

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
SPRING 2010 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

**ENGL 520: RENAISSANCE ENGLISH LITERATURES AND CULTURES:
Shakespeare and Contemporary Theory**
Bruce Smith, Wednesday, 5:00-7:20 p.m. Number 32780D

“He sent thither his Theôry, or solemn legation for sacrifice, decked in the richest garments” (George Grote, *A History of Greece*, 1853). A deft hand with the sacrificial knife is not required for this course, but two feet and a peripatetic itch, are. *Theors* in ancient Greek were people sent out from the city to perform religious rites. Hence, *theoria* as a view from the outside. Inevitably that view from the outside changes the view from the inside, from the position of one’s habitation as a reader.

This seminar will explore a representative selection of Shakespeare’s plays and poems from the theoretical vantage points provided by several current preoccupations: (1) ecology, (2) cognitive theory, (3) historical phenomenology, and (4) presentism. For each of these concerns we will read and discuss theoretical readings as well as hands-on applications, using *The Tempest* as a reference point. Afterwards each participant in the seminar will be asked to put together a critical manifesto that announces his or her goals for the seminar and details the particular critical strategy (or strategies) that he or she will use to pursue those goals. The particular texts chosen for discussion will cover the three dramatic genres in which Shakespeare exercised his imagination (comedy, history, and tragedy) as well as Ovidian narrative (*Venus and Adonis* or *The Rape of Lucrece*) and some of the sonnets. Particular selections will be determined by the interests of the participants in the seminar but will definitely include *Much Ado about Nothing*, which the class will see in a production by the Glendale repertory company A Noise Within. Other productions of interest in LA during spring 2009 may also be included.

In addition to writing a critical manifesto, each student will be asked to provide a summary of one of the critical readings, to lead discussion of one text, to write a short summation of the issues raised in that discussion, and to produce a final paper that deploys his or chosen methodology to read one or more texts.

Recommended textbooks for purchase: William Shakespeare, *The Norton Shakespeare*, 2nd ed., ed. Stephen Greenblatt *et al.* (Norton, 2008); Diana Henderson, ed., *Alternative Shakespeares 3* (Routledge, 2007).

ENGL 530: RESTORATION AND 18TH CENTURY BRITISH LITERATURES AND CULTURES:
Leo Braudy, Monday, 2:00-4:20 p.m. Number 32781D

In the middle of the seventeenth century, England experienced the first modern revolution. It began with the beheading of Charles I and the reign of Oliver Cromwell but did not end with the Restoration of Charles II to the throne. This political upheaval set the stage for a host of cultural changes that marked indelibly the transition from the Elizabethan world of courts and courtiers to the modern world of politics and public opinion. Assumptions about class and gender that had hardly varied since the Middle

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Ages were abruptly, and very openly, up for discussion and change. In this course we will look at the period stretching roughly from the English Civil Wars to the death of Alexander Pope in an attempt to understand the complex interplay between its literature and its politics (public and private), its economics, and its cultural values.

We will begin with Marvell and Rochester, two poets who were not interested in being thought professional literary men but yet who clearly placed themselves in relation to a literary tradition. Dryden and Pope will be the other main poetic figures--representing a new assertion that the poet is particularly equipped to tell his audience what to believe about the world and to help them deal with it. Another important focus of the course will be the theatre of the Restoration period, the birthplace of a new conception of acting, the actor, and the idea of performance in the plays of Aphra Behn, Dryden, Sir George Etherege, George Farquhar, Thomas Otway, and William Wycherley. In addition we will read poems and prose by Mary Astell, Behn, Daniel Defoe, Anne Finch, John Locke, and Jonathan Swift.

The course will be conducted in the second floor conference room of the William Andrews Clark Library on Adams Boulevard, so that we can draw upon the Clark's extensive and virtually unique collection of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century texts and thereby get a keener sense of what it was like to live in the cultural and material milieu where these works appeared. There will also be ample time to consider the visual culture of the period--paintings, sculpture, engravings, frontispieces--using the Clark's resources.

Three pieces of work will be required in the seminar: two papers approximately 12-15 pages in length on topics developed in consultation; and an oral report (including annotated bibliography) on a topic in political, economic, or social history relevant to the general reading for the week.

Students interested in the course are encouraged to e-mail me <braudy@usc.edu> if they have any general questions. Our first class will include a tour of the Clark and its research facilities.

ENGL 580: 19TH CENTURY AMERICAN LITERATURES AND CULTURES: U.S. Modernisms

John Carlos Rowe, Thursday, 5:00-7:20 p.m. Number 32786D

Half the seminar will be devoted to the backgrounds to U.S. modernism in Whitman's and Dickinson's poetry, Henry James's (*In the Cage*) and Twain's (*Pudd'nhead Wilson*) realism, Gilman's ("The Yellow Wall-Paper") and Chopin's (*The Awakening*) adaptations of literary naturalism. In the second half of the seminar, we will then study examples of four versions of U.S. literary modernism deeply influenced by these predecessors (either the movements or the authors or both): aesthetic or so-called "high" modernism (Ezra Pound [*Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*], T.S. Eliot [*The Waste Land*], and Gertrude Stein [*Three Lives*]); the Harlem Renaissance (W. E. B. DuBois [*The Souls of Black Folk*]); Left culture of the CPUSA (Rukeyser [*The Book of the Dead*]) and Mexican Marxism (José Clemente Orozco's frescoes [*The Epic of America*]); the social criticism and cultural expression of the pan-Indian movement of the 1930s (*Black Elk Speaks*).

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We will try to assess the complementarity and conflict among these different backgrounds and versions of U.S. literary modernism, as well as consider their respective influences on subsequent political and cultural movements. While considering some of the transnational dimensions of "U.S. Modernisms" both across the Atlantic and within the Americas, we will also treat a good range of canonical "modernist" works in the period 1865-1940. Requirements: lead the discussion of part of one seminar (probably with another member of the seminar); complete a seminar essay of approximately 25 pages or an equivalent project.

ENGL 595: LITERARY STUDIES ACROSS CULTURES: Theories of Colonialism and Postcolonialism
David Lloyd, Monday, 4:30-6:50 p.m. Course Number 32790D

This course is intended to introduce fundamental concepts and debates in the study of colonial and post-colonial cultures, including some work on indigeneity in the Americas. The course is thus not intended to introduce literary works of the third world, for example, but to provide an overview of the principal terms within which such works have been understood. We will be looking at histories and varieties of modern imperialism, principally British, French and American; at the rise of nationalisms and ideas of nationalist culture; at the function of literature in nationalist movements; at colonial ideology and state formations; at critiques of both nationalism and colonialism from a number of perspectives, including those of feminism and "subaltern" movements; at concepts like "coloniality" and "postcoloniality", "race" and "racialization", decolonization, internal colonialism, the "third world", development, and orientalism. The course is intended to be of use to graduates expecting to do further work on postcolonial writing or minority/ethnic literatures and anticipates some willingness to read around independently and to bring into discussion works not on the syllabus.

ENGL 599: SPECIAL TOPICS: Writing Articles for Publication in Humanities Journals
Susan Green, Thursday, 4:30-6:50 p.m. Course Number 32792D

The course will focus on developing seminar papers into publishable articles, emphasizing procedures and strategies common to varying specializations in literary study. The seminar will have some attributes of a workshop, with examples of papers and articles discussed in class; individual sessions will also be scheduled. Prospective students should submit to the instructor a seminar paper on which they would like to work, ideally before the end of the current fall term – **Deadline: December 15, 2009.**

Susan Green is Director of the Huntington Library Press and Editor of the *Huntington Library Quarterly*. She can be contacted at sgreen@huntington.org.

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**ENGL 620: LITERATURE AND INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES: Writer & Composer
David St. John, Tuesday, 2:00 - 4:20 p.m. Course Number 32796D**

This course will be team taught by David St. John and composer Frank Ticheli of the School of Music. It is a structured collaboration between composers and poets/writers. Activities include fundamentals of poetry, comparative analysis of poem/song settings, and creative projects. We hope that this course can foster long-term collaborative relationships between composers and writers. The course is designed for graduate students in Music Composition and English/Creative Writing (Poetry). However, other graduate students may enroll with the permission of the instructor. Be warned: this is all about collaboration in the arts. If you think of yourself as a lone wolf artist, this course may not be for you.

**ENGL 650: MULTICULTURAL LITERARY STUDIES: “Our Daily Bread”: Race,
Gender and Genre in the Americas
Teresa McKenna, Tuesday, 2:00 - 4:20 p.m. Course Number 32799D**

The title is taken from Pablo Neruda’s Nobel Address. He observes: “I have often said that the best poet is the man who delivers our daily bread: the local baker, who does not think he is a god. He fulfills his majestic yet humble task of kneading, placing in the oven, browning, and delivering our daily bread, with a true sense of community.” This course will explore Neruda’s sense of the poet in the world as emblematic of the writing of a number of contemporary feminist writers who as poets and essayists have brought their work to the public in an effort to forge community and to transform society’s views of social and sexual relations. In their effort to accomplish this communication with the public, their constructions of genre have bled one into the other producing, in Fernando Retamar’s words, a “mulatto genre” distinct to the Americas, one in which the boundaries between forms become the sites of political and poetic inscription. The word “mulatto” here not only refers to a distinct mixture of races, but also an intercalation of genres including poetry and prose, or photography and journalistic witnessing, or autobiography and testimonio. These intercalations or intersectionalities produce a distinct form of expression related to the formation of feminist communities. Taking in particular the work of Latina writers as a fulcrum to launch an investigation, we will read an array of work by North and Latin American writers including, but not limited to, the following: Pat Mora, Cherrie Moraga, Audre Lorde, bell hooks, Elena Poniatowska, Rosario Castellanos, Audrienne Rich, Margaret Atwood and Toni Morrison. This course will explore, among other things, the ways in which ideology operates in the public sphere and how expressive forms, genres, respond to the social, political and aesthetic needs of an historical moment. All Spanish language texts will be read in English translation. No knowledge of Spanish is prerequisite for this course.

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ENGL 695: GRADUATE FICTION FORM AND THEORY

Percival Everett, Monday, 2:00-4:20 p.m. Course Number 32802D

Though we proceed with the understanding that we can identify the forms of the novel and short story, we cannot actually offer necessary and sufficient conditions for a work being either. We will address the question of whether there is an archetypal model of any form of fiction and ask where the boundaries of the model exist. We will also explore what happens when boundaries (if they are real) are crossed.

ENGL 698: GRADUATE POETRY FORM AND THEORY: Translation – Theory, Practice, Miracles of...

Carol Muske-Dukes, Thursday, 2:00-4:20 p.m. Course Number 32805D

We will address the matter of translation as theory, as process, practice, trouble and miracle. We'll look at superb, adequate, too literal, too "free", awful, brilliant, for-the-ages, etc., translations of major poems, including poems by Catullus, Rilke, Sappho, Tu Fu, Celan and others. We'll be hearing from many authorities on translation, including Heather McHugh, Richard Howard, Jane Hirschfield, Joseph Brodsky, Michael Heim, Octavio Paz, Robert Bly, Carolyn Kizer and others. We will consult (as a kind of primary text) Rainer Schulte's *Comparative Perspectives: an Anthology of Multiple Translations* – but also look into Heather McHugh's *Glottal Stop* (translations of Celan), Robert Bly's *The Eight Stages of Translation*, *Nineteen Ways of Looking at Wang Wei* (Eliot Weinberger and Octavio Paz, Robert Hass on Tomas Tranströmer, Charles Simic on Brodsky, Paul Muldoon's Norton lectures and (if time) Shelley's translations, with commentary by contemporary poets. Each student will give a presentation based on his or her semester-long project – and as well translate individual poems for each class meeting.

**ENGL 700: THEORIES AND PRACTICES OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT I:
Prospectus Class**

Susan McCabe, Every other Thursday 4:30 to 6:30 Course Number 32806D

This class will function as a workshop for students who have finished course work and are poised to write their dissertation prospectus. We will work closely on argumentation, supporting materials, project significance and bibliography. Most importantly, the course will put in stages the process of writing a persuasive and articulate prospectus that will serve as your map to the dissertation. It will also allow you to think of different forms of the prospectus—in abstract form and in proposal forms (for fellowships and so forth). The class requires peer reviewing and diligent steady progress on transforming your topic to an exciting argument. All fields welcome, of course.

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If you are interested in taking the class, please sign up for the class in the usual way—
but note that the time is not as noted in the schedule of classes.