**Fall 2009 & Spring 2010 Course Descriptions**

**LIT-608 001**
**Course Level:** Graduate  
**Studies in Genre (3)**  
**Detective Fiction**

A study of the detective genre, starting with Edgar Allan Poe and then moving through the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. The primary focus is on the hard-boiled American tradition of crime fiction, although the course involves forays into other kinds of crime and conspiracy writing and films as well. Authors include Conan Doyle, Freud, Hammett, Chandler, Himes, and Highsmith. Meets with LIT-308 001.

**LIT-608 002**
**LITERATURE**  
**FALL 2009**  
**Course Level:** Graduate  
**Studies in Genre (3)**  
**The Fate of Beauty, the Fate of Lyric**

"Writing poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric," Adorno famously claimed, and yet, for many, poetry remains the ideal of beauty. In this course, students discover the deep structures that make some poems beautiful and read poems that challenge the idea of beauty, creating a different kind of experience. Meets with LIT-308 002.

**LIT-608 001**
**LITERATURE**  
**SPRING 2010**  
**Course Level:** Graduate  
**Studies in Genre (3)**  
**Modern Drama**

This seminar focuses on plays written by modern British dramatists between 1895 to present, including Wilde, Shaw, Galsworthy, Coward, Rattigan, Osborne, Pinter, Stoppard, Churchill, Wertenbaker, and Ravenhill. The class explores the social and economic contexts informing the drama as well as original performance conditions. Discussions range from genre to staging, for instance, why did realism and naturalism dominate the British stage well into the 1960s in contrast to the experimental dramatic forms (i.e. absurdism, surrealism) common to continental practice. Meets with LIT-308 001.
**Studies in Genre (3)**

*Contemporary American Poetry*

Beginning with an overview of the modernist tradition and its influence, this course surveys contemporary American experimental poetry from the 1960s to the present. The class studies the work of poets experimenting with the lyrical tradition, and a broad range of movements including the Objectivists, Beats, New York School and Language Poets. Critical issues are examined, such as what is at stake intellectually, politically, and culturally in the formal innovation of this new American poetry. Meets with LIT-308 002.

**LIT-610 001**

**LITERATURE**

*SPRING 2010*

**Course Level:** Graduate

**Major Authors (3)**

*Lessing and Atwood*

Students read selected novels and other imaginative writing (short fiction and poetry) of two distinguished contemporary novelists, Doris Lessing and Margaret Atwood, recent recipients of the Nobel Prize in Literature and the Booker Prize, respectively. The class explores central ideas and strategies of narrative structure and expression in each author's work. Meets with LIT-310 001.

**LIT-623 001**

**LITERATURE**

*FALL 2009*

**Course Level:** Graduate

**Ethnic Literatures of the United States (3)**

*Black Love*

How should we understand the fact that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. successfully articulated and enacted a radical democratic politics in the language of love? How might this ideal challenge the emphasis on protest, power, and cultural difference that dominates the study of African American culture? This course explores how African American artists and thinkers, including Dr. King, imagine the relationship between love on one hand and the social and political well-being of African Americans on the other. The course traces how some artists define the spiritual health available in affirming romantic relationships, portray empowering expressions of sexuality and sensuality, and depict the liberating bonds of family and community as powerful resistance to the effects of racism. In the process, the class considers how these ideals complicate and contradict the ideals of identity politics by imagining the power of the heart. Artists include Zora Neale Hurston, John Coltrane, Toni Morrison, and A. Van Jordan. Meets with LIT-323 001.
This course examines the cultural legacy of the civil rights movement, its idealism, activism, and political radicalism exemplified, some would say, by soul music, for the literary and popular culture created by the African American artists who came of age in the 1970s and 1980s. The class explores the variety of ways these artists used irony, satire, introspection, and postmodern eclecticism to revise inherited definitions of freedom and equality in order to trouble the boundaries of blackness itself. Artists include Colson Whitehead, Spike Lee, Kara Walker, The Roots, Toni Morrison, Dave Chappelle, and Junot Diaz. Meets with LIT-323 001.

This course puts queer theory in conversation with Shakespeare to enable a reinforced perspective on the issues that animate queer theory today. These questions include the relation between history and sexuality, sexual identity, the relation between sex and the State, and the role of performance. Readings include queer theorists such as Lee Edelman and Jonathan Goldberg, and Shakespeare texts including Measure for Measure and Venus and Adonis, among others. Meets with LIT-332 001.

Advanced study of Shakespeare and Shakespeare on film, including shorts and silent movies; full-length features; and independent, arthouse, and international Shakespeare films dating from 1899 to the present. This course offers ample opportunities for literary analysis of Shakespeare's plays, as well as serving as an overview of film history and an introduction to film criticism and theory. Plays include Midsummer Night's Dream, Henry V, Romeo and Juliet, Titus Andronicus, King Lear, Hamlet, As You Like It, Taming of the Shrew, and Macbeth. Meets with LIT-332 002.
001
LITERATURE
Course Level: Graduate
Topics in Nineteenth Century British and European Literature (3)
*Desire and the Nineteenth Century British Novel*

This course examines several Victorian novels with attention to representations and narrative structures of desire. Texts include writings by Charles Dickens, William Thackeray, George Elliot, and Sigmund Freud. Meets with LIT-340 001.

LIT-640
001
LITERATURE
Course Level: Graduate
Topics in Nineteenth Century British and European Literature (3)
*Charlotte Bronte and William Thackeray*

When Charlotte Bronte dedicated the second edition of Jane Eyre to William Thackeray in 1847, she had never met him. Soon afterwards the two celebrated authors did meet; and they began a curious and, at times, tumultuous friendship that lasted until Bronte's death in 1855. This course traces the nature of their literary relationship through the exploration of both biographical and literary texts. Readings include Bronte's Jane Eyre and Shirley and Thackeray's Vanity Fair and Henry Esmond, as well as varying accounts of their friendship including their remarks about one another as enigmatic people and novelists. Meets with LIT-340 001.

LIT-643
002
LITERATURE
Course Level: Graduate
Topics in British and European Modernism (3)
*Modern Commonwealth Fiction*

This course is a survey of the twentieth-century British novel including Irish and Scottish contributions, beginning with Joyce and Woolf, focusing on the technical innovations of high modernism. The class then analyzes responses to modernism, first in realistic texts by Isherwoood, Waugh, Green, and Spark, and then by postmodern writers such as Ishiguro, Winterson, Welsh, and Barnes. Finally, an attempt to contextualize these different formal strategies is made by considering cultural changes within Great Britain in the twentieth century and innovations in the novel as a genre. Meets with LIT-343 001.
Topics in Film (3)

The Musical

Less a course on the sociological construct of the musical or its origins on the stage, this course focuses on an intense examination of genre study by using the film musical from its inception with the sound era in 1927 through present-day incarnations. Meets with LIT-346 001.

LIT-646
002
LITERATURE
Course Level: Graduate
Topics in Film (3)
Canadian Cinema

Over the last few decades, Canada has produced one of the most unusual and challenging bodies of cinema in the world. Like the country itself, its cinema is a compelling blend of disparate parts: two separate filmmaking traditions (English-language and francophone), an ambivalent but fruitful relationship between the local support of a proactive National Film Board and the economic hegemony of Hollywood and the 'American Empire', and an ever changing pool of ethnic identities, from its indigenous peoples to its Jewish and Asian populations. This course samples the richness of Canadian cinema, with a focus on the Quebecois cinema, a force since the 1960s, and on the new wave of Anglophone cinema in the 1990s. Canadian cinema is issues and idea-driven; class discussions focus equally on the often spectacular formal and stylistic means used to present these ideas. Meets with LIT-346 002.

LIT-646
001
LITERATURE
Course Level: Graduate
Topics in Film (3)
Melodrama

In this class students develop a historical and theoretical framework for studying melodrama. Starting from the evolution of early film melodrama and its relationship to popular theater, the course traces the generic conventions of the mode in a diverse range of texts from classical Hollywood formulas. Meets with LIT-346 001.

LIT-646
002
LITERATURE
Course Level: Graduate
Topics in Film (3)
Film Noir
This course studies perhaps the most influential of all Hollywood products, the film noir. Screenings represent a varied selection from a corpus of some 400 movies made between 1941 and 1958, plus some precursors and examples of "neo-noir" from recent decades. Class discussions examine each film on its own terms as well as for ways it can help define what film noir was, where it came from, why it caught on, and why it seems to be so important to us now, both in its original forms, and in the traces we see of it everywhere around us. Readings give background and context; they also offer a variety of critical approaches to and interpretations of the phenomenon of film noir in addition to readings of individual films. Meets with LIT-346 002.

LIT-660
001
LITERATURE
Course Level: Graduate
Topics in Medieval Literature (3)
Chaucer: The Canterbury Tales

This course introduces students to Chaucer's language and work with a reading of the complete Canterbury Tales in the original Middle English. The class pays attention both to literary tradition and innovation in the Tales and to the historical and cultural contexts of late fourteenth-century England. Include the marriage question and gender relations; experience vs. authority; religious feeling and anticlericalism; and social interaction and conflict between classes. Meets with LIT-360 001.

LIT-736
001
LITERATURE
Course Level: Graduate
Seminar in Eighteenth Century Literature (3)
Milton, Gender, and Reason

Milton's Paradise Lost has been alternately described for its endorsement of female subordination and celebrated for its depiction of "rational conversation" and mutuality between the sexes. In this course, students explore Milton's representation of gender, sexual difference, reason, and the body by reading Paradise Lost alongside Milton's Biblical and patristic sources; his writings on marriage and divorce; seventeenth-century responses to 'the woman question,' and critical analyses ranging from the eighteenth century until the present day to situate Milton's gender politics within his seventeenth-century context, and also to reflect critically upon successive generations of feminist literary criticism.

LIT-737
001
LITERATURE
Course Level: Graduate
Seminar in Nineteenth Century Literature (3)
Melville

Melville's major works including Typee, Mardi, Moby Dick, Pierre, short stories and novellas, The Confidence Man, the Civil War poems, and Billy Budd. Significant engagement with source materials, such as Emerson, the Bible, Shakespeare, Hawthorne, Frederick Douglass, as well as secondary scholarship.