V41.0710  Film as Literature
The aim of this course is to study the relationship between the American novel and the cinema and the effect of the relationship on ways in which students in this visual age perceive the novel. The class will examine the possibilities and problems of adaptations, with emphasis on the importance of reading originals despite the widespread access to film versions.

The method will be to assign five novels to be read and to show in class the corresponding films based on the works. There will be classroom analysis of each medium and comparisons enabling the student to measure the extent to which the original is compromised or fulfilled. Inherent in the discussions will be the broader topic of the overall relationship between cinema and literature.


The corresponding films to be shown will be Sidney Lumet’s “Daniel,” Elia Kazan’s “The Last Tycoon,” Steven Spielberg’s “The Color Purple,” Alan Pakula’s “Sophie’s Choice” and George Stevens’ “A Place in the Sun.”

Wolf

V41.0200  Literary Interpretation
This course introduces essential literary critical skills and concepts for the English major. Students will practice the slow, careful reading that is the basis of interpretation, considering the many ways that literature produces meanings. Reading across a variety of poetic, prose, and dramatic genres, we will try to understand how texts work and how our discipline has developed ways of understanding—analyzing, theorizing, researching—them. Students will also write critical analyses of literary texts, developing their interpretations in formal papers. Farina/Holbrook

V41.0210  British Literature I
Although those who do not understand literary history are probably not doomed to repeat it, comprehending the literary past is an essential part of formulating something intelligent to say about the literary present. This course is designed to give you a broad sense of the literary tradition in Britain from the Anglo-Saxon period (8th century) to the English Civil War (mid-17th century). Among the many texts we’ll be reading are the epics Beowulf and John Milton’s Paradise Lost, Arthurian tales Sir Gawain & the Green Knight and Thomas Malory’s Morte Darthur, the plays Mankind and Christopher Marlowe’s Doctor Faustus, and poems from William Shakespeare, John Donne, Mary Wroth, Edmund Spenser & Philip Sidney. In addition to regularly attending and participating in class, you will be expected to write several short response papers and deliver two in-class presentations.

V41.0220  British Literature II
This course is designed as an intensive introduction to major works in British literature from the Restoration through the twentieth-century. It seeks to introduce students to many of the key genres of literary production during this period, including poetry, prose, non-fiction and drama. As the course progresses, we will strive to situate our readings within both their historical moment and within a larger narrative about British literary history roughly the 1680’s through the twentieth century.-Miller

V41.0230  American Literature I
This course will provide a broad survey of the texts, concepts, and authors that have informed and participated in the production of American literary culture, from the period of the earliest colonial missions through the eve of the Civil War. We will examine the roles played by textual production in the creation of a New World of contested contact zones, a range of their colonial enterprises and community formations, a revolutionary idea and polity, a nascent national culture, and finally the politically contentious and aesthetically effulgent explosion of texts called the “American Renaissance.” Along the way, we will consider a number of conceptual schemas and belief systems, such as Calvinist religious faith, Enlightenment science and ethics, the rhetorics of sentiment and domesticity, and Transcendentalist philosophies of art and citizenship. Students will read a number of texts generally recognized as classics of American literature—Franklin’s Autobiography, Douglass’s Narrative of the Life, Hawthorne’s The
Scarlet Letter—as well as an array of marginally canonical texts, ranging from Native American oral narratives, to Lemuel Haynes’s anti-slavery sermons, to Toussaint L’Ouverture’s political writings. Evaluation of students’ progress will include several short written exercises, a longer essay, and a cumulative final exam. Owens

V41.0400  Renaissance in England—CANCELLED
This course introduces literature of the English Renaissance (roughly 1500-1660). We will concentrate our efforts on significant literary genres such as the sonnet, drama, and epic, but will not neglect prose writings in philosophy and theory. This is a survey course and so has no particular theme. However, we will try to put the literature into historical context by considering political, religious and scientific developments. We will think about the period as being marked by both the rebirth of classical learning and the birth of the early modern era.

V41.0412  Shakespeare and Elizabethan Theatre
This course will examine eight of Shakespeare's most famous plays and contextualize them with other works of drama of the late 16th and early 17th century, including revenge tragedies, history plays, city comedies, and Jacobean melodrama. In reading Shakespeare's plays against the work of other dramatists of the period, we will come to a greater understanding of the rich variety of Elizabethan drama and of the dynamics of influence in place in the early modern theaters. Among the non-Shakespearean dramatists we will read are Thomas Kyd, Christopher Marlowe, and John Webster. Harlan

V41.0640  American Fiction Since WWII
This course provides a brief survey of some of the major narrative modes and thematic concerns of American fiction produced since the Second World War. To call the six decades of U.S. history that have passed since the end of that conflict “tumultuous” would understate the force and velocity of change: among other things, those decades saw the rise of the Civil Rights movement and the counter-cultural New Left; war in Korea, Viet Nam, and the Persian Gulf, and smaller-scale conflicts in El Salvador, Grenada, Panama, and elsewhere; the ascendancy of Reaganite conservatism; the end of the Cold War and the proclamations of a globalized New World Order. The immense variety of stories and novels composed and published during that time matches this frenetic, sometimes violent, sometimes beautiful range of historical experience. The compressed nature of the summer intensive will make difficult for us to mount a comprehensive survey of that variety. Instead, we will examine the notions of national affiliation and genre implicit in the formulation “American fiction,” and, through rigorously focused narrative and aesthetic analysis of stylistically idiosyncratic texts, we will interrogate the assumptions that underwrite those notions. Some of the issues we will engage: How (and how well) do fictive texts capture the complexity of the American national scene? How do text’s narrative strategies and techniques function, and why should we account for them? Most important, why should we read fictions, when reality is already so strange? Major texts on the syllabus will include Vladimir Nabokov’s Pale Fire, Ishmael Reed’s Mumbo Jumbo, and Louise Erdrich’s Love Medicine; we will also read some shorter fiction and a select few pieces of literary criticism and cultural theory.

V41.0728  Science Fiction
In this summer course we will be making a text-based study of the science fiction genre (focusing on short stories and novels rather than film & TV). Concentrating on American SF of the past century, we will explore the significant periods/modes/movements of SF (e.g., the Golden Age, hard SF, cyberpunk). A series of fundamental questions will guide our study: What is SF? (how do we define it? what are its conventions?); Why do we read it? (what impact is it designed to have on our imagination and intellect?); How do we read it? (what strains are placed on the hermeneutic process by the poetics of SF?). Science fiction has been called the "literature of ideas"; accordingly, we will explore how it works as literature, and the culturally-relevant ideas it conveys.

V41.0755  Representations of Women
Before we can address the representation of women, we have to think about what representation itself involves. The word denotes both standing in for another person or group – as in legal representation, and depiction – the translation of ideas, experience, or emotions into art. Throughout the course we will consider, in the context of gender problematics, which aspect(s) of reality the author is attempting to convey, how he or she goes about it, and what kind of spokesperson this makes them. A constant question will be the relationship between the sex of the author and the sex of his or her subject, and how perception of this is affected by the sex of the reader or viewer.
Our primary readings will attempt to cover variety (of genres, periods, cultures) rather than trace the representation of women in a narrow time frame or single national tradition, and will include Euripides, Ibsen, Anne Finch, Dickinson, Prevost, Defoe, a dollop of pornography, and Burney.