Spring 2027 Graduate Seminars: MFA and PhD

7001.001 Literary Nonfiction: Immersion Journalism

Professor: Joshua Wheeler Meeting: T 3:00-5:50 Location: Allen 202

In this course you'll spend the whole semester immersed in the research, reporting, and writing of a single magazine-style feature story. We'll model our class as a magazine editorial board and you'll develop a feature story from pitch to production. Along the way we'll read deep into the tradition of literary magazine writing and you'll experiment with all the tools and techniques of creative nonfiction.

7006.001 Fiction Writing

Professor: Maurice Ruffin Meeting: Th 12:00-2:50 Location: Allen 202

Writing is such a lovely endeavor, but sometimes it can feel impossible to find a way into a story or novel. As such, I encourage student writers to work with materials that are important to them, themes that stoke their passions, and the courage to confront the blank page. My goal is that writers feel so excited at the end of class they want to run home and get right back to the page. We'll have fun, and you'll create work you're proud of.

7107.001 Prosody and Poetic Forms

Professor: Adam Clay Meeting: T 3:30-6:20 Location: Allen 202

In this forms course, we'll explore docupoetics through our own projects and the poetry of others. We'll consider collections by Victoria Chang, Layli Long Soldier, C.D. Wright, and Tyehimba Jess with the goal of incorporating these writers' approaches in our own creative projects. Students will draft original poems, and we'll critique them in a workshop format. In addition, this is a service-learning required course, and another aspect of the course will involve corresponding with poets at Louisiana State Penitentiary. These interactions will explore docupoetics and involve critique, support, and mentorship. As part of this project, students will also assist these incarcerated writers with assembling a personal archive (digital or otherwise) that can function as an important historical record and inspiration for future writing projects. The

class will culminate with a visit to the penitentiary, where we will take part in a collaborative reading of our work.

7109.001 Forms of Film Writing

Professor: Zack Godshall Meeting: M 3:30-6:20 Location: Allen 202

In this course, we'll become explorers in the realm of the image-makers where the pen becomes a camera and the camera a pen. We'll examine various ways poetry and film have intersected, from the earliest days of cinema until now. Our main focus will be on how filmmakers and writers have included poetry and poetic techniques and concepts in films and film scripts. We'll investigate narrative and documentary films as well as various forms such as experimental film, poetry film, and the videopoem, among others. We'll also look into how poets have written works in response to films. Students will complete a substantial creative project (written with some visual component). This project will be modeled on or in response to material discussed in the course.

7221.001 Postcolonial Theory

Professor: Saumya Lal Meeting: Th 3:00-5:50 Location: Allen 202

In this course, we will explore the central concerns and debates of postcolonial theory. In the first few weeks, we will read foundational works that have defined the field's enduring conversations on colonial discourses, representation, otherness, nationalism, violence, and identity, among other issues. Subsequently, we will examine postcolonial theory's intersections with queer studies, affect studies, ecocriticism, disability studies, war and conflict studies, and digital humanities to consider how these fields speak to each other. Over the course of the semester, we will trace the evolving preoccupations of postcolonial theory through the last few decades and contemplate its future directions.

7222.001 Reading the World and the World: Critical Literacy in Action

Professor: Ashlynn Wittchow Meeting: Th 6:00-9:00 Location: Allen 202

Paulo Freire and Donaldo Macedo (1987) once argued that, although literacy is often understood as a transferable set of skills, it instead functions as a form of cultural politics. This course will introduce students to the sociocultural turn in literacy studies, which instead frames literacy as a situated social practice. Throughout the course, participants will be asked to explore several central questions: What is critical literacy? What are the theoretical foundations of critical literacy practices? How might critical literacy invite us to complicate contemporary literacy "crisis" narratives? Readings will include both literary and theoretical texts, including work from Paulo Freire, Donaldo Macedo, James Paul Gee, Brian Street, Shirley Brice Heath, Maggie Nelson, Gloria Anzaldúa, James Baldwin, and Claudia Rankine. Students will have the opportunity to engage in field-based literacy experiences through an ongoing partnership with Humanities Amped.

7920.001 The Editing Lab

Professor: Pallavi Rastogi Meeting: T 3:00-5:50 Location: Allen 226

This graduate workshop will pilot the Editing Lab at LSU and serve as an introduction to scholarly editing. Through hands-on work with the journal South Asian Review, students will gain experience with the scholarly publishing process, including desk review, peer review, revision and resubmission, copyediting, and proofreading. The course will also provide valuable alt-ac experience for those interested in careers in academic editing and publishing. Regardless of their professional aspirations, all students will learn to reflect on editorial decisions and apply these insights to their own writing, becoming more attentive readers and more adept at revising their own work. Students will also meticulously edit a piece of their own academic prose as a course requirement. The class is open to all English graduate students (PhDs and MFAs) at any stage of their academic programs.

7962.001 Victorian Literature in Migration

Professor: Jessica Valdez Meeting: M 12:30-3:20 Location: Allen 202

The nineteenth century was an age of mass migration. As Josephine McDonagh argues, "migration in this period was a print phenomenon," with the global circulation of print functioning as a "technology of transport" as important as steam. This course examines the interplay between Victorian literature, print culture, and the movement of goods and people

across the British empire and the Atlantic world. How did literature imagine, enable, and theorize movement? What forms did community take, and who was included, excluded, or caught in between? How did the global circulation of people, goods, and print culture affect the development of literary forms? Readings will include theory and criticism by Homi Bhabha, Paul Gilroy, Édouard Glissant, Lisa Lowe, and Raymond Williams, among others, as well as nineteenth-century writers including Charles Dickens, Frederick Douglass, Toru Dutt, Sheridan Le Fanu, Amy Levy, Olive Schreiner, and Mary Seacole. Throughout the course, we will draw upon recent scholarship that challenges the boundaries of "Victorian" literature.

7972.001 Eco-Fiction and the U.S. South

Professor: Brannon Costello Meeting: W 12:30-3:20 Location: Allen 202

This course will consider a selection of works of twentieth- and twenty-first century fiction (mostly prose, a few graphic) in a range of genres that explores environmental issues such as climate change, resource extraction, ecological disasters, and species extinction via their engagement with "the South," broadly and variably defined. How does cultural discourse about the South—often focused on pathology, backwardness, and abjection but also resilience, community, and fecundity—inflect and intersect with discourse about environmental challenges? How has fiction represented environmental racism and the pursuit of environmental justice in the U.S. South, and to what extent are environmental crises in the southeast understood as regionally contained or part of a national or global system? How do traditions of defining and reading "southern literature" shape our interpretations of novels that confront such issues? We'll consider these and a host of other questions. Students can expect to read about a novel per week and to be responsible for a discussion-leading presentation, a series of short analysis essays, a book review assignment, and a final seminar paper including short conference presentation.

7974.001 American Textualities

Professor: Lauren Coats Meeting: T 12:00-2:50 Location: Allen 202

This course will focus on early and nineteenth-century American print cultures: the era of the rise of the novel, the burgeoning periodical press, the expansion of the reading public, and the emergence of new technologies for producing words and images on the page. We'll consider how texts were made, circulated, and read, asking questions about the materiality and technologies of print as well as their content. We'll read literary works, mainly novels as well as magazines and print ephemera, alongside criticism in textual studies, book history, and print culture studies. Readings might include works by Susanna Rowson, Nat Turner, Edgar Allan Poe, Thomas Paine, Sarah Willis (Fanny Fern), John Ledyard, Helen Hunt Jackson and Charles

Chesnutt, as well as nineteenth-century periodicals (such as Godey's Lady's Book, The Broadway Journal, and Harper's), scrapbooks, and other literary matter. To help us explore these texts and the networks they anchor, students may spend some time in the archives (Hill Library) and with digital methods (no prior experience necessary).

7930.001 Dissertation Workshop

Professor: Chris Rovee Meeting: F 12:30-3:20 Location: Allen 202

This workshop will emphasize revision, rewriting, and journal submission. Each participant will select an existing draft of a dissertation chapter and revise it, step-by-step and week-by-week, throughout the semester. The goal is to emerge with a polished and completed chapter that can also be submitted as an article for publication. Along the way, each participant will develop a better feel for their overall project, the conversations to which its arguments belong, and why those arguments matter. Prospective participants should contact the professor for details about the required course workbook and for discount codes to purchase it.