

The following descriptions are for topics courses that are being offered through the Honors College in the Spring 2014. All other descriptions are listed in the Undergraduate Catalog.

Academic Writing

GSW 1120H (3) 4:30-5:45 MW; McGuire Rzicznek

Course # 11587

Relax! It's No Big Deal. Or Is It?

What does relaxation mean? How do we foster a state of relaxation in a society that prides itself on multitasking and never stopping—even on the weekends? Think about it. Sundays used to be a day for lounging; now they are a catch-up day—or better yet a work-ahead day—for homework, laundry, cooking, cleaning, yard work, etc. As a class we'll explore the medical, economical, cultural, and personal benefits of relaxation through rigorous academic and critical research, including scholarly articles, relevant documentaries, and various relaxation techniques—all of which we'll synthesize and use as support in several argumentative essays. At the end of the semester these essays will culminate to create a portfolio of academic writing.

Academic Writing

GSW 1120H (3) 1:30-2:20 MWF; Van Buskirk

Course # 17246

The Literacies, Languages, and Conventions of the Academy: Examining Standards and Debates

Why do so many professors complain that their students are arriving on campus ill-prepared for the rigor of academic work or lacking the foundational knowledge and skills necessary to engage with complex ideas? Why does almost every college student have to take some version of a first-year writing course? What does it mean to be literate? What kind of English qualifies as “academic English,” and who gets to make the determination? What does it mean to be a “native speaker” of English, as opposed to a “non-native speaker” in the context of the university, and what kind of implications might these designations carry? To what extent can language enhance or limit our educational and professional achievements? . . . these are just a few of the questions we will consider, research, discuss, and write in response to in this course. We will explore inter-related and often overlapping debates concerning literacy(ies), language (specifically various forms of English), curriculum design, and the myriad conventions that inform “academic writing.” We will read, write, and argue about the degree to which one’s primary and secondary educations, as well as the discourse(s) an individual acquires, influence one’s opportunities for success in the university. In the process, we will explore how certain linguistic and curricular conventions have come to be valued by the academy, as well as consider who is favored and marginalized by this system.

HUMANITIES

Gendering Narrative

ENG 4230H (3) 6:00-7:15 MW; Haught

Course # 17025

How is language gendered? Raced? Classed? How are the experiences of those marginalized from the dominant culture represented within the dominant culture’s language? This multi-genre course will investigate how language both constructs and negotiates identity. The range of novelists, graphic novelists, storytellers, poets, and performance artists may include Virginia Woolf, Leslie Marmon Silko, Louise Erdrich, Alice Walker, Marjane Satrapi, Alison Bechdel, Alana Troyana (aka “Carmelita Tropicana”), Kate Bornstein, Adrienne Rich, Natasha Trethewey, and Suheir Hammad, to name a few. We will consider critical perspectives from 1970s French feminist theorists (Cixous, Wittig, etc.) to feminist epistemologies (Collins, Anzaldúa, Minh-ha, etc.) to postmodern “disidentifications” (Muñoz).

This course will require close-reading, reading journal, midterm exam, research/analysis essay, and substantive class discussion.

Contemporary British Literature

ENG 4800H (3) 1:00-2:15 TR; Gearhart

Course # 14709

The Contemporary British Novel and the Production of Culture

In the aftermath of the Second World War when promises of opportunity and equality did not materialize, discontent in Britain was rife, as the appearance of the Angry Young Man on the 1950s literary scene confirmed. In the 1980s, however, Margaret Thatcher would extol the immediate postwar period as idyllic, and on this fiction she would build a new empire, one characterized by conservative individualism. Given the recent death of Thatcher, this seems a good time to reexamine Thatcherism, which has been described by Louisa Hadley and Elizabeth Ho as creating “a symbolic

'wound' in the contemporary imagination, a palpable point where things can be said to have irrecoverably changed" (*Thatcher & After* 2010, 2). This course thus takes the Thatcher era as its starting point, examining texts written during and set in the 1980s that deal with issues such as conservatism, consumerism, class, race, homosexuality, growing up and growing older. Keeping in mind Alan Sinfield's assertion that literature does not "rise above" politics but rather actively participates in the formation of culture, we will ask if, as Hadley and Ho suggest, Thatcher was in fact able to silence all forms of resistance to her politics. By moving on to study novels published in the 1990s and 2000s that deal with British identity, particularly in relation to the fall of Empire, we will ask how writers have tended, even if belatedly, to the "symbolic 'wound'" created by Thatcherism and explore what it means to be British in the postwar/Postmodern era. Text to be studied may include Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*, Alan Hollinghurst's *The Line of Beauty*, Martin Amis's *Money*, Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*, Irvine Welsh's *Trainspotting*, James Kelman's *How Late It Was, How Late*, and Graham Swift's *Last Orders*.

Critical Thinking about Great Ideas

HNRS 2020 (3)

8:30-9:45 MW; Steel

Course # 11604

10:30-11:20 MWF; Emery

Course # 11712

11:30-12:45 TR; Browne

Course # 11716

1:00-2:15 TR; Diehl

Course # 11717

2:30-3:45 TR; Diehl

Course # 11720

2:30-3:45 TR; Earley

Course # 11722

10:30-11:45 MW; Jones

Course # 14778

11:30-12:45 TR; McManus

Course # 15878

10:00-11:15 MW; Steel

Course # 16977

2:30-3:45 TR; Sover

Course # 16978

This course is required for first year students in the spring semester.

This course will focus upon analysis and integration of ideas related to the following: Judeo-Christian thought, Greek Humanism, Markets, Democracy, and Feminism. Questions addressed will include: What makes these areas of thought "great ideas?" What assumptions underlie these ideas? How do these ideas relate to each other? to contemporary issues? The course will emphasize active thinking and discussion, readings from primary sources (many "classics"), and frequent writing. *Required Spring semester for first-year students.*

SPECIAL SEMINARS

School Choice: What are the Real Options?

HNRS 3000 (2) 9:30-11:15 M; Myers

Course # 17410

This course will be a discussion based study of the variety of choices for pre-kindergarten-12 grade students with the purpose of engaging students in becoming aware of the different types of education found today in the United States. The course would look at public education, private schools, charter (community) schools, on-line education and home schooling, and would consist of comparing, contrasting, and evaluating each type of educational system. The readings will involve current articles from newspapers such as the New York Times, as well as articles from other publications. One course requirement might be to create a hypothetical charter school based on current Ohio requirements as well as creating a public education school district. The course will be discussion based with research involved.

Effective Oral Persuasion

HNRS 3000 (3) 1:00-2:15 TR; Browne

Course # 15802

This course will focus on communicative effectiveness-oral communication. Oral communication, like any skill, benefits from models and practice. We will spend a lot of the first two weeks observing people like Elizabeth Warren and multiple televangelists in search of the skills and attitudes that make them effective with their particular audiences. The course will center our attention on energy and likeability as essential skills to effective persuasion. These are the kinds of attributes that academics ignore at their peril. Much of this course is in antagonism to Plato's claim that "truth need not come dressed in fancy garb." If one wants to get her supposed truth across to the audience, she had better follow Aristotle's first chapter of Rhetoric and make contact with the audience. (An interesting note here is that meta-analyses

of student evaluation scores done using factor analysis demonstrate over and over that one factor swamps the other relevant factors in determining high student evaluation –ENERGY.)

We will tape every participant before and after the course to memorialize for the students their growth as oral communicators.

Statistical Thinking in Sports

HNRS 3000 (1) 11:30-12:20 M; Albert

Course # 13038

This special topics course will introduce statistical concepts within the context of interesting questions in sports. We will read articles on rating the performance of players and teams, the existence of the “hot-hand” in basketball, baseball, and hockey, predicting the outcomes of games, and understanding the significance of unusual outcomes such as a perfect game in baseball. It is helpful, but not necessary, for the student to have some background in statistics at the introductory level.

Sherlock Holmes in Adaptation

HNRS 4000 (2) 9:30-11:15 M; Diehl

Course # 12096

Since his first appearance in print in 1887, the classic detective of Sherlock Holmes has inspired a wealth of literary, television, and filmic adaptations; in fact, *The Guinness Book of World Records* has consistently listed Sherlock as “the most portrayed movie character,” with more than 70 actors playing the role in over 200 films to date. This special topic seminar will begin with an in-depth study of the Sherlock “canon”—the four major novels and collection of short stories by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Then, we will turn our attention to a selection of the many literary, television, and filmic adaptations of the classic detective—from screening episodes of the BBC series *Sherlock* and Fox’s *House*, to reading graphic novels (e.g., *Sherlock Holmes: Year One*) and examples of “literary fiction” (e.g., *Good Night, Mr. Holmes* and *The Beekeeper’s Apprentice*), to viewing anime adaptations (e.g., *Sherlock Hound*), and screening both independent and mainstream film adaptations (e.g., *They Might Be Giants* and *Without a Clue*). At the center of our investigation into the figure of Sherlock Holmes will be a series of interrelated questions regarding the politics and poetics of adaptation: In what ways is the figure of Sherlock Holmes shaped and determined by the socio-historical and politico-cultural moment within which an adaptation of his story is produced? In what ways has the figure of Sherlock Holmes remained consistent across a variety of representations of the Arthur Conan Doyle legend? In what ways has the Arthur Conan Doyle “canon” been violated and what do those violations reveal about the historical moment and the specific cultures against which those violations occur? Students who enroll in this seminar will be required to attend regularly-scheduled (usually bi-weekly), out-of-class screenings of film and television adaptations.

Zen and the Art of Everyday Life

HNRS 4000 (1) 4:00-5:00 M; Morgan-Russell and Dickinson

Course # 17633

This seminar examines the basic philosophical underpinnings of Zen Buddhism, its historical development as a school of Mahayana Buddhism and its influence on contemporary cultural and artistic practices. We will look at practices and forms such as the Japanese tea ceremony, poetry and haiku, music, yoga, painting and Beat writing among others, as well as Zen’s manifestation as a practice for everyday living.

Zen is famously described as a “special transmission outside [the] scriptures, not founded on words or letters,” and our goal is therefore not only to understand Zen conceptually, but to emphasize the *experiential* component of Zen’s practical expression in the arts as well as in such mundane activities as eating, cleaning, walking and, of course, sitting meditation (zazen).

How can we “understand”—and best of all *experience*—a practice that flourishes at precisely those moments when the limits of conceptual thinking are reached? This is our challenge, and our course objective!