

## SPRING 2012

### Course Descriptions for ENGLISH 1050, *THE LITERARY EXPERIENCE*

*All sections are writing intensive*

#### **1050-001**

**MWF 8:30 AM – 9:20 AM**

**John Hagen**

The goals of this course are several. The first is to lead the students by direction and indirection to learn that literary experience is one of the great pleasures of the human spirit. To arrive at this goal, we will do intense readings of poetry, fiction and drama; that is, we will stretch our intellectual faculties to understand critically what makes great literature that directly and indirectly resonates with human experience. The course intends also to bring students to think critically about what they read and to articulate clearly what they have read. To achieve this latter goal, students will do intensive writing about assigned readings. This writing will be reviewed in individual conferences several times during the semester.

#### **1050-002**

**MWF 8:30 AM – 9:20 AM**

**Cathleen Velez**

The concepts of man's struggle to find justice in a world of injustice and his need to search for self are addressed in *The Stranger*, the 20th century work of Albert Camus. In Jean-Paul Sartre's *No Exit*, the conception of an afterlife is explored, questioning the existence of hell and its impact on the human mind. In Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, the relationship of man to a superior being is addressed while underscoring the need to believe. The course is interdisciplinary and while focusing on the literary experience will delve into the areas of philosophy, theology, sociology and psychology. It is a writing intensive course. In this course you'll improve your writing and critical thinking skills by reading, discussing, and writing about literature. You will also gain confidence and pleasure in your reactions to literature and related arts. You'll give close readings to selections of fiction, poetry, drama, and memoir and respond to them in class discussions, formal papers, and informal writing. To enhance the coherence and interdisciplinary nature of the course, we will focus on the explosion of literature created by American, Irish, British, and French writers living in Paris between WWI and the Great Depression: the so-called Lost Generation. We will examine how the artistic, financial, and social freedoms of this milieu led to creative surges not only in literature but also in art and music. We will visit the art museum to see literary innovations mirrored in art. To widen our perspective of literary modernism, we may also read works from contrasting historical period.

**1050-003**

**MWF 9:30 AM – 10:20 AM**

**Cecilia Ready**

**THE BEATS AND THEIR SPAWN**

Kerouac, Cassidy, Ginsberg, Ferlinghetti, DiPrima, Snyder...

These artists and many more exploded onto the post-World War II American literary scene. From Columbia University in New York to City Lights Book Store in San Francisco, they spread out across the country—beat, downtrodden; beat, moving to the rhythms of jazz; beat, seeking the beatific vision of America. Fueled by French Existentialism, Zen Buddhism, Catholicism, hungry for “kicks, joy, darkness,” they voiced the dreams, fears, and obsessions of their generation. And they spawned a revolutionary aesthetic in literature, music, and film which lives on after them. Some of it is beautiful, some of it not, but none of it is boring. Can you dig it?

**1050-004**

**MWF 9:30 AM – 10:20 AM**

**Eileen Mullahy**

Designed as a literary survey course, ENG 1050 offers students the opportunity to examine a variety of literary genres, including short stories, poetry, plays and essays. Students will develop and refine their abilities to:

- understand major concepts and utilize techniques of literary analysis
- apply close reading and annotation techniques
- expand their knowledge of literary criticism
- compose and revise critical essays

Given the survey nature of this course, reading assignments and responses represent a significant portion of the coursework. Students will also complete two critical research papers, and offer their own analyses of a specific work to the class. Finally, one in-class exam will require students to explain and apply literary analysis theories and techniques.

**1050-005**

**MWF 10:30 AM – 11:20 AM**

**Jody Ross**

In this course you'll improve your writing and critical thinking skills by reading, discussing, and writing about literature. You will also gain confidence and pleasure in your reactions to literature and related arts. You'll give close readings to selections of fiction, poetry, drama, and memoir and respond to them in class discussions, formal papers, and informal writing. To enhance the coherence and interdisciplinary nature of the course, we will focus on the explosion of literature created by American, Irish, British, and French writers living in Paris between WWI and the Great Depression: the so-called Lost Generation. We will examine how the artistic, financial, and social freedoms of this milieu led to creative surges not only in literature but also in art and music. We will visit the art museum to see literary innovations mirrored in art. To widen our perspective of literary modernism, we may also read works from contrasting historical period.

**1050-007**

**MWF 11:30 AM – 12:20 PM**

**Robert O’Neil**

In ENG 1050-007, 009, 013, we will explore contemporary short stories and novels. Students will write three essays throughout the course, developing their own thesis-driven arguments. The course will begin with “The Vintage Book of Contemporary American Short Stories.” Raymond Carver, Kate Braverman, Mary Gaitskill, and Denis Johnson are just a few of the authors that will be discussed. The novels “The Things They Carried” by Tim O’Brien and “The Sorrow of War” by Bao Ninh will follow. These two novels highlight the struggles of two authors who both fought in the Vietnam War, but for different sides: Ninh for the North Vietnamese and O’Brien for the Americans. “Libra” highlights the events leading up to and following the JFK assassination. We follow Lee Harvey Oswald as a teenager in New York to his perch in the Texas Book Depository. The novel also provides the vengeful plot of disgruntled CIA members who want to assassinate the president. “Libra” addresses the relationship between fact and fiction in an attempt to question and challenge the very history that America is built upon.

**1050-008**

**MWF 11:30 AM – 12:20 PM**

**Earl Bader**

**TELLING TRUE STORIES: WALKING THE FICTION/NON-FICTION BORDERLINE**

When, in The Things They Carried, Tim O’Brien says, “A true war story is neither true nor about war” he is pointing to the fact that all writers — fiction and non-fiction alike — “invent” the truth. Though O’Brien was literally a soldier in Vietnam, he is able to get at the psychological truth of that time only by imagining moments that never happened, yet he has received great praise for the accuracy of his “fiction.” Richard Selzer, a medical doctor honored for his “non-fiction” Mortal Lessons calls himself a “poet” of the body and seeks to write about both disease and healing in a way that “captures the imagination.” Selzer’s claim is that he is a better “doctor” now that he no longer practices surgery at all but rather writes about it full time. The authors in Inventing The Truth: The Art and Craft of Memoir take us inside the creative process of making “self” into “story” explaining how one stays faithful to actual events, characters, and places but cuts, sews, and reweaves them so as to produce “art.” Barry Lopez, a non-fiction environmentalist, writes in Crossing Open Ground of the earth’s ecosystems from the inside so compellingly that they become living characters before our eyes. Yiyun Li, who grew up in China but became a novelist only when she came to America and began to write in English, speaks in A Thousand Years of Good Prayers of how important storytelling — the free and uninhibited play of words — became during the repressive Mao regime when censorship made any leap of the imagination a treason against the state. The authors in Home: American Writers Remember Rooms Of Their Own discover a poetics of space in the houses where they grew up and use that poetics to probe how we “imagine” ourselves into adulthood and thus into our humanness. This course will seek to inquire into the creative process itself and into the ever shifting borderline between self and story, between non-fiction and fiction.

**1050-009**

**MWF 12:30 PM – 1:20 PM**

**Robert O’Neil**

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**1050-010**

**MWF 12:30 PM – 1:20 PM**

**James Kirschke**

In this course the students will read, discuss and write about a wide range of artistically significant works. Whenever possible, the course will emphasize interdisciplinary connections among the works studied.

Human relevance in the artistic legacies of literature will be mainly explored. The theme of the course will be Philosophies of Life: Ways of Viewing our Relationships with the World. In this course we will study the lives and works of such authors as Willa Cather, Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Madeleine L’Engle, Harper Lee, Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Langston Hughes, Robert Frost, William Carlos Williams, and Wallace Stevens. If time allows, we may also peruse selections of some other genius authors, especially poets.

**1050-011**

**MW 1: 30 PM – 2:45 PM**

**Gail Ciociola**

Broadly defined, the literary experience involves reading, listening to, thinking about, and/or evaluating literature. It can involve much else, as well, but ideally the whole enterprise in any form should be an enjoyable one. To these ends, then, this course will recreate the “experience” by examining works of relatively contemporary practitioners of fiction and drama. The novels studied will include Michael Cunningham’s The Hours and Toni Morrison’s Song of Solomon.

Selected poems by contemporary authors will also be considered, along with plays by recent Pulitzer Prize winners, David Mamet, August Wilson, and Wendy Wasserstein.

**1050-012**

**MW 3:00 PM – 4:15 PM**

**Gail Ciociola**

Broadly defined, the literary experience involves reading, listening to, thinking about, and/or evaluating literature. It can involve much else, as well, but ideally the whole enterprise in any form should be an enjoyable one. To these ends, then, this course will recreate the “experience” by examining works of relatively contemporary practitioners of fiction and drama. The novels studied will include Michael Cunningham’s The Hours and Toni Morrison’s Song of Solomon. Selected poems by contemporary authors will also be considered, along with plays by recent Pulitzer Prize winners, David Mamet, August Wilson, and Wendy Wasserstein.

**1050-013**

**MW 4:30 PM – 5:45 PM**

**Robert O’Neil**

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**1050-014**

**TR 8:30 AM – 9:45 AM**

**Mary Ellen Fattori**

As individuals, we bring our unique experiences and knowledge of our world to any work of literature that we read. As a result, English 1050 offers students the opportunity to explore and share their individual responses to literary works that frequently reflect aspects of their own lives. Students will examine various works of fiction, drama, and poetry in conjunction with the external forces (historical, philosophical, religious, social, etc.) that contributed to their creation and were affected by them. Students will be encouraged to think critically about what they read

and respond clearly to it through class discussion, oral reports, and variety of writing assignments, both formal and informal. These assignments will provide students with many opportunities to participating in all phases of the writing process, including research, brainstorming, outlining, creation and revision of rough drafts, and ultimately the submission of well-written, polished final drafts.

**1050-015**

**TR 8:30 AM – 9:45 AM**

**Cathleen Velez**

The concepts of man's struggle to find justice in a world of injustice and his need to search for self are addressed in *The Stranger*, the 20th century work of Albert Camus. In Jean-Paul Sartre's *No Exit*, the conception of an afterlife is explored, questioning the existence of hell and its impact on the human mind. In Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, the relationship of man to a superior being is addressed while underscoring the need to believe. The course is interdisciplinary and while focusing on the literary experience will delve into the areas of philosophy, theology, sociology and psychology. It is a writing intensive course In this course you'll improve your writing and critical thinking skills by reading, discussing, and writing about literature. You will also gain confidence and pleasure in your reactions to literature and related arts. You'll give close readings to selections of fiction, poetry, drama, and memoir and respond to them in class discussions, formal papers, and informal writing. To enhance the coherence and interdisciplinary nature of the course, we will focus on the explosion of literature created by American, Irish, British, and French writers living in Paris between WWI and the Great Depression: the so-called Lost Generation. We will examine how the artistic, financial, and social freedoms of this milieu led to creative surges not only in literature but also in art and music. We will visit the art museum to see literary innovations mirrored in art. To widen our perspective of literary modernism, we may also read works from contrasting historical period.

**1050-016**

**TR 10:00 AM – 11:15 AM**

**Ellen Bonds**

The Nobel Prize in Literature

“...for works of lyrical beauty...” “who...gives life to an essential aspect of American reality...” “for impassioned writing with wide horizons....” These are just a few of the comments used to describe recent winners of the Nobel prize in literature. Since 1901, poets, dramatists, novelists, and writers whose work defies easy categorization have been honored for the contributions their writing has made, not only to the world of literature, but also “to humanity.” Although no single prize (even one as prestigious as the Nobel) automatically signifies greatness, it can help direct readers' attention to works of literature that expand our literary experiences. So, we'll take a look at some of these writers, their literature, and their analyses of literature as expressed in the Nobel acceptance speeches. We'll look at recent winners such as Seamus Heaney, Toni Morrison, and Günter Grass. We'll also look at works by well-known authors such as W. B.

Yeats, and William Faulkner. Students will read, discuss, research, and write about this literature, and together, we will build our awareness of world literature.

**1050-017**

**TR 11:30 AM – 12:45 PM**

**Christopher Devenney**

**The Blues and American Literature**

Taking shape as a black Southern folk-form at the dawn of the Twentieth Century, wringing lyric euphoria from despair, blues music has moved from the back porches, street corners, and juke-joints of the American south and into the heart of American culture during the past one hundred years. But blues song and blues performance have been shadowed from the start by an equally vital literary response that bears witness to the harsh lives, earthly pleasures, and transformative yearnings of blues-makers and their audiences. Using musical examples as primary evidence, the course will delve into various “blues texts” by writers such as August Wilson, Ralph Ellison, Zora Neale Hurston, Langston Hughes, David Honeyboy Edwards, Gayl Jones, and Louis Nordan among others.

**1050-018**

**TR 1:00 PM – 2:15 PM**

**Ellen Bonds**

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**1050-019**

**TR 2:30 PM – 3:45 PM**

**Joseph Kinney**

What better way to improve a student’s appreciation of literature and his or her writing than to learn from the best writer in the English language, William Shakespeare? Selected plays, and a

wide variety of poems and short stories by different authors are assigned for discussion; topics for four essays, and a final essay-examination.

**1050-020**

**TR 4:00 PM – 5:15 PM**

**August Tarrier**

It's the End of the World as We Know It and I Feel Fine

Every generation produces its own idea of the world's end. That vision often tells us a lot more about what preoccupies us at the time than it does about what the future might be like. If a utopian impulse leads us to imagine a better world, a dystopian one elicits a cautionary tale: if we continue in this direction, we're in deep trouble. We'll be studying some of these cautionary tales in order to discern what might bring about our downfall or enslave us, but also to examine the ways in which memory serves as a tool of resistance and a first step toward collective action against authoritarian or repressive regimes. We'll be reading and/or viewing *The War of the Worlds*, *The Road*, *The Handmaid's Tale*, and *Children of Men*. In addition to our class discussions, expect that you'll be participating in small group discussions, and writing and revising three papers.

**1050-100**

**MW 6:00 PM – 7:15 PM**

**Joseph Edgette**

Literature has often been described as the written record of the human experience. This course will explore the literary account of the impact of nature, society, and self on the individual from a humanistic perspective. Through the examination, analysis, and discussion of selected literary examples, and films, the student will have the opportunity to become better acquainted, more accurately informed, and more keenly aware of literature's overall influence on and by its human creator. A rich sampling from the writings of selected authors, poets, and dramatists, and others will shape the topics that comprise this excursion into the human condition.

**1050-101**

**T 6:10 PM – 8:50 PM**

**Charles Cherry**

This course has two goals: 1) To give you additional writing practice in order not to teach you how to write—you can already write—but in order to make you better editors of your own prose; 2) to read and discuss a range of brief fiction in order to witness the range of human experience and grapple with the question of what constitutes an artful rendering of that experience.