V41.0180 Writing New York
This course examines the evolution of New York City as a literary construct as well as the city's emergence and continual reinvention as one of the country's – and the world's – premiere sites of literary and cultural production. Beginning with the earliest New York theaters in the eighteenth century and continuing to the present, we will examine a range of drama, fiction, non-fiction, and poetry that reveal a variety of New York experiences. -Patell and Waterman

V41.0200 Literary Interpretation
Introduction to the interpretation of literary texts. Teaches the student to talk and write about literature. Through study of the various forms of poetry, the short story, the novel, and the drama, students develop a critical language and approach appropriate to the experience of each work. Required of all English majors.

(sections 001, 003, 005) This course is an introduction to the English major. Our primary intention is to help students develop the critical tools necessary for becoming perceptive readers of literary texts and writers of critical papers. We will use our time in the classroom to discuss and analyze a broad spectrum of texts belonging to various genres and historical periods. As we read, we will pay special attention to formal and structural elements of the texts, without losing sight of broader theoretical and thematic contexts. Discussions will familiarize students with literary terms and tropes, and multiple assignments will be designed to help them use this critical vocabulary effectively in their writing.

The course is divided into three sections: poetry, prose and drama. The poetry section will include authors ranging the gamut from Robert Browning to Allen Ginsburg. We will also read shorter fiction from Herman Melville, James Baldwin, Virginia Woolf, Raymond Carver, and Ernest Hemingway. We will read longer fiction from Nathanael West, Jamaica Kincaid, and F. Scott Fitzgerald. We will conclude with Shakespeare’s King Lear. This course assumes no previous experience with the English major—enthusiasm is the only prerequisite. Rosen / Larose

(sections 006, 008) This course will explore the variety of possible ways to read a given text, and the scope of different meanings that are created from various approaches to reading. We will concentrate on a few fictional works: Charles Dickens’ Great Expectations, a few examples of Tennyson’s poetry, and Oscar Wilde’s The Importance of Being Earnest. The small amount of fictional reading required will permit us to examine these works in depth, using radically different reading methods to create meaning, and to examine what it means to create meaning out of a fictional work. We will explore reading methods that construct a literary work as timeless or as historically time-bound, as psychoanalytic or as authorless, as deconstructive or as molded by genre. We will also consider how each method imposes certain constraints or limitations upon our experiences of the texts. Thus, this course will include an important combination of class discussions and informal responses to each text as well as formal paper assignments that build from several drafts throughout the course of the semester, as an opportunity not just to develop the necessary skills and vocabulary of an English major, but also to explore what may be lost or gained by presenting and molding our reading experiences in and through the written formats required by our discipline. Nash
V41.0210.001  British Literature I
This course is designed to give you a sense of the breadth of the British literary tradition from Beowulf to the Restoration. By the end of the term, you should be able not only to understand the transformations, developments, challenges, and competitions that make up early British literary history, but you should be able to pick up just about any work, whether poetry, prose, or drama, in ANY PERIOD of British literature and be able to understand something new about it. Understanding the literary past is key to being ready to say something intelligent about the literary present. Over the course of this semester, we hope to introduce you to texts you never even thought you would want to read, and to teach you to experience them as fully as possible—aesthetically, historically, culturally, and critically. -Starr

V41.0220.001  British Literature II
Survey of English literature from the Restoration to the 20th century. Close reading of representative works with attention to the historical, intellectual, and social contexts of the period. Recitation required. Lockridge

V41.0230.001  American Literature I
This course is a survey of the major texts of American literature from the European invasion and the colonial period through the beginning of the US American Civil War. Some of the issues on which we will focus include the textual representations of the early inter-cultural encounters in the New World between Native American, European, and African cultures; the cultural and literary diversity of the various colonial regions of the early Americas with regard to religion, ethnicity, class, and gender; the formation and contestation of national ideologies and literary nationalism; the literary response to the expansion of slavery and capitalism in the nineteenth century; and the rise of American imperialism on the eve of the Civil War. Assignments include two 5-7 page papers (25% each); participation to discussions in the section meetings and short in-class response exercises (15%); a mid-term (15%), and a final exam (20%). The following texts will be on order at the NYU Bookstore and must be purchased: The Norton Anthology of American Literature, vols. A and B. Additional materials will be made available via the on-line course syllabus at http://homepages.nyu.edu/~rb137/teach/0230/home.html -Bauer

V41.0320.001  Colloquium: Chaucer
Introduction to Geoffrey Chaucer’s major poetry, with particular attention to The Canterbury Tales. Chaucer’s language and versification are studied briefly but intensively so that students are able to read his 14th-century London dialect with comprehension and pleasure. Special critical attention is given to his narrative skills, methods of characterization, wide range of styles and forms, and other rhetorical strategies. Students are also encouraged to explore Chaucer’s artistry as a reflection of late medieval social and cultural history.

V41.0411.001  Shakespeare II
In this survey of the latter half of Shakespeare’s career as a playwright we will consider the relation between the genres of his plays (festive and problem comedy, tragedy, romance) and the social and political conditions that shaped his developing sense of dramatic form. Critical analysis of the plays as both performances and written works will form the fabric of this course; the connection of drama to its culture will be its guiding thread. We will discuss at least eight plays, including: Twelfth Night, Measure for Measure, King Lear, Othello, and The Winter’s Tale. The requirements include two essays, a midterm exam, a final exam, and consistent attendance. -Archer

V41.0415.001  Colloquium: Shakespeare
Explores the richness and variety of Shakespearean drama through an intensive study of selected major plays. Approximately six to eight plays are read intensively and thoroughly examined in class.
V41.0515.001  Colloquium: Pope and Swift
Jonathan Swift and Alexander Pope, the leading writers in England's so-called "Augustan Age" (the first half of the 18th century), were great friends, correspondents, and collaborators. But they were very different kinds of writers, and sometimes drew attention to their differences. The assumption of the seminar is that we can understand these two writers better if we read their works side by side, and even as a kind of continuing conversation with each other. Each might be said to write with the other one in mind, both as ideal reader, and as fellow writer who prompts a response, often a corrective one. The syllabus is organized about a series of topics: the young Pope and Swift as candidates for literary fame; reading couplets and decoding satire; mock-forms; satires on women; praise of women; satire and money; satire and human pride; the satirist’s apologia; the satirist’s farewell; satire and the state of poetry. The course will focus on the distinctive ways in which Pope and Swift conceive of the satirist’s responsibility and the satirist’s art, and on the strikingly different relationships that each satirist sets up with his readers. –Griffin

V41.0565.001  Colloquium: 19th Century American Writers: Hawthorne
This course is a study of Hawthorne's stories and book-length romances. We will pay particular attention to the fiction's representation of an earlier American past as well as its engagement with political, theological, and philosophical debates of its own moment. We will also take time to examine Hawthorne's literary influences and his impact on later writers. Primary materials will include Fanshawe, The Scarlet Letter, The House of the Seven Gables, The Blithedale Romance, The Marble Faun, Twice-Told Tales, and Mosses from an Old Manse. Secondary materials will include a biography, historical documents, and selected literary criticism.-Baker

V41.0605.001  British Novel in the 20th Century
The modern novel in English, with a transatlantic perspective. Coverage includes the early modernism of Hardy, Conrad, and James; the High Modernism of Joyce, Woolf, and Mansfield; and the American modernism of Cather, Hemingway, and Chandler.-Meisel

V41.0606.001  20th Century British Literature
This historically-inflected survey of contemporary British fiction will cover a broad range of texts spanning science fiction, graphic novels, artists’ books and children’s stories. Writers to be studied include Alan Moore, China Mieville, Alex Garland and JG Ballard. We will pay close attention to the relationship between literature and visual arts, newspaper culture and public broadcasting. There will be extensive use of independent and dance musics, as well as of documentaries and cine-essays. Topics to be explored include the growing popularity of life writing, the blurring of the gap between fiction and non-fiction, the turn to landscape, and the poetics of obsession. Others: the history of post-war travel, sport, urbanism, migration, stalking, comedy. -Sandhu

V41.0607.001  Contemporary British Literature and Culture
How have British writers responded to the end of empire, Cold War, economic decline and radical changes in racial and sexual politics? This course offers an introduction to contemporary British fiction in an era of profound political and economic change and social upheaval. We will explore novels, poetry and film profoundly influenced by the shadow of war, by immigration from the former colonies, by dramatic shifts in gender relations and sexuality, by class conflict and deindustrialization, environmental catastrophe, and by the potential break up of Britain. Caught between an ambivalent special relationship with America and a technocratic European superstate, how has British culture adapted to its uneasy geopolitical position? How does a nation so obsessed with images of its past traditions remain at the cutting edge of music and popular culture? What is Britain’s position in the global cultural economy? We will examine a range of avant-garde, postcolonial and popular texts which challenge received notions of Englishness. Particular attention will be paid to the interaction between literature and other cultural forms such as cinema, popular music and sport. Readings may be drawn from the work of Bowen, Orwell, Waugh, Beckett, Selvon, Lessing, Spark, Naipaul, Burgess, Ballard, Rushdie, Carter, Amis, Smith, and Ishiguro.-Deer
V41.0626.001  Langston Hughes and Ernest Hemingway
This course will examine representative works by these two significant figures in twentieth-century American literature. As we consider the aesthetic and philosophical relationship between these writers, our readings will be drawn largely (but not exclusively) from two time periods: (1) the mid-1920s, which saw the publication of Hughes’s first two volumes of poetry, as well as Hemingway’s The Sun Also Rises and his early stories; (2) the late 1930s, particularly Hughes and Hemingway’s response to the Spanish Civil War. We will also examine the incendiary poems that caused Hughes to be subpoenaed before Joseph McCarthy’s House Subcommittee on Un-American Activities. In the 2004 presidential campaign, Sen. John Kerry adopted as his slogan Hughes’s poem “Let America Be America Again.” In the same spirit, we will question how the work of Hughes and Hemingway may apply to our times: are these texts literary artifacts, or do Hughes’s racial, political, and social views speak to our twenty-first-century reality? Can Hemingway’s observations about men at war inform us today? Class sessions will be conducted as a discussion, not a lecture. Requirements include regular attendance and active, informed class participation, weekly responses on the readings, and a 7-9 pp. paper.

V41.0635.001  American Fiction 1900-1945
American fiction in this period embodies the variety and anxiety of an era of rapid change. How writers and critics attempted to define and respond to the idea of the “new” or the “transformed” illuminates specific works of literary art and the cultural contexts in which they were created. In literary practice and critical discourse, passages from realism to naturalism to modernism and the reinvention of forms in an era of variety and synthesis help shape the imagination of domestic and political reality. Through readings in fiction and selected critical essays, this course explores an aesthetic of change forged by working artists and analyzed by critics. The course is intended as a survey of forms and practices with an emphasis on modernism and contemporary, eclectic style. Hendin

V41.0964.001  Topics in Emergent Literature: Racial Transformations in American Literature
How do we imagine an American subject who is neither black nor white? Asian Americans and Latina/os constitute the two most quickly growing minority populations in the U.S. Yet our critical and popular paradigms for thinking about race and ethnicity in the U.S. often remain tied to discourses of whiteness and blackness. What types of “transformations” might the emergence of Asian American and Latina/o voices in artistic and political forums index? This seminar will explore representations of racial and national formation and cultural citizenship in prose/narrative works by Asian American and Latina/o authors from the twentieth century. We will also read selections of contemporary cultural criticism in race theory and ethnic studies so as to develop a contextual framework for our discussions. We will consider how conditions of labor, immigration, racialization, sexuality, literary and aesthetic production, empire, panethnicity, diaspora and transnationalism, and civil and human rights discourse provide opportunities and limits for articulating an emergent American subject.

V41.0712.001  Major Texts in Critical Theory
In this course we study key texts in critical theory from Plato to Derrida. The first half of the course focuses on four major types of critical theory: mimetic, ethical, expressive, and formalist. The second half turns to 20th-century critical schools—such as Russian and American formalism, archetypal criticism, structuralism, psychoanalytic criticism, feminism, reader theory, deconstruction, and historicism.

V41.0724.001  Italian American Life
Italian American writers have expressed their heritage and their engagement in American life in vivid fiction or poetry that reflects their changing status and concerns. From narratives of immigration to current work by "assimilated" writers, the course explores the depiction of Italian American identity. Addressing and challenging stereotypes, the course explores depictions in film and television as well as the changing family relationships, sexual mores, and political and social concerns evident in fiction and poetry. Situating the field of Italian American Studies in the context of contemporary ethnic studies, this course highlights its contribution to American literature. Hendin
V41.0735.001 Readings in Contemporary Literary Theory: Emergency, Dictatorship, Coup

Why has the so-called Third World been witness to so many authoritarian regimes, military coups and states of emergencies? How have such situations been narrated and imagined in literature and film? And what can these representations offer us in terms of understanding the challenges faced by new nations emerging from colonialism? In this course, we will read a range of literature (and view one or two films) in order to tackle such questions. Starting with Kafka’s eerily prophetic tale, “In the Penal Colony”, we will read texts that deal with: the rise of authoritarian regimes (V. S. Naipaul), everyday life under states of emergency (Hou Hsiao Hsien, Rohinton Mistry, Jessica Hagedorn), allegories of political collaboration (Yi Munyol), psychological formations of dictators and colonial elites (Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Pramoedya Ananta Toer), and experiences of political oppression and incarceration (Ngugi wa Thiong’o, Ken Saro-wiwa). While we read these literatures for their conceptualisations of power and insights into lived experience under dictatorships, we will also consider how the aesthetic may theorize alternative forms of political action or struggle. Primary texts will be supplemented by historical, theoretical and political readings where necessary. -Watson

V41.0906.001 Junior Honors Seminar

Since the seminar is intended to give students with various interests practice in working on a longer paper in anticipation of the senior thesis, it will not be restricted to a single period or genre. We will be looking at what can be broadly described as transformations or in some cases hybrid formations. We will do this by looking at paired texts from different periods that have some of the same thematics. The pairs are general themes:

*Frankenstein* and Richard Powers, *Galatea* 2.2 Human creation of sentient beings.

*Alice in Wonderland*/Through the Looking Glass and Stoppard’s *Arcadia* Innocence / precocity and the sentimental sexualization of childhood.


Imperialism and the invention of the English detective. Kipling, *Kim* and Tagore, Gora Hybridity, identity and the Raj. Chandler, *The Big Sleep* book and film and Miller, *That Yellow Bastard* and the film Sin City. Gender Boundaries of the American private eye / film adaptation. The last class will be devoted to the presentation of drafts of the term paper. Everyone will get feedback on their draft before the final paper is due. –Spear

V41.0925/0926 Senior Honors Thesis/Colloquium

To complete the honors program, the student must write a thesis under the supervision of a faculty director in this individual tutorial course. The student chooses a topic (normally at the beginning of the senior year) and is guided through the research and writing by weekly conferences with the thesis director. Students enrolled in the thesis course are also expected to attend the non-credit colloquium for thesis-writers (V41.0926). Consult the assistant director of undergraduate studies for honors concerning the selection of a topic and a thesis director. Information about the length, format, and due date of the thesis is available on the department’s website.

xV41.0950.001 Medieval Mystics: Margery Kempe In Her Contexts

This course will take as its central concern the *Book of Margery Kempe*, the extraordinary fifteenth-century spiritual autobiography that describes Margery’s mystical experiences as well as the more earthbound elements of her busy life. In what ways can mystical experiences be said to be made of or by books? We will read works Margery read (listened to) and works that can be argued to have structured her own life, including saints’ lives, devotional works, and mystical treatises. Surrounding the *Book* with other relevant texts, we will also read documents concerning heresy, household letters, and medical treatises on women’s problems. Expect long readings, in both Middle English and modern English translation. Some experience in reading the Middle English language (in Brit Lit 1 or equivalent) is a prerequisite for the course. Seminar members in groups of two will be required to choose a major text on the syllabus and become experts on it, particularly on its relation to the *Book of Margery Kempe*. A seminar presentation on this research will be required, as well as a short paper early in the semester and a final 12-15-page paper on a topic developed in consultation with the instructor.-Dinshaw
V41.0953.001  Topics: 18th-Century British
Computer technology and the electronic "hypertext" it makes possible are changing the experience of reading, the nature of what is read, and even, arguably, ourselves as readers. As we work to predict the long-term consequences of these changes, it is helpful to investigate parallel moments in history when new technologies of reading seemed at once to offer new democratic opportunities and to threaten traditional forms of social interaction and ways of life. This course will examine the implications of the spread of printing after the collapse of government censorship in 1695. The eighteenth century saw the development of a "literary marketplace" where authors of diverse backgrounds sold their works to publishers for pay (a phenomenon some contemporaries satirized as "Grub Street"); it also saw the development of new literary genres (novels, periodicals, daily newspapers) and reading audiences (especially women and other disenfranchised groups). Scholars today are working to understand the significance of these changes: is it a coincidence, for instance, that we can trace the origins of secular feminism and working class movements to this period? The spread of print had consequences for the study of English literature; indeed, the concept of "English Literature" itself can be traced to this period when the publication of affordable libraries of "classic" authors contributed to the formation of a national literary canon. We will work to understand these developments by reading a variety of texts including poetry, fiction, drama, biography, and essays by authors such as John Milton, Daniel Defoe, Elinor James, Joseph Addison, Richard Steele, Henry Fielding, Alexander Pope, Samuel Johnson, and Jane Austen as well as twentieth-century theorists of orality and literacy, print culture, and related concerns. A special hands-on session held in the Fales Library and Special Collections of Bobst Library will allow students to examine original copies of eighteenth-century texts in order to employ the evidence of historical artifacts in their own oral and written projects. - McDowell

V41.0955.001  Topics: 20th-Century British Literature: Modern War Literature and Culture
What impact has war had on twentieth century literature and culture? How have writers struggled to create during wartime in the face of censorship, propaganda, trauma and the technologies of violence? This course examines representations of modern warfare in a range of British and American novels, poems, and films. We will chart the transformations and mutations of war culture from the era of colonial warfare, total warfare during the First World War, the Spanish Civil War, through the “People’s War” of World War Two, the apocalyptic imaginary of Cold War, guerilla warfare and counterinsurgency, to the high tech claims of “postmodern warfare.” Focusing in particular on questions of gender, imperialism and resistance, we will read novels, poetry, memoirs, military writings and theoretical texts. The course will also include discussions of film and popular culture. Readings may include the work of Conrad, Sassoon and Owen, Ford, Brittain, Woolf, West, Hemingway, T.E. Lawrence, Orwell, Bowen, Warner, Greene, O’Brien, Ondaatje, Amis, Swofford, and Barker. - Deer

V41.0964.001  Topics in Emergent Literature: Racial Transformations in American Literature
How do we imagine an American subject who is neither black nor white? Asian Americans and Latina/os constitute the two most quickly growing minority populations in the U.S. Yet our critical and popular paradigms for thinking about race and ethnicity in the U.S. often remain tied to discourses of whiteness and blackness. What types of “transformations” might the emergence of Asian American and Latina/o voices in artistic and political forums index? This seminar will explore representations of racial and national formation and cultural citizenship in prose/narrative works by Asian American and Latina/o authors from the twentieth century. We will also read selections of contemporary cultural criticism in race theory and ethnic studies so as to develop a contextual framework for our discussions. We will consider how conditions of labor, immigration, racialization, sexuality, literary and aesthetic production, empire, panethnicity, diaspora and transnationalism, and civil and human rights discourse provide opportunities and limits for articulating an emergent American subject. - Parikh
**V41.0970.001**  **Topics: Critical Theory: The Poetics and Politics of Literacy**
What are reading and writing for? How does one's socialization as a reader and writer or as a speaker and performer shape one's way of being in the world? What is the relationship between power and literacy? We will approach these and other questions by thinking about the poetics of literacy—that is, the tropes and images that transmit literacy and the ways in which literature both embodies and shapes our literacy practices. We will think as well about the politics of literacy: What institutions are mobilized or structured for literacy’s sake, with what consequences? Reading across history and culture, with a special emphasis on literacy in the U.S., we will think about inscription and exclusion, institutions and disciplines of literacy and literature, about race and schooling, and about the possibilities for renewed or revolutionary literacies. Literary readings will likely include Plato’s *Phaedrus*, selections from Homer’s *The Iliad* and Ovid’s *Metamorphosis*, Poe’s "The Purloined Letter," Douglass’s *Narrative*, Kafka’s *In the Penal Colony*, Churchill’s *Mad Forest* (which we will also see in performance); theoretical readings will likely include works by Bourdieu, De Certeau, Derrida, Finnegan, Foucault, Freire, Goody, Ong, Sarris, Street. Assignments will include frequent short exercises which will involve engaging with the literacy environment of New York City; a literacy autobiography; and a final essay.

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**V41.0972.001**  **Topics: Gothicism and Science Fiction**
In the 18th century, Gothic novels were the genre of possibility, a site for renegotiating the "real." Science fiction has been fiction under pressure--pressure to use the future to do the same thing for us. But what genre can rise to reality today if, as William Gibson argues, "we have no future because the present is too volatile"? Possible Gothic texts include Walpole’s *Castle of Otranto*, Radcliffe’s *The Castles of Athlyn and Dunblane*, Austen’s *Northanger Abbey*, Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, and Stoker’s *Dracula*. Possible SF texts include *Moving Mars* and *Darwin’s Children* by Greg Bear, the Manifold series by Stephen Baxter, the Dune Chronicles by Frank Herbert, and *Neuromancer* and *Pattern Recognition* by William Gibson.

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**V41.0972.002**  **Genre Studies: Folklore and Literature, the Oral and the Written Tradition**
From the origins of language and narrative in creation myths, national epics, ancient drama, folktales, ballads, and the periodic revivals of native lore, we shall consider the nature, function, and character of oral expression, its relation to writing, its survival through history, and its influence on literature. On the literary side, we shall consider the origins of writing, its purposes, how it relates to and completes oral forms. For texts, we treat the familiar in new ways: Homer, Greek drama, Genesis, Ovid, *The Canterbury Tales*, *Don Quixote*, the Brothers Grimm, Robin Hood and the Arthurian Cycles in England, Wordsworth, Sir Walter Scott, Hans Christian Andersen, American frontier tales, Lewis Carroll, and the dramatic version of Peter Pan, which recaptures the whole history of literacy and the many issues of oral expression. Along with texts, from runes to hypertext, we consider ritual performances such as parades, holiday feasts, costumes, and rites of passage such as graduation with which the course concludes. The course serves several purposes: First, it provides a new perspective on great literary works and on the history of literary expression from ancient times to the present, from the most elite to nursery tales and popular culture. Secondly, it includes a study of language, how it evolves and the purposes it serves. Third, it is inter-disciplinary, introducing concepts from linguistics, anthropology, sociology, law, and aesthetics. This course is challenging but rewarding, a mighty summing up of many things with which students are familiar and a preparation for a life of letters. Requirements include a familiarity with World and British literature, successful completion of Con. West. or its equivalent, successful completion of Brit. Lit. I and II, weekly attendance, enthusiastic participation, an absolute commitment of ten hours each week of preparation including a brief weekly paper or response questions.
Experiments in Realism: World Literature in English

This course will consider Anglophone novels from India and Africa, in particular those that confirm and challenge basic structures of realist narrative. Largely considered within the parameters of postcolonial literature, many of these novels are read as national allegories; criticism often focuses on the details of socio-historical context and the central issues of decolonization, nationalism and neocolonialism. In this course we will pay particular attention to questions of aesthetics and form. What is meant by the term realism and what does it offer, both politically and aesthetically, to the writer? What kind of narrative strategies do these novels present that challenge some of the fundamental premises of realist literature? Some texts we may consider: V.S. Naipaul’s A House for Mister Biswas, Rohinton Mistry’s A Fine Balance, Mulk Raj Anand’s Coolie, Ayi Kwei Armah’s The Beautiful Ones are Not Yet Born, Salman Rushdie’s Midnight’s Children, Arundhati Roy’s A God of Small Things, Ngugi wa Thiong’o’s Matigari. This class will be discussion based and students will write one long analytical research paper and 2 book reviews.- Gajarawala