AS.060 (ENGLISH)

AS.060.107. Introduction to Literary Study. 3 Credits.
This course serves as an introduction to the basic methods of and critical approaches to the study of literature. Some sections may have further individual topic descriptions; please check in SIS when searching for courses.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.108. Time Travel. 3 Credits.
Why is time travel such a consistent and perplexing theme in literature and film over the last 150 years? Why is modernity so concerned with peaking backwards or forwards? This course will examine the history of time-travel fiction, from its beginning in utopian fiction through its box-office dominance in the 1980s, and into today. Writers will likely include Mark Twain, Edward Bellamy, Harold Steele Mackay, Ray Bradbury, Robert Heinlein, and Philip K. Dick. Movies will include *The Terminator*, *Back to the Future*, and *Primer*.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.109. Robots, Androids, Slaves. 3 Credits.
Since the rise of Silicon Valley, tech enthusiasts and futurists have been debating the possibility of what has been called “the singularity” — the moment when artificial intelligence (AI) decisively and irreversibly surpasses human abilities. If this does happen, observers worry, it’s not just that robots will take our jobs; will we become subservient to our new robot masters? Will we become extinct, and not because of climate change? This course explores such questions through the lens of literature and popular media. We will watch several films from the last 15 years or so that depict the rise of AI. We will ask about the roles that gender, race and class have in our imagination of the work robots do. And we will read a range of short essays that approach the question of labor and technology from different angles than mass media usually do.

AS.060.129. Writing Africa Now. 3 Credits.
This course surveys post-2000 literary and cultural production from sub-Saharan Africa. Topics will include debates over genre and fiction’s relevance to African experience, legacies of canonical writing about sub-Saharan Africa. Topics will include debates over genre and fiction’s relevance to African experience, legacies of canonical writing about sub-Saharan Africa. Students will be introduced to the main print and online arteries of African intellectual discussion. This class is for non-majors and does not count towards the English major or minor.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.135. American Nightmares: Burroughs, Highsmith, Dick. 3 Credits.
These three authors share a common starting point: Patricia Highsmith, William S. Burroughs and Philip K. Dick all began their careers writing mass market genre fiction in pre-Stonewall, pre-civil rights, Cold War 1950s America. Absorbing the stylistic codes of their respective marketplaces of suspense writing and lesbian romance, “drug fiend” confessional, and science fiction, each writer’s conformist apprenticeship in pulp resurfaces in increasingly nightmarish forms in the violent and paranoid scenarios that dominate their mature work. Reading broadly in each author’s short fiction, novels, and prose, we will sequentially examine Burroughs’ “cut-up” techniques and “routines”, Highsmith’s free indirect discourse gone wrong, and Dick’s disorienting temporal experiments as inflamed allergic reactions to generic codes. We will also examine the cinematic afterlives of these authors by looking at key scenes from three adaptations of their work: Alfred Hitchcock’s *Strangers on a Train* (1951), David Cronenberg’s *Naked Lunch* (1991), and Richard Linklater’s *A Scanner Darkly* (2006).

AS.060.137. Doctors Without Borders: Literature, Medicine, and the Human Condition. 3 Credits.
Doctors play a significant role in shaping literary history as both writers and fictional subjects. From Chekhov to Sherlock Holmes, W. Somerset Maugham to Middlemarch, medical practice is imagined to bestow a privileged understanding of humanity in confrontation with questions of life and death. This course explores how writing about medicine connects long-established themes of mortality, authority, and ways of knowing to timely questions of global migration, cultural contact, and social justice. We will read literary writing by physicians as well as writing that depicts their work in detail, by authors including Nawal El Saadawi, Atul Gawande, Abraham Verghese, Damon Galgut, and Taiye Selasi.

AS.060.140. Diaries, Journals, Some Notes. 3 Credits.
A study of genres of private writings, focusing on the diary form. Readings will likely include diaries by Pepys, Boswell, Frank, Woolf, as well as critical and theoretical texts on the form.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.142. Indigenous Science Fiction: (Re)making Worlds. 3 Credits.
This discussion-based seminar will survey science fiction written by indigenous authors in what are now the United States, Canada, and Australia. We will investigate by what means and to what ends this particular genre has been taken up by indigenous peoples both to reflect on their settler-colonial pasts and presents and to imagine decolonial futures. Texts may include: Leslie Marmon Silko, Almanac of the Dead; William Sanders, "The Undiscovered"; Daniel Heath Justice, *The Way of Thorn and Thunder*; Blake Hausman, *Riding the Trail of Tears*; Waubgeshig Rice, Moon of the Crusted Snow; Claire Coleman, *Terra Nullius*; Tanya Tagaq, Split Tooth. Fulfills the Global and Minority Literatures requirement.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.148. Asian and Latinx American Literatures: Rethinking Empire. 3 Credits.
This course explores the transnational convergence of Asians/Asian Americans and Latinxs/ Latinx Americans from a history of multiple imperialisms to the neoliberal, globalized present. We will situate the racialization of Asian and Latinx peoples within a larger, global framework and think critically about areas of solidarity and tension between these two multi-ethnic groups through readings in literature, history, and sociology.
Area: Writing Intensive
AS.060.151. Doubles, Demons, and Dummies: The Literature of the Fantastic. 3 Credits.
Talking reflections. Dolls with knives. Dancing automatons. They are all part of the strange and dangerous world of the fantastic. This course examines the literature of the fantastic, or what we can refer to as creepy double, demon, and dummy stories. We'll look at everything from Poe to American Psycho in an attempt to figure out what just happened, why, and how it relates to literary meaning.

AS.060.163. William Faulkner, Race, and Southern Fiction. 3 Credits.
This course will introduce students to debates in American literary studies around questions of race, politics, and the history of the American South. The course will center around a reading of William Faulkner's Absalom, Absalom! alongside literary history, critical theory, and other pieces of fiction from the American South. We will use these texts to explore the transformations of racial discourses in 19th and 20th century America, with close attention to how they influence the present.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.164. Cyberpunk: High-Tech, Low Life. 3 Credits.
This course will examine the science fiction movement of cyberpunk as an aesthetic, narrative, and political reaction to late neoliberalism. We will read and discuss literature, film, and interactive media from this genre to develop an understanding of how cyberpunk texts register, refract, and attempt to reconcile antagonisms central to contemporary life.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.165. Science Fiction and Climate Change. 3 Credits.
This course will examine representations of, and confrontations with, climate change in science fiction. Special focus will be given to indigenous futurisms as uniquely valuable perspectives on the climate crisis. We will examine these narratives alongside climate change discourse, literary theory, and literary criticism.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.169. Literature and Visual Art. 3 Credits.
We'll glance at the history of the relations between painting and literature, before turning to the art of the past 200 years. What has drawn writers to place their powers against those of painters (in particular)? How have they managed the comparisons? How might we understand the distinctive powers and limitations of these two modes of responding to human experience? While we may have an exam, writing assignments will constitute most of your grade.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.207. William Shakespeare. 3 Credits.
Who was William Shakespeare, and what can his poems, histories, comedies and tragedies tell us about our overlap with, and divergences from, the early modern world?

AS.060.208. English Literature from Chaucer to Behn. 3 Credits.
This course is a survey of English writing from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries. Tracing the evolution of vernacular literature in English from the late medieval period to the early modern period and onwards to the threshold of modernity, we will focus intensively upon four key works: Geoffrey Chaucer's “The Canterbury Tales,” Book I of Edmund Spenser's “The Faerie Queen,” John Milton's “Paradise Lost” and Aphra Behn's “Oroonoko.” These works will be examined in their formal and generic dimensions as key examples of broader aesthetic changes in the constitution of “literature” as a category. They will also be placed in their political, religious, and social contexts. Through lectures, class discussion, written responses, and longer essay assignments, students will master the fundamentals of English literary history as well as the techniques of critical reading and writing.

AS.060.209. The Literary History of the Devil to 1800. 3 Credits.
This course reads major works in European literature before 1800 (give or take) depicting the devil. It examines the history of the various social, cultural and political guises under which the devil appears, and the function that representing radical evil performs, in literature and society. Among our readings will be Dante's Inferno; Milton's Paradise Lost; Goethe's Faust, Part One, and many other major Satanic works.

AS.060.210. British Literature II. 3 Credits.
This course provides a framework for grasping the dazzling variety and explosive innovation of literature in English during the last quarter-millennium. Attending both to textual details and to historical contexts, we will see how Wordsworth, Austen, Tennyson, Dickens, Wilde, Woolf, Rushdie, and other writers extend and undo tradition, illuminate their times and places as well as our own, and conspire to bring to us the intense experience distinctive to great literary art.

AS.060.211. How Not to be Afraid of Poetry. 3 Credits.
What is poetry? And why don't we like it? This course will explore what makes poetry turn ordinary language into something extraordinary. Opening up a range of poetry in English, the course will involve reading poetry aloud, thinking about poetry and its forms, and gaining experience in understanding poetry. Assignments will include attending to details small and large in poems, becoming an expert about a single poet, debating aesthetic issues, and composing short analytical papers about poems. There are two required written assignments, a midterm and a final examination.

AS.060.212. British Literature: 18th Century to the Present. 3 Credits.
A survey of major authors such as Wordsworth, Austen, Tennyson, Dickens, Wilde, Woolf, Joyce, and Rushdie. Substantial attention to formal conventions as well as stylistic innovation, to aesthetic value as well as social meaning.

AS.060.216. Zombies. 3 Credits.
This lecture survey will attempt to answer why the zombie has become such a fixture in contemporary literature and cinema. We will track this figure across its many incarnations—from its late-eighteenth-century appearance in ethnographic fictions growing out of the modern cultures of racialized slavery in the Americas right up to twenty-first-century Hollywood blockbusters in which the origins of the figure in the cultures of racialized slavery are perhaps not overt yet continue to manifest. What are the implications of the zombie’s arc from a particular human being targeted for domination by a sorcerer to a living-dead horde created by radiation or epidemic? “Texts” may include: Mary Shelley, Frankenstein; Edgar Allan Poe, “The Man Who Was Used Up”; H.P. Lovecraft, "Herbert West–Re-Animator”; Zora Neale Hurston, Tell My Horse; Victor Halperin, dir., White Zombie; George Romero, dir., Dead series; Edgar Wright, dir., Shaun of the Dead; Alejandro Brugués, dir., Juan de los Muertos; Colm McCarthy, dir., The Girl with All the Gifts; Colson Whitehead, Zone One; Jordan Peele, dir., Get Out. Fulfills the Global and Minority Literatures requirement.

AS.060.217. Time Travel. 3 Credits.
Why is time travel such a consistent and perplexing theme in literature and film over the last 150 years? Why is modernity so concerned with peeking backwards or forwards? This course will examine the history of time-travel fiction, from its beginning in utopian fiction through its box-office dominance in the 1980s, and into today.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.219. American Literature to 1865. 3 Credits.
A survey course of American literature from contact to the Civil War.
AS.060.220. Clint Eastwood, Race and the American Western. 3 Credits.
Drawing from the body of work engaging and recording the Hollywood gunfighter and outlaw folk-hero Clint Eastwood, the course will investigate American cinematic representations of slavery and its absence, the Civil War, and racial formation along the United States' southwestern frontier in films produced from the 1950s through the contemporary period. A focus on the cultural icon Clint Eastwood enables a close examination of American cinematic fantasies of the frontier, frontier violence and the desire to escape or erase the tensions of race and slavery that have deeply permeated the American cultural consciousness, particularly the creation of American masculine ideals. The course will also take decided note of the national shift from liberal "Great Society Programs" of the 1960s to the conservative "neoliberal" social and cultural ideals in the 1980s and 1990s. Our purpose is to consider the organization and reformation of hegemonic power by way of the complex morality play the western film evokes, typically considering the interstitial geographies between civilization and savagery, belonging and alienation, and metropolitan and colonial outpost. We will privilege in our discussions the contested frontiers of racial dominion.

AS.060.221. The Modernist Novel: Consciousness and Crisis. 3 Credits.
A course on key novels written in Britain or its former colonies between 1900 and 1960. Major attention to the meanings of modernism across the arts as well as innovations in prose fiction. Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.222. American Literature, 1865 to today. 3 Credits.
A survey of American literature from 1865 to today.

AS.060.232. Detective Fiction. 3 Credits.
This lecture will trace the the history of English-language detective fiction through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Why does the figure of the detective appear when it does? How does it change over time, and what can we learn from that? We will pay special attention to the way clues and suspense operate, the role of the reader in figuring out the mystery, and the complicated relationship of the detective with official authority. Authors will likely include some selection of Wilkie Collins, Edgar Allen Poe, Arthur Conan Doyle, Agatha Christie, Dashiell Hammet, and Raymond Chandler.

AS.060.265. Nineteenth Century British Novel. 3 Credits.
Reading major novelists from the nineteenth century including Austen, C. Brontë, Dickens, Eliot, Hardy, and Conrad. We will pay attention to formal conventions, and relation to social and historical context.

AS.060.304. Large Novels. 3 Credits.
This course will look at novels that are not only large in size, but which also think about the meaning and methods of trying to capture huge segments of the world into a piece of art. How much can be fit into a novel? What is gained and what is lost? How large is too large? We will read Charles Dickens's Bleak House, Lev Tolstoy's War and Peace, and Herman Melville's Moby Dick.

AS.060.220. The Essay Form and Creative Non-Fiction. 3 Credits.
We'll focus on the essay form, with special attention to recent creative non-fiction that responds to art and literature itself. Theoretical, stylistic, and formal issues will all be considered.

AS.060.309. Slavery in Renaissance Literature. 3 Credits.
Against the backdrop of the rise of the European slave trade, how were slaves represented in early modern English literature? How was the condition of enslavement inflected by emergent nationalism, colonialism and theological constructions of difference? This course puts Renaissance literature into conversation with comparative histories of slavery and critical race theory. Authors include Aristotle, Terence, Epictetus, Christopher Marlowe, William Shakespeare, John Milton, Aphra Behn, Orlando Patterson, Kim Hall, Stephen Greenblatt, Mary Nyquist, Moses Finley and others.

AS.060.313. Literature of the Settler Revolution. 3 Credits.
The nineteenth century saw the creation of an "Angloworld" as a result of what one historian has called "the settler revolution." In perhaps the largest mass migration in human history, millions of English-speakers (and others) invaded Indigenous worlds in what have consequently come to be known as the United States, Canada, and Australia. This seminar offers an introduction to nineteenth-century Indigenous and settler Anglophone writing in the US, Canada, and Australia with a view to understanding the role of literature in inciting, interrogating, and resisting this settler revolution.

AS.060.314. Social Media Fictions. 3 Credits.
Writers around the world are now searching for ways to incorporate new modes of social interaction - e.g. Facebook, Twitter, text messaging, and Skype - into their print work. This course explores the various techniques they have adopted for this purpose, with an eye to critically evaluating their implications for narrative structure and its "reality effect." From Teju Cole's very public experiments with the Twitter novel to a Zimbabwean writer's attempt to capture plot turns through SMS, we will discuss the ways in which narrative is helped or hindered by the ubiquity of social media. Writers studied will include Tendai Huchu, Zadie Smith, Jonathan Franzen, and Eben Venter.

AS.060.315. Literature of Incarceration. 3 Credits.
We will take up a history of writing from and about various carceral sites (prison, detention camps, etc-- as well as Circe's island and Jonah's whale) to see what they can teach us about larger questions of the movement (or not) of certain populations, the ideology and economies of imprisonment, and campaigns for the abolition of prisons.

AS.060.316. Mapping the Global Metropolis. 3 Credits.
Cities have long taken on a central role in literature, but much of our reading about urban space is confined to a few Western hubs. And while the city has traditionally been a space for fictional characters to develop into national subjects, much of the most innovative contemporary writing sees the city as a character of its own. This course will address the representational challenges of globalization through fiction and genre-bending memoir about contemporary metropolises that act as its microcosms: Johannesburg, Lagos, Delhi, London, and New York. We will read primary works by Ivan Vladislavic, Chris Abani, Aravind Adiga, Zadie Smith, and Teju Cole, as well as supplementary excerpts from books including Capital, by Rana Dasgupta, Mike Davis' Planet of Slums, Ato Quayson's Oxford Street, Accra, and Loren Kruger's Imagining the Edgy City. Finally, the course will include theoretical readings about globality and representation, such as Fredric Jameson's essay on "Cognitive Mapping" and Arjun Appadurai's seminal book Modernity at Large.

Area: Writing Intensive
AS.060.317. Jane Austen Beyond England. 3 Credits.
This will be an in-depth study of Austen's novels with an emphasis on how they have traveled outside of the country of her birth — e.g. to the United States, India, and East Asia—through the work of individuals and the flows of global capitalism. Students will gain perhaps a disorienting sense of what Austen means in different cultures at different historical moments, and conduct individual research to learn more. Knowledge of another language is not necessary but could prove useful. The course will include a field-trip to the Alberta Burke Austen collection at Goucher College.
Area: Writing Intensive
AS.060.107

AS.060.320. Icons of Feminism. 3 Credits.
This course looks at four crucial figures who have haunted feminist thought and responses to feminism over the centuries. Sappho, known as the first female poet, remains an enigmatic icon of feminine desire and creativity; Antigone, the daughter of Oedipus and the heroine of Sophocles’ play Antigone, still inspires feminist analyses of women’s relationship to law, the state and civil society; and Joan of Arc, the militant maid of Orleans, troubles thinking about women and violence as well as women, religion and spirituality. The last figure is Mary Wollstonecraft, often cited as the first modern feminist. The course will examine literary works written about these iconic figures, as well as contemporary feminist writing about their influence and viability as models for the future of feminism.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.326. Shakespeare: The Novel. 3 Credits.
What if King Lear had been a mother? What if the we thought about Othello through the lens of the holocaust? What if the indigene Caliban was the hero, not the villain? What if Miranda chose Caliban over her European suitor? (The Tempest) Could a modern-day Kate be tricked into marriage and “tamed” (The Taming of the Shrew)? When contemporary novelists rewrite Shakespeare, they pose questions left hanging in the play and bring the plays into our own world. In this course, we will read Shakespeare plays (King Lear, The Tempest, The Taming of the Shrew, Merchant of Venice) along with contemporary novelists that rewrite — and confront — those plays (Jane Smiley, Caryl Phillips, J. M. Coetzee, Anne Tyler). Students will take up important literary questions about kinds of literature (plays vs novels), the canon, imitation, adaptation, and also address the themes of power, gender and sexuality, family dynamics, authority, colonization and the environment.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.327. “All Art is Propaganda”. 3 Credits.
This course will explore black literature written as protest. We will examine how, in the face of threats to black life, Frances E.W. Harper, Richard Wright, Amiri Baraka, and others have realized versions of W.E.B. Du Bois’s objective: “all art is propaganda and ever must be, despite the wailing of the purists.”
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.328. Malcolm and Martin: An Introduction to the Lives and Thought of Two Icons of the Black Freedom Struggle. 3 Credits.
Using their recorded speeches, written lectures and published writings and drawing from their biographies, this course will explore the important life work of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. We intend to expound traditional conversations about political radicalism and ethnic politics by analyzing these spokesmen associated most indelibly with black nationalism and racial integration, respectively.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.331. The Literature of the Atlantic Slavery. 3 Credits.
This seminar will trace the historical development of the slavery debate in the Atlantic world through examination of key texts from a host of genres and locations—Quaker religious tracts, political documents like the Haitian Declaration of Independence, Cuban antislavery novels, slave narratives, and “classics” of American literature like Melville’s Benito Cereno. We will consider how the institution of Atlantic slavery was variously represented, justified, and criticized, discovering in the process the deep structures of modern slavery discourse.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.337. James Joyce’s Ulysses. 3 Credits.
A careful semester-long reading of James Joyce’s masterpiece Ulysses, one of the greatest and most intimidating novels in world literature.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.341. Milton. 3 Credits.
This class will study Milton’s poetry and prose across the whole of his writing career, with special attention to Paradise Lost, the great epic poem retelling the story of the fall of humankind. We will consider Milton’s literary background, his contemporary political and social milieu, as well as critical debates that surrounding the poet, who was accused of being ‘of the devil’s party.’ Pre-1800 course.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.342. Contemporary Novel of Ideas. 3 Credits.
The novel of ideas is often traced to 18th century French or 19th century Russian writing, but it has come broadly to signify works of robust philosophical contemplation. The inherently slippery term seems to indicate a work in which “form” is subsidiary to “content,” or at least, in which narrative structures adapt to prioritize thought rather than style, image, or even character. But how, exactly, and about what, do novels “think?” In large part, the novel of ideas is now conflated with a rote and recognizable brand of social realism. This course asks what might qualify as a novel of ideas today, both in terms of the novel’s changing relation to geographical space (and thereby the formal spaces in which philosophy might lurk), and of the particular “ideas” it critiques or puts forth. We will read novels including J.M. Coetzee, Marlene van Niekerk, Jonathan Franzen, Teju Cole, and Ronan Bennett within a longer literary-philosophical tradition, with reference to works such as Candide, War and Peace, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, and Kierkegaard’s Diary of a Seducer.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.343. Marxism and Literature. 3 Credits.
This course will provide a survey of some of the concepts in Marx’s work, especially those to be found in volume 1 of Capital, that might help us get a clearer sense of 21st-century politics and culture. We will move outward from reading Marx to reading recent and classic texts in the Marxist critical tradition. We will discuss explicitly economic ideas about commodities, surplus value, and concrete and abstract labor, as well as historical and political ideas like “primitive accumulation” and the “uneven and combined development” of nations. We will think about what reading Marx and the Marxist tradition can help us see about colonialism, gender, race, technology, and the environment, as well as how it can clarify the character of economic crises. Toward the end of the term we will turn to literary texts, not necessarily “Marxist” themselves, to help us understand important questions that Marxism cannot tackle by itself, like: who are people, anyway? What do they hope for, when they write? Is there a Marxist idea of beauty, and is it different than everybody else’s? Along with Marx, and anti-colonial, anti-racist and feminist writers in the Marxist tradition, we’ll read work by the novelist NK Jemisin, and the poet Stephanie Young.
Area: Writing Intensive
AS.060.348. Virginia Woolf and Bloomsbury. 3 Credits.
An exploration of the achievements and investments of one of the most influential coteries in the history of Britain. In addition to delving into key fictions by Virginia Woolf, we will examine novels by Leonard Woolf and E. M. Forster, art criticism by Roger Fry and Clive Bell, biographical essays by Lytton Strachey, economic writings by John Maynard Keynes, and poetry by T. S. Eliot.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.350. Reason and Romance: Literature of the British Eighteenth Century. 3 Credits.
Any era can be characterized by its oppositions and polarities, but perhaps few were more defined by their contradictions than the eighteenth century in Britain. Reason and passion, honor and ribaldry, skepticism and fantasy, tradition and revolution: in capturing the tensions between these dyads, the wildly energetic literature of the period furnishes a singular lens through which to examine questions of consciousness, gender, celebrity, race, political theater, and even life during a pandemic that continue to shape our lives today. Authors studied may include Frances Burney, Ottobah Cugoano, Daniel Defoe, Olaudah Equiano, John Gay, Samuel Johnson, Charlotte Lennox, Alexander Pope, Jonathan Swift, and Mary Wollstonecraft.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.353. Margaret Atwood: Imagining Catastrophe. 3 Credits.
This is the moment for a course on the Canadian climate activist, poet, and novelist Margaret Atwood. Best known for her dystopian The Handmaid’s Tale (1985), Atwood’s monitory visions in poetry, short stories, non-fiction and novels attend to themes of malevolence, metamorphosis, memory, genetic mutation, totalitarianism, corporate control, feminism, and climate disaster, while rooted in traditions of folktale, myth, and ironic detachment. Among other works, including poetry and non-fiction, we will read novels The Handmaid’s Tale, The Testaments, The Blind Assassin, Oryx and Crake, The Year of the Flood, and MaddAddam, exploring Atwood’s “writing with intent.” Seminar discussion; midterm; class presentations; two short papers and one final project.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.354. Literature of the Sea. 3 Credits.
In this course, we will read 19th- and 20th-century American and British literature about the sea, using an approach informed by recent scholarship in what has been called Blue Humanities or Oceanic Studies.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.355. Poetry and Politics Today. 3 Credits.
The history of poetry is full of political poems of every kind — odes, epics, dramatic persona poems. And the history of literary criticism is full of denunciations of poetry that gets “too political,” and loses sight of its job to give pleasure. In this course, we will look at a range of contemporary poetry that tackles political issues — things like the causes of climate change; immigration crises; white supremacy; patriarchal gender systems; the legacies of colonialism — and study the ways it accomplishes its goals while still giving us the kinds of surprise in language that poetry has always promised. Reading will include (but not be limited to) work by Tongo Eisen-Martin, Cathy Park Hong, Sandra Simonds, Stephanie Young, and Wendy Trevino.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.358. Virginia Woolf. 3 Credits.
Beautiful, acute, and consequential, Woolf’s writing opens onto an extraordinary range of aesthetic, psychological, and political issues. In this seminar, we will read from her novels, essays, and diaries as well as the varied works of art and philosophy that influenced her.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.359. Slavery in Early Modern Literature. 3 Credits.
Against the backdrop of the rise of the European slave trade, how were enslaved people represented in early modern English literature? How was the condition of enslavement inflected by emergent nationalism, colonialism and theological constructions of difference? This course puts Renaissance literature into conversation with comparative histories of slavery and critical race theory. Authors include Aristotle, Plautus, Thomas More, Bartolomé de las Casas, Christopher Marlowe, William Shakespeare, Philip Massinger, John Milton, Aphra Behn, Osman of Timisóara, Stephanie Smoluckow, Michael Gusaco, Saidiya Hartman, Herman Bennett, Orlando Patterson, Jared Sexton, and Mary Nyquist.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.360. Politics, History and Autobiography. 3 Credits.
This is an intensive seminar exploring the political and historical dimensions of personal experience. The class is designed to introduce students to writing critically about their own lives and to understanding the function of autobiographical writing in the lives of black Americans. We function partly as a writers’ workshop and partly as a critical review. The final goal of the seminar is a polished 15-20 page autobiographical essay and a 5-7 page critical review of an autobiography, such as would be found in the New York Review of Books.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.361. The Politics of Memoir. 3 Credits.
This course explores the interlocking political and historical dimensions of personal experience, an account of ourselves and our relations (“the quest for competitive advantage between groups, individuals, or societies”) that points us in the direction of what “is ‘common’ to the whole community.” What does it mean for people who are not the chief actors or theoreticians of political movements to construe the record of their experience as an act of political intervention, an aid in our total understanding of the structure of popular belief and behavior? Furthermore, what happens when attempt to historicize and critique these recorded experiences? The class asks its members to focus closely on an episode of autobiographical experience as both an historical fossil and tangible politicized moment, particularly the places where race, gender and economic power are visible. By producing a “critical discourse of everyday life—by turning residual, untheorized everyday experience into communicable experience... one can reframe ostensibly private and individual experiences in terms of a collective struggle.” To help our investigation we will read and analyze closely memoirs, many of them from the African American experience. We function partly as a writers’ workshop and partly as a critical review. The final goal of the seminar is a polished 20-25 page autobiographical essay.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.362. Medicine in Renaissance Literature. 3 Credits.
From quacks to plague, from humorals to hypochondria, this course explores how early modern literature represents and occasionally satirizes medicine. Authors include Shakespeare, Jonson, Donne, Nashe, Browne and Molière.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.363. Henry James. 3 Credits.
This seminar will focus on the novels and short fiction of one of the most brilliant crafters of prose and plot ever to write in English. Extensive attention will be devoted to the intricacies of James’s language; to his transatlantic situation; to his relationship to other authors; and to his place in the histories of literature, criticism, and theory. In a few instances, we will read his work in relation to writing by his brother, the pioneering philosopher and psychologist William James.
Area: Writing Intensive
AS.060.356. Malcolm and Martin: An Intro to the Lives and Thought of Two Icons of the Black Freedom Struggle. 3 Credits.
Using their speeches, written lectures and published writings and drawing from their biographies, this course will explore the important life work of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. We intend to upend traditional conversations about political radicalism and ethnic politics by analyzing these spokesmen associated most indelibly with black nationalism and racial integration, respectively.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.369. Speculative Slavery and Liberatory Fiction. 3 Credits.
This course will introduce students to the study and genre of Black speculative fiction and Afrofuturism, through the lens of narratives focused on liberation/freedom. Liberatory fiction pushes the genre of Afrofuturism further to create space for the imagination to envision alternate futures and pasts, that rewrite history to aid in the process of liberation for black lives. The intended outcome of these texts is the liberation of its subjects and, in some cases, its readers to reflect on the contemporary. The liberation of subjects comes in the form of attaining collective or personal freedoms. This course will cover themes such as, gender and the speculative, the haunting of the post-slavery subject, and black apocalypses. All of these themes will be analyzed through reading both theory and narratives including: The Graphic Novel Adaptation of Octavia Butler's Kindred, Toni Morrison's Beloved, Saidiya Hartman's "Venus in Two Acts", and N.K. Jemisin's "The City Born Great".
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.374. Irish Literature. 3 Credits.
This course will introduce students to the long history of Irish literature, often relegated to a footnote or subsumed under the study of British literature broadly, from the medieval period until the contemporary era. Starting with the medieval Irish epic Táin Bó Cúailnge [The Cattle Raid of Cooley] and ending with Anna Burns' 2018 masterpiece Milkman, this course will introduce students to the ways in which a colonial literature changes over time as Ireland, England's first colony, is conquered and reconquered, rebels and revolts, and continues to confront the legacy of colonization as the nation remains divided between the North and the Republic today. Throughout the course, students will read texts written Jonathan Swift, Brian Ferriman, Peig Sayers, J.M. Synge, James Connolly, Elizabeth Bowen, Samuel Beckett, Edna O'Brien and others. This course will serve as a case study for students interested in literature of conflict, colonial and neo-colonial politics, and the fight for justice globally.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.377. Edmund Spenser's Faerie Queene. 3 Credits.
After a diagnostic introduction to his early poetry, this reading intensive seminar will concentrate upon Edmund Spenser's masterpiece, The Faerie Queene (1590/1596), which we will read in its entirety.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.381. The Asian American Novel. 3 Credits.
This course provides a foundation for reading Asian American novels. We will be discussing the origins of “Asian American” as a political coalition in the 1960s amidst a longer historical narrative of U.S. imperial and military projects and immigration policies that have influenced the racialization of those who identify with this multi-ethnic group. At the same time, we will be examining the limitations of this U.S.-centric perspective by rethinking the geopolitical spaces of both “Asia” and “the Americas” through transpacific and hemispheric lenses. Discussions will center around how the novel form could provide insight into linked social struggles and the new narratives of political community they imagine.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.384. The Contemporary Novel. 3 Credits.
In the first two decades of the twenty-first century, writers of narrative fiction have been working furiously to keep up with the turbulence that global capitalism has visited on the world — war, political chaos, environmental catastrophe, massive forced migration and displacement — while trying to maintain ties to the techniques of narrative that gave the 19th century reality novel its successes and its prestige. In this course we will read a range of texts, mostly in translation, that stretch and deform those conventions in order to represent the lives and struggles of characters who are caught up in immense historical change. More and more often, novelists are choosing to depict characters drawn from what Marx would have called “surplus populations” — people for whom economic stability and personal safety are out of reach, partly because they are seen as not worth employing (or exploiting). Under these conditions, we will ask, is it only possible to tell tragic stories? What do happy endings look like? What do changes do character development and point of view have to undergo, for instance, to keep up with 21st-century history? Is realism still the best vehicle for telling these stories? Readings will include novels by Sally Rooney, Eduard Louis, Fernanda Melchor, Elena Ferrante, Marlon James, and Manoranjan Byapari, as well as secondary material by Sarah Chihaya, Merve Emre, Katherine Hill, Jill Richards, and the Endnotes collective.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.388. Old World/New World Women. 3 Credits.
The course considers the transatlantic writing of three women in the early modern period, Anne Bradstreet, Aphra Behn, and Phillis Wheatley. We will consider issues of identity, spatiality, religion, commerce, enforced labor, sexuality, race, and gender, along with literary tradition, formal analysis and poetics. We will read a good deal of these early women writers. Foremost in our mind will be the question of how perceptions of space and time are mediated through the global experiences of early modernity.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.389. Emily Dickinson. 3 Credits.
Dickinson's poetry, more than most, has seemed to prompt creativity in others. In the past two decades, especially, poets, writers, critics, and filmmakers have found their own voices in response to hers. We will focus on the formal, aesthetic, historical and gendered aspects of her poetry as we try to understand, and benefit from, this power to elicit response. Exams are unlikely. Instead, expect close attention to your own writing, as we pay close attention to hers.
Area: Writing Intensive
AS.060.391. Early American Literature. 3 Credits.
This course is an introduction to literatures drawn from across the Americas, although primarily the British North American colonies that would eventually become the United States, from first contact in 1492 up through the American wars of independence. Our readings are roughly organized according to chronology and genre. We will think about the adapted and emergent generic forms through which “the New World” was ongoingly invented, including genres like the Indian captivity narrative and the slave narrative that arguably make their debut in world literary history in the Americas during this time frame. We will conclude by attending to the rather late emergence of the novel in American literary history, reading four novels that appeared in the early US national period. The objective of the course is simply to contextualize and analyze a wide array of texts, each of which richly rewards the engaged reader, in order to trace the origins of American literatures. Course texts may include contact narratives (Columbus, Caminha, Smith, Hennepin); conquest narratives (Mather, Las Casas, Poma de Ayala); Indian captivity narratives (Cabeza de Vaca, Rowlandson, Staden); slave narratives (Gronniosaw, Jea, Cugoano); revolutionary polemics (Paine, Bolivar); and the earliest American novels: William Hill Brown, The Power of Sympathy; Hannah Webster Foster, The Coquette; Leonora Sansay, Secret History or, the Horrors of Santo Domingo; Charles Brockden Brown, Arthur Mervyn. Fulfills the pre-1800 requirement.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.394. Class Fictions. 3 Credits.
This seminar investigates one of the central concerns of nineteenth-century fiction: social and economic class. Why did raising oneself from humble beginnings, and falling into poverty, become such familiar stories? And why are they still so familiar today? We will look at how a number of writers approached the topic of class mobility, each with a unique blend of excitement and anxiety. Authors will likely include Jane Austen, Honoré de Balzac (in translation), Charles Dickens, and William Dean Howells. In order to understand our topic better, we will also look at a selection of theoretical work on the nature of class.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.397. Thomas Pynchon. 3 Credits.
Intensive reading of two major Pynchon novels, along with theories of modernity, postmodernity, etc.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.400. Billie Holiday's Baltimore 1870-1960: A Reverse Classroom Journey in the Archives. 3 Credits.
This course will use the tools of the historical archive to etch a social history of Baltimore during the long Billie Holiday (1915-1959) era from the Reconstruction through post-World War II. Holiday's remarkable and unique art has earned her the title of the premier jazz singer of all-time, but unknown to most, her voice and experience were strongly shaped by her early life in Baltimore City, the city’s black habitation and migration, its musical culture, its black middle and lower class, its urban density, as well as its cabaret and underworld life. Our task is to examine the city as an unfolding, racializing process, and to glean the evidence from multiple local archival sources to reconstruct some of the rough margins of possibility for the lived experience of Holiday’s grandparents and parents, all born in Baltimore, as well as her own experience as truant, orphan, and sex assault victim in the 1920s. Two questions will occupy our interests intensely. How did the two black communities she lived in extensively evolve from the late 19th through the early 20th centuries? Second, what information can be unearthed about black musical culture—ragtime, marching bands, banjo and fiddle ditties, riverboat music—as it evolved in the post-World War I “jazz” age of sound recording and broadcasting? What was the artist’s relationship to her urban geography? How did it change over space and time? What dimension of shared fate did she have with the community of black Baltimore domestic workers, laborers, artisans, and small business people from the first half of the twentieth century? In what manner did Baltimore’s racial segregation and racism define her life and art? How was her consciousness as a vocal opponent to segregation shaped by her grooming in the city?
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.402. The Computer in Modern Literature. 3 Credits.
How have computers, and human interactions with computers, been represented in twentieth- and twenty-first-century literature? How have attitudes toward computers changed over that time? Now most books are written on computers, and many are read on them as well: what traces of these forms of production and consumption can we find in literary texts? Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.405. Psychoanalysis and Literature. 3 Credits.
In this course we will read some foundational texts by Sigmund Freud, and pair them with a select group of literary works—Sophocles’ “Oedipus the King” and “Oedipus at Colonus”, William Shakespeare’s “Hamlet”, Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Purloined Letter”, Wilhelm Jensen’s “Gradiva”—which have inspired psychoanalytic ideas and generations of psychoanalytic literary interpretation.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.406. Transfiguring the Renaissance. 3 Credits.
Tracing the poetics of bodily transformation then and now, this course puts early modern literature into dialogue with medical epistemologies of the sexed body and contemporary critical reflections upon transgender experience, embodiment and transition. Early modern texts might include Arthur Golding’s translation of Ovid’s “Metamorphosis”, John Lyly’s “Gallathea”, Francis Beaumont’s “Salmacis and Hermaphroditus”, Ben Jonson’s “Epicoene, or The Silent Woman”, Middleton & Dekker’s “The Roaring Girl” and John Milton’s “Paradise Lost.”
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.501. Independent Study. 3 Credits.
Area: Writing Intensive
You must request Independent Academic Work using the Independent Academic Work form found in Student Self-Service: Registration > Online Forms.
AS.060.502. Independent Study. 1 - 3 Credits.
You must request Independent Academic Work using the Independent Academic Work form found in Student Self-Service: Registration > Online Forms.

AS.060.509. Senior Essay. 3 Credits.
The English Department offers qualified majors the option of writing a senior essay. This is to be a one-semester project undertaken in the fall of the senior year, resulting in an essay of 30-35 pages. The senior essay counts as a three-credit course which can be applied toward the requirements for the major. Each project will be assigned both an advisor and a second reader. In addition, students writing essays will meet as a group with the Director of Undergraduate Study once or twice in the course of the project. The senior essay option is open to all students with a cumulative GPA of 3.6 or higher in English Department courses at the end of the fall term of their junior year. Project descriptions (generally of one to two pages) and a preliminary bibliography should be submitted to a prospective advisor selected by the student from the core faculty. All proposals must be received at least two weeks prior to the beginning of registration period during the spring term of the junior year. Students should meet with the prospective advisor to discuss the project in general terms before submitting a formal proposal. The advisor will determine whether the proposed project is feasible and worthwhile. Individual faculty need not direct more than one approved senior essay per academic year. Acceptance of a proposal will therefore depend on faculty availability as well as on the strength of the proposal itself. When completed, the senior essay will be judged and graded by the advisor in consultation with the second reader. The senior essay will not be part of the Department's honors program, which will continue to be based solely on a cumulative GPA of 3.6 in English Department courses.
Area: Writing Intensive
You must request Independent Academic Work using the Independent Academic Work form found in Student Self-Service: Registration > Online Forms.

AS.060.602. Proseminar.
This course is intended to train students in skills required by the discipline, help prepare them for a range of futures, and integrate them into the university community.

AS.060.603. Secularism & Theory.
This graduate seminar will construct a history of critical theory through the lens of contemporary narratives about secularization and methodological critiques of secularism.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.604. Philology.
An examination of the many ways (both as old and then 'New', but also as the subject of a key 'return') that 'philology' has been claimed as the master category of literary study. The nuts and bolts of older philological procedures as well as the broadest theoretical claims for the term will be attended to.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.607. Fiction and Doubt After 1888.
Examines the interrelation between fiction and doubt since the late nineteenth century. Authors may include Ward, Conrad, Joyce, Eliot, Stevens, Woolf, Baldwin, Flannery O'Connor, Ishmael Reed, Sefi Atta, R. O. Kwon.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.613. American Movement.
This seminar examines representations of people in motion in U.S. writing from 1900 to the present. Migration, international and intranational, will be central to our study, but we'll also consider other forms of travel, transits of authorial and readerly attention, experiences of vagrancy and acceleration, and predicaments of stasis in primary texts as well as theoretical work around mobility. Authors and directors studied may include Simone de Beauvoir, Henry James, Gayl Jones, Jack Kerouac, Chang-Rae Lee, Claude McKay, Bernadette Mayer, Muriel Rukeyser, and Gertrude Stein.
Area: Writing Intensive

The field now known as "global Anglophone literature" has emerged from a complicated and rapidly advancing disciplinary lineage. A host of past and present recordings – including postcolonial, Commonwealth, Third World, global, transnational, world, and the Global South – provide a record of the wider profession's anxieties in relation to non-Western literary traditions. This course prepares graduate students to be able to articulate some of the subtle differences in approach that this nexus of closely related terms may obscure, from the heyday of postcolonial theory in the 1980s and 90s to contemporary subfields like Indian Ocean studies. In addition to key critical texts by theorists including Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, Franco Moretti, Peter Hallward, and Emily Apter, students will be introduced to some outstanding recent methodologies and critiques from the adjacent body of work on comparative literature.
Area: Writing Intensive

This course asks in what ways did literature mitigate population category distinctions within a pre-history of human rights from the period 1500-1700. We will take the situations of sponsored violence, and in particular, war captivity, in order to explore how premodern concepts of duties, rights, atrocity, inhumanity (and prohibitions against abuse) arise and become a locus of mimetic complexity within the literature of the period. Prospecting a historical transformation between ancient, early modern, and modern conceptions of rights, duties, and the human, readings may include: Euripides, Suppliant Women; Seneca, Trojan Women; Shakespeare, Troilus and Cressida; Cicero, Grotius, Gentili, Vitoria, Las Casas, Spenser, Bradstreet, Milton, Dryden, and Behn, as well as literature depicting violence resulting from Britain's East India Company's global intrusions. Splicing apart the "human" from "rights" we consider theoretical material from the liberal tradition and its critique; the problem of 'failed universals'; the historical connection between natural law and human rights; the distinctions drawn around legal and gendered categories of person; and critical race theory, with readings from Asad, Foucault, Moten, Wynter, Cavarero, Brown, Butler, Rawls, Dworkin, Drucilla Cornell, depending on the class's interests.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.616. Milton.
A seminar covering the career of John Milton, including all his major poetry and much of his prose. There will be attention to the history of printing, publication and concepts of reading and writing, as well as to current issues and topics within early modern studies that bear on Milton (e.g. materialism, secularization, 'surface' reading, political theology, quantitative vs hermeneutic methods, actor-network theory). As such, the course will also be an introduction to various methods in early modern studies.
Area: Writing Intensive
AS.060.617. Black Print Culture.
Students interested in black print culture will engage in intensive archival research, both collaborative and individual, using the Sheridan Library's Rare Book and Manuscript collections. Texts include poems, printed lectures, pamphlets, novels, periodicals, ephemera, correspondence, etc., alongside relevant critical and theoretical reading.
Area: Writing Intensive

In Milton: Black and White we will consider Milton and the discourses of racialized categories (poetical, political, and embodied), specifically attending to his role in the historical developments of white identity; concepts of justice; the genre of epic; and universal notions of personhood through the liberal tradition. We will also consider how Black writers have responded to Milton (including Phillis Wheatley, Frederick Douglass, Malcolm X, the gospel tradition, Toni Morrison, Chris Ofili) through readings of Paradise Lost and selected prose, as well as readings in contemporary critical theory.

AS.060.619. Sentimental Reasons.
Recent work in cognitive approaches to literature have led critics to return to the sentimental novel of the eighteenth-century as a “laboratory,” in Daniel Goss’s words, for the investigation of human emotion. There is no easy “fit” between these literary narratives and the narratives of cognitive science, nor between them and the regnant moral philosophy of the age (built upon the mechanism of human sympathy or upon “nervous” association). There is rather a discomfort that reveals social inequities as well as alternative possibilities for both thinking and feeling. The sentimental mode took hold in the circuits of the Atlantic world. This course will study several sentimental narratives that traveled promiscuously through those circuits: Bernardin de St. Pierre’s Paul and Virginia, Sterne’s Sentimental Journey, Mackenzie’s Man of Feeling; Equiano’s Interesting Narrative; Williams’ Peru; and Brown’s The Power of Sympathy. Alongside these works we will read studies by critics working the seams between affect and cognition, philosophy and literature, rhetoric and science. The course will provide a broad history of the sentimental mode, stretching to reflections on the links between the sentimental and the melodramatic. It will simultaneously attend to the experience of reading for sentiment, to forms of feeling and what those feelings know.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.620. Thinking with Scale: Frameworks in Early Modernity.
Concepts include expansion, crowding, data collection, the miniscule, temporality, the planetary and the cosmic in the first age of European mercantile activity and colonial expansion. With readings from world-systems theory and theories of the anthropocene, our case studies will comprise pre-modern English literary texts, including Milton, Paradise Lost, Anne Bradstreet, The Four Monarchies, early modern science (Hooke, Newton), Defoe, The Storm, and early British and colonial American holdings in the Garrett Library. The class will be hands-on, working with material from Special Collections, and will include working towards a digital project (no digital project background necessary).
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.625. Theory of the Novel.
This course will look at the development of novel theory from the eighteenth century until the present. Authors will include Scott, Barbauld, Dallas, Lewes, Eliot, James, Shklovsky, Tomashevsky, Jakobson, Bakhtin, Lukács, Auerbach, Barthes, Jameson, Girard, Sedgwick, Moretti, Armstrong, Miller, Hale, Lynch, and Woloch. Novelists will likely include Madame de Lafayette, Austen, Goethe, and Wolfe.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.627. Poetry and Performance.
This course will be devoted to the histories and theories of 19th-, 20th-, and 21st-century poetry and performance, beginning with William Wordsworth’s and Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s Lyrical Ballads. Upon hearing the poets read, William Hazlitt remarked that “[t]here is a chaunt in the recitation both of Coleridge and Wordsworth, which acts as a spell upon the hearer, and disarms the judgment.” This early instance of reception history will provide the backdrop for our discussion throughout the semester. Besides Wordsworth and Coleridge, our reading list will include verse, theory, and criticism by Robert Browning, Walt Whitman, T.S. Eliot, James Weldon Johnson, Langston Hughes, William Carlos Williams, Charles Olson, Allen Ginsberg, Norman Pritchard, Amiri Baraka, Tracie Morris, Christian Bök, Lisa Gitelman, Frederich Kittler, Peter Middleton, John M. Picker, Susan Stewart, and others.
Area: Writing Intensive

Today human rights and capabilities are two intertwined concepts. In the early modern period, these were much debated and literature was a key site for the development of these imperfect, variable and contested discourses. Reading literary works from the European tradition, in particular in Europeans’ engagement with dissident groups both within and outside Europe, we will explore themes of embodiment, power, risk, vulnerability and the languages and practices of equivalence and domination in the variable discourses of humanitarianism, natural law, and rights in authors including Shakespeare, Grotius, Montaigne, Hobbes, Milton, Behn, Locke, Swift, Montagu and Defoe.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.629. The History of the Book.
The course will account for the major transformations in the media used for writing from the scroll to the web as well as the rich account of this history and its theorizations.
Area: Writing Intensive
This seminar offers an introduction to a key concept in contemporary critical theory and literary and cultural studies: settler colonialism, understood as a specific form of colonialism focused on the appropriation of land rather than the exploitation of labor and thereby involving the attempted elimination and replacement of indigenous polities and societies by an invading force. The course will have a dual focus: 1) tracing the theoretical distinction of settler colonialism from other forms of colonialism and tracking the critique implicit in this distinction of dominant forms of leftism that arguably presuppose a settler-colonial frame of reference; 2) tracking the history of what James Belich has called the “Anglo settler revolution” of the nineteenth century and engaging in a comparative analysis of the literatures produced in the course of that revolution in what are now Ireland, the United States, Canada, Australia, and elsewhere in the Pacific. We will especially attend to narrative fictions—often (self-) identified as “romances”—that chronicle settlement and register the temporal disruption of indigenous persistence and resistance. Secondary texts may include: Belich, Replenishing the Earth; Glen Coulthard, Red Skin, White Masks; Aileen Moreton-Robinson, The White Possessive; Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, “Decolonization is Not a Metaphor”; Patrick Wolfe, Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology. Primary texts may include: Charles Brockden Brown, Edgar Huntly; S. Alice Callahan, A Child of the Forest; Marcus Clarke, His Natural Life; Susanna Moodie, Roughing It in the Bush; Herman Melville, Typee; Sydney Owenson, The Wild Irish Girl; Simon Pokagon, Ogmíawnkwe Mitigwaki (Queen of the Woods); John Richardson, Wacousta or, The Prophecy; Catharine Maria Sedgwick, Hope Leslie; and the FX television series, Taboo.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.637. Counterfactual Literature.
This course will focus on the formal, affective, ethical, and conceptual issues associated with forking-path texts—poems, fictions and films that openly offer alternative paths to the experience of individuals.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.638. Whitman and the Whitmanian.
This course will take the occasion of the bicentennial of the birth of Walt Whitman as an occasion to think about the legacies of his poetry in American literary history, especially in contemporary poetry. We will read key texts of Whitman’s then move to more recent writing, paying attention to the key scholarship on Whitman from the last few decades, as well as to recent scholarship on poetry that is in dialog with the questions of democracy, capitalism, on the one hand, and form and address, on the other, that have shaped our reading of Whitman and of poetry in the Whitmanian mode.
Area: Writing Intensive

This seminar will provide an intensive introduction to antebellum nineteenth-century U.S. literature by way of tracking a critical formulation foundational to the field of American studies as whole: “the American Renaissance.” Coined by F.O. Matthiessen in 1941, “the American Renaissance” initially referred to a canon of five white male writers (Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Henry David Thoreau, and Walt Whitman) alleged to have produced work of distinction in two interrelated senses—the first specifically “American” literature deserving of academic study. We will follow the fortunes of this critical formulation, tracing how some of the authors in Matthiessen’s canon have subsequently been reinterpreted and repositioned as well as how “the American Renaissance” canon has been expanded and its very conceptualization contested. Primary authors whose work may be examined include William Apess, William Wells Brown, Lydia Maria Child, Frederick Douglass, Emerson, Margaret Fuller, Hawthorne, Harriet Jacobs, Melville, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and the anonymous author of Xicotencatl. Secondary works may include: Matthiessen, The American Renaissance (1941); Reynolds, Beneath the American Renaissance (1988); Michaels and Pease, The American Renaissance Reconsidered (1989); Crews, “Whose American Renaissance?” (1988); Colacurcio, “The American-Renaissance Renaissance” (1991); Avalone, “What American Renaissance?” (1997); Grossman, Reconstituting the American Renaissance (2003); Brickhouse, Transamerican Literary Relations (2004); Fluck, Romance with America (2009); Hager and Marrs, “Against 1865” (2013).
Area: Writing Intensive

How much can you say about a novel? How much of a novel can a critic interpret? The large scale of the novel form seems to resist the interpretive techniques of literary criticism, which look closely at a small number of textual examples. But what if we tried to read every word of a novel, and see it in all its forms: genre, structure, history, politics, biography, and so on? This seminar will look closely at a small number of Victorian novels (probably Dickens’ *David Copperfield* and Eliot’s *Daniel Deronda*, subject to change). We will approach these novels through a variety of theoretical lenses. There will be a special emphasis placed on the relations between form, history, and politics. This seminar will also offer students a chance to apply theories of literature and the novel often considered in abstract.
Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.642. Reading Capital Now.
Since the 2008 financial crash, there’s been rising popular consciousness of capitalism’s crisis-bound character and, therefore, its vulnerability. But finance isn’t the only thing that capitalism has brought to a boiling point: for attentive readers of Marx, the mounting climate disaster, the COVID pandemic, and the struggle for Black Lives have only further highlighted the complex interconnections among our energy and food infrastructures, histories of racist and settler-colonial violence, the patriarchal organization of sexuality, and the maintenance of capitalist profitability no matter the social cost. The aim of this seminar is, first, to show how a thorough reading of the first volume of Marx’s Capital goes a long way toward helping us see all these histories and crises as part of a single, many-faceted dynamic, and, second, to highlight 20th- and 21st-century Marxist work that takes Marx in new directions, from critiques of racial capitalism, colonialism, and the patriarchy of the wage, to studies of climate crisis and the global recomposition of the labor pool. Along with Marx, we’ll read work by WEB DuBois, James Boggs, Silvia Federici, Thiti Bhattacharya, Jairus Banaji, Nikhil Singh, Andreas Malm, the Endnotes collective, James Parisot, and others.
Area: Writing Intensive
AS.060.644. Oceanic Studies & the Black Diaspora.
In this course, we take up Hester Blum’s blunt observation that “the sea is not a metaphor” in order to consider the visions and hopes black writers have associated with the sea, as well as the despair and trauma transatlantic slavery has left “in the wake,” to quote Christina Sharpe. Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.645. What was Literary Character?.
What role did literary character play along the passage from ancient theories of dramatic action to contemporary theories of subjectivity and personhood? What role, specifically, did Shakespearean personhood play in the theorization of literature’s capacity to stage and represent a portable, exemplary “self”? How do group categories of race, gender and class qualify and inflect the ostensive individuation of character outcomes? As test cases, in this course we will consider an array of early modern literary persons from before and after Shakespeare as depicted in poetry, drama and prose: Heywood’s Lucrece, Marlowe’s Tamburlaine, Shakespeare’s Hamlet and Cleopatra, Middleton’s Timon, Molierie’s Alceste, Milton’s Christ and Behn’s Oroonoko. This course will range widely across theorists of literary character and the reader/character relationship, considering Aristotle, Theophrastus, Sir Thomas Overbury, Sigmund Freud, Aaron Kunin, Blakey Vermeule, Toril Moi, Rita Felski, Amanda Anderson, and Thomas Metzinger, among others. Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.649. The Essay Form & Academic Prose.
While we will spend some time with the history and theory of the essay, much of our time will be spent considering the contemporary essay and its forms. Across the past decade, academics have increasingly published essays designed for non-specialists. We’ll study many of them, both as objects of critical attention and of practical value. Writing assignments will include the option to write essays. Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.650. Character Studies.
What are literary characters? Can we imagine literature without them? And how do they relate to questions of form and society? Starting with Aristotle, and moving through 20th- and 21st-century critics such as Lukacs, Barthes, and Woloch. We will pay special attention to the historical relationship between theories of character and approaches to the novel.

AS.060.651. The Sensorium of Reading c. 1800.
This seminar aims to think hard about the embodied reader and the material realm of reading. Our work will position reading less as a strict function of cognition and more as a matter of phenomenology, sensation, and material structures. Though we will attend to question of vision (and loss of vision) we will also highlight other senses: hearing, touch, smell, taste and bodily proprioception. Course materials will include recent studies that link reading and the senses, as well as texts from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century, a moment when the idea of Literature emerged alongside a theorizing of media and mediation, and investigations linking aesthetics and phenomenology. Samuel Taylor Coleridge will be one guide for the seminar, but so will the ballad revival and the literature of abolition. Seminar participants are invited to target other periods and places in their own research projects for the seminar. Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.652. The Time and Space of Capital.
This course will look at the relationship between the logical and historical aspects of Marx’s analysis of capitalism, which special emphasis on key arguments in volumes 2 and 3 of Capitalism. We will ask questions about capital’s use of time and space in the service of accumulation, and read more recent secondary material all term from anti-colonial, feminist, queer, Indigenous, and Black radical traditions, in order to develop a fresh picture of the complex interrelation or different types of oppression and exploitation across capitalist history. Some familiarity with the concepts and argument of Capital, volume 1 will be helpful, but are not required. Area: Writing Intensive

Bringing theological commentary and psychoanalytic diagnosis into conversation with historicism, formalism, sexuality studies and premodern critical race studies, this course uses Edmund Spenser’s “Faire Queene” to re-open the question of hermeneutics. Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.654. The Romance.
This graduate seminar takes a long view of the romance—the genre of literary imagination, par excellence—as originating and recurring in the Anglo world as a crucial technology of settler indigenization on stolen land and also of Indigenous resistance to settler fantasies of realization, from twelfth-century Norman England and Ireland to nineteenth-century North America and Australasia. Texts may include: Geoffrey of Monmouth, History of the Kings of Britain; Wace, Roman de Brut; Catharine Maria Sedgwick, Hope Leslie; Joseph Smith, The Book of Mormon; Mark Twain, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court; Simon Pokagon, Queen of the Woods; Eleanor Catton, The Luminaries. Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.658. 1922 and Its Neighbors.
A course focusing on works published in the _annus mirabilis_ of modernism, 1922, and the years nearby. In addition to reading these texts in detail, we’ll consider what it means to periodize at a granular level and how our primary texts and theoretical readings take up the problem of the neighbor as well as questions of of hospitality, community, social obligation, and domesticity. Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.668. The Slavery Debate in the Atlantic World.
This graduate seminar will trace the historical development of the slavery debate in the Atlantic world through examination of key texts from a host of genres and locations—Quaker religious tracts, political documents like the Haitian Declaration of Independence, Cuban antislavery novels, slave narratives, and “classics” of “American” literature like Melville’s Benito Cereno. Our historical investigations into the rhetorical field of anti- and proslavery will be framed by a theoretical interest in political theology. How might critical reflection on sovereignty, recent and not so recent—from Derrida back to Bodin (widely acknowledged as having provided one of the first philosophical defenses of anti-slavery)—help us recast the intellectual history of the slavery debate and Atlantic radicalism, more generally? Area: Writing Intensive

AS.060.800. Independent Study.
This course is a semester-long independent research course for graduate students. Students will have one-on-one assignments and check-in’s with designated faculty throughout the semester. AS.060.893. Individual Work.
AS.060.894. Independent Reading.