

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS ENGLISH DEPARTMENT ***Fall 2025***

NOTE: If you have any questions about how a course ‘counts’ in the major, please see your English Major Faculty Advisor. If you do not have a Faculty Advisor, please contact department Associate Chair, Prof. Seamus O’Malley seamus.omalley@yu.edu

Media Exit Project: The media exit project will now be completed as part of an advanced course taken with our media studies instructors.

Internships: *Must be approved for academic credit before being started.* Fill out the form and give a description of the internship duties to your faculty or media advisor. Internships are only required for media studies students who wish to earn a concentration in journalism or advertising. www.yu.edu/registrar/forms

MEDIA AND CREATIVE WRITING COURSES

ENGL 1600/MAR 3323 Advertising Copywriting/ Creative Advertising

M/W 3:10-4:25PM/3:35-4:50 E Slot

Erik Mintz

Good advertising doesn’t have to be an oxymoron. In this course we’ll examine what it takes to make an ad that’s persuasive-- one that entertains or makes us laugh, cry, think, or change our minds-- while simultaneously accomplishing the goal of selling a product, service or just getting us to nod our heads in agreement. By studying the masters who’ve done and still do exceptional advertising we’ll begin to understand how to create advertising that people actually want to see and watch and share. Through weekly course assignments and teacher and student critique we’ll develop the skills to write effective print, TV, digital/new media, and radio advertising. We’ll also undertake an appreciation of design, layout, and type treatments and apply those skills and techniques to the work.

Required for Advertising track and an elective for other Media Studies tracks. Prerequisite: English 1100 or 1200H

ENGL 1720 Advanced Journalism

M 6-8:30pm Evening slot

Jason Gewirtz

This class will allow students majoring in several disciplines to learn about writing and reporting for digital news outlets and magazines. We will focus on hard news, features and opinion throughout the course. In addition, the course will also focus on ethics, properly covering a community, and leadership within a newsroom. The class will also cover the business of journalism to cover how the corporations behind journalism profit. Students will also learn about challenges to the model and creative ways to make it thrive. Much of the class will consist of writing assigned stories and pitching.

Pre-req: ENGL 1100 or 1200 or 1200H. Elective for Media Tracks & Creative Writing. Counts toward Writing Minor.

ENGL 1728/HIST2909 Media Revolutions

M/W 1:25-2:40pm /1:40-2:25pm D slot

Jeffrey Freedman

This course will survey the history of media from the ancient world to the present. Taking ‘media’ in the broadest sense to encompass the full range of communications technologies, we will begin with the papyri scrolls of ancient Greece and move from there through the manuscript codex of the Middle Ages, the printed book of the age of Gutenberg, newspapers in the 18th and 19th centuries, radio and film in the 20th century, and the internet and social media of our own digital age. Several recurrent questions will frame our survey of media landscapes: How, to what ends, and in what institutional settings are particular media used? How do they affect modes of thinking? And what are the relations of different media to the various historical forms of religious, political, and economic power?

Elective for Media Tracks; same as HIST 2909; pre-req: ENGL 1100 or ENGL 1200H

ENGL 1801 Writing Fiction

M/W 1:25-2:40pm /1:40-2:255pm D slot

Sarah Snider

Our goal as fiction writers is to entertain or amuse our readers, to move or persuade them, to get them to look more closely at or think more deeply about something that we feel is worth their attention—or some combination(s) of these. Ultimately the goal of fiction, as David Foster Wallace has said, is to show what it is to be a human being. In this Writing Fiction course, we will be reading and writing stories that work toward these ends. The course is for both curious novices as well as for those with some experience writing stories who want to expand their knowledge and range. We will spend the first half of the semester discussing various works of fiction from different traditions and time periods. We will read for content, but just as importantly, we will study the voice, point of view, structure, and use of language. We will practice close reading techniques with our own writing in mind. Every week, we will be writing creatively in response to these works, using them as models and as inspiration for our own writing. The second half of the semester is dedicated to the writing workshop. You will be responsible for submitting one substantial story or a series of shorter stories for workshop critique and for extensive revision.

Pre-req: ENGL 1100 or 1200 or 1200H. Elective for Media Tracks & Creative Writing. Counts toward Writing Minor.

ENGL 1900 Advanced Creative Writing

T/Th 3-4:15pm N slot

Ann Peters

This is an advanced course for those who have taken introductory creative writing and want to continue to improve their skills in writing fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction. This course is required for Creative Writing majors, and the final portfolio you hand in for the class will fulfill the exit requirement for the major. In this course, you will keep a daily writing journal, respond to weekly writing prompts, participate in five peer workshops, and meet regularly with the professor. Over the course of the semester, you will produce new work and revise work from previous creative writing courses with the goal of completing a thirty-page portfolio of polished work. The final portfolio can include work from any genre and counts for 35% of the grade.

This course is required for CW majors and is open to all who have taken English 1800 or another CW or CW x-list course. It counts towards the Writing Minor.

ENGL 2000 Methods for English Majors

M/W 3:10-4:25pm/3:35-4:50pm E slot

Matt Miller

Who decides what texts mean? Why are some interpretations better than others? How much does the author's intention matter? How does language generate meaning? In this foundational course, we will study a variety of texts, including some classic literature, as we consider major debates about meaning and interpretive practices that have emerged throughout the last hundred years.

This course is more about *how* we read than what we read. The goal is to show how meaning is created through critical reading and to help you learn to read and interpret works contextually and closely. To this end, our course has several objectives: students should leave this course with a clear sense of the variety of theoretical approaches available to them as readers, have a sense of why these approaches matter in apprehending all different kinds of texts, and be able to manifest their ability to read texts in different ways through verbal and written modes of communication.

You may find that the issues and readings difficult at first. But the course is also enjoyable and will help you gain the skills you'll need to read and write critically about all kinds of texts, not just literary ones. We will read poems and a novel, but we will also be interpreting videos, essays, photographs, and other kinds of "texts" you encounter every day (and yes, a photograph can be read as a text—we'll learn how and why). Different sections of the course take up major issues of concern in literary and cultural studies, issues like authorship, language, reading, subjectivity, ideology, aesthetics, and history.

This course is a requirement for English majors and minors (but not for the writing minor). It fulfills a requirement in the SCW core curriculum: "Interpreting Literature and the Arts." Pre-Requisite: English 1100 or 1200H.

LITERATURE COURSES: Category II (Survey) Courses

ENGL 2580 American Jewish Literature

T/Th 11:50am-1:05pm L slot

Charlotte Fiehn

In this course, we will explore, from many different angles, the concept of American Jewish literature. We will, from the very beginning, break down the key descriptors for this course— American, Jewish, and literature – exploring how each of these terms may apply to different texts. Considering these texts in their broader historical context, we will try to identify the origins of American Jewish literature and trace its evolution. We will read and analyze texts from the earliest Jewish immigrants to America through to modern works, engaged with the lived experience of Jewish Americans today. Along the way, we will explore how immigration, assimilation, intergenerational struggles, gender, antisemitism, and the Holocaust have affected American Jewish writers and how they have sought to engage with these issues, always returning to the issue of what it means to be American and Jewish, what constitutes literature, and what makes American Jewish literature important and unique within a broader national and international frame.

Following the framework of the *Norton Anthology of Jewish American Literature*, we will begin by looking at literature of arrival, including Jacob I. Cohen’s “Prayer for the *Medina*,” letters from Rebecca Samuel and Rebecca Gratz, discourses on the state of the Jewish religion, and the poetry of Emma Lazarus. We will then look at literature of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, including the works of Abraham Cahan, Anna Margolin, and Edna Ferber. We will consider the works of more contemporary writers, too, including Philip Roth, Cynthia Ozick, and Allegra Goodman. We will also discuss the influence of Jewish writers on drama, musical theater, comedy, and film, considering the works of Arthur Miller, Irvin Berlin, Stephen Sondheim, Groucho Marx, and Kenneth Lonergan.

As part of the class experience, we will also have field trips to the Jewish archive at the New York Public Library and the Center for Jewish History.

Through a seminar-style discussion and two assigned essays, students will critically reflect on the various traditions of Jewish American writers. They will develop familiarity with the critical debates about Jewish American literature and develop their critical reading and writing skills through close reading practice and critical analysis.

This class fulfills a II C Intro. requirement for the English Major. It also fulfills the general requirement, Interpreting Literature and the Arts. Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H.

ENGL 2795 Magic Realism (Long Title: 100 Years of Magic Realism – Now a Survey!)

M/W 5-6:15pm F slot

Matt Miller

“Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendía was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice.”

--Gabriel García Márquez, *A Hundred Years of Solitude*

“A book must be the axe for the frozen sea inside us.”

--Franz Kafka

This course will be an imaginative journey into what happens in fiction when the real, normal or everyday confront the unreal, dreamlike, or downright bizarre. The conjunction in the quotation of the extraordinary situation, with an ordinary memory, but of a discovery that sounds just plain odd is just one example of the mind-bending prose we will explore together. Not only that, but the novels, stories, and essays we'll read are internationally recognized as some of the greatest writers of our time: including Italo Calvino, Franz Kafka,

Gabriel Garcia Marquez, and Louise Erdrich. On our journey, we'll explore memories, alternative realities, fantastic places, and magical transformations into the extraordinary. Toward the end of the class, we will consider the relationship between what is often called the “magic realism” of these writers and other types of art such as painting and film.

This class fulfills a II C Intro. requirement for the English Major. It also fulfills the general requirement, Interpreting Literature and the Arts. Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H.

ENGL 2920H Topics: Jews in the Western Literary Imagination

T/Th 9-10:15am J slot

Shaina Trapedo

From medieval blood libels to Ulysses' Leopold Bloom, the figure of the Jew has loomed large in the Western literary imagination. This course will examine how authors through the ages, such as Boccaccio, Chaucer, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Lessing, Dickens, and Eliot, have represented Jewishness in poetry and prose for their predominantly Christian readers. How are Jews positioned in relation to law, commerce, community, morality, wisdom, and faith in the fictional worlds they inhabit? What technical or thematic purpose do Jewish characters serve in the construction of the text as a whole? Through deep engagement with a variety of texts, we'll consider to what extent these works reflect, reinforce, challenge, and/or change the existing archetypes and assumptions about Jews in their respective historical and cultural moments, and how these characterizations reverberate in the social history of antisemitism (and philosemitism). We'll also briefly consider the literary afterlives of these characters in the hands of Jewish writers, such as Will Eisner's graphic novel Fagin and Philip Roth's Operation Shylock. Taught under the auspices of both the English department and the Straus Center for Torah and Western Thought, this course will feature occasional guest lectures by affiliated humanities faculty.

This is a “Forms, Identities, Reading Practices” course in English, designed to pose questions about who writes and reads for whom, in what ways, and why does it matter? It fulfills a IIC Intro. requirement for the English Major. It fulfills Interpreting Literature and the Arts. Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H, and Honors Program requirements.

LITERATURE COURSES: Category III (Topics) Courses

ENGL 2590 African American Literature

T/Th 1:35-2:50pm M slot

Cynthia Wachtell

ENGL 2700 Introduction to Film

T 3-5:40pm (Tuesdays only, double session)

Nora Nachumi

Cinema has profoundly shaped the ways in which we see the world and understand our place within it. Form, content, history, audience reception, and film as a cultural industry all contribute to the ways we interpret film. Focusing principally on classic and contemporary English-language, Hollywood-made cinema, this course provides a comprehensive introduction to the formal elements of film while remaining attentive to the various ways in which cinema involves interactions with specific audiences and larger social structures. Over the course of the semester, we will investigate how meaning is produced in cinema formally, examine the aesthetic and rhetorical aspects of film, and explore the social and cultural contexts that shape how we and other audiences make sense of and take pleasure in films. Some of the films we may consider include but are not limited to: *The Wizard of Oz* (1939), *Mildred Pierce* (1945), *Rear Window* (1954), *Singing in the Rain* (1952), *Blade Runner* (1982), *The Shawshank Redemption* (1994), *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008), *Smoke Signals* (2019),

Everything Everywhere All at Once (2022). Upon completing the course, students should have a working knowledge of film form and vocabulary, a general outline of film history, and some critical/theoretical perspectives for analyzing film.

Course requirements include: 5 quizzes, participation in an online forum, 2 short essays (2 pp), 1 film review, one 5-7 page essay.

Pre-req: English 1100 or 1200H or FYWR 1020. Fulfills category III. Fulfills Interpreting Literature and the Arts.

ENLG 2800 Literature and Culture of the City: New York

T/Th 10:25-11:40am K slot

Ann Peters

This course will increase your knowledge of New York City and give you a greater understanding of how literature can shape and deepen one's experience of place. Over the course of the semester, you'll be introduced to all sorts of literary concepts and terms ('modernism,' 'lyric poetry,' 'flash fiction,' etc.) as well as all sorts of ideas and theories about the history and culture of this city since the Civil War. We'll be talking about the role of immigrants, the effects of gentrification, and the mapping of class difference on the urban landscape; we'll be talking about apartments and tenement buildings, about the history of Harlem and Greenwich Village and Central Park, about food and language and street life, and most of all, about the lives and communities of New Yorkers and the stories they tell.

We'll be reading poetry and fiction, but we will also be reading some non-fiction essays about a variety of topics (the Bowery, riding buses, the first maps of Manhattan, New York nostalgia, life in a housing project, etc.) and even a few short articles from the newspaper (*The Metropolitan Diary* from *The New York Times* and a couple of oral history interviews.) You'll also be making a visit to the New York Tenement Museum. Readings may include poetry by Walt Whitman, Langston Hughes, Dorothy Parker, and Frank O'Hara; short stories by Abraham Cahan, Willa Cather, James Baldwin, Maeve Brennan, Amy Hempl, Bernard Malamud, Grace Paley, and Junot Diaz; nonfiction essays by, E.B. White, Zadie Smith, Tony Judt, Colson Whitehead, and Joseph Mitchell; and two novels: 1) Either Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* or William Dean Howells's *The Hazard of New Fortunes*; 2) And one selected from the following list: Teju Cole's *Open City*, Chang Rae Lee's *Native Speaker*, Paula Fox's *Desperate Characters*, Ann Petry's *The Street*, Saul Bellow's *Seize the Day*, Steven Millhauser's *Martin Dressler*, and Toni Morrison's *Jazz*.

Course Requirements: There will be one 5-7 page paper, regular weekly reading quizzes, three reading responses (2-3 pages), one midterm exam, and a museum visit project. There will not be a final exam.

This is a "Forms, Identities, Reading Practices" course in English, designed to pose questions about who writes and reads for whom, in what ways, and why does it matter? It fulfills a IIIC Intro requirement for the English Major. It fulfills Interpreting Literature and the Arts. Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H.

ENGL 2920H Topics: Russian Literature

M/W 11:55am-1:10pm C slot

Seamus O'Malley

Several of the world's great novels were written in two decades (the 1860s and 1870s) and in two cities (Moscow and St. Petersburg). Ivan Turgenev, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, and Leo Tolstoy all produced remarkable works of fiction, and we'll read *Fathers and Sons*, *Notes From the Underground*, and the towering *Anna Karenina*. We'll also turn to the short fiction of their literary descendant Anton Chekhov. These works explored the tensions between the city and the country; nationalism and cosmopolitanism; loyalty and rebellion; marriage and infidelity; and faith and *nihilizm* (nihilism).

Half the course will be dedicated to Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*. Clocking in at over 800 pages, it is that rare book that wins over both the literary *cognoscenti* and Oprah's Book Club. Anna K. is one of the most fully realized characters in the history of the written word, and there will be times when you will forget you are reading and feel instead like you are just watching life itself. We use the term "realism" in an awkward attempt to describe Tolstoy's style that has countless imitators but no peers. We'll do our best not to let periodic quizzes on the novel ruin our literary escapade.

Course requirements include weekly writing responses; *Anna Karenina* quizzes; two essays; an oral presentation; and a final exam.

This is a "Forms, Identities, Reading Practices" course in English, designed to pose questions about who writes and reads for whom, in what ways, and why does it matter? It fulfills a IIC Intro. requirement for the English Major. It fulfills Interpreting Literature and the Arts. Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H, and Honors Program requirements.

ENGL 2926 Myth and Folklore: Relations to Literature

M/W 10:25-11:40am B slot

Seamus O'Malley

This course will start at the very beginning of Western literature, with Homer and the Greeks. Besides inventing logic, democracy, and the alphabet, the Greeks also produced literature that has endured the entire span of human history. We will read Homer's epic poems *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, as well as several Greek tragedies and other texts engaged with the myths of ancient Greece. We will get to know some of the gods and heroes of Mount Olympus, like Zeus, Aphrodite, Athena, and Hercules.

But we'll also trace the influence of these texts and concepts on English literature, as such myths appeared in poetry, novels, and folklore. We will read writers like William Shakespeare, John Milton, Percy Shelley, and Virginia Woolf. Finally, we will turn to modern adaptations of Greek myth, including the recent novel *Circe* by Madeline Miller, and the film *Chi-Raq* by Spike Lee.

Course requirements: class discussion, regular written reading responses, one close-reading essay, one thesis-driven essay, midterm, final exam.

This is a "Forms, Identities, Reading Practices" course in English, designed to pose questions about who writes and reads for whom, in what ways, and why does it matter? It fulfills a III C Intro. requirement for the English Major. It fulfills Interpreting Literature and the Arts. Pre-requisite: English 1100 or 1200H.

ADVANCED LITERATURE COURSE: Category III (Topics)

ENGL 3920 Topics: Women and Narratology

T/Th 11:50am-1:05pm L slot

Nora Nachumi

In *A Room of One's Own* (1929), Virginia Woolf remarks that one of the most significant difficulties faced by women when they began to write professionally was that “there was no common sentence ready for her use.” The only model available was a “man’s sentence,” which was utterly unsuited to a woman writer:

Charlotte Brontë, with all her splendid gift for prose, stumbled and fell with that clumsy weapon in her hands. George Eliot committed atrocities with it that beggar description. Jane Austen looked at it and laughed at it and devised a perfectly natural, shapely sentence proper for her own use and never departed from it. Thus, with less genius for writing than Charlotte Brontë, she got infinitely more said.

Taking its cue from Woolf’s evaluation of Austen, this course proposes to apply narratology—a discipline that examines the formal structures of narrative—to the study of women’s writing, a field that has traditionally focused on the representation of gender relationships, power dynamics, and the cultural representation of women. Over the course of the semester students will hone their understanding of concepts fundamental to the practice of narratology as well as to the subdiscipline of feminist narratology and use them to illuminate poetry and prose by writers which will may include, but are not limited to, Jane Austen, Elizabeth Bishop, Angela Carter, Jamaica Kincaid, Maxine Hong Kingston, Audre Lorde, Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton, Amy Tan, and Virginia Woolf.

Requirements: 5 quizzes, weekly posts in the course discussion forum, a critical summary and presentation, 2 analytical essays (2-3 pp each), and a final essay written in 2 drafts (8-10 pp).

This course counts towards the minor in women’s studies. Pre-req: one Introductory Literature class or a flat A in English 1100 or 1200H or FYWR 1020. Fulfills Category III Advanced. It fulfills Interpreting Literature and the Arts.

English Department Course Grid, Fall 2025

| Monday | Tues | Wed | Thurs |
|--|---|--|---|
| A 9-10:15 | J 9-10:15 | A 9-10:15 | J 9-10:15 |
| ENGL 1100: Trapedo | ENGL 1100: Grimaldi ENGL 2920: Topics: Jews in the Western Literary Imagination, Trapedo (Honors, Straus, Seminar cat. IIIC) | ENGL 1100: Trapedo | ENGL 1100: Grimaldi ENGL 2920: Topics: Jews in the Western Literary Imagination, Trapedo (Honors, Straus, Seminar cat. IIIC) |
| B 10:25-11:40 | K 10:25-11:40 | B 10:25-11:40 | K 10:25-11:40 |
| ENGL 1010: Trapedo ENGL 1100: Snider ENGL 2926: Myth and Folklore, O'Malley (cat. IIIC Intro) | ENGL 1100: Grimaldi ENGL 1100: Nachumi ENGL 2800: Lit & Culture of the City: NYC (cat. IIIC) Peters | ENGL 1010: Trapedo ENGL 1100: Snider ENGL 2926: Myth and Folklore, O'Malley (cat. IIIC Intro) | ENGL 1100: Grimaldi ENGL 1100: Nachumi ENGL 2800: Lit & Culture of the City: NYC (cat. IIIC) Peters |
| C 11:55-1:10 | L 11:50-1:05 | C 11:55-1:10 | L 11:50-1:05 |
| ENGL 1100: Snider ENGL 2920H: Topics: Russian Literature, O'Malley (Cat. IIIC, Honors) | ENGL 2580: American Jewish Literature, Fiehn (cat. IIC, Intro) ENGL 1100 Grimaldi ENGL 1100 Grimaldi ENGL 3920: Topics: Women and Narratology (Adv, seminar, cat. III), Nachumi | ENGL 1100: Snider ENGL 2920H: Topics: Russian Literature, O'Malley (Cat. IIIC, Honors) | ENGL 2580: American Jewish Literature, Fiehn (cat. IIC, Intro) ENGL 1100 Grimaldi ENGL 1100 Grimaldi ENGL 3920: Topics: Women and Narratology (Adv, seminar, cat. III), Nachumi |
| D 1:25-2:40, 1:40-2:55 | M 1:35-2:50 | D 1:25-2:40 | M 1:35-2:50 |
| ENGL 1801: Writing Fiction, Snider ENGL 1200: Freshman Honors Seminar, Miller ENGL 1728 Media Revolutions, Freedman (media X-list) | ENGL 1200: Peters ENGL 1100: Fiehn ENGL 2590: African American Lit, Wachtell | ENGL 1801: Writing Fiction, Snider ENGL 1200: Freshman Honors Seminar, Miller ENGL 1728 Media Revolutions, Freedman (media X-list) Club hour 2:40-3:30 | ENGL 1200: Peters ENGL 1100: Fiehn ENGL 2590: African American Lit, Wachtell |
| E 3:10-4:25 | N 3:00-4:15 | E 3:10-4:25;3:35-4:50 | N 3:00-4:15 |
| ENGL 1100: O'Malley ENGL 2000: Methods for English Majors, Miller ENGL 1600: Advertising Copywriting: Elective for Media; counts towards Writing minor, Erik Mintz | ENGL 1200: Fiehn ENGL 2700: Intro to Film, Nachumi (seminar, cat. IIIB; Tuesdays only, runs until 5:40pm) ENGL 1900: Advanced Creative Writing, Peters (Adv, CW) | ENGL 1100: O'Malley ENGL 2000: Methods for English Majors, Miller ENGL 1600: Advertising Copywriting: Elective for Media; counts towards Writing minor, Erik Mintz | ENGL 1200: Fiehn ENGL 1900: Advanced Creative Writing, Peters (Adv, CW) |
| F 4:40-5:55 | P 4:40-5:55 | F 5:00-6:15 | P 4:40-5:55 |
| ENGL 2795: Magic Realism (Intro, cat. IIB), Miller | none | ENGL 2795: Magic Realism (Into, cat. IIB), Miller | none |
| Monday Evening 6:00-8:30pm ENGL 1720: Advanced Journalism, Gewirtz. 6:00-8:30pm | | | |