V. Course descriptions for WR100 and WR150

All texts written in languages other than English are read in English translation.

American Colors: Race and Culture in the United States, 1965-present

This course is an interdisciplinary examination of American culture in which we will explore the interplay of race, society, ethnicity, and popular discourse through the analysis of critical and creative literature, film, and television. Focusing on recent American history from 1965 to the present, we will utilize U.S. Census-derived racial categories as the framework (i.e., black/African American, white/Caucasian, Asian, and so forth) to interpret the meaning of such classifications and investigate their impact on the ever-growing heterogeneous American society. Readings include Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic’s *Critical Race Theory*; Brigit Brander Rasmussen, Eric Klinenberg, Irene J. Nexica, and Matt Wray’s *The Making and Unmaking of Whiteness*; and Tricia Rose’s *Black Noise*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WR150 K4</td>
<td>Tue,Thu</td>
<td>9:30am - 11:00am</td>
<td>McComb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WR150 N5</td>
<td>Tue,Thu</td>
<td>2:00pm - 3:30pm</td>
<td>McComb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

American Environmental History

For thousands of years, human beings have explored, exploited, or existed peacefully with the natural environment surrounding them. This seminar examines the question of what constitutes a proper relationship between people and the environment, and how nature and culture interact. How aware have we been of the impact of human activities on the environment? What sorts of images and values do we attach to nature? How important is wilderness and its preservation? The American West will be a special area for our inquiries. Course readings include Theodore Steinberg’s *Acts of God*, Jan Dizard’s *Going Wild*, and Sarah Royce’s *A Frontier Lady*. There are also a selection of shorter articles and essays.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WR150 J1</td>
<td>Tue,Thu</td>
<td>8:00am - 9:30am</td>
<td>Fitts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WR150 K1</td>
<td>Tue,Thu</td>
<td>9:30am - 11:00am</td>
<td>Fitts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WR150 M2</td>
<td>Tue,Thu</td>
<td>12:30pm - 2:00pm</td>
<td>Fitts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

American Generations in the Twentieth Century

This course combines sociological and literary perspectives to study the labeling of generations in twentieth-century America. We examine the history and culture of the G.I. Generation, the Baby Boomers, Generation X, and the Millennial Generation. Our discussions focus on the way such labels both do and do not prove adequate to the complexities of each generation. Readings include John Steinbeck’s *Grapes of Wrath*, Russell Baker’s *Growing Up*, Sylvia Plath’s *Bell Jar*, Annie Dillard’s *American Childhood*, Dave Eggers’s *You Shall Know Our Velocity*, and Jonathan Safran Foer’s *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WR150 D5</td>
<td>Mon,Wed,Fri</td>
<td>11:00am - 12:00pm</td>
<td>Merritt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WR150 E3</td>
<td>Mon,Wed,Fri</td>
<td>12:00pm - 1:00pm</td>
<td>Merritt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

American Homestead

This seminar studies conceptions of the American homestead. What is a homestead and why has this idea figured so prominently in American literature and culture? In this course, we encounter the historical tension between the established East and the frontier West, and we ask what it means to be “at home” in a country characterized by restless migration. Readings include Thoreau’s *Walden*, Tumer’s *The Frontier in American History*, and Sherman Alexie’s *Reservation Blues*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WR150 F4</td>
<td>Mon,Wed,Fri</td>
<td>1:00pm - 2:00pm</td>
<td>Blyler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WR150 G2</td>
<td>Mon,Wed,Fri</td>
<td>2:00pm - 3:00pm</td>
<td>Blyler</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

American Literature and World Cultures

Examines the effects of globalization and the influence of European, African, Asian and other world cultures on the formation of a distinctive national literature in the United States. Readings by Crèvecœur, Emerson, James, Du Bois, Eliot, Pound, Fitzgerald, Cather, Stein, and others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EN220 B1</td>
<td>Mon,Wed,Fri</td>
<td>11:00am - 12:00pm</td>
<td>Patterson</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EN220 B1 is a WR150 equivalent offered by the English Department.
American Manifesto
With the rise of the Tea Party in contemporary politics, a noticeable trend in popular, political rhetoric has emerged. Candidates and pundits often invoke the wisdom of the founding fathers, the spirit of ’76, and the words of the Constitution to support their own political and ideological views. But this trend is not new in American culture; indeed, it is a tradition as old as this country itself and a practice that often says much more about our frenetic, present circumstances than our deep understanding of the past. American Manifesto will examine a number of protest movements in American history—abolitionism, the women’s movement, the counter-cultural revolution of the 60s, and the present-day Tea Party—with a focus on how these movements have used the ideals, the images, and the mythology of America’s founding to further their own political and social ends. Using an interdisciplinary approach, we will engage a variety of media—political speech, poetry, fiction, essay, and film—to reach a better understanding of how important the values of America’s founding are to future generations of patriots, politicians, and protestors alike.

WR150 J4  Tue,Thu  8:00am - 9:30am  Hodin
WR150 K6  Tue,Thu  9:30am - 11:00am  Hodin

American Romantic Fiction and the Occult
This course follows some of nineteenth-century America’s best-known short fiction authors, ranging from early “sketch” writers such as Washington Irving to later Dark Romanticists like Edgar Allan Poe and Nathaniel Hawthorne. We will investigate the primary texts’ gothic and subversive elements such as mesmerism, black magic, mad science, secret sects, psychosis, and witchery. In class discussions, we will examine how each writer contrasts surface realities with deeper, darker levels of truth underneath. Critical readings will debate, among other topics, the authors’ constructions of gender and their attitudes towards individual will—subjects critical to the nineteenth-century American backdrop. Texts include Irving’s “Rip Van Winkle,” Hawthorne’s “Rappaccini’s Daughter,” Melville’s “Bartleby,” and Poe’s “The Fall of the House of Usher.”

WR150 OA  Tue,Thu  3:30pm - 5:00pm  D’Alessandro

The American Short Story: Tradition and Evolution
This seminar explores the evolution of the American short story from its early forms to contemporary experiments. Our concern is to understand both the formal qualities of the short story (plot, setting, characterization, point of view) and the range of themes that have found expression in this brief but potent prose genre. In this course, we consider short stories as individual entities and as works grouped together into collections. The seminar compares American short stories with British and European models. Readings are selected from the stories of Nathaniel Hawthorne, Edgar Allan Poe, Washington Irving, Herman Melville, Mark Twain, Henry James, Kate Chopin, O. Henry, Willa Cather, Jack London, Ernest Hemingway, Flannery O’Connor, John Edgar Wideman, Eudora Welty, John Gardner, John Updike, and William Gass, among others.

WR150 A2  Mon,Wed,Fri  8:00am - 9:00am  Prentice
WR150 C7  Mon,Wed,Fri  10:00am - 11:00am  Prentice
WR150 D8  Mon,Wed,Fri  11:00am - 12:00pm  Prentice
WR150 KA  Tue,Thur  9:30am - 11:00am  Giraldi
WR150 L8  Tue,Thur  11:00am - 12:30pm  Giraldi
WR150 O3  Tue,Thur  3:30pm - 5:00pm  Wallace, A

Approaches to Death
This seminar examines personal encounters with death as well as social and religious customs surrounding the event. Selected readings from literary, philosophical, and sacred texts reveal how individual and collective responses have embodied the defining beliefs of different cultures in several historical periods. Written assignments are based on close analysis of readings and supervised research of outside sources. Readings include Plato’s Phaedo, Shakespeare’s Hamlet, and Tolstoy’s Death of Ivan Ilych.

WR150 HA  Mon,Wed,Fri  3:00pm - 4:00pm  Green
Art Thou Learnèd?: Staging Education in Shakespeare’s England

Melancholic scholars, testy pedants, and conceited clerks abound in the drama of early modern England. In this course, we will ask why the dramatists of the Tudor-Stuart period were so preoccupied with education and the educated. We will strive to understand representations of learning in the period as they are enmeshed in concerns about social standing, gender, and race. Texts may include William Shakespeare’s *Love’s Labour’s Lost* and *As You Like It*, Ben Jonson’s *Poetaster*, and the anonymous *Parnassus* plays alongside a number of excerpts from renaissance treatises on education. Finally, we will engage with a variety of contemporary critical perspectives on these authors and subjects.

WR150 H4  Mon,Wed,Fri  3:00pm - 4:00pm  Rothschild, A

Arts Criticism: From the Old Media to the New

Everybody is a critic, but what does it take to be a great one? This course examines the history of American criticism of the arts, from Edgar Allan Poe to Metacritic.com. The approach is two-fold: to study the evaluative verve, aesthetic tastes, and writing styles of the best arts critics of the past and to explore how compelling critical voices can be developed for today’s rapidly changing media landscape. Discussion of issues raised by reviewing, from conflicts of interest to the culture wars, also drives our exploration of where public dialogue about the arts will go in the future. Readings include Morris Dickstein’s *Double Agent*, Maurice Berger’s *The Crisis of Criticism*, and reviews by Edgar Allan Poe, H.L Mencken, Edmund Wilson, Pauline Kael, Chuck Klosterman, and others.

WR150 N9  Tue,Thu  2:00pm - 3:30pm  Marx
WR150 O5  Tue,Thu  3:30pm - 5:00pm  Marx

The Bard in the Digital Age

Students in this course will examine both the drama of Shakespeare’s time and works from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries that address or revise the earlier plays. Through their examination and comparison of these texts, students will learn about the ideas and ideologies that have been passed down through literary tradition while exploring the value of critical analysis. The course will provide students with the skills they will need to articulate their concerns about the social changes made evident in these works. Course readings will include works by Shakespeare, Marlowe, and Bulgakov, as well as films, graphic novels, webcomics, and online sites and resources.

WR150 I5  Mon,Wed,Fri  4:00pm - 5:00pm  Bezio

Beauty and the Body

This course takes contemporary notions of beauty as its primary subject, using film, advertising, and other popular media outlets as exhibits. Analyzing ideas of beauty as it intersects with race, gender, class, and religion, we will construct portfolios of critical writing about the ideas of beauty, particularly in American culture. Students will be encouraged to revise their work thoroughly as new concepts and ideas are introduced. Readings will include selections from the works of Susan Bordo, John Berger, and Judith Butler, among others.

WR150 A3  Mon,Wed,Fri  8:00am - 9:00am  Champion

Bedside Manners: The Doctor-Patient Relationship in Context

In addition to textbook pedagogy, medical training has always relied not only on textbooks but also on a “hidden curriculum,” the transmission of knowledge through clinical experience. Efforts to formalize this knowledge first took the form of case histories. When statistical approaches to disease displaced the case history as a teaching tool, the teaching of a “bedside manner” was relegated to informal modes of transmission (e.g., mentoring). Lately, however, the trend has shifted again, toward a fresh appreciation of patients’ stories as part of effective clinical practice. Using examples drawn from case histories, personal essays, and scholarly writings, this course examines the doctor-patient relationship in historical and social contexts such as: the teaching of “bedside manner” in the history of medicine; the recent “empathic turn” in medical education; resistance to empathy by both doctor and patient; and special situations such as battlefield medicine and the treatment of the dying. Readings include Michael Stein’s *The Addict*, and essays by Atul Gawande, Oliver Sacks, Richard Selzer, Danielle Ofri, and Adam Gopnik.

WR150 E7  Mon,Wed,Fri  12:00pm - 1:00pm  Josefowicz
Bioethics and Science Policy

This course will explore the key issues of bioethics and how those issues inform government policy and the regulation of science. These explorations will be guided by reading descriptive articles, legal cases, and persuasive essays by scientists, lawyers, medical doctors, and thought leaders in ethics. By evaluating these issues and arguments, we will be able to develop our own positions in a variety of writings including letters to policy makers, argumentative essays, and policy briefs. Readings will include The Nuremberg Code, Report of the Advisory Committee on Human Radiation Experiments, “The Morality of Screening for Disability” by Jeff McMahan, and *Remaking Eden* by Lee Silver.

WR150 Q2  Tue,Thu  6:30pm - 8:00pm  Holloway

Bob Dylan’s Lyrics

This class examines Bob Dylan’s lyrics in light of his artistic influences, life, and milieu. We explore the wealth of criticism and reaction his songs have inspired, paying special attention to questions concerning the nature of his art—for example, the relationship between song lyrics and poetry—and the current critical discussion about his legacy. Readings include Dylan’s *Lyrics* and *Chronicles*, Christopher Ricks’s *The Force of Poetry*, and Michael Gray’s *Song and Dance Man III*.

WR150 I3  Mon,Wed,Fri  4:00pm - 5:00pm  Barents, K

Boston Confucianism

Confucius and China go hand in hand. But do they have to? Can Confucianism exist as a religious tradition outside China? If so, what can Confucius teach us? We first look for answers to these questions by surveying Confucianism’s expansion throughout East Asia. We then examine the tradition in America today, focusing on the work of BU and Harvard Confucians. Texts include the *Analects*, essays by Japanese and Korean Confucians, and articles by Robert Neville.

WR100 I1  Tue,Thu  8:00am - 9:30am  Klancer

Boston: Forefront of Science and Art

One of America’s oldest and most intellectual cities, Boston has historically been at the center of the country’s development in science and art. Boston today continues to remain important in both areas, with old and new museums and universities and tech companies in and surrounding the city. We will consider Boston as the forefront of “Arts and Sciences”—that is, a liberal arts education. We will explore the unique cosmopolitan and cutting-edge atmosphere of Boston by reading short stories set in and around its universities (e.g., stories by Jhumpa Lahiri, an Indian-American writer and BU alum) as well as articles and essays about several issues in the city’s art and science worlds (such as an infamous $300 million art theft from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum and the construction of BU’s controversial bioterrorism lab).

WR100 C1  Mon,Wed,Fri  10:00am - 11:00am  Michaud  Restricted to designated ESL students.

WR100 M1  Tue,Thu  2:00pm - 3:30pm  Hanselman  Restricted to designated ESL students.

Central and East European Cinema

This seminar provides an overview of Central and East European film from the Soviet and post-Soviet periods, concentrating on its history, aesthetic and political dimensions, and broader impact on international cinema. Class meetings will be devoted to discussion and analysis of specific films and, in particular, practicing the methods necessary to orient our own writing toward theoretically sound interpretations of visual media. Course materials may vary by section, but they will include various writings about film by filmmakers, critics, historians, and theorists, such as excerpts from Noël Burch’s *Theory of Film Practice*, Sergei Eisenstein’s *Film Form*, or Andrei Tarkovsky’s *Sculpting in Time*, as well as films by directors from various nations, such as Eisenstein’s *Battleship Potemkin* (USSR), Jiří Menzel’s *Closely Watched Trains* (Czech), Tarkovsky’s *Solaris* (USSR), Nikita Mikhalkov’s *Burnt by the Sun* (Russia), Emir Kusturica’s *Do You Remember Dolly Bell?* (Yugoslavia), and others.

WR150 J6  Tue,Thu  8:00am - 9:30am  Eubanks

WR150 KD  Tue,Thu  9:30am - 11:00am  Eubanks

For the latest updates to this catalog, go to www.bu.edu/writingprogram/writing-program-curriculum/catalog.
The Colbert Report: American Satire

Stephen Colbert’s eponymous persona has become a pop culture icon. With his irreverent, masterful blend of irony, wit, parody, sarcasm, black humor, logical fallacy, and double entendre, Colbert satirically exposes hypocrisy with surgical precision, inviting us to think more deeply about serious issues and to improve our socio-political conditions. Although we will highlight his place in the American tradition, we will examine Colbert’s rhetoric in a broad historical context. Readings will include classic poems by Horace and Juvenal, as well as Jonathan Swift’s “A Modest Proposal,” Ambrose Bierce’s The Devil’s Dictionary, and Colbert’s I Am America (And So Can You!).

WR150 O4 Tue,Thu 3:30pm - 5:00pm Rodriguez

Comedy and the Comic Impulse

This seminar offers a serious, and sometimes not so serious, study of works that provoke serious, and sometimes not so serious, laughter. We study a wide range of genres that incorporate comic techniques for different purposes—from comedy of manners to parody, satire, farce, and the comic novel. Our aim is to understand how comic forms relate to each other, and what sort of commentary they make on serious works and ideas. As a research seminar, this course also considers critical and theoretical studies of comedy and the comic impulse. Primary readings are selected from among the following: Aristophanes’ Lysistrata, Shakespeare’s Twelfth Night, Moliere’s Tartuffe, Sheridan’s School for Scandal, and Wilde’s Importance of Being Earnest.

WR150 M1 Tue,Thu 12:30pm - 2:00pm Ress
WR150 N1 Tue,Thu 2:00pm - 3:30pm Ress

Conformity and Rebellion in Literature

In this seminar, we will explore questions of conformity and rebellion through the lens of various texts. We will examine how various authors imagined and confronted social, scientific, and political boundaries and consider questions like the following: What are the conditions of conformity? What circumstances generate rebellion? How do the definitions of each change with time or location? In addition to selected criticism, primary readings may include Louisa May Alcott’s Behind a Mask, Herman Melville’s Benito Cereno, Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet, short works by H. D. Thoreau, Tim O’Brien, Willa Cather, Junot Diaz, Kurt Vonnegut, Flannery O’Connor, and poetry by Emily Dickinson, Wilfred Owen, and Anne Sexton.

WR100 J1 Tue,Thu 9:30am - 11:00am Hanselman Restricted to designated ESL students.
WR100 K1 Tue,Thu 11:00am - 12:30pm Hanselman Restricted to designated ESL students.

Constructing Boston

Massive construction projects have transformed Boston’s urban landscape over the past few centuries from a hilly peninsula jutting into an estuary to a large seaport infamous for its congested traffic. This seminar examines how projects such as the infilling of the Back Bay and the “Big Dig” have contributed to this process. We will examine visual media such as historical maps, plans, engravings, and photographs, along with written sources such as historical essays and newspaper articles and editorials. Students will bring their first-hand observations of the city to bear on these sources in a series of papers, shorter written exercises, and class discussions.

WR150 G8 Mon,Wed,Fri 2:00pm - 3:00pm Wallace, E

Consumer Society and the American Family: A Sociological Perspective

The United States has been identified as a consumer society for almost a century. Consumerism permeates our daily lives, yet its subtle effects on the social class structure and on institutions such as the family are often overlooked. This course grapples with the question of whether or not a society revolved around consumption has harmful effects on children and families. We will consider the complex intersection between outside influences such as advertising, consumer choices, and unequal resources among families. Studying academic sources along with popular media will help students develop informed arguments that they will translate into well-written essays.

WR150 KE Tue,Thu 9:30am - 11:00am Bowman
The Craft of Fiction

This course examines the elements of storymaking, including voice, character, narrative, structure, and subtext. Students produce essays analyzing the construction of fiction, gain insight in their analysis with the assistance of modern practitioners, and begin stories of their own in response to their findings. Readings include Madison Smart Bell’s *Narrative Design*, Adam Sexton’s *Master Class in Fiction Writing*, Creating Fiction edited by Julie Checkoway, Francine Prose’s *Reading Like a Writer*, and essays by Charles Baxter. Students attend local readings and interviews with local authors in addition to their WR150 research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WR100 J2</td>
<td>Tue,Thu</td>
<td>9:30am - 11:00am</td>
<td>Hoover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WR150 L5</td>
<td>Tue,Thu</td>
<td>11:00am - 12:30pm</td>
<td>Hoover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WR150 M6</td>
<td>Tue,Thu</td>
<td>12:30pm - 2:00pm</td>
<td>Hoover</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Damned Mob of Scribbling Women

In this course, which takes its title from Nathaniel Hawthorne’s infamous complaint, we will study the opportunities and limitations that nineteenth-century, American women faced as they sought to express themselves in writing. We will conduct research about the lives of these women, the circumstances under which they wrote, and the ways in which their writing has been received by popular and scholarly audiences over time. Texts may include works by Emily Dickinson, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Rebecca Harding Davis, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Mary Wilkins Freeman, Harriet Jacobs, Zitkala Sa, and others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WR150 FA</td>
<td>Mon,Wed,Fri</td>
<td>1:00pm - 2:00pm</td>
<td>Barrett</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dante and the Modern Imagination

In the 1930s Osip Mandelstam wrote, “It is unthinkable to read the cantos of Dante without aiming them in the direction of the present day. . . . They are missiles for capturing the future.” What is it about Dante’s medieval *Inferno* that so captures the modern imagination? We will seek to answer this question by reading several translations of *Inferno* as well as essays on Dante by a variety modern writers and translators. In addition to considering the cultural relevance of the *Inferno*’s form and content, we will address modern visual representations of the work. Robert M. Durling’s 1996 translation will serve as a starting point for our discussion. Other texts we will examine include selected cantos from Daniel Halpern’s *Dante’s Inferno: Translations by Twenty Contemporary Poets* and Robert Pinsky’s *The Inferno of Dante*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WR150 J3</td>
<td>Tue,Thu</td>
<td>8:00am - 9:30am</td>
<td>Challener</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WR150 OD</td>
<td>Tue,Thu</td>
<td>3:30pm - 5:00pm</td>
<td>Challener</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WR150 P1</td>
<td>Tue,Thu</td>
<td>5:00pm - 6:30pm</td>
<td>Challener</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Debates in the History of Medicine

Medical advances and increased public health have often come at the price of deliberately inflicting harm. In this class we examine some of the historical debates about when and whether intentional harm to animals, individuals, or groups outweighs the benefits of medical progress. Vivisection exposes the issue of cruelty versus advances in medical research; vaccination weighs the relative risks and benefits of dangerous medical procedures to a particular individual; and the case of Typhoid Mary is representative of the problem of personal liberty versus public health. Readings include John Dalton’s *Vivisection*, Francis Cobbe’s *Vivisection in America*, Peter Singer’s *Rethinking Life and Death*, Anita Guerrini’s *Experimenting on Humans and Animals*, and Arthur Allen’s *Vaccine*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WR150 C8</td>
<td>Mon,Wed,Fri</td>
<td>10:00am - 11:00am</td>
<td>Kinraid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WR150 E6</td>
<td>Mon,Wed,Fri</td>
<td>12:00pm - 1:00pm</td>
<td>Kinraid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WR150 F5</td>
<td>Mon,Wed,Fri</td>
<td>1:00pm - 2:00pm</td>
<td>Kinraid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Defining "America": Representing Race and Religion in the United States

Since the founding of the earliest colonies, Americans have prided themselves on the seemingly unprecedented racial, ethnic, and religious diversity of their society. Yet interactions between the dominant culture and minority communities have often been marred by prejudice, intolerance, and even outright violence. This course examines writing of various types—including speeches, propaganda, fiction, journalism, and television and film—about three minority groups that have long been a part of the American story: Catholics, Mormons, and African Americans. We will explore the material generated about these groups to understand the similarities and differences of various representations of minorities in the United States, and we will consider how these representations serve to define America’s contested national identity.

Democracy in Comparative Historical Perspective

This seminar explores the concept of democracy in Western Civilization as it has been presented in the writings of major thinkers over the centuries. We devote special attention to the question of the relevance of earlier perspectives to the present day. For the writing assignments, students are encouraged to engage in critical examination of past and present ideas about democracy, including a consideration of their historical context. The required readings include Plato’s Republic, Thomas Hobbes’s Leviathan, Alexis de Tocqueville’s Democracy in America, William Golding’s Lord of the Flies, George Orwell’s Animal Farm, and W.E.B. Du Bois’s writings on democracy.

Disability in Contemporary American Culture

Beginning with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, this course will set out to ask questions about what counts as a disability in the eyes of the law, and about how medicine, science, and technology, as well as film, journalism, and literature, represent physical difference. We will read essays and articles dealing with disability issues facing Americans today, from Iraq amputees and cochlear implants to euthanasia and gene therapy. We will respond to these issues in class discussions, journals, and online responses, as well as in at least four formal writing assignments. Readings will include selected cases from the ADA and IDEA, short essays on issues in bioethics such as gene therapy and euthanasia, and recent essays on the universal design movement in architecture. Literary works may include essays by David Sedaris and Lucy Grealy’s Autobiography of a Face.

Documentary Film: History, Theory, and Form

This course studies documentaries, moving chronologically from the early 20th century to today. We will screen (both in and out of class) a number of documentaries, considering the filmmaker’s formal and ethical choices, and the technical, social, and theoretical contexts that inform them. Documentaries studied include Dziga Vertov’s Man With a Movie Camera, Leni Riefenstahl’s Triumph of the Will, and Frederick Wiseman’s High School, as well as films by Albert and David Maysles and Errol Morris. Historical and theoretical readings will provide impetus for student writing. Please note that this course will require at least two evening film screenings.
Entering Europe

The years heading into European integration were ecstatic ones for the countries of the former Soviet/East Bloc. Joining the EU for many meant a “return” to Europe, a coming back to “civilization” after many years of Soviet influence or direct rule. But EU membership has not lived up to its promise entirely. Although the new member states’ economies are improving, the relaxing of borders has meant massive emigrations of the youngest and brightest, large influxes of immigrants from Asia and Russia, and a second-class status within the EU itself. This course examines the meaning of EU membership for its new member states as reflected in contemporary literature, film, and advertising of the New Europe. Readings and films include Milan Kundera’s *Ignorance*, the film *Horem padem* (Up and Down, dir. Jan Hrebejk, 2004), Dubravka Ugresic’s *The Museum of Unconditional Surrender*, Bernhard Schlink’s *Flight of Love*, and shorter works.

WR150 MA  Tue,Thu  12:30pm - 2:00pm  Avizienis
WR150 OB  Tue,Thu  3:30pm - 5:00pm  Avizienis
WR150 P2  Tue,Thu  5:00pm - 6:30pm  Avizienis

The Ethical Imagination

This seminar studies the nature of ethics—its multiple definitions according to well-known thinkers and its connection to religion, law, and science. Our inquiry is based on a diversity of philosophical and literary perspectives, all with a similar focus: what it means to live a good life. Philosophical readings include excerpts from Plato’s *Republic*, Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, and Nietzsche’s *Beyond Good and Evil*. Fictional readings include Chekhov’s *The Lady with the Dog*, Flannery O’Connor’s *A Good Man is Hard to Find*, and Jim Shepard’s *Sans Farine*.

WR150 J7  Tue,Thu  8:00am - 9:30am  Allenberg
WR150 K7  Tue,Thu  9:30am - 11:00am  Allenberg
WR150 L6  Tue,Thu  11:00am - 12:30pm  Allenberg

Ethical Issues in Public Health

This course will examine and reflect on the contemporary relevance of selected ethical issues that have arisen in the public health arena over the last 100 years. Topics will include the Tuskegee Syphilis Study; the eugenics movement in the United States and the related Supreme Court case, *Buck v. Bell*; and the development of guidelines for research involving human subjects, such as the Nuremberg Code and the Belmont Report. We will discuss these issues with an eye to current ethical dilemmas faced by public health practitioners, such as those arising from genetics and pharmacological research, and privacy considerations around personal health information in an electronic age.

WR100 F2  Mon,Wed,Fri  1:00pm - 2:00pm  Smith
WR150 C1  Mon,Wed,Fri  10:00am - 11:00am  Smith
WR150 D2  Mon,Wed,Fri  11:00am - 12:00pm  Smith

Evolution of Science Fiction

This course will examine and explore the evolution of science fiction from Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* to classic sci-fi works by Clarke and Bradbury, to modern speculative fiction. Students will write formal essays and deliver one presentations about the readings, focusing on comparison and synthesis of the works. The course will introduce students to the fundamentals of academic argumentation in writing through an examination of the evolution of science fiction as a genre, and how that evolution reflects scientific/technological development, as well as the development of a new kind of consciousness.

WR150 H1  Mon,Wed,Fri  3:00pm - 4:00pm  Renstrom
Fantasy at the Fin-de-Siècle

The fin-de-siècle (approximately 1870-1910) was a time of significant social, cultural, and technological change. Darwin’s theory of evolution challenged traditional ideas about the origin of humanity, and Freudian psychoanalysis shed light on its darkest impulses. The automobile replaced the horse, and the camera captured life as it had never been captured before. The New Woman shocked society by working, agitating for the vote, and riding a bicycle. It was also a great age of fantasy, in which writers such as Le Fanu, Stevenson, Stoker, Wells, and Wilde reinvigorated the fairy tale, tale of terror, and scientific romance, and artistic movements such as Symbolism and Art Nouveau challenged the nineteenth-century emphasis on realistic representation. We will examine this resurgence of fantasy in the context of the changes occurring at the end of the nineteenth century, and investigate the importance of fantasy to our own fin-de-siècle. Readings will include Stevenson’s *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Le Fanu’s *Carmilla*, and Stoker’s *Dracula*, as well as a selection of short stories, poems, and essays. We will also examine artistic works from the time period.

The First Amendment

Amendment I: “Congress shall make no law… abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press.” Ratified by the states in 1791, the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution assumed its contemporary form after World War I when the Supreme Court began assessing the contours of freedom of speech and of the press—two of the Constitution’s highest ideals. In three sections, this writing and research seminar traces the history of the First Amendment. The first segment defines and frames the ideas of free speech and expression. The next explores a history of ideas from philosophical foundations to contemporary forms. The third section addresses themes that embody the salient tensions of particular historical moments and register the interwoven nature of political change and constitutional evolution. Sources for the course and for research projects include philosophical writings, legislative histories, journalistic accounts, legal cases, novels, film, contemporary art, television shows, political cartoons, websites, and historical works.

Friendship, Love, Sex, Poetry

In this seminar, we will practice the fundamentals of literary analysis and research while reading poems about friendship, love, and sex. We will also explore shifting definitions of loyalty, modesty, and obscenity in poems drawn from classical antiquity, the European Renaissance, and the American twentieth century. We’ll inevitably ask the following questions: How has poetry shaped Western ideals of love? How did poetry become so closely linked with our most private experiences? Do poets use similar techniques to describe religious and erotic love? And what makes literature obscene? Readings may include poems by Sappho, Horace, Catullus, Shakespeare, Marlowe, Auden, and Millay.

Global Arts and Crafts

The Arts and Crafts movement emerged in England in the late nineteenth century as a collective response to industrialization and urbanization. Artists, designers, and architects revived medieval crafts skills, guild systems, and the aesthetics of the handmade. This course will explore the movement’s origin in England and modern crafts movements throughout the world. Readings will include Adamson’s *Thinking Through Craft*, Coomaraswamy’s *The Indian Craftsman*, King’s *The Bungalow: The Production of a Global Culture*, The Collected Works of William Morris; The Works of John Ruskin; and Yanagi’s *The Unknown Craftsman.*
Half the Sky: Political, Social, and Biological Perspectives on Gender Today

“Women hold up half the sky,” said Mao Tse-Tung, arguing for greater opportunities for women in China. In this course, we will read *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide* by *New York Times* writers Nicholas Kristoff and Sheryl WuDunn; excerpts from *Reading Lolita in Tehran* by Azar Nafisi; and a number of essays, articles, and speeches about sex and gender in today’s global society. We will consider issues ranging from the biological or social basis for gender differences (typified in the controversy surrounding remarks by economist and then-President of Harvard University Larry Summers) to the responsibilities of the US to women in developing countries.

WR100 E1  Mon,Wed,Fri  12:00pm - 1:00pm  Michaud  Restricted to designated ESL students.

WR100 F1  Mon,Wed,Fri  1:00pm - 2:00pm  Michaud  Restricted to designated ESL students.

Heroic Cinema: East and West

We will explore the theme of the hero by examining a number of East Asian and American movies. Analytical readings will help us understand how Eastern and Western cultures create and view their heroes. Our movies will take us over a 2,000-year arc as we consider the swordsman, the gunfighter, and the law enforcer. In our writing, we will compare and contrast these heroes and the themes emphasized in East Asian and American heroic cinema; we will also think about what this genre has to say about the human condition.

WR100 H1  Mon,Wed,Fri  3:00pm - 4:00pm  Dalia

Ideas of Order

What is the relationship between form and content? How is “order” maintained among the words in a literary work and the individuals in society as a whole? How do authors create moments of suspicion, distrust, or paranoia? By examining literature through the lens of some of its most famous critics and theorists, students will be asked to think critically not only about how literature works, but what literature *does*—both on the page and in the world. This course will include poetry, short fiction, and novels from the nineteenth century to the present day, including works by Edgar Allan Poe, Joseph Conrad, Thomas Hardy, Kate Chopin, Marianne Moore, Wallace Stevens, and Elizabeth Bishop.

EN220 I1  Mon,Wed,Fri  1:00pm - 2:00pm  Zibrak  Enroll in EN220 I1.

EN220 I1 is a WR150 equivalent offered by the English Department.

Imagining the Vietnam War: “The Big Muddy” in American Culture

This course explores the Vietnam War’s polarizing influence on American culture and vice versa. Combining exhibits in literature, music, and film, the course charts this devastating conflict’s effect on how Americans envisioned themselves. Beginning with America’s first involvement during the height of its power in the 1950s and continuing through to the present, students will trace diverse perspectives of the Vietnam War that include women, soldiers, protestors, supporters, and Vietnamese. Readings will include Graham Greene’s *The Quiet American*, Tim O’Brien’s *If I Die in a Combat Zone*, and Bobbie Ann Mason’s *In Country*.

WR150 G5  Mon,Wed,Fri  2:00pm - 3:00pm  Blumenthal

Inventing the American Individualist

“Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind.” So wrote Ralph Waldo Emerson, expressing a sentiment that seems native to the American character. From mountain men to entrepreneurs, from pioneers to beatniks, from suffragettes to senators, Americans have identified with roles that are individualistic, independent, and self-reliant. In this seminar, we investigate the degree to which this attitude is rooted and reflected in our literary tradition. Readings will include Thoreau’s “Civil Disobedience,” Ginsburg’s “Howl,” and Twain’s *Huckleberry Finn*.

WR100 G1  Mon,Wed,Fri  2:00pm - 3:00pm  Villano
Literature and Human Freedom
This course will be organized as an engagement with the ways literature has taken up the fact of human freedom in the world. We will pay close attention to the social and historical but also to the philosophical and aesthetic dimensions of questions that pertain to the nature of human freedom. Our topics will include fate, will, power, captivity, coercion, and various dimensions of questions of ethics and responsibility. We will, in addition, ask and ponder questions about freedom specifically in relation to how they are taken up in the form of literature: How, for example, do literary texts variously “ask” questions about human freedom? In what forms and genres do they do so? How does literature struggle with questions about our freedom, and what makes these struggles specifically “literary”? And how are such concerns reflected in the formal dimensions of texts? Readings will include works by Sophocles, Wollstonecraft, Blake, Shelley, Marx, Ibsen, Whitman, Kafka, Sartre, and Beckett.

EN220 G1  Mon,Wed,Fri 12:00pm - 1:00pm  Ostas  Enroll in EN220 G1.

EN220 G1 is a WR150 equivalent offered by the English Department.

Literature and Moral Ambiguity
We explore morally ambiguous situations, characters and authorial attitudes in work by Ryunduke Akatagawa, Robert Browning, Fyodor Dostoevsky (short extract from The Brothers Karamazov), Christopher Marlowe, William Shakespeare and T.S.Eliot. Filmed versions of In a Bamboo Grove and The Merchant of Venice support our reading of these texts, and we compare Dostoevsky’s Grand Inquisitor with Browning’s Bishop Blougram, and Marlowe’s and Shakespeare’s treatment of Jews.

WR150 L1  Tue,Thu 11:00am - 12:30pm  Fido

Literature and the Environment
This course will discuss issues concerning the environment and their reflection in literary texts. Authors read will range from Shakespeare, Goldsmith, and Wordsworth through Cooper, Thoreau, and Muir, to Annie Dillard and other contemporary writers. As in other sections of EN 220, attention will also be paid to prose composition and literary theory.

EN220 H1  Tue,Thu 2:00pm - 3:30pm  Van Anglen  Enroll in EN220 H1.

EN220 H1 is a WR150 equivalent offered by the English Department.

Literature, History, Identity
In this course we will be studying novels, short stories, poetry, travel writing, and histories that explore different aspects of social reality in non-Western parts of the world. How do literary writings on Asia, Africa and the Caribbean depict and reflect on aspects of modern life such as colonial and postcolonial authority, ethnic identity, and historical consciousness? We will read writers of fiction and non-fiction. These include Assia Djebar, Tayeb Salih, V. S. Naipaul, Derek Walcott, Danyal Muenuddin, Benedict Anderson, Charles Taylor, and Partha Ch.

EN220 A1  Tue,Thu 9:30am - 11:00am  Krishnan  Enroll in EN220 A1.

EN220 A1 is a WR150 equivalent offered by the English Department.

Living Irish Poets
This seminar is devoted to the study of living Irish poets and the earlier writers who influenced them. Our purpose will be to relate the best recent verse to traditions of poetic composition that have proven most relevant and enduring. We will also discuss prose writings in which poets describe and justify their art. Readings will be selected from the works of William Butler Yeats, Michael Hartnett, Seamus Heaney, Paul Muldoon, Eavan Boland, Michael Longley, Ciaran Carson, and Paula Meehan.

WR150 I1  Mon,Wed,Fri 4:00pm - 5:00pm  Barents, B

Living Poets
This seminar is devoted to the study of living poets and the earlier writers who influenced them. Our purpose is to relate the best recent verse to traditions of poetic composition that have proven most relevant and enduring. We also discuss prose writings in which poets describe and justify their art. Readings are selected from the work of Mark Doty, Louise Gluck, David Ferry, Lisel Mueller, and Seamus Heaney.

WR150 F3  Mon,Wed,Fri 1:00pm - 2:00pm  Merritt
Love and Death

This course explores traditional literary subjects, specifically, “Renaissance Love” and “Modern Death” in non-traditional ways in order to foreground a variety of literary and historical theories and methods. It includes such works as Shakespeare’s “Troilus and Cressida,” and Wyatt’s “The Flee From Me,” through Coleridge’s “Rime of the Ancient Mariner,” Emerson’s “Experience,” and Primo Levi’s “Survival in Auschwitz.”

EN220 C1  Tue,Thu  11:00am - 12:30pm  Mizruchi  Enroll in EN220 C1.

Made-Up Lives: Memoirists, Biographers, and Fabulists, 1910-2010

In 2006, the Smoking Gun website reported that James Frey had fabricated portions of his best-selling autobiography, *A Million Little Pieces*. Oprah Winfrey confronted Frey on camera, telling him, “I feel that you betrayed millions of readers” and asking him, “Why did you lie?” In this course, we will ask not why Frey lied, but why it mattered to so many people that he did. What claims to truth and authority do memoirists and biographers advance? As we examine the uncertain boundaries that separate autobiography and biography from fiction, we will look back to three twentieth-century authors—Virginia Woolf, Gertrude Stein, and Julian Barnes—who, with more abandon than Frey, confused made-up lives with real ones. Texts may include Woolf’s *Orlando*, Stein’s *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, and Barnes’ *Flaubert’s Parrot*.

WR150 H2  Mon,Wed,Fri  3:00pm - 4:00pm  Gilbert

Manuscripts Don't Burn: Fairy Tales, Grotesque, Science Fiction, and Satire in Russian Literature

In the works of many Russian and Soviet authors, we find a delightful combination of avant-garde style and lasting classic value. Mixing the supernatural with penetrating realism and black humor, writers such as Nikolai Gogol, Mikhail Bulgakov, and the Strugatsky brothers created complex, ambiguous texts that frequently allowed their authors to evade strict censorship while addressing acute social, political, and philosophical questions. On the contrary, some of these works, such as Mikhail Bulgakov’s novel *Master and Margarita*, were so controversial that they could not be published during the Soviet years although in the end they outlasted the repressive regime. We will study these works in light of theoretical and critical sources on fairy tale, satire, and science fiction.

WR150 E5  Mon,Wed,Fri  12:00pm - 1:00pm  Brofman

Masterpieces of German Literature (in English translation)

Introduction to major works of German literature in comparative perspective, emphasizing methods of close reading and the art of critical writing. Theme: “The difficulty of being human.” In three subsections: 1) Existential revolt (from Job to Prometheus): questions of divine justice, of the relation of gods & man, & of the incommensurateness of the human with the divine; 2) “Hell is other people”: how social forces can break an individual; and 3) “The crack-up”: on the moment, circa age 30, when one may realize that one has made decisions, or not, on solid grounds, or not, that have made one’s life irrevocably one’s life. Novels, stories, poetry, essays, films and plays by Johannes von Saaz, Johann Wolfgang Goethe, Heinrich von Kleist, Georg Büchner, Robert Musil, Ingeborg Bachmann, William Faulkner, F. Scott Fitzgerald and others. (Counts as a Humanities course for purposes of satisfying the CAS Divisional Studies requirement; may in addition be taken to fulfill the WR 150 writing requirement.) All readings will be in English. There are no prerequisites for this course.

LG250 A1  Mon,Wed,Fri  10:00am - 11:00am  Schwartz  Enroll in LG250 A1.

LG250 A1 is a WR150 equivalent offered by the Modern Languages and Comparative Literature Department.
The Matter of King Arthur Then and Now

The matter of King Arthur is deeply rooted in Western Europe’s medieval imagination; by the fifteenth century, Arthur had been fully realized by Sir Thomas Malory in *Le Morte d’Arthur*. The legend lay relatively quiet for a time, embedded in the cultural heritage of Great Britain, so that when Arthur was brought back from Avalon in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, he could be re-imagined in art and literature in new ways that spoke to spiritual quests of the modern age. Readings include selections from Sir Thomas Malory’s *Le Morte d’Arthur*, Alfred, Lord Tennyson’s *Idylls of the King*, John Steinbeck’s *The Acts of King Arthur and His Noble Knights*, and T. H. White’s *The Once and Future King*. In addition, the legend of King Arthur will be considered through the works of the Pre-Raphaelites (including a trip to the Boston Public Library) and contemporary films.

Measurement and Methodology

Have you ever wondered how people’s opinions about the implications of climate change data can differ so dramatically? If different methods of evaluating exposure to radiation yield different results, how do we determine which method is the right one? Is there a right one? How do we evaluate the extent to which evidence from clinical trials supports hypotheses about the efficacy of a particular pharmaceutical? Questions about methodology and measurements yield vastly different conclusions and perspectives in areas such as climate change, biological risk assessment, and medicine. Through this writing- and research-intensive course, we will deepen our understanding of quantitative and qualitative arguments and the nature of evidence and explore how methodological and personal bias can influence policy and practice. Readings will include case studies of scientific practice, scientific publications, and representations of scientific knowledge in popular publications.

Melville/Kafka

Although Franz Kafka’s distinctively bizarre writing might appear to be without precedent, several critics have suggested that Herman Melville’s work anticipates it, despite Kafka never having read the American author. Indeed, shared concerns such as the unreliability of perception and the nature of oppression and injustice connect these two writers despite their separation in time and culture. In this class, we will research and write about the literary correspondences that might (or might not) exist between the two authors. Readings will include selections from Melville’s *The Confidence Man* and *The Piazza Tales* and Kafka’s parables, stories, and diary entries.

The Memoir

The memoir is usually viewed as a private genre of personal recollection. Yet many important writers have used the form to explore larger questions of historical, economic, political, and religious significance. This course focuses on writers of memoir who have examined their lives and the lives of their families through lenses wider than the personal. Readings include Wolff’s *This Boy’s Life*, Harrison’s *The Kiss*, Sedaris’s *Naked*, and Karr’s *The Liar’s Club*.

Modern American Liberalism and its Critics

Liberalism is both the animating principle of twentieth-century American politics and one of the most hotly contested ideas in modern U.S. history. This course will introduce students to the fundamentals of academic writing through an exploration of the post-World War II liberal tradition and the impassioned debates surrounding it. We will focus our attention on three main features of modern liberal politics: anti-communism, the welfare state, and the pursuit of civil rights. In addition, we will consider major critiques of liberalism as expressed through the civil rights movement, 1960s student radicalism, and modern conservatism. Source texts will include philosophical writings, historical essays, speeches, and journalistic accounts drawn from a diverse array of political actors, writers, and social critics.
Modern and Contemporary American Poetry

In his 1855 preface to *Leaves of Grass*, Walt Whitman declared, “The United States themselves are essentially the greatest poem.” This seminar will explore his claim by studying some of the major figures and movements of modern and contemporary American poetry, beginning with nineteenth-century precursors Whitman and Emily Dickinson and moving through both World Wars to the end of the twentieth century. We will also explore the historical and cultural contexts that frame these works of art and read various manifestos that declare what a poem should be and how it should be written. Poets will include Robert Frost, T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Wallace Stevens, Langston Hughes, Elizabeth Bishop, Gwendolyn Brooks, Allen Ginsberg, Robert Lowell, and Sylvia Plath.

**WR150 LB**  Tue,Thu  11:00am - 12:30pm  Tandon

Modern Literature and Society

In the wake of the Industrial Revolution, which marked a significant turning point in human consciousness, writers systematically critiqued the devastating costs of technological progress. We will examine how their formally innovative works of fiction, poetry, and drama shed light on imperialism, gender and racial inequality, total war, and consumerism. Readings will include Henrik Ibsen’s *Ghosts*, T. S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, Ernest Hemingway’s *The Sun Also Rises*, and Samuel Beckett’s *Endgame*.

**WR150 M8**  Tue,Thu  12:30pm - 2:00pm  Rodriguez
**WR150 N8**  Tue,Thu  2:00pm - 3:30pm  Rodriguez

The Modern Novella

Major authors such as Tolstoy and Joyce are noted for their long novels and concentrated short stories. These figures, along with others such as Camus, Gide, Conrad, and Unamuno, were also attracted to the novella, an intermediate form that mixes complex character development with a unified plot, setting, and mood. Our purpose in this seminar is to explore the philosophical, political, and psychological themes found within the modern novella. Readings include Tolstoy’s *The Death of Ivan Ilych*, Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, Unamuno’s *Abel Sanchez*, Gide’s *Pastoral Symphony*, and Camus’s *The Stranger*.

**WR100 N1**  Tue,Thu  3:30pm - 5:00pm  Ress

Multiethnic Stories and Histories

The primary focus of this course will be literary texts that share a place, genre, and period: American short stories from 1890–1920. Within this unity, we will consider a diversity of perspectives as we read stories by authors of African, Asian, European, and North American descent and discover the particular histories of American ethnic groups in this period. During the turn into the twentieth century, the United States experienced rapid and profound social change spurred by immigration, industrialization, and technological advancements; meanwhile, in the literary world, American writers of fiction from various ethnic backgrounds emerged. Students will use course readings and their research into historical context, biographies of the authors, and theories of ethnicity to write informed interpretations of the stories and to enrich their understanding of the period. We will return frequently to the themes of ethnicity and race, language and power relations, assimilation, and hybridity. Authors will include Zitkala-Ša, Charles Chesnutt, Henry James, María Cristina Mena, Sui Sin Far, and Anzia Yezierska.

**WR150 B8**  Mon,Wed,Fri  9:00am - 10:00am  Field

Mythical Metamorphoses of Gender and Sexuality in Twenty-first Century Fiction

We will read fiction that interweaves ancient myths and twenty-first-century characters’ experiences with gender and sexuality. Exploring how these characters’ connections to myths help depict contemporary conflicts and transformations, we’ll consider ways this fiction wrestles with gender/sexuality as biology, performance, and choice. How do these love stories challenge binaries such as masculine/feminine, heterosexual/homosexual, and body/mind? How do nonlinear and multi-perspective narrations reshape understandings of identity? Readings include Eugenides’ novel *Middlesex*, Smith’s novella *Girl Meets Boy: The Myth of Iphis*, theories of gender and sexuality, and Ovid’s tales of Iphis, the Minotaur, Hermaphroditus, and Tiresias.

**WR150 N2**  Tue,Thu  2:00pm - 3:30pm  Schaaf
The Nature of Consciousness

Humans are not only aware of the outer physical world and the inner mental world, but they are also aware they are aware. New technology now allows researchers to investigate the relation of specific brain areas to specific behaviors. Science-based student papers research Dissociative Identity Disorder and Antisocial Personality Disorder. Readings begin with Steven Pinker’s How the Mind Works to look at the work of the cognitive scientists and then move on to Antonio Damasio’s The Feeling of What Happens for a psychological model and Gerald Edelman’s Wider than the Sky for a neurobiological model for consciousness.

WR150 F1  Mon,Wed,Fri  1:00pm - 2:00pm  Scheuerman
WR150 G1  Mon,Wed,Fri  2:00pm - 3:00pm  Scheuerman

The Novel Now

For some, the interactive, instantly gratifying world of online entertainment spells doom for the art of the novel. But there are signs that the contemporary novel is not only surviving but thriving in the new millennium. The focus of this class will be on the particular kind of life—linguistic inventiveness, passion, originality, and energy—that powerful novels provide. Reading will be selected from among the following: Whitehead’s Apex Hides the Hurt, Murakami’s Sputnik Sweetheart, McCarthy’s The Road, Ourednik’s Europeana, Lynda Barry’s Cruddy, and Carole Maso’s The Art Lover.

WR150 Q1  Tue,Thu  6:30pm - 8:00pm  Marx

Oratory in America

Great American speeches idealize, challenge, and shape the nation’s identity. “I have a dream” and “Ask not what your country can do for you” are phrases embedded in American culture and politics. In this seminar students investigate the history of American oratory through careful study of rhetorical guides, actual speeches, and debates about American rhetoric. Writing assignments ask students to apply the persuasive and analytical powers of the readings to their own compositions. Students will also memorize and recite exemplary passages. Readings are selected from among the speeches of Presidents Lincoln, Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt, Kennedy, Reagan, and Obama, the oratory of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and the rhetorical theory of Aristotle and Hugh Blair.

WR100 C2  Mon,Wed,Fri  10:00am - 11:00am  Shawn
WR150 D1  Mon,Wed,Fri  11:00am - 12:00pm  Shawn
WR150 E1  Mon,Wed,Fri  12:00pm - 1:00pm  Shawn

Personal Ethics and Social Policy

This seminar explores various ideas of how social and political forces influence a citizen’s freedom of conscience. We concentrate on circumstances in which an individual’s sense of morality comes into conflict with the laws of the state. Readings include Sophocles’ Antigone, Emerson’s “Self-Reliance,” and Thoreau’s “Civil Disobedience.”

WR150 D3  Mon,Wed,Fri  11:00am - 12:00pm  Villano
WR150 F2  Mon,Wed,Fri  1:00pm - 2:00pm  Villano

Perspectives on Friendship

This course will focus on the concept of friendship in selected works of fiction, philosophy, and social science, with the goal of moving from a familiar notion of “the friend” to a more theoretical understanding of “friendship.” We will begin by studying works of classical writers; then examine sociological and anthropological accounts of friendship; and finally, through film and fiction, explore the place of friendship in modern society. Readings will include Aristotle’s Nichomachean Ethics, Montaigne’s “On Friendship,” Confucius’ Analects, Natsume Soseki’s Kokoro, E. M. Forster’s A Passage to India, Robert N. Bellah’s Habits of the Heart, and Michael Pakaluk’s Other Selves: Philosophers on Friendship.

WR100 L1  Tue,Thu  12:30pm - 2:00pm  Gapotchenko
Persuasive Speech in Ancient Literature

In Western literature and politics, the ability to argue persuasively has been revered, celebrated, suspected, and declaimed from Homer down to our own time. In this course we will examine the use and reception of persuasive speech in Homer’s *Iliad*, Sophocles’ *Philoctetes*, Euripides’ *Medea*, Thucydides’ *Peloponnesian War* and will compare the persuasive techniques found in these ancient texts to the rhetoric of modern political figures, such as Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr. and Barack Obama, always with an eye toward the application of persuasive language and rhetorical strategy in our own writing.

WR150 H5  Mon, Wed, Fri  3:00pm - 4:00pm  Holm

Playing Games: How Video Games Work and What They Mean

According to the MacArthur Foundation, video game playing among American teens is nearly universal—97% have experience with games, and at least half play some sort of video game on any given day. With these numbers in mind, it is unsurprising that video games now rival music and film as global entertainment industries. This course will ask its participants to think critically and write analytically about the games we play, including console games, casual games, cell phone games, and multiplayer online games. Readings will include Ian Bogost’s *Persuasive Games: The Expressive Power of Videogames*, Raph Koster’s *Theory of Fun for Game Designers*, Justine Cassel’s *From Barbie to Mortal Kombat: Gender and Computer Games*, and a variety of current game journalism.

WR150 H9  Mon, Wed, Fri  3:00pm - 4:00pm  Bushnell

The Poetics of Rap

This seminar examines rap not only for its historical and cultural significance but even more so for its aesthetic value as a dynamic form of poetry. Close analysis of lyrics and rhythm will lend new insights to the discussion of rap’s dominant—and divisive—issues: free speech, consumerism, criminality, urban identity, regionalism, and the politics of race, gender, and sexuality. Readings include Tricia Rose’s *Black Noise* and *The Hip Hop Wars*, Jeff Chang’s *Can’t Stop Won’t Stop*, Adam Bradley’s *Book of Rhymes: The Poetics of Hip Hop*, and essays from Tracie Morris and DJ Renegade.

WR150 G4  Mon, Wed, Fri  2:00pm - 3:00pm  Adair
WR150 H6  Mon, Wed, Fri  3:00pm - 4:00pm  Adair

The Poetry of War

This course explores war as poets have observed, justified, glorified, and condemned it from ancient through recent times. We explore what selected poems tell us about the experience of combat, for soldiers and civilians, the victorious and the defeated. How does poetry celebrate and commemorate war, and what does it tell us about the virtues associated with war—the sacrifice and discipline and courage—and about the carnage and atrocity and trauma? In addition to memorizing and reciting war poetry, we examine the historical context of some poems and attend to the way poems converse with each other across the ages. Readings from *The Oxford Book of War Poetry* are supplemented with critical texts.

WR150 O9  Tue, Thu  3:30pm - 5:00pm  Walsh

Policing the Boundaries of American Identity: Anti-Immigration Movements in U.S. History to 1930

Examines how the trope of America as a “Nation of Immigrants” has challenged and affected political and social policy, with specific attention to the period of Second Wave immigration (1880–1925). The course will focus on the roles of religion, race, and labor in the creation of immigration policy.

AM250 A1  Mon, Wed, Fri  10:00am - 11:00am  Schneider  Enroll in AM250 A1.

AM250 A1 is a WR150 equivalent offered by the American and New England Studies Program.
Postwar America

In “Postwar America,” you will strive to become persuasive and eloquent writers and engaged readers through the study of the cultural and artistic landscape of the United States after World War II. Although the postwar era is often remembered for drab conformity and sterile materialism, mid-century art and literature suggest a sense of dissatisfaction with the dominant national ethos that resulted in disruptive discourses and experimental forms. Materials will include literature (Yates, Miller, Roth), journalism (Hersey and others), film (Kubrick and others), and literary criticism (Hayden, Henthorn, Kaplan, and others).

WR150 K8 Tue,Thu 9:30am - 11:00am Kordonowy
WR150 L7 Tue,Thu 11:00am - 12:30pm Kordonowy

Public Gardens and Urban Wilds: Boston's Natural History

This course will explore Boston’s greener places, where we can read the evidence of its emergence from the hills and marshes of the past and witness the ongoing tension it maintains between human inhabitants and nature. How does Boston’s current form demonstrate a desire to shape the natural for human purposes? How do parks function in the city? What is the value of undefined green space? How does the city address the concepts of recreation and public memory? Does wilderness still exist within the cityscape? In addressing these questions, this class will aim to gain understanding of the convergence of human and natural history that characterizes one of America’s oldest cities. Readings will include Jane Holtz Kay’s Lost Boston, selections from Nancy Seasholes’s Gaining Ground and Lawrence W. Kennedy’s Planning the City upon a Hill, Robert Lowell’s “For the Union Dead,” selected prose by Elizabeth Bishop and Thoreau, and Department of Parks and Recreation documents.

WR150 H7 Mon,Wed,Fri 3:00pm - 4:00pm Blyler

Race and Boston

New England has long been racially and ethnically diverse, but the region has also experienced racial and ethnic strife. This seminar will introduce students to college-level reading and writing by exploring a number of significant moments in New England’s complex racial and ethnic history. The seminar will begin by examining the Civil Rights movement in Boston in the 1950s, progress to the bus riots that resulted from school desegregation in the 1970s, and conclude with contemporary concerns. We will consider a variety of perspectives as represented in popular and academic histories, journalism, photography, governmental documents, speeches, fiction, and poetry. Texts will include Michael Patrick MacDonald’s All Souls, Zadie Smith’s On Beauty, and selections of Sam Cornish, Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, among others.

WR150 B1 Mon,Wed,Fri 9:00am - 10:00am Bennett
WR150 C2 Mon,Wed,Fri 10:00am - 11:00am Bennett
WR150 D4 Mon,Wed,Fri 11:00am - 12:00pm Bennett

Reading Disaster

This seminar will examine artistic responses to disasters international and local, real and perceived. We’ll consider such issues as the function of the artist in a time of crisis, the aestheticization of violence, poetic strategies of excess, and the serious and cautionary possibilities of science fiction and fantasy. Readings will include Carolyn Forche’s Against Forgetting: Twentieth-Century Poetry of Witness, Jonathan Safran Foer’s Everything Is Illuminated, and Suzanne Stephens’s Imagining Ground Zero: Official and Unofficial Proposals for the World Trade Center Site.

WR150 NB Tue,Thu 2:00pm - 3:30pm Bozek

Reading In: Ambiguity in Twentieth-Century Fiction

This course asks students to examine the role of ambiguity in a selection of twentieth-century literature. Course readings will include prose from Henry James, Leo Tolstoy, Gabriel García Márquez, Edith Wharton, and others. Some of the course texts feature indefinite characterizations or moral situations; others present us with puzzling and potentially unsolvable dilemmas. In one way or another, all of the course’s authors use ambiguity as a literary device, though not always to the same end. Students will become familiar with existing scholarly debates about literary ambiguity by reading scholarly articles from various interpretive frameworks—including psychoanalysis, formalism, structuralism, and feminism—and will then be asked to join the debate, presenting their own points of view.

WR150 C6 Mon,Wed,Fri 10:00am - 11:00am Kervin
Reading Marcel Proust in the Digital Age

In this section of WR150, we will study the nature of reading at the same time we develop the skills of reading attentively, researching effectively, and writing clearly. We will read a selection from Marcel Proust’s *In Search of Lost Time*, a text that requires quiet concentration and patience (and which is also, arguably, the best novel ever written). As we enjoy Proust’s complex style, we will simultaneously reflect upon technological developments including e-readers, Wikipedia, and Internet social networks—developments that have changed reading, relationships, and attention spans. Readings may include selections from Proust, Birkerts, Kirby, and Mayer-Schonberger. All readings will be in English.

WR150 JA  Tue, Thu  8:00am - 9:30am  Kent

Readings in Cultural Anthropology

This seminar explores works that engage the experiences of the foreign and the familiar across a variety of cultures. We will examine comparative constructions of masculinity and femininity, the changing dynamics of gender and sexuality in traditional cultures, and debates about the role masculinity and fatherhood in contemporary society. Readings will include all or portions of *The Sambia* by Gilbert Herdt, *The Hijra* by Serena Nanda, and *Gender in Amazonia and New Guinea* edited by Thomas Gregor and Donald Tuzin.

WR150 C4  Mon, Wed, Fri  10:00am - 11:00am  Pasto
WR150 D6  Mon, Wed, Fri  11:00am - 12:00pm  Pasto
WR150 E4  Mon, Wed, Fri  12:00pm - 1:00pm  Pasto

The Religious Use of Psychoactive Substances

Psychoactive substances have been used for religious purposes for thousands of years and in a multitude of cultures. In our day, such practices are controversial. Indeed, in the United States and in most Western countries, use of some psychoactive plants and substances—even for religious purposes—is deemed a criminal offense. In this class, we will explore the religious use of psychoactive plants from a range of perspectives, including scientific (what is the basis of the plants’ effects?), medical (how do these plants affect our bodies?), social (what are their implications for public safety and civil liberties?), and legal (how has this issue been treated in law and in the courts?). Readings include books such as *Iboga: The Visionary Root of African Shamanism* by V. Ravalec, Mallendi and A. Paicheler, numerous and *A Hallucinogenic Tea, Laced with Controversy: Ayahuasca in the Amazon and the United States* by M. Dobkin de Rios and R. Rumriill, as well as numerous scholarly articles and Supreme Court reports.

WR150 A6  Mon, Wed, Fri  8:00am - 9:00am  Bradonjić

Representations of War and Justice

This course examines representations of war and justice in a historical and interdisciplinary context. Specifically, this course asks the questions “What is justice?” and “Can war be just?” with special attention paid to the ongoing war in Afghanistan. Attention will also be paid to the major contemporary philosophical approaches of Realism, Just War Theory, and Pacifism. Students will be asked to write essays critically applying moral and philosophical arguments to historical debates and current events. Readings range from classic passages in Homer’s *Iliad* and Thucydides’ *The Peloponnesian Wars* to Michael Walzer’s *Just and Unjust Wars*, Kurt Vonnegut’s *Slaughterhouse-Five*, and Barack Obama’s *Nobel Lecture*.

WR150 O7  Tue, Thu  3:30pm - 5:00pm  Robinson
Representing Dreams

DREAMS are very important in the visual arts and literature, both as inspiration and as a form of expression. Characters tell their dreams, interpret others’ dreams, or wonder if an experience was a dream; artists highlight the significance of dreams when rendering images from their own dream life and representing historically famous dreams and dreamers. How do dreams count as knowledge for writers and artists, and what kinds of knowledge do they offer? In this course, we follow a historical trajectory as we study examples of dreams in the context of non-fictional discourses drawn from philosophy and psychology. We study excerpts from Homer’s Iliad and Odyssey, and Aristotle’s On Sleep and Dreams, as well as Shakespeare’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Lewis Carroll’s Through the Looking Glass, Freud’s On Dreams, Daniel Dennett’s Are Dreams Experiences?, and Catherine Corman’s Joseph Cornell’s Dreams.

WR150 M5 Tue,Thu 12:30pm - 2:00pm  Lewin
WR150 O1 Tue,Thu 3:30pm - 5:00pm  Lewin

Reviled Architecture: The Buildings We Love to Hate

Former Boston University president John Silber once remarked that while he generally opposed the death penalty, he was willing to make an exception in the case of the architect who designed BU’s Warren Towers dormitory. In a similar vein, Esquire magazine recently named the Ryugyong Hotel in North Korea “the worst building in the history of mankind.” From Portland’s Municipal Services Building to London’s “gherkin,” the built environment is pocked with architectural carbuncles that continue to incite widespread ire, yet even the most despised building has its ardent defenders. This course hones students’ writing skills by exploring controversial buildings from the perspective of the architects, critics, and scholars who loathe (and occasionally love) them. Case studies may include Boston City Hall, the Pan Am Building, and MIT’s Stata Center.

WR150 H3 Mon,Wed,Fri 3:00pm - 4:00pm  Sirman

Revisiting Fairy Tales

In this seminar we will do case studies of three fairy tales: “Red Riding Hood,” “Beauty and the Beast,” and “Bluebeard.” We will read multiple versions of each tale, examining the transformation of the themes of violence, adolescence, and sexuality, side by side with critical essays by scholars working from anthropological, linguistic, literary-critical, and psychological viewpoints. We will engage with issues including oral versus print cultures and the significance of the continual retelling and re-visioning of familiar tales, as well as the meanings of recurring motifs such as the monstrous bride/groom. Authors and critics may include Charles Perrault, Brothers Grimm, Italo Calvino, Joseph Jacobs, Anne Sexton, Margaret Atwood, Maria Tatar, Jack Zipes, Bruno Bettelheim, and Angela Carter.

WR150 BA Mon,Wed,Fri 9:00am - 10:00am  Bennett-Zendzian

The Rhetoric of Freedom in America

This course helps students to research and to write critically about the rhetoric in a series of classic literary and political texts that explore the concept of freedom. By explicating primary texts by thinkers as diverse as Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Zora Neale Hurston, Richard Wright, and Martin Luther King, students enhance their reading comprehension skills, hone their critical thinking, writing, and scholarship, and enter into the debate over the meaning of freedom throughout American history. Readings include Thomas Jefferson’s Declaration of Independence, Abraham Lincoln’s First Inaugural Address, Richard Wright’s Native Son, and Martin Luther King Jr’s “Letter from a Birmingham Jail.”

WR150 L3 Tue,Thu 11:00am - 12:30pm  Underwood
WR150 N3 Tue,Thu 2:00pm - 3:30pm  Underwood
WR150 O2 Tue,Thu 3:30pm - 5:00pm  Underwood

For the latest updates to this catalog, go to www.bu.edu/writingprogram/writing-program-curriculum/catalog.  Printed on 12/6/2010
Road Trips

In “Road Trips,” we will study narratives of road travel, particularly after the development of the Interstate Highway System in America. Although the road trip has often been considered an opportunity for recreational tourism, many American road narratives tell stories of self-discovery, migration, labor, and exile. In this course, we will engage literature, journalism, film, photography, and literary criticism in order to see how road travel helps shape national consciousness in the United States. Materials include pieces from Kerouac, Nabokov, Lange, Bulosan, and others.

WR100 M2 Tue, Thu 2:00pm - 3:30pm Kordonowy

The Rules of Evidence

Standards and practices of the English major, examined in the light of narration and detection. Authors under consideration may include Poe, Twain, James, Frost, Lowell, Gilman, O’Brien, Whitehead, Cha. Frequent critical readings; frequent papers.

EN220 D1 Tue, Thu 12:30pm - 2:00pm Howell Enroll in EN220 D1.

EN220 D1 is a WR150 equivalent offered by the English Department.

Russian Literary Masterpieces

In this seminar we explore and write about challenging masterpieces of Russian literature created in the 1800s and in the post-Revolutionary period. The literary explosion of the nineteenth century and the political turmoil of the twentieth have brought us works that pose difficult questions about the relationship between historical reality and aesthetic expression. What is the role of the artist in times of political upheaval, and how do writers respond to the assault on human life and dignity that they witness? We begin answering these questions through close reading of short masterpieces of Russian literature with an eye to their style, tone, and historical and cultural setting. Readings vary by section but frequently include Alexander Pushkin’s “The Bronze Horseman,” Nikolai Gogol’s “The Overcoat,” Fyodor Dostoevsky’s Notes from Underground, Leo Tolstoy’s The Death of Ivan Ilyich, Anton Chekhov’s short stories, Bulgakov’s Master and Margarita, and others.

WR150 K9 Tue, Thu 9:30am - 11:00am Gapotchenko
WR150 N6 Tue, Thu 2:00pm - 3:30pm Gapotchenko

Science in Foreign Affairs and International Diplomacy

Developments in science and technology have driven our relations with other nations and peoples of the world for centuries. This course examines past and current global affairs and studies how science shapes U.S. foreign policy decisions. By 2050, the world population is expected to reach 9.5 billion inhabitants, and the average global temperature is expected to increase by 2–4 degrees. With these changes arise increased demand for energy and natural resources, arable land, and food and water security. The potential for regional conflicts grows while massive human migrations are likely adaptation measures. How do science and technology address global issues and promote international diplomacy? Readings include Timothy Ferris’s The Science of Liberty and Paul Collier’s The Bottom Billion.

WR150 NA Tue, Thu 2:00pm - 3:30pm Stone

Sex, Gender, and the Social Self

We live in a gendered society, and norms about sexuality help shape our world, benefiting some individuals and groups while oppressing others. In this course, we will explore the social construction of gender and sexuality. This task requires that we look at how social institutions and human interaction shape gender and sexuality, as well as the ways that gender and sexuality intersect with other aspects of identity such as race and class. Students will focus on gender and sexuality as aspects of our identities; thinking deeply and writing critically about issues such as heteronormativity, homophobia, masculinities, and femininities. Readings will include Dude, You’re a Fag: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School; “Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence;” “Doing Gender;” and “Coming Out and Crossing Over: Identity Formation and Proclamation in a Transgender Community.”

WR150 OC Tue, Thu 3:30pm - 5:00pm Donovan

For the latest updates to this catalog, go to www.bu.edu/writingprogram/writing-program-curriculum/catalog.
Shahrazad, Arabesques and Storytelling: Fables of Resistance in Modern Middle Eastern Literature

In this course, students will explore the ways in which Middle Eastern texts experiment with storytelling techniques as a form of resistance to colonial and patriarchal domination. These narrative approaches often blur the boundaries between the imaginative, the real, and the historical in order to question authority. The course will include such works as *Dreams of Trespass* by Fatima Mernissi, *The Century of Locusts* by Malika Mokeddem, and others by Anton Shammas, Tayib Salih, and Ghassan Khanafani.

WR100 B2  Mon,Wed,Fri  9:00am - 10:00am  Jameson

Shakespeare and Performance

Although most twenty-first century students are more likely to encounter renaissance plays on the page than on the stage, Shakespeare and his contemporaries conceived of their texts primarily as blueprints for theatrical production. This seminar will attempt to offer a more complete understanding of English renaissance drama by emphasizing the centrality of performance when approaching the texts. Students will explore topics such as the nature of late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century staging practices, the ubiquity of performance in the daily life of renaissance England, and the incredible range of interpretations the period’s plays have elicited over 400 years of continuous theatrical production. Texts may include Shakespeare’s *Richard III*, *Hamlet*, and *Measure for Measure*, and Jonson’s *Bartholomew Fair*.

WR150 H8  Mon,Wed,Fri  3:00pm - 4:00pm  Stokes

Shakespearean Controversies

Shakespeare’s enduring popularity has occasionally tended to sanitize discomforting and divisive issues in his plays. This seminar explores the complexities of Shakespearean language and stagecraft while attending to representations of controversial topics such as religious intolerance, class conflict, political violence, racial difference, and sexism. Our goal is to contextualize the plays in their historical moment and determine what Shakespeare and his contemporaries may have to tell us about pressing issues in our culture. This semester, readings include plays from Shakespeare’s four major genres: *The Tempest*, *Measure for Measure*, *Coriolanus*, and *Henry V*.

WR150 B5  Mon,Wed,Fri  9:00am - 10:00am  Meyer

Source and Sorcery: All About Food

Food is, of course, essential, but how do we decide what to eat? That decision may be based on taste, nutrition, cost, convenience, or the environmental impact of our agricultural practices, or some combination of these criteria. This course explores the choices we make regarding food not only as individuals but also as a society. The issues addressed include food scarcity and abundance, industrialized agriculture and alternative systems, the ocean as a source of food, and food as an aspect of culture and identity. Readings include work by Michael Pollan, M.F.K. Fisher, Ruth Reichl, and others.

WR150 KF  Tue,Thu  9:30am - 11:00am  Pepper

Spike Lee’s America

This course examines United States social dynamics as depicted in the films of director Spike Lee. Topics for debate and written argumentation include racism, sexism, and classism in American history; portrayals of gang violence and the drug trade in Lee’s vision of urban life; and the merits of film as a vehicle for examining these and related issues. Analysis of films such as *Do The Right Thing*, *Jungle Fever*, *Malcolm X*, and *When the Levees Broke* will be contextualized by the cultural criticism of Paula Massood, bell hooks, Ed Guerrero, and Toni Cade Bambara, among others.

WR150 G6  Mon,Wed,Fri  2:00pm - 3:00pm  Potorti

Structures of Language

Anyone who speaks a language, according to Steven Pinker, is interested in language. Reading Pinker’s *The Language Instinct* to understand how the mind translates thought to words and structures words into original yet coherent sentences, the class will apply the theories of cognitive science to sentences from Shakespeare, Samuel Johnson and Gertrude Stein, and to the logical paragraphs of the scientists Darwin, James Watson, and Stephen Jay Gould. Papers explore both the biological origins and the cultural consequences of language.

WR100 D1  Mon,Wed,Fri  11:00am - 12:00pm  Scheuerman
Studies in Betrayal
The moral, aesthetic, psychological, and political implications of betrayal in a variety of works including Shakespeare’s Sonnets, novels by Emily Bronte, Dickens, and Fitzgerald, F.W. Murnau’s film *Sunrise*, Arthur Miller’s play *The Crucible*, and Elia Kazan’s film *On the Waterfront.*

**EN220 HP** Mon,Wed,Fri 11:00am - 12:00pm Brown
**EN220 HP is a WR150 equivalent offered by the English Department.**

Sylvia Plath and Her World
Almost fifty years after her suicide, evaluations of Sylvia Plath’s work are still difficult to untangle from judgments about her intensely documented life and death. Biographers, critics, and fans have all vied to discern the “real Plath” from among her various alluring and ferocious literary personas. Often termed confessional, Plath’s writing raises vexing questions about the relationship between experience and art and between the personal and the political. In this course, we will read a variety of historical, critical, and theoretical sources to help us understand and enter into debates about the continuing relevance and significance of Plath’s writing. Readings will include *The Bell Jar, Ariel,* and selections from *Collected Poems* and Plath’s *Journals.*

**WR150 K5** Tue,Thu 9:30am - 11:00am Madsen Hardy
**WR150 L4** Tue,Thu 11:00am - 12:30pm Madsen Hardy
**WR150 M3** Tue,Thu 12:30pm - 2:00pm Madsen Hardy

Sympathy for the Devil
The concept of a “Prince of Darkness” personifying supernatural evil in opposition to God has proved invaluable to writers, although the major religions offer only limited theological justification for such a being. After looking at the sparse scriptural references to the Adversary, the seminar considers literary depictions of the Devil. Key readings include C.S. Lewis’s *Screwtape Letters,* Mark Twain’s *Mysterious Stranger Manuscripts,* and Mikhail Bulgakov’s *The Master and Margarita.*

**WR150 K2** Tue,Thu 9:30am - 11:00am Fido

A Tail of Enlightenment?: Apuleius’ *The Golden Ass*
“Pay attention, reader, and you’ll be delighted,” is the narrator’s promise in Apuleius’ *The Golden Ass.* Indeed, this novel about a man magically turned into a donkey has delighted and perplexed readers like St. Augustine, Cervantes, and Shakespeare, among many others. In this course, we will read this second-century A.D. Roman novel and consider what has made it so appealing to ancient and modern readers. Our principle concerns will be the literary influences on the novel (e.g. Homer’s *Odyssey* and Virgil’s *Aeneid*), the themes of magic and transformation, and the novel’s complex narrative structure.

**WR150 A5** Mon,Wed,Fri 8:00am - 9:00am Vincze

Technology, Innovation, and International Development
Within this class, we consider International Development (ID) alongside sustainability and technological innovation and within the broader framework of the United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Our focus in this class is on ongoing ID projects, rather than disaster relief or humanitarian aid in times of crisis; however, we will address some of the issues that are common across all forms of aid including changing development theory, the application of appropriate technology, and critiques of the politics and ethics of aid. The field is multi-disciplinary, but readings will allow us to broadly consider the role of technology in ID; to examine case studies of successful and unsuccessful projects; and to draw on policy and theory works from development and STS (Science, Technology, and Society) literature. Within this broad context, we will investigate and assess some of the recent and contemporary scientific and technological innovations that have been identified as solutions to pressing development issues. In this class, students will work on individual and group research and writing projects that add to our understanding of the important role of science and technology in development projects.

**WR150 B2** Mon,Wed,Fri 9:00am - 10:00am Breen
**WR150 C3** Mon,Wed,Fri 10:00am - 11:00am Breen
**WR150 E2** Mon,Wed,Fri 12:00pm - 1:00pm Breen
"The Play's the Thing": Literature Influenced by Shakespeare's Hamlet

This course will not only consider why Hamlet can be understood as such a “universal” or “unlimited” text, but also explore how and why various subsequent texts have pointedly invoked aspects of Shakespeare’s most famous play throughout the past four centuries. Beginning with a close examination of Hamlet itself, we will then undertake readings of a series of English/European and American texts stretching from the eighteenth to the twentieth century. Some central thematic dynamics which we will pursue include the following: representations of hypocrisy; notions of confidence, duplicity, and seeming vs. being; understandings of fidelity and familiarity; problems of reflection and the constructed nature of words and language; and the balance between masculinity and cowardice, individuality and history/inheritance, and agency and fate.

WR150 G7 Mon,Wed,Fri 2:00pm - 3:00pm Rothschild, I

To Embody the Way: Studies in Early Chinese Spirituality

This course aims to improve writing ability through an exploration of early Confucian and Daoist concepts of self-cultivation (self-improvement). Class content will begin with a discussion of the relationship between Chinese thought and religion, and will continue through related topics including early Chinese images of the self and its development, human nature, ideals of human excellence, utopianism, and cosmology. Texts may include the Analects of Confucius, the Dao De Jing, the Mencius, the Xunzi, and the Zhuangzi.

WR150 B9 Mon,Wed,Fri 9:00am - 10:00am Loh

Tragedy and the Tragic

This section focuses on the tragic element in prose fiction and poetry, and tragedy as a dramatic genre from classical antiquity to the present, in order to introduce participants to textual analysis, literary research, and contemporary critical methodologies. Authors will include Sophocles, Shakespeare, Beckett, Tolstoy, Camus, and others.

EN220 E1 Tue,Thu 11:00am - 12:30pm Van Anglen Enroll in EN220 E1.

EN220 E1 is a WR150 equivalent offered by the English Department.

Turn-of-the-Century Modern: American Art at 1900

This course examines American visual culture at a time of great social change when modernist expression and modernity went hand-in-hand. We will consider visual products of all kinds (painting, cinema, photography, and architecture) to piece together a picture of a rapidly modernizing nation. Emphasis will be placed on situating these works in their historical context. Readings will include: Alan Trachtenberg's Incorporation of America, Robert Sklar's Movie-Made America, and John Cooper's Pivotal Decades.

WR150 B6 Mon,Wed,Fri 9:00am - 10:00am Root

U.S. Presidents and American Secularism

The separation of Church and State is a prominent aspect of American cultural and political life. Despite the centrality of this separation for our culture, various interpretations and appraisals of this secularism have supported antithetical social agendas. Writings for this seminar will engage speeches of various American presidents to explore the meaning, benefits, and limits of political and cultural secularism. Readings, which will all be available online, will include Jefferson's Virginia Act for Establishing Religious Freedom, Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, John F. Kennedy's Speech to the Greater Houston Ministerial Association, and Obama's Call to Renewal Address.

WR150 O8 Tue,Thu 3:30pm - 5:00pm Larson
Utopia and Dystopia in Philosophy and Literature

“A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at, for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing.” The idea of utopia had been thriving in literature and philosophy for millennia, but when Oscar Wilde wrote these words in 1891, it was witnessing the rise of its dark counterpart, the dystopia. This course will focus on various ways writers have imagined the ideal society from Plato to the present day, as well as on horrific visions of social experiment gone wrong. We will study and enter the debates on topics such as science and technology; sex, gender, and procreation; art and censorship; and family and education. Authors may include Plato, More, Swift, Samuel Butler, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Aldous Huxley, George Orwell, Kurt Vonnegut, and Ursula Le Guin.

WR150 B7  Mon,Wed,Fri  9:00am - 10:00am  Christensen

Visions of Technology and Society

In their many speculations about the future, human beings have generally assumed that technology would make life better (safer, healthier, more comfortable, more egalitarian, etc.) than it is now. Is this optimism justified? Might technology instead introduce new, intractable problems and set humanity on a more troubling course? How have philosopher, scientists, and technologists thought about these questions, and how well have their predictions come true? Our seminar explores fiction, commentary, drama, and reportage that addresses the development and deployment of the atomic bomb and other weapons of mass destruction in the twentieth century. How has the application of advanced scientific knowledge and technology to the art of waging war affected not only our social systems but our very humanity? We explore the works of Kurt Vonnegut, Michael Frayn, John Hersey, and Ray Bradbury among others.

WR150 M4  Tue,Thu  12:30pm - 2:00pm  Hodin

Walt Whitman and American Modernism

This seminar investigates the influence of Walt Whitman on twentieth-century American poetry. The course begins with a close look at Whitman’s work and the qualities we might describe as “Whitmanian,” following which we consider the ways in which a variety of twentieth-century American poets have responded to Whitman’s poetic vision as well as to the challenges he set forth. Readings include Emerson’s “The Poet,” Whitman’s “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry,” T. S. Eliot’s The Waste Land, and Yusef Komunyakaa’s Dien Cai Dau.

WR150 L9  Tue,Thu  11:00am - 12:30pm  Wallace, A
WR150 M7  Tue,Thu  12:30pm - 2:00pm  Wallace, A

The Whale

Come aboard the Pequod, as we explore Boston’s great nineteenth century whaling days through Hermann Melville’s classic American masterpiece Moby Dick. As we join with Ishmael in captain Ahab’s pursuit of the great white whale, our epic voyage will cross currents of religious vision, class conflict, colonial trade, and lead out to the very limits of manic obsession! In addition to our consideration of the novel as a great work of literature, students will be encouraged to develop inter-disciplinary projects that may touch more broadly on such areas as nineteenth century history, ecology, or marine biology. Works include an abridged reading of Moby Dick accompanied by selections of historical and critical literature. We will also venture out as a group to the New Bedford Whaling Museum and board an actual whale watching vessel out of Boston Harbor.

WR150 J2  Tue,Thu  8:00am - 9:30am  Degener
WR150 K3  Tue,Thu  9:30am - 11:00am  Degener
WR150 L2  Tue,Thu  11:00am - 12:30pm  Degener
Writing About Controversial Science
As scientific questions enter the political arena it becomes essential that all of us should recognize genuine scientific argument if we are to make rational decisions about the place of Intelligent Design in the classroom, the need for any action over global warming, or the value of stem cell research. This course looks at a number of scientific controversies and disputes, starting with examining some conflicting scientific data, and proceeding to compare and contrast a policy statement issued by the proponents of Intelligent Design with a position piece written by two advocates of classical Darwinism. The longest section of the course looks at books by Matt Ridley, Steven Quartz & Terrence Sejnowski, and Frans de Waal, discussing the ways in which studies of evolution and the brain over the last ten years have developed the case for morality as a biological function.

WR150 N4  Tue,Thu  2:00pm - 3:30pm  Fido

Writing An Education
What does it mean to be educated? We will explore this question in a variety of works including fiction by Ama Ata Aidoo and Emily Brontë; poetry by Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Langston Hughes; and Margaret Edson’s play Wit. In addition, we will reflect on our own educational experiences and participate in a related off-campus service project.

EN220 F1  Tue,Thu  12:30pm - 2:00pm  Cordner  Enroll in EN220 F1.
EN220 F1 is a WR150 equivalent offered by the English Department.