shakespeare and Milton during the English Renaissance (1580-1660s), and ending with an eighteenth-century work of Jonathan Swift. The class will promote close reading, as well as understanding of major historical trends as they pertained to the creation of the most influential works of literature in the English language.

Prerequisite: English 1100 (Literary Interpretation).

Text: The Norton Anthology of English Literature Vol. I: A, B, and C.

Assignments: two take-home writing assignments, quizzes, and a final exam.

English 3620: Readings in Creative Non-Fiction

Modality: In-person

CRN: 15227

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00—3:15

Dr. Maria Gigante

In this class, our focus will be on reading as writers, and we will analyze several works of creative nonfiction. The overarching goal is to understand how effective writing is structured and how writers use techniques to produce various effects. Our discussions about assigned readings will help to inform your compositional and creative choices in the production of two essays.

English 3660: Advanced Fiction Writing

Modality: Fully synchronous online

CRN: 10869

Wednesdays, 6:30—9:00

Professor Richard Katrovas

We shall explore the range of narrative prose composition as reflected in the efforts of students enrolled in the course. We shall bring to bear compassionate, thoughtful, unvarnished criticism upon one another's efforts, and proceed in a spirit of joyful celebration of unfettered creativity and emotional honesty. We shall proceed on the assumption that all arts pedagogy centers on imitation, and that by good faith imitating we celebrate the past and forge paths into the future. We shall, finally, proceed on the assumptions that authenticity is the only precondition of originality, and that fun is good.

English 3670: Advanced Poetry Writing

Modality: In-person

CRN: 14962

Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:30—4:45

Dr. Alen Hamza

In this course, we will work toward imagining things into existence and polishing our poetry. You will write a lot, try new things, and hone your craft. Because writing well requires reading well (and widely), we will read a good deal of published poetry, including several single-author collections. We will also read essays on the craft of writing and on the genesis and growth of a writer's consciousness, enlarging our vocabulary and ways of discussing poems from a writer's perspective. Generally speaking, one day each week will be a workshop day; the other we will use to discuss an essay, one or two sets of poems, or a book of poetry.

English 3680: Playwriting

Modality: In-person

CRN: 10822

Mondays and Wednesdays, 9:30 – 10:45

Ms. Kristen Field

This writing course focuses on the creation of original plays. Initial playwriting exercises will complement class discussions on craft, technique, and mentor texts, all focused on the core tenets of playwriting - character, conflict, and environment. Students will have the opportunity to read existing theatrical works and discuss the ways they function as both literary texts and blueprints for performance. Playwriting exercises and class discussions on existing works will then shift to focus on the creation, development, and revision of new, individual scripts. Each student will submit two (2) ten-minute plays for workshopping. During these workshops, students will help the featured playwrights develop their work and, by doing so, deepen their understanding of effective playwriting. After each workshop, the featured playwrights will meet individually with the instructor regarding revision goals. Students will submit a final portfolio, which will include their exercise work and their revised ten-minute plays.

English 3700: Writing Creative Non-Fiction

Modality: In-person

CRN: 15450

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:30—4:45

Dr. Maria Gigante

This course is set up as a traditional workshop, which means that it will be centered around class discussion and review of each student's writing. In preparation for workshops, we will read examples of creative nonfiction and discuss a range of possibilities for form, techniques, and style. Everyone will generate at least two pieces of creative nonfiction and participate in the peer review process.

English 3720: Development of Modern English

Modality: In-person

CRN: 15451

Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:00—11:40

Dr. Lisa Minnick

From the catalog: English 3720 traces the development of modern English from its beginnings to the present, examining historic and linguistic influences on change in spoken and written English. It explores theories of language development, with emphasis on their practical implications.

Students who complete the course successfully will acquire the following:

- Language description skills, including proficiency in the International Phonetic Alphabet.
- Working knowledge of terminology used in the discipline of linguistics.
- Understanding of the external (social, political, intellectual) influences on language change.
- Understanding of the internal (linguistic) mechanisms of language change.

- Awareness of how standard varieties are authorized and institutionalized.
- Understanding of English as a global lingua franca and the implications of its influence.

English 3820: Literature for the Young Child

Modality: In-person

CRN: 13072

Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:00—3:40

Dr. Meghann Meeusen

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 2: Exploration and Discovery – Societies and Cultures Category.

The Spring 2023 section of ENGL 3820 *Literature for the Young Child* will offer a student-driven approach to the study of children’s film and television, exploring how a shift toward streaming content has created new avenues in diverse representation. Initial weeks of the course will delve into contemporary programming on Disney+, Netflix, and other streaming media platforms, and the final portion of the semester will develop based on collaborative student research projects, culminating in opportunities to share individual avenues of study aligning with student interests and goals.

Throughout the semester, students will encounter a range of texts with diverse and inclusive representation, building skills to analyze positive and negative artistic choices when it comes to how media for young people portrays power dynamics, cultural authenticity, and social justice. Pairing this context with social, political, and cultural shifts that influence contemporary texts, students will track and comment upon potential trends in children’s and young adult television and film.

English 3820: Literature for the Young Child

Modality: Fully synchronous online

CRN: 13314

Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:00—11:40

Mr. Kevin Fitton

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 2: Exploration and Discovery – Societies and Cultures Category.

In this section of ENG 3820, *Literature for the Young Child*, we will be focusing on middle grade fiction, generally characterized as books marketed toward children between 8 and 12 years old. We will explore significant books in this category, including newer works, and books about characters from underrepresented and marginalized groups. We will also explore key themes and features for middle grade, especially in contrast to novels that are geared toward young adults.

This course will involve a significant amount of reading and discussion with flexibility to focus on your own areas of interest. You will come away from this class with a much fuller understanding of middle grade literature, and also children’s literature on the whole.

English 4090: Writing in the Sciences

Modality: Asynchronous Online

CRN: 14616

Professor Carlos Salinas

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 3: Connections – Local and National Perspectives Category.

ENGL 4090 is a writing course designed to help science majors and others interested in scientific communication understand how scientific arguments are constructed. A portion of this course will also be devoted to learning how to frame scientific arguments to non-expert audiences. Prerequisite: Junior standing.

English 4120: Climate Change and Culture

Modality: In-person

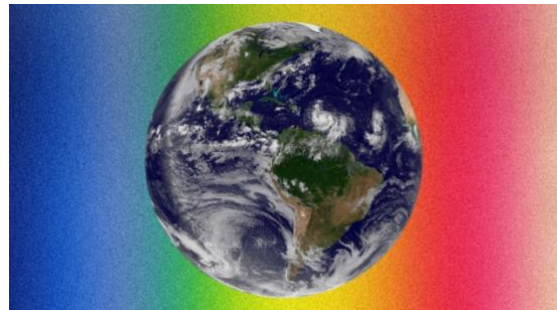
CRN: 15466

Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:00—3:15

Dr. Allen Webb

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 3: Connections – Global Perspectives Category.

Now is a time of dire emergency for the Earth, a time when drastic and dramatic measures must be taken so that our planet remains habitable. The emergency of the global COVID pandemic has been a kind of fire drill for the climate crisis, emphasizing the importance of science, the relatedness of all human communities, and the necessity of collaboration and changing behavior.



A cultural studies approach to understanding the climate crisis can foster a deeper understanding of the human social systems that cause global heating and possibilities for meaningful action.

This course brings together texts from the humanities, especially novels, and the social sciences to consider: the global impact, history, politics, and ethics of global warming; imagined representations of warming in the future and their relevance to the present; and, ways to mobilize people to address climate change via social movements.

English 4160: Women in Literature

Modality: In-person

CRN: 15235

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:00—5:40

Dr. Jil Larson

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 3: Connections – Global Perspectives

Category.

In this section of the course we will read international literature by and about women and discuss questions about gender in a variety of global cultural contexts. This course will give you the opportunity to encounter, ponder, write about, and discuss literary representations of women. In addition to studying the novels and short stories on our reading list, each of you will explore and present to the class a few poems by a woman poet of your choice. A midterm examination will allow you to write comparative essays about women writers/characters from different parts of the world. This emphasis on diversity and inclusion will be central to the midterm exam and reflected in our readings. Your paper writing will also allow you to pursue your own particular interests in this literature, to share your discoveries and insights with the rest of the class, and to develop your writing skills by composing and revising a portfolio of papers. Our reading list will include international writers, such as Yiyun Li, Chinelo Okparanta, Marguerite Duras, Jesmyn Ward, Valeria Luisell, Elif Shafak, Elena Ferrante, Margaret Atwood, and Julie Otsuka.

English 4400: Studies in Verse

Modality: In-person

CRN: 13071

Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:00—1:40

Dr. Alen Hamza

Catalog Description: A historical and formal study of poetry, emphasizing the development of poetic techniques, major verse forms and styles, and their relation to theories of poetry. Attention shall be paid to the critical and theoretical bases of interpretation.

English 4520: Shakespeare Seminar

Modality: In-person

CRN: 14713

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:00—11:40

Dr. Grace Tiffany

This is a discussion- and writing-intensive course which may fulfill the baccalaureate-level writing requirement of the student's curriculum. We'll read and talk about seven of Shakespeare's plays and experiment with scene readings. We'll also watch play-scenes on video and try to attend the Chicago Shakespeare Theatre's production of *The Comedy of Errors*.

Readings:

some sonnets

The Comedy of Errors

The Merchant of Venice

Henry V

Hamlet

Othello

Macbeth

The Tempest

Assignments: three short (2-page) papers, one 8-to-10-pg. research paper, final exam, class participation

English 4790: Writing in the Secondary Schools

Modality: In-person

CRN: 11895

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:00—1:40

Dr. Jonathan Bush

Built around concepts of 'best practice,' this course includes intensive study and practice of all aspects of teaching writing at middle and secondary schools and will focus on concepts of audience, purpose, and genre as they apply to the processes of writing. We will practice all the skills that make an effective writing teacher – planning, development, response, grading, and classroom activities that support students' writing processes. We will also touch on grammar, technology, and the effect of Common Core Standards on classroom practices. The course typically concludes with a practical demonstration of teaching, either at WMU or in local high school or middle school classrooms. Students will leave the course with a firm background in teaching writing.

English 4840: Culture in Children's Literature

Modality: Partially Synchronous Online

CRN: 15234

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30—10:45

Ms. Jaime Bienhoff

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 3: Connections – Local and National Perspectives Category.

In today's contemporary social and political environment, it has become essentially important to think critically about the ways that texts for young people shape ideologies and understanding of culture within our society. ENGL 4840 tackles this challenge by examining a range of topics speaking to current concerns of multiculturalism, diversity, and the richness of culture that defines America. Readings will highlight underrepresented voices and will include novels for young readers and middle grade students, picturebooks, comics, poetry, and/or film. Additionally, students will engage in critical thinking and consider their own analytical practices through discussion, activities, and short essays as well as creation of a multimodal research project.

English 5550: Chaucer

Modality: Hybrid

CRN: 15452

Wednesdays, 4:00 – 6:20

Dr. Erin Sweany

Chaucer's Estates Satire & Fictional Class Mobility

Film representations of the Middle Ages often use the trope of rags-to-riches to tell the stories of their protagonists: a poor boy becomes a knight (*The Knight's Tale*) or a peasant is betrothed to a prince (*The Princess Bride*). But how does medieval literature itself tell such tales?

Conveniently, Geoffrey Chaucer, a central figure in Middle English literary history, filled his texts with representations of different social classes interacting with one another, most famously in his *Canterbury Tales*. As the pilgrims wend their way to the shrine of Thomas à Becket, Chaucer presents a tableau of character types and literary tropes that are then variously singled out and



combined to tell different stories about medieval English social hierarchies and interactions. As idealizations, critiques, and satires unfold for the reader, we can ask: How did medieval England imagine its class structure and class mobility? To what literary ends does Chaucer put social types, interactions, and clashes? How does Chaucer incorporate historical class turmoil of the fourteenth century, that he lived through, into his poems? Through a variety of Chaucer's texts (including, but not limited to, *The Canterbury Tales*), we will investigate these questions and more. All literary texts will be accompanied by relevant scholarship from the field and carefully situated within the historical contexts from which they emerged, contexts that are largely monarchical but also include the rise of a significant middle class in England and popular revolts that were, ironically, lent strength by the havoc that the Black Death played on working class populations (if there are clear parallels between the Black Death and COVID-19, it is in class rumblings that both diseases brought to the surface, rather than in virulence or death rates).

Nearly all texts in this class will be read in Middle English. Previous experience with Middle English is not required.

This course will meet synchronously once a week, every week, throughout the semester (alternating online and in-person meetings).

English 5670: Creative Writing Workshop—Poetry

Modality: Fully synchronous online

CRN: 14854

Mondays, 6:30 – 9:00

Professor Richard Katrovas

Poetry is the mother of all verbal expression. We shall honor the mother.

English 5970: Lexicography

Modality: In-person

CRN: 15453

Tuesdays, 4:00 – 6:20

Dr. Lisa Minnick

Lexicography: Dictionaries Past, Present, and Future



Explores the more than 4,000-year history of dictionaries, their uses, ideological underpinnings, and processes for their creation. Students will examine a variety of dictionaries, primarily although not exclusively in English, from some of the earliest known cuneiform tablet lexicons to electronic innovations like the Oxford English Dictionary Online and the Urban Dictionary. We will also explore lexicographical theories and consider practical applications to dictionary-making, including 21st-century developments like crowd-sourced and corpus-based methodologies along with other tools and techniques.

