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Please note: For your convenience, here is a list of the English Department faculty and their contact information for spring '22. If office hours are not convenient, please make an appointment.

Make sure you speak with your advisor well in advance of fall '22 registration, which begins April 5.

INSTRUCTOR	OFFICE HOURS Spring 2022	EXT.	OFFICE
Baker, Calvin	Th 1:00-3:00 & by appt.	5165	PMH 315
Benzon, Paul	T 4:00-5:30, W 12:30-2:00 & by appt.	5162	PMH 311
Bernard, April	By appt.	8396	PMH 319
Black, Barbara, Chair	Th 1:30-3:00, F 11:00-12:30	5154	PMH 313
Boyers, Peg	By appt.	5186	PMH 327
Boyers, Robert	By appt.	5156	PMH 325
Bozio, Andrew	W 4:00-5:00 & by appt.	5158	PMH 317
Cermatori, Joseph	M 2:00-5:00 & by appt.	5163	PMH 316
Diaby, Bakary	M, F 11:00-12:00 & by appt.	5166	PMH 322
Dunn, Olivia	M by appt., W, F 11:45-12:45 (all on zoom)	8493	PMH 332
Fawcett, Jennifer	M, W 1:00-2:00 & by appt.	5193	PMH 336
Golden, Catherine	Th 12:30-1:30 & by appt.	5164	PMH 321
Greaves, Margaret	On Leave	5191	PMH 309
Greenspan, Kate	T/Th 1:00-2:00, W 10:00-11:30	5167	PMH 324
Hall, Linda	M 10:30-noon & by appt.	5182	PMH 318
Hrbek, Greg	By appt.	8398	PMH 310
Jorgensen, Caitlin	W 9:00-11:00 & by appt.	8393	PMH 326
Junkerman, Nick	Th 2:30-4:30	5161	PMH 306
Marx, Michael Associate Chair	M 2:15-3:30, Th 11:00-2:30, & by appt.	5173	PMH 320
McAdams, Ruth	M 4:00-5:00, F 11:00-12:00, & by appt.	5174	PMH 331
Melito, Marla	Th 12:00-1:00 & by appt. (all on zoom)	8112	STAR. 201
Mintz, Susannah	By appt.	5169	PMH 305
Niles, Thad	M, W 12:30-2:00	8114	LIBR 442
Parra, Jamie	Sabbatical	5172	PMH 315
Pashley, Brenda	W 2:00-4:00 & by appt.	8150	STAR. 101
Soderlind, Lori	W 3:00-6:00 & by appt.	5187	PMH 333
Sperry, Eileen	Every other Tue, Feb 8-May 11, 10:00-3:00	5153	PMH 334
Stokes, Mason	M 4:00-5:00, T 3:34-4:45, & by appt.	5184	PMH 308
Suresh, Archana	W 11:30-1:00 & by appt.	5177	PMH 320E
Wientzen, Tim	T 11:00-12:00 & by appt.	8397	PMH 307
Wolff, Melora	By appt.	5197	PMH 323

Note to Students:

In this Prospectus, you will see some new designations for certain courses. If you entered Skidmore in the fall of 2020 or after, you will want to pay attention to the information in all caps bold that indicates which courses count as your Early Period, Middle Period, and Late Period requirements for the English major. You will need one of each to complete the English major. This is the new Literary History requirement.

If you entered Skidmore prior to fall 2020, you will need two Early Period courses for the English major. These are marked accordingly with the information in all caps bold.

The Shape of Fall 2022: courses grouped by common focus

POETRY

EN 213—Poetry
EN 248W—The Brontës
EN 347—Seventeenth-Century Poetry
EN 363—Poetry 1800 to the Present
EN 363W—Confessional Poetry
EN 377P—Poetry of Witness
EN 280—Introduction to Poetry Writing

FICTION

EN 211—Fiction
EN 322P—Bad Melville
EN 328R—Ulysses
EN 362R—Rise of the Novel
EN 363—Modernist Imagination
EN 281—Introduction to Fiction Writing
EN 380—Fiction Workshop

NONFICTION

EN 228—American Life Writing
EN 363—Modernist Imagination
EN 375*—Literature and Philosophy: Existentialism
EN 378—Nonfiction Workshop

DRAMA, THEATER, FILM

EN 229W—Memory in Film
EN 225W—Introduction to Shakespeare
EN 229—Shakespeare: Comedy and Tragedy

WORD AND IMAGE

EN 229W—Memory in Film
EN 228—Graphic Narratives and Comic Books
EN 363—The Modernist Imagination
EN 375*—Critical Digital Studies

RACE, GENDER, DISABILITY

EN 221—Introduction to Asian American Literature
EN 229—Disability Aesthetics
EN 248W—The Brontës

AMERICAN LITERATURE

EN 221—Introduction to Asian American Literature
EN 228—American Life Writing
EN 228—Graphic Narratives and Comic Books
EN 322P—Bad Melville

BRITISH AND IRISH LITERATURE

EN 225W—Introduction to Shakespeare
EN 229—Shakespeare: Comedy and Tragedy
EN 248W—The Brontës
EN 328R—Ulysses
EN 362R—Rise of the Novel

LITERARY HISTORY

Early Period

EN 230—The Bible as Literature
EN 225W—Introduction to Shakespeare
EN 229—Shakespeare: Comedy and Tragedy
EN 347—Seventeenth-Century Poetry

Middle Period

EN 248W—The Brontës
EN 322P—Bad Melville
EN 362R—Rise of the Novel

Late Period

EN 228—Graphic Narratives and Comic Books
EN 328R—Ulysses
EN 363—The Modernist Imagination
EN 363W—Confessional Poetry
EN 377P—Poetry of Witness

CREATIVE WRITING

EN 280—Introduction to Poetry Writing
EN 281—Introduction to Fiction Writing
EN 380—Fiction Workshop
EN 378—Nonfiction Workshop
EN 377P—Poetry of Witness

WRITING

EN 225W—Introduction to Shakespeare
EN 228—American Life Writing
EN 229W—Memory in Film
EN 248W—The Brontës
EN 303H—Peer Tutoring Project
EN 280—Introduction to Poetry Writing
EN 281—Introduction to Fiction Writing
EN 363W—Confessional Poetry
EN 380—Fiction Workshop
EN 378—Nonfiction Workshop
EN 377P—Poetry of Witness

* For seniors only

EN 103
4 credits

WRITING SEMINAR I

The Department

Designed to be accessible to a wide range of students, this course uses a variety of real-world topics and text types as students build audience-based writing skills for effective communication and persuasion. Students will learn reliable strategies to gain confidence and develop an academic voice in a supportive community of writers, with special emphasis on making effective grammatical and stylistic choices. Along with writing skills, the course supports critical thinking, critical reading, and organizational skills that translate to other courses.

Students with an Expository Writing Placement of 103 must complete EN 103 by the end of their first year. Afterwards, they have to complete EN 105 to fulfill the Foundation Requirement by the end of sophomore year.

Section 01
MWF 10:10-11:05

T. Niles

Section 02
WF 8:40-10:00

A. Suresh

Section 03
WF 10:10-11:30

A. Suresh

Section 04
WF 12:20-1:40

A. Suresh

EN 105
4 credits
See Sections Below

WRITING SEMINAR II

The Department

In this seminar, students will gain experience in writing analytical essays informed by critical reading and careful reasoning. Special attention is given to developing ideas, writing from sources, organizing material, and revising drafts. The class will also focus on grammar, style, and formal conventions of writing. Peer critique sessions and workshops give students a chance to respond to their classmates' work. Weekly informal writing complements assignments of longer finished papers. This course fulfills the all-college Foundation Requirement in Expository Writing. Each section of 105 is focused on a particular topic or theme.

Student with an Expository Writing Placement of 105 may enroll in a section of EN 105, EN 110: Introduction to Literary Studies, or a department-based writing-intensive course listed in Banner.

EN 105 01
TTh 12:40-2:00

UTOPIA/DYSTOPIA

N. Junkerman

When we look ahead, our imaginations often seem to run in two directions—either toward the hope of future happiness or the fear of future despair. In this course, we'll look at how these two impulses have produced visions of utopia and dystopia in literature, film, political speech, and journalism. We will examine hopeful and fearful visions of human society across several centuries, and challenge ourselves to ask big questions about the relationship between imagination and social reality. Above all, we will write and talk about writing-in essays, short assignments, peer review sessions—and we will explore how writing both reflects and shapes our dreams and nightmares. Possible assigned works include novels by Ursula Le Guin, Octavia Butler, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman and films like *Blade Runner*, *Snowpiercer*, and *Children of Men*.

EN 105 02
MWF 1:25-2:20

WRITING GENDER

R. McAdams

Whether or not we always realize it, gender constantly, quietly shapes our experiences—from determining which bathroom we use at a gas station, to framing others' responses if we start to cry in public, to influencing the way we speak and write. But what is gender, actually? How is it constructed and maintained? In this writing seminar, we will analyze the way that biological and social definitions of gender compete with and inform each other, as well as the way that gender identities and expressions have varied historically and culturally. We will read and write about practices like drag and cross-dressing that play with normative expectations, as well as about nonbinary and transgender identities that reject the reduction of gender to the biological sex

assigned on a birth certificate. Above all, we will write and talk about writing—in essays, short assignments, and peer review sessions—and we will explore how writing reflects gender and shapes our understanding of what gender is.

EN 105 03
TTh 11:10-12:30

WRITING OUTER SPACE

M. Greaves

Using outer space as our material, this writing seminar will introduce you to the conventions of college writing. We will consider representations of outer space in a range of genres and media, including poetry, fiction, film, TV, and the visual arts. Discussion and writing topics will range from black holes to Hubble space photography. We will spend several of our class sessions exploring the Tang exhibition *Parallax: Framing the Cosmos*, which will provide you with material for at least one of your papers. In short weekly writing assignments, a sequence of longer papers, and a presentation, you will sharpen your writing skills by investigating the scientific, political, personal, and aesthetic meanings we find in the cosmos.

EN 105 04
TTh 3:40-5:00

HAPPY

M. Melito

From the Declaration of Independence to the #100daysofhappiness project, one could argue that Americans are obsessed with the pursuit of happiness. But what are we really seeking? What lengths are we willing to go to find happiness? How do factors like income, education, relationship status, and technology inform our perceptions? Can we bottle happiness? Buy happiness? Be coached into happiness? What does it mean to be truly happy? And what happens when you are not? In this writing seminar, we will examine these questions and our own cultural and personal biases through reading, writing, and discussion. We will examine texts from philosophers, psychologists, film-makers, and essayists as we consider the question of what it means to be happy. Students will prepare weekly responses, formal essays, and a research project, in addition to participating in peer workshops and teacher conferences.

EN 105 05
MWF 11:15-12:10

UNDER THE INFLUENCE

T. Niles

Argument seems inescapable. Adherence to its rituals as a central cultural practice of Western higher education can determine the success of an essay or presentation, which is perhaps enough to motivate its study. But more compelling reasons for examination may come from the arguments that surround us in newspapers, advertisements, and everyday political discourse. Certainly, responsible citizens and consumers ought to critically examine attempts to influence their lives, gain their money, or win their allegiance. The skills we learn will help us understand the structure and strategy of arguments. Hopefully, what we learn will be relevant to our lives inside and outside of the academic sphere. In this writing course, we will explore some fundamental principles of argument (using real-life examples when possible) and examine rhetorical choices in a variety of situations. We will also explore how professionals confront various psychological, social, linguistic, and ethical issues related to persuasion. All this will prepare us to create a final project designed to enhance public discourse and decision-making—i.e., a useful text designed for a real-world audience.

EN 105 07
TTh 9:40-11:00

THE COST OF COLLEGE

E. Sperry

EN 105 08
TTh 11:10-12:30

THE COST OF COLLEGE

E. Sperry

You've paid your deposit, bought a sweatshirt, and moved into your dorm—now what? The American higher education system promises much to its students: an education, a career, an intellectual community. But what does it actually deliver? In this class, we'll explore the promises of higher education, asking what college can—and should—provide. What's the value of a liberal arts education? How has college functioned as a tool of political and social change? What might the future of higher education look like in the wake of COVID? Central to these questions will be the practice of writing: we'll think about writing as a method of inquiry central to the work of education. This class will focus on developing strong analytical skills, effective drafting and revising techniques, and clear individual writing voices in conversation with our readings and one another.

EN 105 09
TTh 9:40-11:00

THE WITCH

J. Fawcett

EN 105 10
TTh 2:10-3:30

THE WITCH

J. Fawcett

Hag, crone, prostitute, midwife, monster. Other. Beyond the pointy hat and the broomstick, what is a witch? Witches have been around for centuries. Today they may range from kitschy Halloween staples to a fearsome symbol of power, but some things haven't changed: at the root is an iconic female figure who challenges misogyny. This course will explore the place of witches in history and popular culture, focusing on how they connect to female bodies, knowledge, and feminism. The goal of the class is to develop a rigorous process for creating written work that is clear, thought-provoking, and elegant. Coursework includes three short papers and three polished essays developed through multiple drafts, peer critique, and individual conferences.

EN 105 11
MWF 8:00-8:55

WRITING AS RADICAL EMPATHY

O. Dunn

EN 105 12
MWF 9:05-10:00

WRITING AS RADICAL EMPATHY

O. Dunn

EN 105 13
MWF 11:15-12:10

WRITING AS RADICAL EMPATHY

O. Dunn

"Language is far from being a closed, self-contained system, and words are deeply intertwined with our ways of engaging with the world. Language in this sense is more like an interface rather than a firewall, an array of devices that connects us to the things that matter to us," says the scholar Rita Felski. Good writing can give the reader an emotional experience, a chance to interact with another person's mind and heart. But how does it do this? How does language convey emotion? How does a writer make us see what they see, feel what they feel? In this class, we'll move outside of our comfort zone—away from simply reading works we might enjoy because they are "relatable." We'll explore what boundaries writing can cross. We'll discuss how writing can create change in the world. We'll look at work from writers and artists who actively work to make us see things their way, from poets to activists to visual artists. We'll pay special attention to how each artist crafts their work; using these same tools, you'll create powerful writing of your own. By the end of the semester, after drafting and revision, you'll have a portfolio of polished writing.

EN 105 14
TTh 12:40-2:00

BACKSTORIES

L. Soderlind

EN 105 17
TTh 2:10-3:30

BACKSTORIES

L. Soderlind

How do you suppose your lights come on so reliably? It starts long before the switch is flipped. Many of the simple functions and customs of our world are vastly more complicated than we realize. This course in expository writing invites students to think about major structures in our lives that we take as givens, and to unravel their webbed backstories. The same tangle of environmental, political, social, and economic controversies that precedes power to bulb underlies many critical functions we rely on in the physical world and also precedes many "norms" in our culture. The two-day weekend workers enjoy today, for example, was not preordained; it exists because the labor movement fought for it. By examining cause-effect chains and critical choices made along the way, we'll learn more about how the world works—and sometimes doesn't. Students will develop arguments for ways to improve these systems and, because a curious mind is essential to good writing, will foster their own interest in discovering how all kinds of things work.

EN 105 15
MWF 8:00-8:55

FOOD FIGHTS

C. Jorgensen

Everyone has a favorite food, and most have at least one food they won't touch. But food is about more than taste: it references memory, community, language, and culture. Sometimes that yields nostalgia; sometimes it produces conflict. In this class, we will examine food writing on a number of topics: What pleasure lies in food memory? How does food intersect with economics,

language, social justice, history, and race? Who has the right to claim—and to profit from—the food of a particular culture? In the end, what should we eat—both for our own sake and for the sake of the planet?

Our writing projects will range from nonfiction narrative to researched argument; our readings will range from memoir to persuasive text. You will develop your ability to analyze food writing, and you will learn how to enter into the debate using the tools of rhetoric. These tools include various types of appeals as well as strategies for invention (coming up with something to say), arrangement (organizing your thoughts), and style (writing clear, graceful, persuasive prose). There will be frequent formal and informal writing, peer review, revision exercises, and small-group workshopping.

EN 105 16
WF 8:40-10:00

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

B. Pashley

“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.” These words from Gandhi inspire this writing seminar where we will examine what it means to be a part of a community. What types of communities exist? Are there inherent responsibilities that people have as members of communities? And who truly benefits from volunteerism and community service? Participating in a volunteer experience that resonates with you will be the foundation for much of your writing in our class. Using this experience and course readings, you will create several original compositions using a formal writing process. Additionally, you will produce informal writing, criticize each other's writings, debate controversial topics, and improve your presentation skills, all while participating in something larger than yourself: a community of writers. At the conclusion of this class, you can expect a more sophisticated sense of yourself as a writer and a more refined sense of self and community. You'll really understand what's in it for you.

EN 105 18
TTh 3:40-5:00

SOWING THE SEEDS OF CHANGE

M. Marx

A parable of Jesus. The climate crisis. Race relations. A deteriorating social order. Are these elements of a dystopian vision or parts of our present existence? Regardless of our perspectives, they are the seeds that Octavia Butler plants in her classic work of science fiction and brings to fruition in *The Parable of the Sower* (1993), this year's summer reading. In this seminar, we will write to learn about the underlying meaning and artistry of Butler's novel as we learn to craft prose that responds to college standards and expectations. As we undertake a critical examination of protagonist Lauren Olamina's belief in change, we will also explore how—through informal and formal writing assignments and classroom activities—we can change our attitudes toward writing. Thoughtful attention to discovery, drafting, critiquing, and revision may ultimately change the papers we produce for the better.

EN 105 18
MW 2:30-3:50

LITERATURE OF WITNESS

H. Hussaini

Why do we feel the need and responsibility to document crises? How do we document it? In this course, students will read writers who have lived through and written about crises in their times: police brutality, terrorism, government surveillance, ecological crises, and pandemics. We will discuss the ways global crises have been written about in multiple genres and write our accounts of recent crises. By trying to define together what “literature of witness” means, we will develop an understanding of writing as a lens through which one understands contemporary history. Authors we will read include Jasmyn Ward, Tadeusz Borowski, Ahmad Saadawi, Keum Suk Gendry-Kim, Mahmoud Darwish, and Layli Long Soldier.

EN 105H
4 credits

WRITING SEMINAR II: HONORS SECTIONS

The Department

The honors sections of EN 105 offer highly motivated students with strong verbal skills the opportunity to refine their ability to analyze sophisticated ideas, to hone their rhetorical strategies, and to develop cogent arguments. Toward these goals, students write and revise essays drawing upon a variety of challenging readings and critique each other's work for depth and complexity of thought, logic of supporting evidence, and subtleties of style. Students must have a placement of EN 105H to enroll in the class.

Student with an Expository Writing Placement of 105H may enroll in a section of EN 105H, EN 105: Writing Seminar II, EN 110: Introduction to Literary Studies, or a department-based writing-intensive course listed in Banner.

EN 105H 01
MW 2:30-3:50

WRITING ON DEMAND

L. Hall

When the essayist Joan Didion was in her twenties, she wrote editorial copy for *Vogue* magazine on a wide range of subjects. In her forties, she noted that it is “easy to make light of this kind of ‘writing,’ [but] I do not make light of it at all: it was at *Vogue* that I learned a kind of ease with words... a way of regarding words not as mirrors of my own inadequacy but as tools, toys, weapons to be deployed strategically on a page.” Inspired by Didion’s on-the-job apprenticeship, this course will ask you to undertake the work of a professional copywriter or ghostwriter. What might you be asked to compose? The introduction to the documentary “extras” for a television series. The “Our Story” blurb for the website of a local restaurant. A capsule biography for a mayoral candidate. A C.E.O.’s response to a request from *Forbes*: “Tell us about the biggest mistake you ever made as a leader.” The instructor will furnish you with material; with her guidance, you will shape it into publishable or, as the case may be, presentable prose. Expect frequent short assignments, most of them graded.

EN 105H 02
MW 10:10-11:30

WRITING AS RELATIONSHIP

M. Wolff

“We ourselves are chambers *filled* with voices,” writes author Tony Hoagland, “and awake or asleep, we hear them. Just as they have cultural power, they have artistic potential.” In this writing seminar, we study how literary essayists orchestrate their own multiple voices, the voices of others, and experience to create powerful and artful essays. We’ll read and discuss essays of reflection, argument, satire, portraiture, and criticism. How do great writers make us feel their emotions or consider their perspective? How do they stir our connection to a person or idea we may not “relate” to? How can we learn to *love a sentence*, and why does that matter? How can writers use imagery, rhetorical rhythm, registers of speech, metaphors, description, speculations, transitions, and evidence to reach other people across gaps of difference? How may writing help us to get through the difficult days or events? Students share close-reading, discussion, writing exercises, and workshop conversations about essay drafts. Each student develops a clear writing style of their own and a relationship with the subjects they explore. Required: several written exercises, three essays (draft and revisions), readings, discussion, peer reviews.

EN 110
4 credits

INTRODUCTION TO LITERARY STUDIES

The Department

This course introduces students to the practice of literary studies, with a particular emphasis on the skills involved in close reading. The course aims to foster a way of thinking critically and with sophistication about language, texts, and literary production. We will ask such questions as how and why we read, what it means to read as students of literature, what writing can teach us about reading, and what reading can teach us about writing. The goal overall is to make the words on the page thrillingly rich and complicated, while also recognizing the ways in which those words have been informed by their social, political, aesthetic, psychological, and religious contexts. This course is writing-intensive and will include some attention to critical perspective and appropriate research skills. Students with an EW placement of EN 105 or EN 105H may enroll in EN 110.

Fulfills the all-college Foundation Requirement in expository writing; prospective English majors are encouraged to take EN 110 prior to enrolling in 200-level courses.

EN 110 01
TTh 9:40-11:00

TEXTS AND BODIES

P. Benzon

What can literature tell us about the body? What possibilities does it present for understanding the body—physically, socially, historically, and politically? How do authors working in various genres use language to represent bodies, tell their stories, and imagine them in new ways?

In this course, we’ll ask these and other questions as we study a range of literary and cultural texts across history and genre. Paying careful attention to literary form and practices of close reading, we’ll explore how authors use language to think about embodiment in relation to issues of identity, power, politics, time, history, violence, the supernatural, and more. Possible texts may include poetry by William Shakespeare, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Sylvia Plath, and Tracy K. Smith; fiction by Mary Shelley, Nella Larsen, Carmen Maria Machado, and Toni Morrison; drama by Tony Kushner and Suzan-Lori Parks; and film by Barry Jenkins and Jordan Peele.

EN 110 02
TTh 3:40-5:00

LITERATURE AND GRIEF

J. Cermatori

Loss, sorrow, and the challenges of living with them have unfortunately become pervasive today, part of everyday life in the modern world. This course seeks to ask: how has literature — in its various historical contexts and forms — responded to the enduring problem of grief? How does mourning take shape in literary works, and how might literature help us navigate the grievousness of our present moment, marked as it is by public health crises, vanishing political horizons, and planetary climate change? Together, we will encounter works from a range of genres and time periods (poetry, plays, prose fiction, essays) that take up the pain of loss and what Elizabeth Bishop once called “the art of losing.” We will consider the psychological and political meanings of grief in literature, along with the way mournfulness, healing, and survival have been intertwined across generations of literary history. Readings will include works by Emily Dickinson, Gwendolyn Brooks, William Shakespeare, Caryl Churchill, Thornton Wilder, Kazuo Ishiguro, and others.

EN 110 03
TTh 11:10-12:30

TEMPTATION

C. Golden

A motif dating from the Bible and extending across centuries and genres of British and American literature. Our section of EN 110 will begin with Jane Austen’s Regency novel, *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) with Mr. Darcy’s refusal to dance with Elizabeth Bennet, who is “tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt me” (emphasis added). We will move back in time to the temptation scene in the Garden of Eden and onward to Christopher Marlowe’s play *Dr. Faustus* (1616) where we witness the temptation of the soul for unlimited knowledge. William Blake’s *Songs of Experience* (1794) and Christina Rossetti’s *The Goblin Market* (1862) present us with poems about temptation and succumbing to forbidden fruit. Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s groundbreaking feminist short story “The Yellow Wall-Paper” (1892) approaches temptation differently—the nameless narrator attempts to read and decipher the patterns of the ubiquitous wallpaper. Analyzing these tempting texts across genres and reading scholarly introductions, literary criticism, and endnotes, students will write four essays and practice textual annotation through COVE (the Collaborative Organization for Virtual Education). Underlying our course are foundational questions to literary studies: What constitutes textual evidence? How is a text informed by its social, political, aesthetic, psychological, and religious contexts? In what ways does literary criticism influence our reading of a literary work? In this writing-intensive course, students will read critically, write analytically, revise thoughtfully, and research deeply to develop their voices as writers.

EN 110 04
MW 2:30-3:50

BODIES OF LITERATURE

S. Mintz

In this section of EN 110, we’ll explore the myriad ways in which literature has represented the human body—including such hybrid extensions of bodies as companion animals and prosthetic technologies. Our goal will be to understand why—and how—embodiment matters: to characters, to plots and narrative structures, to motifs, themes, and symbolism. How has representation of the body changed over time? What’s the difference between a realistic and a metaphorical use of bodily features? What role do disability, disfigurement, and disease play in literary treatments of the human “condition”? And how do the specific rules and possibilities of literary form bring bodies into being? Students will write often and be expected to contribute to conversation.

GN 151A
M 10:10-11:05
1 credit

COLLOQUIUM ON LITERARY RESEARCH METHODS

M. Greaves

In this course, faculty from the Skidmore English department will lead weekly discussions on their recent research projects and on the methods that are central to their interests and subfields in literary studies. These conversations will focus on the practical, theoretical, and empirical aspects of scholarly work. They aim to serve as an introduction to key theories and research methodologies in literary studies, as well as help you develop pathways into literary analysis that are favorable to your interests. Along the way, faculty will discuss their personal and professional trajectories, inviting you to imagine the many professional avenues that Skidmore English majors can pursue. (1 Credit. S/U only.)

This is a new course, open to students of all years but especially recommended to new majors or those considering majoring in English. A terrific course to take alongside EN 110.

200 – LEVEL COURSES

EN 211 01
TTh 3:40-5:00
3 credits

FICTION

R. Boyers

EN 211 is an introduction to the art of fiction, with discussions focused on the broadest possible range of pertinent issues. What is the difference between a relatively straightforward “realist” novel and a novel clearly intended to deviate from the conventions of realism? What makes a book a feminist novel? Why would a writer begin a story by telling us immediately what is going to happen in the narrative and then gradually work “backwards” through the story line in patient, vivid detail? What prompted a writer to compose a fiction in the first person, from the point of view of a single character, rather than telling it from an omniscient point of view, where it is possible to delve into the thoughts and feelings of all of the characters? Do we have a special interest in fiction with political intentions? Can we be attracted by stories that challenge rather than confirm our own view of things?

The course will introduce students to many different kinds of short stories by writers recent and not so recent, writers as diverse as Kafka, Melville, Tolstoy, Ralph Ellison, Bharati Mukherjee, Jamaica Kincaid, Alice Munro, James Baldwin, and others. It will also devote some weeks to novels by Danzy Senna (*New People*), Claire Messud (*The Woman Upstairs*), and JM Coetzee (*Disgrace*).

Students will write two 1500-word papers and take both a mid-term and final exam.

RECOMMENDED PREPARATION FOR ADVANCED COURSES IN FICTION
COUNTS AS A “FORMS OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE” COURSE

EN 213 01
MW 2:30-3:50
3 credits

POETRY

E. Sperry

“‘Poem’ comes from the Greek *poiōma*, meaning a ‘thing made,’” Mark Yakich writes, “and a poet is defined in ancient terms as ‘a maker of things.’ So if a poem is a thing made, what kind of thing is it?” This class will attempt to answer that very question: what sort of thing is a poem? Looking at examples from throughout English and American traditions, we’ll explore what defines poetry as a literary category. What are the formal dimensions of poetry—its lines, meters, lengths, shapes? How does a poem imagine its relationship with its audience? With the world around itself? Class will center around detailed discussion of the texts, with several short writing assignments and a final project.

RECOMMENDED PREPARATION FOR ADVANCED COURSES IN POETRY
COUNTS AS A “FORMS OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE” COURSE

EN 221 01
MWF 11:15-12:10
3 credits

INTRODUCTION TO ASIAN AMERICAN LITERATURE

TBA

A survey of major authors, works, and topics in Asian American literature and culture. The course aims to provide a sense of the historical conditions out of which various forms of Asian American writing and culture have emerged and changed over time. As a literature course, the class will focus on textual analysis and close reading on how specific texts give representational shape to the social and historical experiences that they depict. Readings consist chiefly of works that have canonical status within the field of Asian American literary studies but also include works that suggest new directions in the field. With regard to genre, these readings will include short stories, novels, memoir, autobiography, poetry, and film.

COUNTS AS A LATE PERIOD HISTORY REQUIREMENT
COUNTS AS A “LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN CONTEXT” COURSE
COUNTS AS A CULTURAL DIVERSITY COURSE
COUNTS TOWARD ASIAN STUDIES MAJOR
COUNTS FOR GENDER STUDIES CREDIT

EN 225W 01
TTh 3:40-5:00
4 credits

INTRODUCTION TO SHAKESPEARE

A. Bozio

This course provides an introduction to Shakespeare through the lens of premodern critical race studies (PCRS). PCRS is a scholarly movement that investigates how race was constructed in the premodern era, how it intersects with gender, sexuality, class, and disability, and how those intersections continue to inform the way that we think about race in the twenty-first century. In this course, we'll use PCRS as a framework for studying Shakespeare's plays and their larger cultural effects—within the early modern period and beyond. Our readings will include *Titus Andronicus*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *As You Like It*, *Henry V*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*, as well as essays by leading practitioners of PCRS to help us think more critically and capaciously about Shakespeare's representation of race.

COUNTS AS AN EARLY PERIOD HISTORY REQUIREMENT
COUNTS AS A "LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN CONTEXT" COURSE
COUNTS AS THE DRAMATIC LITERATURE REQUIREMENT WITHIN THEATER MAJOR

EN 228 01
TTh 11:10-12:30
3 credits

GRAPHIC NARRATIVES AND COMIC BOOKS

P. Benzon

In recent years, the genre of the graphic narrative has seen an explosion in creative, provocative literary work. What has in the past been both feared as a threat to "legitimate" culture and dismissed as a cheap diversion for kids is now widely considered a serious art form—a place for literary innovation and political critique. Both scholars and casual readers alike have gravitated towards this burgeoning field as an increasingly important form of literature in our increasingly visual culture.

In this course, we will explore a range of major graphic narratives from the past thirty years, studying how authors intertwine text and image on the page in ways that create new approaches to storytelling, new perspectives on social and cultural issues, and new ways of reading. Paying close attention to relations between the visual and the textual, we'll consider how authors explore questions of power and politics, memory and trauma, identity and embodiment, and time and space in unique ways through this form. Readings will include texts by Scott McCloud, Alan Moore, Ta-Nehisi Coates, Gene Luen Yang, Alison Bechdel, Carmen Maria Machado, Mat Johnson, and others.

COUNTS AS A LATE PERIOD HISTORY REQUIREMENT
COUNTS AS A "FORMS OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE" COURSE
COUNTS TOWARD THE MEDIA AND FILM STUDIES MINOR

EN 228 02
TTh 9:40-11:00
3 credits

AMERICAN LIFE WRITING

N. Junkerman

In this class, we will study some of the rich and varied texts that Americans have written about their lives. In sources including poems, letters, diaries, and autobiographies, we will encounter traces of individual stories that can seem by turns intimately familiar and deeply mysterious. The course will begin with some general consideration of the practice of writing about one's own life. From there we will examine the ways in which autobiographical texts have allowed Americans to speak truth to power, to confess their sins, to document atrocities, and to describe the intimate and ordinary details of their lives. In addition to reading many examples of life writing, students will experiment intermittently with writing about their own lives.

COUNTS AS A "FORMS OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE" COURSE

EN 229 01
M 6:30-9:30
3 credits

SHAKESPEARE: COMEDY AND TRAGEDY

M. Conner

This class constitutes an immersion in the comedies and tragedies of William Shakespeare. We will examine eight of Shakespeare's most prominent plays, engaging them as both literary works and dramatic performances. Our investigations will include such major issues as the religious and philosophical questions of the plays; the inter-weavings of gender, class, and power presented in them; and the historical, political, and cultural concepts that the plays engage. We will examine Shakespeare's two main genres of tragedy and comedy, seeking to understand the implications and worldviews of each form. In addition, we will study the tools of stagecraft and performance available to Shakespeare, to understand how the plays *dramatize*—that is, present

in a dynamic and living form—the issues and questions within their words, and we will attend closely to Shakespeare’s uses of language and poetic form. Finally, we’ll consider how these plays, now over four centuries old, speak to us in powerful ways in our own historical moment. If, as Shakespeare wrote, “all the world’s a stage, and all the men and women merely players,” how do we construct ourselves and our beliefs in the complex world of 2022?

COUNTS AS AN EARLY PERIOD HISTORY REQUIREMENT

COUNTS AS A “LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN CONTEXT” COURSE

COUNTS AS THE DRAMATIC LITERATURE REQUIREMENT WITHIN THEATER MAJOR

EN 229 02

DISABILITY AESTHETICS

S. Mintz

WF 12:20-1:40

3 credits

An introduction to disability in relation to beauty, art, imagination, and emotion. We will think about how disability creates such art forms as painting, dance, poetry, film, graphic memoir, and other textualities—not as an ugliness that must be repaired but as the impulse and defining feature of work that aims to change minds, inspire feeling, and delight the senses. Course materials will be comprised primarily of art created by people with disabilities, and our conversations will focus on how disability might revise how we think about gracefulness, beauty and value, character and plot, the relationship between art and society, and the meaning of emotion. Students will write short papers and produce a final project that aligns with their own artistic intentions.

COUNTS AS A LATE PERIOD HISTORY REQUIREMENT

COUNTS AS A “LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN CONTEXT” COURSE

EN 229W 01

MEMORY IN FILM

M. Wolff

TTh 11:10-12:30

4 credits

“I will have spent my life trying to understand the function of remembering,” renowned filmmaker Chris Marker wrote in 1983, “which is not the opposite of forgetting, but rather, its lining.” In this seminar, we study full-length films about the functions of remembering and of forgetting. How can the effects of disease, dreams, faith in the afterlife, PTSD, guilt, old age, romantic derangement, and mourning be replicated in film image and narrative? How do memory-films enable ethical thinking across spaces of difference? What is the purpose of prosthetic memory in cinema? How do films from different eras and cultures disrupt, or reinvent, processes and mechanisms of remembering? What directorial visions rebuff and confront historical amnesia? How do the advances of digital film affect image meanings? Film-maker interviews and diaries, chapters on film studies, and psychoanalytic theory are contextual readings. Discussion seminar with a writing emphasis. Three major essays, and one final project or weekly film diary required. Film titles may include *After Life*, *Get Out*, *Caché*, *Watermelon Woman*, *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, *Chocolat*, *45 Years*, *Waltz with Bashir*, *Parallel Mothers*, *Arrival*, *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, *Certified Copy*, *The Father*, or others.

COUNTS AS A LATE PERIOD HISTORY REQUIREMENT

COUNTS AS A “LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN CONTEXT” COURSE

COUNTS TOWARD MEDIA AND FILM STUDIES MINOR

EN 230 01

BIBLE AS LITERATURE

M. Marx

TTh 12:40-2:00

3 credits

Milton’s *Paradise Lost*. Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*. John Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath*. Octavia E. Butler’s *The Parable of the Sower*. Toni Morrison’s *Song of Solomon*. Bob Marley’s “The Rivers of Babylon.” What could such a disparate list have in common? Each of them in their distinct uses and unique styles is informed by the Bible. If we read these books without the knowledge of the Bible, we lose an important dimension of the texts. But the Bible is also a work of literature in its own right, worthy of study as a literary text. This course provides students with an introduction to the Bible as literature, concentrating on careful readings of select books from the Old Testament and the New Testament. We will supplement our study with examinations of translations of the Bible, methods of Biblical criticism, the history of the Bible, and, of course, references to English language literatures. Course work includes formal papers, a class blog, oral presentations, and a final examination.

COUNTS AS AN EARLY PERIOD HISTORY REQUIREMENT

COUNTS AS A “LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN CONTEXT” COURSE

COUNTS TOWARD RELIGIOUS STUDIES MAJOR

EN 237 01
MWF 11:15-12:10
3 credits

POSTCOLONIAL LITERATURE

H. Hussaini

This course is an introduction to postcolonial literature and theory with a focus on allegorical writing. Allegory is a symbolic narrative whose details represent moral and political truths outside the story and it is a common feature of postcolonial writing. We will study the deployment of allegory as a literary device in both colonial and postcolonial texts and examine the ways these writings oppose each other's ideological motives. Central to our discussion will be two French-language novels in translation, by an Algerian-born and French-born author, respectively, that imagine the takeover of world governments by fundamentalist Islamist groups: Tahar Djaout's *The Last Summer of Reason* (1993) and Michel Houellebecq's *Submission* (2015). To help us understand the lexicon of postcolonial thought, we will read excerpts from Edward Said's *Orientalism* and Gayatri Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?" as well as selected literary theory from the Near East in translation.

COUNTS AS A LATE PERIOD HISTORY REQUIREMENT
COUNTS AS A "LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN CONTEXT" COURSE
COUNTS AS A GLOBAL CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES COURSE
COUNTS FOR GENDER STUDIES CREDIT

EN 248W
TTh 2:10-3:30
4 credits

THE BRONTËS

C. Golden

A madwoman in the attic, impassioned love, and a mysterious/abusive past. Such sensational themes may seem ripped from today's social media, but they are the defining elements of the novels of the Brontë sisters. Beginning with biography, we will adopt new historicist and gender studies approaches to study arguably the greatest English literary family of the nineteenth century. Readings include Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), and Anne Brontë's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1848) as well as poetry by the sisters and their brother, Branwell. We will distinguish between Brontëan myths and biographical truths and question why their works are read as a literary canon and their lives are retold collectively. For this writing-intensive course, students will situate the Brontës in their historical moment, read critically, research deeply, write analytically, develop visual literacy skills, and participate actively. Coursework will include papers, presentations, annotation of the sisters' novels through COVE (Collaborative Organization for Virtual Education), and the creation of a virtual COVE class gallery on the life and work of the Brontë sisters.

COUNTS AS A MIDDLE PERIOD HISTORY REQUIREMENT
COUNTS AS A "LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN CONTEXT" COURSE
COUNTS FOR GENDER STUDIES CREDIT

INTRODUCTORY WORKSHOPS

EN 281 01
TTh 12:40-2:00
4 credits

INTRODUCTION TO FICTION WRITING

A. Bernard

Weekly reading and writing exercises will focus on many fiction basics, such as characterization, point of view, plot, and structure. Discussion and workshop format will proceed in an atmosphere of good humor and good will. Readings will be distributed; the only required text for purchase will be James Woods's *How Fiction Works*.

CAN COUNT AS PREREQ FOR UPPER-LEVEL WORKSHOPS
COUNTS AS A "FORMS OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE" COURSE
FULFILLS COLLEGE ARTS REQUIREMENT
COUNTS TOWARD CREATIVE WRITING MINOR

EN 281 02
TTh 2:10-3:30
4 credits

INTRODUCTION TO FICTION WRITING

C. Baker

In this introductory course students will explore the fundamental apparatus of prose narratives by reading a variety of stories, with an eye toward understanding their construction, and writing their own. The course will cover the technical components of

fiction, including characterization, structure, style, and setting. It will also begin to weigh the aesthetic, social, and intellectual motives of meaning-making that inform all stories, and story-telling, from fiction to history to science to narratives of self.

Students will be expected to complete weekly writing assignments, of increasing sophistication, and produce a final story of 10-12 pages.

CAN COUNT AS PREREQ FOR UPPER-LEVEL WORKSHOPS
COUNTS AS A “FORMS OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE” COURSE
FULFILLS COLLEGE ARTS REQUIREMENT
COUNTS TOWARD CREATIVE WRITING MINOR

EN 282 01	INTRODUCTION TO POETRY WRITING	A. Bernard
WF 10:10-11:30		
4 credits		

Weekly reading and writing exercises will focus on many poetry basics, such as mode, voice, and structure. Discussion and workshop format will proceed in an atmosphere of good humor and good will. Readings will be distributed; the only required text for purchase will be *The Making of a Poem* by Eavan Boland and Mark Strand.

CAN COUNT AS PREREQ FOR UPPER-LEVEL WORKSHOPS
COUNTS AS A “FORMS OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE” COURSE
FULFILLS COLLEGE ARTS REQUIREMENT
COUNTS TOWARD CREATIVE WRITING MINOR

300 – LEVEL COURSES

EN 303H 01	PEER TUTORING PROJECT	C. Jorgensen
MWF 9:05-10:00		
4 credits		

“ . . it is not the English language that hurts me,” bell hooks says, “but what the oppressors do with it, how they shape it to become a territory that limits and defines, how they make it a weapon that can shame, humiliate, colonize” (“Teaching New Worlds / New Words”). hooks then quotes Adrienne Rich: “This is the oppressor’s language yet I need it to talk to you.” Justice-focused teaching and tutoring of English require thoughtfulness. In EN 303H, Peer Tutoring Project, we learn a toolbox of strategies for tutoring, including ways to structure sessions and respond to tutees’ expressed concerns. We learn Standard Academic English, even as we acknowledge its racist and ableist foundations, and consider ways to negotiate the meanings and demands of “academic writing.”

Much of the course is devoted to experiential learning, first through shadowing experienced tutors and then through independently tutoring in the Writing Center. In our class meetings, we will consider the roles of writing centers; strategies for effective tutoring sessions, including techniques for supporting student writers whose first language is not English; the problematic position of Standard Written English; approaches to papers from various disciplines; and methods for explaining grammatical and punctuation guidelines. Some class sessions will be small-group meetings to assess progress, to debrief, and to plan. Coursework involves reading and discussion in Writing Center theory and practice, short reflective papers, a research paper, and four hours a week in the Writing Center. Once students begin independently tutoring (around Week 7 of the course), they will receive work-study pay for those hours. NOTE: This course is the required preparation for tutoring in the Writing Center.

PREREQUISITE: PERMISSION OF INSTRUCTOR
FULFILLS HONORS FORUM REQUIREMENT

EN 322P 01	BAD MELVILLE	J. Parra
TTh 3:40-5:00		
4 credits		

What does it mean to evaluate something as “good” or “bad”? How and why do we use these categories to describe persons, actions, and aesthetic objects? Should we always strive to succeed—to be good, live a good life, and read good books? Why?

This course will explore the virtues of badness through the work of an artist who died a failure: Herman Melville. Over the course of the semester, we will discuss the emergence of his masterpiece, *Moby-Dick*, from relative obscurity at the time of its author's death into the pantheon of great American literature, investigating what forces made this shift possible. We will also look at a novel that many critics still consider to be Melville's worst, *Pierre, or The Ambiguities*, which was described in 1852 as "a dead failure" and "this crazy rigamarole." Others consider *Pierre* to be the author's best, most psychologically astute—and disturbing—work. If we put aside the question of success or failure, how else might we productively read a work like this? What, in other words, do we want from our literature? And how should we read for it? The class will read other examples of Melville's fiction, including "Bartleby, the Scrivener" and *Benito Cereno*, as meditations on the ethical, political, and social problems that follow from apparently "good" behavior as well as the potential for radical change that inheres in behaving badly.

COUNTS AS A MIDDLE PERIOD HISTORY REQUIREMENT

EN 328R 01
MW 2:30-3:50
4 credits

JAMES JOYCE'S ULYSSES

T. Wientzen

Warning: this class is for the hardcore literary nerd.

James Joyce's 1922 novel, *Ulysses*, is one of the most celebrated and despised novels in the English language. A major part of this novel's legacy has to do with how goddamn hard it is to read. Many "serious" readers often find that they simply cannot get beyond the opening chapters. And yet, *Ulysses* is often classed as being one of the most important novels ever written—the great work of Ireland and perhaps of the modern English-speaking world. Loosely built on the model of Homer's *Odyssey*, Joyce's novel turns the mundane events of a single day in colonial Dublin (16 June 1904) into a modern epic about empire, love, gender, urban life, the transcendent beauty of everyday life, and the "nightmare" of history.

Because *Ulysses* is an unusually challenging book, there is only one way to read it for the first time: with a dedicated community of peers and the guidance of an experienced hand. We will begin this epic journey by reading a few of Joyce's early stories, in which he introduced readers to many of the dominant questions that preoccupy *Ulysses*. Moving on to *Ulysses*, we will attempt to disentangle the political, aesthetic, and philosophical strands Joyce laboriously weaved into his novel. We will undertake this task by analyzing Joyce's distinctive understanding of his young century, one that could appear as both a moment of liberation and a waking nightmare. In so doing, we will attempt to understand how *Ulysses* became, in the eyes of many, the paradigmatic expression of a modernist sensibility.

COUNTS AS A LATE PERIOD REQUIREMENT

EN 347 01
WF 10:10-11:30
3 credits

**SPECIAL STUDIES IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY
POETRY AND PROSE: METAPHYSICAL POETRY**

S. Mintz

An intensive study of the work of several major seventeenth-century writers, each involved in some way in the radical energies that made this period so significant in the formation of modern ideas of identity, politics, and family. From the quiet devotion of George Herbert to the cunning subversions of Katherine Philips, from Donne's erotic and spiritual dramas to Milton's revolutionary zeal, we will address questions of irony and wit, love and sex, form and experimentation, the pressures of politics and religion on writing, and the symbolism of body parts and disease. If time permits, we'll briefly consider the work of contemporary poets who considered one or another of these figures their favorite writer, to explore the nature of literary correspondences. Shorter essays and a longer research paper will be required.

COUNTS AS AN EARLY PERIOD REQUIREMENT

EN 362R 01
MW 4:00-5:20
4 credits

RISE OF THE NOVEL

R. McAdams

This course will give students an overview of the development of the novel during its formative phase in eighteenth-century Britain. We will consider the relationship of the novel to economic, social, and intellectual transformations, reading influential theories of the novel's so-called "rise" during this period alongside revisionist accounts that map the messy proliferation of prose

fiction in many forms and formats. We will study the formal devices by which the novel delves into individual character depth and represents social breadth. We will look at major genres that arose in the eighteenth century and live on today—the epistolary novel, the courtship novel, the gothic novel, etc., just as we wrestle with theoretical readings about what prose fiction is and does. Authors may include Aphra Behn, Madame de la Fayette, Daniel Defoe, Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding, Frances Burney, Jane Austen, and others. The course will focus on the development of literary research skills and will culminate in a final, major research paper.

COUNTS AS A MIDDLE PERIOD REQUIREMENT

EN 363 01

POETRY 1800 TO THE PRESENT

A. Bernard

WF 12:20-1:40

3 credits

Poets create forms, and modes, that are then taken forward in time by each succeeding generation. This class begins with various “musical” forms: Coleridge and the Ballad Revival, Walt Whitman and Psalms (and verse paragraphs), Emily Dickinson and Hymns (and spirituals), Langston Hughes and Jazz (and free verse). Then it plunges into the “currents” of Modernism, Confessionalism, Political Poetry, and Post-Modernism. I am a working poet as well as a professor, so the focus at all times is on how these poems are made—assignments will include the possibility of writing poems in these forms as well as writing critical papers. An anthology will be provided to students; the only required text for purchase will be a dictionary with full etymologies.

EN 363 02

THE MODERNIST IMAGINATION

R. Boyers

TTh 12:40-2:00

3 credits

The word “modernism” no longer calls to mind a simple set of ideas. Many artists of the so-called modernist period—roughly, the period between 1920 and 1950—believed that modernist art is not about beauty or indeed about any sort of sensory gratification. But this was by no means the view of Virginia Woolf or Henri Matisse. Marcel Duchamp regarded the habit of distinguishing between good and bad taste as ridiculous. But no such animus inspired the practice of modernist writers and artists like Thomas Mann or Giorgio Morandi. Many modernists argued that art was not the place for ideas or politics, but the poet W.H. Auden saw no reason to refrain from introducing politics into his work, and ideas play a central role in a wide range of modernist novels, poems, and paintings. Some early modernist works seemed immediately interesting to their first audiences precisely because they were felt to be “too much.” Avant-garde artists and their fans loved to mock the philistine middle classes who disdained James Joyce, Picasso, and others who had challenged the assumptions upheld by *The New York Times* and other establishment publications. And yet modernism rapidly achieved the sort of widespread acceptance that no one could have predicted even a few years earlier. Modernist works challenged the notion that success in art had anything to do with proper sentiments, verisimilitude, or politically correct views. Students of modernism taught themselves to think seriously about the values to be found only in art and to avoid confusing them with values to be found elsewhere—in the bedroom, the board room, or the political arena. Today several leading writers and thinkers are revisiting modernism in a wide range of books and articles. It seems that a revival is under way, and thus it is a good time to take a look back and to ask whether modernism ought again to be the name of our desire.

This course will therefore examine a variety of works in several different genres. Among the authors, film directors, critics, and artists included in the course syllabus are Virginia Woolf, Franz Kafka, T.S. Eliot, Susan Sontag, Jackson Pollock, Georgia O’Keefe, Ingmar Bergman, Jean-luc Godard, Federico Fellini, Machado de Assis, Octavio Paz, Marianne Moore, and Thomas Mann.

Required: mid-term and final exam, two short papers or one end-of-term paper.

COUNTS AS A LATE PERIOD REQUIREMENT

EN 363W 01

CONFESSIONAL POETRY

M. Greaves

TTh 2:10-3:30

4 credits

“I myself am hell,” wrote Robert Lowell in the 1950s, confessing his mental health struggles in verse. His words are Milton’s, but the impulse felt new: Lowell and other “confessional” poets of the 1950s-1960s explored subjects formerly taboo in poetry, including depression, relationships, trauma, childrearing, and the contents of therapy sessions. In a dynamic era of the Cold War,

the Civil Rights Movement, counterculture, and the rise of color TV, a new kind of lyric poem emerged around the raw life experiences of the private self.

In this course, we will consider the confessional mode and its legacies in recent poetry. We will also explore the idea of confession in culture more broadly, from Saint Augustine's *Confessions* to the curated private confessions on social media. What made poetry, as opposed to other forms of literature and culture, the locus of confessional energy in mid-20th-century America? How have race, gender, and class impacted the writing and reception of confessional verse—which is to say, who gets or wants to be read as confessional, and to what end? We will pay particular attention to the poetry of Lowell, Sylvia Plath, John Berryman, and Anne Sexton. We will also consider how contemporary poets of color—including Ocean Vuong, Natasha Trethewey, and Ada Limón—have worked within and against the historically white confessional mode. Assignments will include several short papers, a presentation, and a research-based critical or creative project.

COUNTS AS A LATE PERIOD REQUIREMENT

EN 377P 01
W 6:30-9:30
4 credits

READING FOR WRITERS: POETRY OF WITNESS

P. Boyers

The course will focus on poetry written in times of extremity, structured around works included in Carolyn Forché's landmark anthology, *Against Forgetting: The Poetry of Witness*. The poems will be considered not primarily as historical documents or front-line reportage but as lyric utterances which can serve as blueprint and inspiration for students seeking to write with urgency and passion about their own lives and times. Each set of readings will be accompanied by a prompt for a weekly writing assignment with a formal component. Among the poets studied will be writers bearing witness to varieties of extremity, ranging all the way from war, ethnic cleansing, and the Holocaust to more intimate kinds of crisis, derangement, and dislocation. The poets include Primo Levi, Czesław Miłosz, Paul Celan, Wisława Szymborska, Anna Akhmatova, Bertholt Brecht, Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, Adam Zagajewski, Zbigniew Herbert, Yehuda Amichai, Federico Garcia Lorca, Li-Young Lee, Marina Tsvetayeva, Reinaldo Arenas, Ocean Vuong, Wole Soyneka, Gabriela Mistral, Cesare Pavese, Rita Dove, Cyrus Cassells, Kaveh Akbar, Du Fu, Amit Majmudar, Ai, Jericho Brown, and Rabindranath Tagore.

COUNTS AS A LATE PERIOD REQUIREMENT

PREREQUISITES: EN 110; ONE COURSE FROM "LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN CONTEXT"; AND EN 280, EN 281, or EN 282.
EN 377 MAY BE TAKEN TWICE WITH A DIFFERENT TOPIC.

EN 371
3 credits

INDEPENDENT STUDY

The Department

Research in English or American literature and special projects in creative writing. Independent study provides an opportunity for any student already well grounded in a special area to pursue a literary or creative writing interest that falls outside the domain of courses regularly offered by the department. The student should carefully define a term's work which complements their background, initiate the proposal with a study-sponsor, and obtain formal approval from the student's advisor and the department chair. Application to do such work in any semester should be made and approved prior to registration for that semester or, at the very latest, before the first day of classes for the term.

EN 399 A-D
1-4 credits

PROFESSIONAL INTERNSHIP IN ENGLISH

The Department

Professional experience at an advanced level for juniors and seniors with substantial academic and cocurricular experience in the major field. With faculty sponsorship and department approval, students may extend their educational experience into such areas as journalism, publishing, editing, and broadcasting. Work will be supplemented by appropriate academic assignments and jointly supervised by a representative of the employer and a faculty member of the Department.

ADVANCED WORKSHOPS

Application Process for 300-level Creative Writing Workshops (EN 378 Nonfiction Workshop, EN 379 Poetry Workshop, EN 380 Fiction Workshop): Five days prior to the first day of Registration, students must email the following information to the professor of the course you wish to enroll in: 1) a list

of previous creative writing and/or genre courses taken at Skidmore (EN 211 Fiction, EN 213 Poetry, EN 215 Drama, EN 219 Nonfiction, EN 228W Intro to Creative Writing, EN 251 Special Studies in Creative Writing, EN 280 Intro to Nonfiction Writing, EN 281 Intro to Fiction Writing, or EN 282 Intro to Poetry Writing). 2) the name and number of the course being applied for, and 3) a writing sample in the genre of the workshop to which you are applying: 5 poems, or 8-10 double-spaced pages of fiction or nonfiction. Your name should appear in the upper-right hand corner of every page. In consultation with the department's creative writing faculty, the instructor of the course will make selections, notify you of the decision, and enter Registration Overrides into the Banner system so that selected students may register. Students who are not accepted may reapply in following semesters.

EN 378 01

NONFICTION WORKSHOP

M. Wolff

WF 12:20-1:40

4 credits

In this workshop we focus on variations of style and voice that enhance accomplished essay craft. We consider speech registers, purposeful inflations and deflations of *persona*, structured tensions between dilemma and discovery, ethical inquiry, and ways that speculative prose and empirical facts co-exist in effective literary nonfiction. This workshop has a significant reading component. During the semester, students read a variety of essays that model stylistic approaches and thematic approaches to essaying, practice skills in short writing assignments, and develop a collection of three substantial essays that explore one chosen topic or theme indicative of individual sensibility. The course offers student writers a creative community in which to explore interests and concerns, and helps students to prepare for the sustained, informed work required in Advanced Projects in Nonfiction. The workshop provides in-depth instruction for all students who hope to develop their skills writing literary essays.

Requirements: Weekly readings; three essays, drafted and revised; writing exercises, at least 2-3 workshop presentations of manuscript work, attendance, participation in all workshop discussions, letters of peer response.

Recommended preparation with one of these courses: Introduction to Creative Writing, Introduction to Nonfiction, Prose Boot Camp, Nonfiction 219, comparable writing experience.

**PREREQUISITES: EN 251, 280, 281, OR 282 - PLUS PERMISSION OF INSTRUCTOR
SEE APPLICATION PROCESS ABOVE.**

EN 380 01

FICTION WORKSHOP

C. Baker

W 6:00-9:00

4 credits

An intensive workshop for committed writers. Though there will be informal discussion of published writing, our primary task will be the critiquing of student work. Attendance, class participation, and thoughtful written response to student writing are of paramount importance. Main creative requirement: two short stories of 10-12 pages each, both of which will be revised after being workshopped.

**PREREQUISITES: EN 251, 280, 281, OR 282 - PLUS PERMISSION OF INSTRUCTOR
SEE APPLICATION PROCESS ABOVE.**

SENIOR CODAS

(formerly known as Capstones)

NOTE: The Senior Coda is satisfied in most cases by a Senior Seminar (EN 375) or Advanced Projects in Writing (EN 381). (Students with appropriate preparation and faculty permission may instead choose the senior thesis or project options: EN 376, 389, 390).

SENIOR SEMINARS FOR FALL 2022

EN 375 01

CRITICAL DIGITAL STUDIES

P. Benzon

TTh 2:10-3:30

4 credits

Since its initial release almost fifteen years ago, the Apple iPhone has become arguably both the fastest-selling and the best-selling object in history. As this rapid, pervasive dissemination suggests, we are currently living through a moment in which social transformation is intimately bound up with technological transformation. The ubiquity of digital media in our daily lives raises a range of far-reaching questions: What does it mean to live, consume, create, and connect when we are always online?

How do we understand the bodies and identities on the other side of the screen? What are the stakes of agency, action, and control in a digital world?

In this course, we'll take up these and other questions as we explore how authors, filmmakers, game designers, artists, and activists reckon with the profound aesthetic, social, political, and historical transformations currently taking place around and through digital technology. We'll study key theorists of digital culture in order to consider the role that digital media plays in reshaping how we understand questions of agency, community, race, gender, sexuality, nationhood, privacy, ethics, labor, materiality, space, power, literature, and art. And we'll explore how cultural practitioners represent and respond to these issues across a range of media and genres. Key areas of focus will include the aesthetics and politics of identity and connectivity amidst always-on life, the changing nature of labor in the digital world, and the politics of identity and subjectivity within the context of big data and algorithmic surveillance. Students will pursue their own interests within our course material through extended research projects that we will workshop and revise during the latter portion of the semester. Qualifying work will earn honors.

EN 375 02

LITERATURE AND PHILOSOPHY: EXISTENTIALISM

J. Cermatori

TTh 11:10-12:30

4 credits

Does human existence have meaning, and if it doesn't, how should we live and act in the world? How should one chart one's own path when the significance of things cannot be guaranteed by any absolute values or higher power? Albert Camus once proclaimed that "The only way to deal with an unfree world is to become so absolutely free that your very existence is an act of rebellion." How is it possible to put this idea of freedom into practice? In the first half of the twentieth century, existential philosophy emerged as a response to these questions, provoking a wide-ranging discussion in art and politics alike. In this seminar, we will survey some of its ramifications in the realm of modern literature. Opening up an interdisciplinary dialogue, we will consider both how literature adapts philosophical discourse and how it functions as a form of philosophical discourse in itself — how literature enacts philosophical thinking by other means. We will start with a survey of several key figures and concepts in the field (Sartre, de Beauvoir, Camus, and others; the void, anxiety, freedom, the gaze, and authenticity). We will then analyze literary works often considered part of a larger existentialist "constellation." Together, we will seek to generate a host of open questions that can permit a wide range of independent research projects at the end of the term. Our primary aim will be for students to develop and write their senior coda papers, but we will also spend time reflecting on their years at Skidmore and their next chapters of life after college. Qualifying work will earn honors.

SENIOR SEMINAR TO BE OFFERED SPRING 2023

EN 375

**THE SHY UNDERGROUND AND
OTHER REVISIONS OF SELF**

S. Mintz

Shy Radicals, Hamja Ahsan's 2017 novel of inwardness, is part speculative manifesto, part comic guidebook for how to live a solitary life. Ahsan imagines a secret movement—the shy underground—comprised of introverts, antisocials, and other neuroqueers banded together in an imaginary homeland called Aspergistan. What would it be like, Ahsan invites us to wonder—who might we *be*—if all the quirks and so-called pathologies of temperament were allowed to flourish?

This section of EN 375 will investigate recent recalibrations of who we are in texts like Ahsan's, ones that stretch the limits of how we think not just about identity but also the edges of autobiographical form. The popularity of graphic memoir will be one point of departure, as well as fragmented essay, life-story through art and books, multimedia collage, speculative and science fiction, substantial theoretical work on contemporary self-life-writing, and everything that Wayne Koestenbaum once called "Play Doh Fun Factory Poetics." Students will pursue topics of their own devising in seminar papers, writing in the company of others with frequent group workshops and consultation with the instructor.

EN 376 01

SENIOR PROJECTS

The Department

3 credits

This offering allows a senior the opportunity to develop a particular facet of English study that they are interested in and have already explored to some extent. It could include projects such as teaching, creative writing, journalism, and film production, as well as specialized reading and writing on literary topics. Outstanding work may qualify the senior for departmental honors. All requirements for a regular Independent Study apply. To register, fill out a "Senior Thesis or Senior Project Registration" form, available in the English department and on the English department's website.

EN 389 01
3 credits

PREPARATION FOR THE SENIOR THESIS

The Department

Required of all second-semester junior or first-semester senior English majors who intend to write a thesis. Under the direction of a thesis advisor, the student reads extensively in primary and secondary sources related to the proposed thesis topic, develops their research skills, and brings the thesis topic to focus by writing an outline and series of brief papers which will contribute to the thesis.

PREREQUISITES: APPROVAL IN ADVANCE BY THE DEPARTMENT

EN 390 01
3 credits

SENIOR THESIS

The Department

Intensive writing and revising of senior thesis under the close guidance of the student's thesis committee. The thesis provides an opportunity for English majors to develop sophisticated research and writing skills, read extensively on the topic of special interest, and produce a major critical paper of forty to eighty pages. Not required of the English major, but strongly recommended as a valuable conclusion to the major and as preparation for graduate study. Distinguished work will qualify eligible students for departmental honors. To register, fill out a "Senior Thesis or Senior Project Registration" form, available in the English department and on the English department's website.

PREREQUISITES: EN 389 AND APPROVAL IN ADVANCE BY THE DEPARTMENT