English Department Spring 2018 Course Descriptions

**English 101E – College Writing and Research: Writing Through and About Popular Culture**
4 credits
Battle, Sha'Dawn

Some of the prevailing categories of mainstream Popular Culture to date include social media, advertisement, music, and television. This course examines the way in which writing through and about mainstream Popular Culture fosters a basis for learning modes of critical analysis, argumentation and research writing, and narrating our own life experiences. That is, students will rhetorically analyze magazine advertisements and argue about / research the subject of Cultural Appropriation in Hip Hop. Additionally, through narrative writing, students will discover how their own identities and experiences are mediated and constituted by Popular Culture representations in television and / or social media.

**ENGL 101E – College Writing and Research**
4 credits
Fallon, D’Arcy

“Tell me what you eat and I’ll tell you who you are.”—Renowned gastronome Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, 1825 Food. We all eat it. We all need it. Whether our favorite meal is tofu ice cream or a big beef burrito from Chipotle’s, food is the engine that keeps us alive. But how much do we really know about what we’re putting in our bodies? It’s complicated. As the filmmakers note in the award-winning documentary film Food, Inc., “The way we eat has changed more in the last 50 years than in the previous 10,000.” In “Food for Thought,” we’ll look at the role food plays in agriculture, big business, ethics, culture, gender, politics, and cooking shows.

**ENGL 101E – College Writing and Research**
4 credits
Hinson, Scot

Taking intellectual and emotional risks lies at the heart of writing. Testing your limits, stretching your intellectual and creative abilities, expanding the boundaries of your intellectual and emotional lives—this is the writer’s project. You will only realize your full potential as a thinker and writer by doing more and better work than you ever thought possible, and, above all, by learning to take risks. This course provides you the opportunities and the environment in which to take the risks necessary for thinking analytically and writing well. English 101 is a composition course designed to give you intensive practice in the art of expository writing. The course emphasizes the writing process and the development of clear and purposeful, well-focused writing, which addresses a well-defined audience. English 101 will call on your analytical and organizational skills, as well as provide opportunities for you to enhance your ability to design and structure writing and to improve your technical expertise. The course will focus on the conventions of academic discourse and selecting, integrating, and documenting sources. This course is also designed to teach you how to read and write effectively at Wittenberg. Also, it will help you to discover that reading and writing are not separate activities, but closely related ones. The course is founded on the belief that learning to read, see, and think analytically is essential to becoming a proficient, accomplished writer.

**ENGL 101E – College Writing and Research: Writing About Place**
4 credits
Inboden, Robin

Have you ever felt deeply attached to a place? Felt awed by the history or beauty of a building or a wild place?
Felt energized by community development or wanted to make a difference? We’ll be thinking about all those things as a focus of our reading and writing in this course. Our primary goal is, of course, to improve your skills as a writer of expository prose. To that end, we will write various kinds of essays, focusing on concrete language, critical thinking, organizational skills, sentence structure, style, and argumentation. Assignments will include a personal essay, an informative essay with research, an argument with research, and an analytical paper. Success in the course will depend on thoughtful reading, active participation, and serious work through the process of revision in order to produce excellent final papers.

**English 101E – College Writing and Research: Writing in a Global Community**  
4 credits  
Incorvati, Rick

This writing course takes up Bryan Stevenson's book *Just Mercy* as a way of raising critical questions about our criminal justice system and the ways that apparently reasonable policies can have unintended consequences. The thorny issues described by Stevenson will set the stage for various kinds of academic writing as we search for some truth and for some practical solutions to the problems that we encounter. As we embark on these writing tasks, we'll ask questions that will help us be effective communicators, questions about the values held by our intended audience, the prospect for finding common ground with that audience, and the rhetorical options available to us as we build our arguments. In this course, we'll read a steady stream of articles, we'll tackle five papers that test our argumentation skills, and we'll regularly seek out feedback from our peers as we venture farther down the path toward informed and engaged global citizenship.

**ENGL 101E – College Writing and Research**  
4 credits  
McClelland, Michael

This course will teach the writing process through essays, extensive class discussion and workshopping, reading, and journal-keeping. Students will improve their academic writing skills, including grammar and punctuation, and will learn that there is much more to successful writing than the dreaded five-paragraph essay. Along the way, students should learn more about themselves, their world and the many different values of writing, including the revolutionary concept that writing can be fun. Class requirements include six papers, class attendance and participation, regular journal writing and frequent in-class writing.

**ENGL 101E – College Writing and Research: Memory, Memorial, and Restitution**  
4 credits  
Richards, Cynthia

All writing is an act of memorial. When we write, we record what has happened, give shape and meaning to the past, and name what often feels elusive in the immediacy of the present. This course will use this natural connection between the act of writing and the act of remembering as a broad thematic rubric for developing the skills in writing you will need to succeed in college, and even more importantly, begin to make meaning out of the experiences of your life. The course will include a personal essay, an interpretative/analytical essay, a research paper preceded by a formal debate, and finally the writing of a descriptive essay that will memorialize some person, place or object of importance to you.

Along the way, we will read compelling essays and works of literature, including essays by Edward Said and Patricia Hampl, the novels *The Dew Breaker* and *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*, and various articles that explore the nature of memory and the act of memorializing. We will also debate issues surrounding the theme of restitution; how do we make right the past, particularly when some injustice has occurred? In the process of exploring these themes, you will be asked to reflect on your own process of writing, to work through several
drafts of each paper, and to remember the value of careful editing in all writing projects. We will meet in conference, work together in small groups, participate in class discussions, and engage in daily in-class freewriting exercises. The goal of this course is nothing less than persuading you that you are all writers and that writing is essential to shaping a meaningful life.

**English 101E – College Writing and Research**

4 credits

Staff

ENGL 101E introduces students to basic forms and conventions of college writing, provides the opportunity for frequent practice in writing and revising, and helps students explore various stages of the writing process, from planning to proofreading. It also introduces the fundamentals of research. A prerequisite to all other English courses, except English 100. To meet the general education writing goal, each student must complete this course with a grade of C- or above.

**ENGL 180A – 20th Century African American Protest Literature and Music**

4 credits

Battle, Sha’Dawn

Prerequisite: ENGL 101E

How do we situate African American music and literature in the context of protest and resistance? How, for example, might cultural critics uncover historical and thematic parallels between undergirding ideals of the Harlem Renaissance and Kanye West and Jay Z's “Murder to Excellence?” Does Rihanna’s famous tagline, “Bitch better have my money” echo Black American sentiments regarding the failures of Reconstruction? This course is designed to investigate the relationship between 20th century African American literature and musical forms of expression, with respect to how both respond and have responded to multiple forms of oppression. We will discuss, analyze, and critique the historical and cultural conditions that led to the production of both the literature and the music as viable modes of protest. While we will discuss the importance of the “Sorrow Songs,” the Blues tradition, and Jazz, this course will focus on arguably the most expressive art form of contemporary African American culture: hip hop. Furthermore, we will cover the literary periods spanning the Antebellum era to the 1980s.

**English 180A – Screening the 19th Century**

4 credits

Inboden, Robin

Prerequisite: ENGL 101E

Since the beginnings of popular cinema in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, filmmakers have gravitated to telling stories already established in the public’s mind. Early silent films recorded Shakespeare plays without dialogue—it was only a matter of time before more recent classics inspired film versions. Immensely popular 19th-century British novels soon became standard fare for the movie-going public, inspiring the question, “which is better—the book or the movie?” In this class, we will explore the reasons that question may be misleading, as we examine the different ways we experience the two media and the different ways in which we judge the aesthetic appeal of books and movies. In so doing, we will discover the ways that a comparison of a film version to a novel illuminates key themes and interpretations in each. Authors whose works we will read and “watch” may include Jane Austen, Charlotte and Emily Brontë, Charles Dickens, Oscar Wilde, and Thomas Hardy. Assignments will include several short papers, weekly quizzes, and a final project that combines the creative and the analytic. Writing intensive.
One way of grappling with the problems of irrational malice, unwarranted suffering, and general wrong-doing is to imagine a force of evil at work in the universe, and in the Western tradition, there is no more vivid way of conjuring up such a notion than with images of hell and its resident demons. Once we’ve labeled and put a devilish face on these energies, though, a peculiar thing sometimes happens: despite their associations with all things abhorrent (or perhaps because of them), some of us find ourselves, truth be told, more than a little fascinated with these diabolical ideas, and this preoccupation with things devilish has unleashed some wildly creative works of literary imagination. This class brings together a number of texts preoccupied with demons, devils, and hellfire including works from the medieval world (Dante’s *Inferno*), the early modern age (John Milton’s *Paradise Lost*), the Romantic period (William Blake’s *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*), and the 20th century (C.S. Lewis’ *The Great Divorce*); we will also consider the substantial inroads that diabolical forces have made in some contemporary films. Throughout this course, we’ll use these various depictions of devils and the underworld to see how writers have attempted to account for some thorny aspects of human experience, and we’ll also devote part of our semester to learning the conventions associated with a variety of literary forms (poetry, novels, plays, film) and to sharpening our skills as readers of these types of expression. There will be three exams, including a comprehensive final, as well as several papers in this writing intensive course.

ENGL 180A – Remapping Violence: 21st Century American Lit. & Transnationalism
4 credits
Polak, Katharine

Prerequisite: ENGL 101E
What is the difference between one plot of land and another? Between one person and another? How is identity negotiated in a time in history when we have access to more ideas (and more people) than ever before? What is the difference between a physical place and a website? In the digital age, the concepts of "borders" and "boundaries" are in question. The control of knowledge has, in some ways, become decentralized, with a broader range of people accessing and contributing to culture in a variety of ways. However, new technology brings new challenges as well, including the reconsolidation of some types of power. In this course, we will look at a variety of genres, including fiction, journalism, graphic novels, and film to examine how 21st century literature is remapping our culture, and how the digital age has remapped literature. We will explore a range of texts focused on borders, including collections like *The Best American Non-Required Reading* and transnational authors like Junot Diaz, to question what the nation, and identity, mean in the 21st century.

ENGL 190A/C – Native American Literatures
4 credits
Askeland, Lori

Prerequisite: ENGL 101E
In this course we will read American Indian and First Nations literatures from origin stories (which continue to be told today) to contemporary poetry and prose, as well as some artwork, music, and film. As we experience these diverse cultural works, we will address a number of questions: How should Native American literature be taught and read, given its diversity and its roots in the oral tradition? How do these texts challenge what we think of as storytelling, "America," and even ourselves? How is the unique legal relationship between American Indians and the United States and Canadian governments represented in Native writings? How do Native artists and writers contest and revise stereotypes of Indians? Students will be expected to keep up with current events via the Internet and to become more acquainted with issues affecting indigenous people today. (You can start
now, if you wish. This news source is great: http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/). This writing intensive course will involve 3 short writings (1-2 pp), two longer papers (5-7 pp), one short presentation, a midterm and a final exam. Cross-listed with WMST. CLAC-friendly.

ENGL 240 – Introduction to Creative Writing
4 credits
Fallon, D’Arcy

Prerequisite: ENGL 101E
This course will introduce students to the essential elements of good writing, focusing on fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama. Throughout the semester, students will read representative texts and study the fundamental elements of all these genres. This course is centered around the “workshop,”—essentially informal peer critique of student work as well as close reading and class discussion of selected texts. We’ll read and analyze, discuss and critique, but most of all we’ll be a community of people who write. Students will produce pieces in all four genres. There are no exams, but there may be an occasional quiz. The grade is based on a writing portfolio of one’s best, revised work, which will be handed in at the end of the semester. The rest of the grade will be based on a journal/writer’s notebook and class participation.

ENGL 241 – Beginning Journalism
4 credits
McClelland, Michael

Prerequisite: ENGL 101E
This course provides a basic introduction to the practice and principles of journalism, with an emphasis on writing for newspapers. We will discuss news, features, entertainment stories, opinion and sports writing, as well as interviewing skills, ethics, copy-editing, headline writing, and other related topics. Students will be expected to meet deadlines, do frequent in-class writing exercises, and to thoughtfully and constructively respond to their classmates’ stories. Grades will be based on stories produced, occasional quizzes, and class participation.

ENGL 242S – Writing Center Theory & Practice
4 credits
Mattison, Michael

Prerequisites: ENGL 101E and Permission of Instructor
This class, designed primarily to prepare writing advisors for the Wittenberg Writing Center, will offer an introduction to writing center theory: what strategies and pedagogies guide conversations in one-to-one sessions; what conflicts exist in the field; how is research conducted and discussed? The course will also require students to spend time in the Writing Center, shadowing veteran advisors and eventually holding sessions of their own. By permission of instructor only—students must apply through the Writing Center. Writing intensive.

ENGL 270 – Literary Form and Interpretation
4 credits
Polak, Kate

Prerequisite: ENGL 101E
Life writing can take many forms: poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, and graphic narrative are only a few of the ways in which people attempt to communicate their various realities. These forms open up different methods of telling the story of a life, of a lesson learned, and of the beauty, wonder, dread, and delight that are a part of
human existence. By examining life writing in various forms and studying the literary devices that allow these forms to re-create the world, we will develop a foundation for the study of literature. To this end, we will focus form and style, literary criticism, historical context, and theoretical interventions in order to better understand how interpreting place is central to both literature and life.

ENGL 280A – British Literary Genealogies: Of Monsters and Other Extraordinary Humans
4 credits
Richards, Cynthia

Prerequisite: ENGL 180A or ENGL 190A/C or ENGL 270
In this course, we will read, discuss, and write about representative texts from the Old English epic Beowulf to the iconic early nineteenth-century novel Frankenstein. We will also seek to locate these texts, spanning five different centuries, within the historical and ideological conditions which helped to determine their meaning for their contemporary readers. We will also remain attentive to how these early British texts build upon the work of their literary predecessors and also how they deliberately alter their message to meet the changing expectations of their culture. In the process, you will acquire a basic knowledge of literary terms, styles, forms, critical concepts, and significant dates.
The course will take as its organizing question what it means to be human. It will do so by looking at “monsters and other extraordinary humans,” or in other words, villains and their conquering heroes. Examining these exaggerated or simplified versions of what makes individuals noble or ignoble makes possible a complex understanding of what makes the ordinary extraordinary, and how literary narratives give voice to our common aspirations and fears. This theme will also help organize and familiarize a diverse, historical body of literature that can often feel quite foreign to the modern reader.
Finally, we will step back from these concerns to reflect and theorize on how English is made and why it is that we read these particular works as representative. Assignments include frequent response papers, two formal papers, a midterm exam and a final exam. Writing intensive.

ENGL 290A - American Literary Themes and Traditions: American Gothic
4 credits
Hinson, Scot

Prerequisite: ENGL 180A or ENGL 190A/C or ENGL 270
Through an examination of the American Gothic, its origins and its contemporary manifestations, we will explore the difficult, bloody, and painful birth of American literature as well as its continued fascination with and terror of what Melville called the “power of blackness” and the sublime mixture of terror and beauty. This course is driven by America’s fascination with Gothic literature, and with what can accurately be described as a Gothic revival in American culture. What is it about the shadowy, diseased, the grotesque, and sublime that so attracts us? What scares us and what spectral shapes do those fears inhabit in our literature? This course in the American Gothic is definitely not for the squeamish and requires frequent reading quizzes, one short and one longer researched essay, a midterm and a final, and a group presentation and bibliography.

ENGL 321 – Advanced Journalism/Feature Writing
4 credits
Fallon D’Arcy

Prerequisite: English 241
Welcome to the world of feature writing. What are feature stories? They are the human side of journalism. As your textbook Feature Writing for Newspapers and Magazines points out, a feature story is “a journalistic article that is typically both original and descriptive. Some feature stories are geared toward entertainment with little
information. Other features inform, but entertain little. The best combine both aspects." Students should expect to write about nine to ten feature stories over the course of the semester, with lots of revision.

ENGL 340 – Advanced Fiction Writing  
4 credits  
McClelland, Michael

Prerequisite: ENGL 240  
There is really only one way to become a superior fiction writer: Write, then read, then go write some more. In this class, we will do plenty of both. Students will continue developing the skills and techniques introduced in Beginning Creative Writing through readings, discussion, workshopping, journal-keeping and lots of writing. Each student will produce three short stories and will do a major revision of one of those pieces. Our goal will be for each student to write at least one story suitable for submission to a literary journal.

ENGL 353 – Anarchy for the U.K.: A Study of Romantic Literature  
4 credits  
Incorvati, Rick

Prerequisites: ENGL 270 and ENGL 280A  
This class considers the innovative writing of the Romantic-era as well as the unprecedented historical events that helped to shape those texts. The anarchist theories of William Godwin will serve as our touchstone as we examine the revolutionary ideas percolating in writings of the feminist thinker Mary Wollstonecraft, the radical poet-prophet William Blake, and the mad, bad, and dangerous Lord Byron. We'll also celebrate the 200th anniversary of the publication of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* by putting that novel in the context of revolutionary ideas. These texts will help us to ask questions about authority, the individual will, and the risks of flying too close to the sun. We have three exams and two papers, including one 15-page semester project, in this course.

ENGL 371C – Disaster, Catastrophe, Havoc  
4 credits  
Polak, Kate

Prerequisites: English 270 and English 280A, or instructor permission  
"Disaster" derives from the Italian for "an ill-starred event." The Greek “katastrophē” refers to an overturning. To “cry havoc” was to signal for destruction. This course will explore recent literature of mayhem, focusing on disasters both natural and manmade, past destruction and pending pandemonium.

ENGL 380 – Outlaw Love: American Stories of Love and the Law from Thomas Jefferson to Loving v. Virginia, and Beyond  
4 credits  
Askeland, Lori

Prerequisite: ENGL 270 and 290A, non-majors by instructor permission  
This course was initially inspired by a confluence of Wittenberg Series events this spring: the visits of documentary film-maker Elisabeth Haviland James and of the great Harvard Law professor and historian, Annett Gordon-Reed, along with the Theatre department’s planned February production of *Dry Land*, by Ruby Rae Spiegel, a play about a young woman facing an unwanted pregnancy. Annette Gordon Reed’s groundbreaking work on Thomas Jefferson’s relationship to Sally Hemings, which made an all but definitive case that she bore his children, is a piece of Black history that former slave William Wells Brown included in what is likely the very
first novel by a Black American writer, *Clotel*. The concerns about sexual assault and abuse within the slaveholding relationship were also powerfully explored by Harriet Jacobs in her powerful novelistic narrative, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*—and all of them share an interest in illicit love between powerful men and outcast women, with Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter*. Moreover, the foundational reality of intimacy between Black and white people in the US, in the era of Ida B. Wells-Barnett, shaped Mark Twain’s great post-war novel, *Huckleberry Finn*, and laid the groundwork for the laws that were questioned by the marriage of Mildred and Richard Loving, in the state of Virginia, in the 1960s—the subject of Elisabeth Haviland James’ HBO documentary *The Loving Story*, and the feature length film, *Loving*, from last year. James Baldwin’s *Giovanni’s Room* written a decade earlier, explores same-sex desire at a time when it, too, was illegal. Finally, it is the birth of children as a result of these (perceived) “dangerous liaisons” that drives so much of the anxieties around these relationships, and it is an unwanted pregnancy that drives the plot of *Dry Land*, a topic freighted with legal weight. The course will include three short papers, one 12-15 page literary research paper, an annotated bibliography, and two presentations, and will require attendance at relevant campus events. CLAC-friendly. WMST-cross-list.

ENGL 404 – Senior Tutorial
2-4 credits
Richards, Cynthia

Prerequisites: ENGL 270, ENGL 280A, ENGL 290A, at least 12 hours of 300 level lit. seminars & English major.
This capstone course requires students to use a previously completed 300-level English course as the foundation for an independently researched 20-25 page project. The course is writing intensive. Only education licensure students are eligible to take the course for two credits. In addition to providing support for students' independently researched 20-25 page projects, this course will provide a more informal opportunity to reflect back on the major and anticipate the future ahead. To both these ends, the course will meet in the classroom, but also in coffeeshops and smaller, informal settings conducive to collaborative work and lively discussion. Prerequisites: English 270, English 280A, English 290A, at least 12 hours of 300-level literature seminars, and a declared English major.

ENGL 405 – Senior Exercises
1 credit
Polak, Kate

Prerequisites: Senior standing and Department Permission
Guided by the learning goals of the English major, this one-credit capstone experience consists of a series of workshops designed to prepare graduating English majors for a symposium presentation and for a portfolio assessment consisting of writing samples, a resume, and a self-reflection. Students will also prepare an abstract of their symposium projects for distribution to the department and the broader campus community.

ENGL 406 – Capstone in Creative Writing
1 credit
McClelland, Michael

Prerequisites: Senior standing and Department Permission
Revision of major work or collection of shorter works from previous creative writing course and participation in a public reading. Includes preparation of a portfolio of writing within a single genre, multiple genres, or blended genres (fiction, poetry, scriptwriting, and/or creative nonfiction). Students will work individually with creative writing faculty to develop and polish their writing for publication submission and movement toward further study and/or career options. Required of and open to senior creative writing minors only.