

Spring 2014 – MA Course Descriptions

ENGL 5000 Studies In: The Literary North and West, Oliver

This course offers a comparative study of literature from Scotland and the American West (including Canada). The approach will be literary-geographical and grounded in cultural history. Readings will be selective from the literatures of Scotland and the North American West from the 19th and 21st centuries, which will provide the basis for comparative study. Paintings and a film will also be incorporated, and a session at the AHC and Art Museum may also be included.

ENGL 5220 Studies: Medieval Epic and Romance, Anderson

ENGL 5280 Studies: 19thC Eng Lit, Nye

The nineteenth century was an epoch of revolution as much in poetry as politics. From the birth of English romanticism to the uneasy end of the century, poetry flourished, affording deep human alternatives to the increasing materialism and commercialism of the age. This seminar will explore the major expressions of poetic creativity, examining the modification and transmission of poetic forms. How, for example, is a sonnet by Wordsworth different than one by Keats, or Shelley, or Rossetti, or Meredith, or Elizabeth Barrett Browning, or Yeats? In addition to intense study of various lyric modes, we'll look at more extended poetic forms, idylls, romances, narrative tales, ballads, even verse epics. And of course this is the most elegiac of ages, perhaps until our own. How can the elegy coexist and develop so fully with a time of increasing imperial confidence and cultural hegemony? In disarming simplicity, Coleridge said, "I wish our clever young poets would remember my homely definitions of prose and poetry; that is, prose,—words in their best order; poetry,—the best words in their best order." Many of the best and most beautiful moments of the English language were shaped by the poets of the nineteenth century, and this seminar aims to identify and explore them.

ENGL 5330 Stds: 20C American Lit, Russell

What was America, who was American, and what did it mean to be American in the 20th century? This course will examine those questions through close reading and analysis of major works of 20th century American literature—with 99.6% less Norman Mailer than similar courses. We will focus primarily on novels and poetry, but short stories and essays may stop by for a drink, and we will trace the main literary movements within 20th century American literature; of special importance will be interrogating the nexus of race, gender, and class both within the literature and within American culture at large so that we may see how the epic social movements of the 20th century derive inspiration from, and find reflection in, the major writings of the period. Reading List Hemingway: *The Sun Also Rises* Fitzgerald: *Tender is the Night* Steinbeck: *Grapes of Wrath* Ellison: *Invisible Man* Vonnegut: *Slaughter House-Five* Cisneros: *House on Mango Street* Erdrich: *Love Medicine* Morrison: *Beloved* Rita Dove, ed. *Penguin Anthology of 20th Century American Poetry*

ENGL 5360 Studies: Ethnic Lit: Irish, Obert

This course surveys Irish and Northern Irish literature (fiction, poetry, drama, non-fiction, and film) and criticism from 1960- present. We will begin by exploring Ireland's struggle for self-definition mid-century, including its reckoning with its (relatively) recent independence from the UK, its engagement with its own postcoloniality, its place in relation to both tradition & modernity, its renewed relationship with the Catholic Church, and its indebtedness to/breaks from the earlier cultural nationalism of the Irish Literary Revival. We will then carry on to discuss present-day cultural concerns in the Irish Republic, including the role of the Irish language, issues of gender & sexuality in modern Ireland, the place of the border between Ireland & Northern Ireland in the Irish imagination, and the implications of the Celtic Tiger's recent cycle of boom and bust. We will also spend a significant portion of the semester dealing with 'the Troubles' in Northern Ireland, examining how writers have responded to civil conflict, sectarian violence, and tentative peace.

ENGL 5530 Modern Critical Theory & Practice: Global Modernisms, Baskin

Recent critics and theorists have moved beyond the nation-state as an organizing category for literary studies and begun to read literature in a global context. This course will study the global turn in literary studies in relation to modernism. Probably the most influential cultural movement of the twentieth-century, modernism was long seen as an exclusively European invention (even if it was later helped along by a few disaffected, and often exiled, British, Irish and American writers). However, recent critics and theorists have thoroughly complicated this familiar picture and are working to develop a concept of modernism as a truly global phenomenon. Focusing on literary texts written in English, but drawing widely on theories of modernity, imperialism, postcolonialism, cosmopolitanism, globalization, "uneven" development and capitalist world-systems, we will trace out this newly expansive understanding of modernism that has emerged from its placement in a global context. Readings may include some of the following authors, theorists and critics: Conrad, Eliot, Loy, McKay, Brathwaite, Walcott, Rhys, Naipul, Abani, O'Neill, Moretti, Casanova, Mufti, Baucom, Wallerstein, Gikandi, Esty, Williams, Jameson, Appiah, Robbins, Harvey, Fanon, Césaire, Ngũgĩ, Bhabha, Spivak, Glissant and Chakrabarty. In addition to reading and discussion, assignments will likely include at least one in-class presentation, a short piece of critical writing, and a seminar paper. Undergraduates may join the class with permission of the instructor only (email jbaskin@uwyo.edu if you are interested).