The newsletter for Texas A&M’s English Undergrads.

The English Aggie

The Pre-Registration Edition

All of your questions about Spring 2017, answered.

Course Descriptions
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ENGL 303 “How to Judge a Book by its Cover” Professor Estill

Although you might have heard that you can’t judge a book by its cover, this course encourages students to do just that. In this class, students will learn to “read” the material contexts and paratexts of literature that influence how we think about the books and texts we read. We will discuss book history, anthologies, and the literary canon. This class will involve hands-on workshops, lecture, and discussion. Join us to learn more about the English major at Texas A&M and the larger field of literary and cultural studies.

ENGL 303 “Transnational Approaches to English Studies” Professor Johansen

English 303 is an introduction to English Studies for English majors. In this writing-intensive class, we will become acquainted with the many different methodologies professional scholars use to read, discuss, and write about literature and other important cultural texts. What kinds of questions do we ask in the discipline of English Studies, and what approaches and tools do we use to answer those questions? Moreover, we will consider the relevance of English Studies to the wider world within which readers read and writers write. What do the questions and critical methodologies we bring to texts have to offer to the culture at large? Throughout the semester, we will practice the basic skills essential to more advanced study in English: close reading, clear writing, and the formulation of fertile, well-informed research questions. In this particular section of English 303, we’ll be thinking particularly about two related questions and their relationship to the study of English: What does it mean to read responsibly? What does a consciousness of these elements require of us as scholars of literature and culture and as critical readers of texts?

ENGL 303 “Victorian Literature: 21st Century Perspectives” Professor Machann

Victorian literature continues to interest literary scholars and contemporary readers. Traditional critical approaches to Victorian poetry, novels, and nonfiction prose have been augmented by new approaches, including gender studies, psychological criticism, and cultural studies. A variety of works by Victorian authors will be studied in this course, with emphasis on new critical assessments. Students will be assigned Victorian literary works by major authors. Some of the latest critical approaches to these works will be emphasized, and reading assignments will include selected essays from the book Twenty-First Century Perspectives on Victorian Literature. In each case, the assigned essay will be related to one or more of the assigned Victorian literary texts.

Registration Reminders

• Be sure to check Howdy for your date and time to register.

* Please check for registration blocks (through Howdy) and get them cleared before your registration date.

• We absolutely will not be filling out new degree plans for students during preregistration advising sessions; you must bring your updated degree plan with you in order to be advised.

• If you plan on graduating in May or August of 2017, we strongly recommend that you come in for advising before registering and check in with us after registering to make sure you will clear for graduation. Please do not assume you will clear your evaluation!
The English Aggie

ENGL 303 “Disease and Healing in Literature” Professor Collins

This course will introduce students to one aspect of the area of scholarship known as the medical humanities. This area of study brings both humanistic and scientific perspectives to bear on issues that must be confronted by doctors, patients and the hospitals that train the former and try to heal the latter. This course will explore writings about, or writings that raise issues relating to doctor-patient interactions, medical ethics, medical education, loss and grief, mystery diseases, and experimental treatments. As a “W” course, it will also build students’ writing skills through discussion of elements of essay writing, and through the writing of papers that employ these elements.

ENGL 392 “20th Century Christian Literature” Professor Clark

Fiction, poetry, and non-fiction prose works from across international boundaries that reflect the complex challenges facing Christians in the past century. Special emphasis with be on close reading within a social and philosophical context.

ENGL 394 “Fairy Tales” Professor Robinson

This course will explore the history of fairy tales, largely from Europe and the United States, from their oral (traditional) roots to modern re-tellings of traditional tales. Our study will include significant European publications of traditional tales such as those by Straparola & Basile (Italy), Perrault and d’Aulnoy (France), the Brothers Grimm (Germany), Andrew Lang and Joseph Jacob (England). We will also read selected tales from other countries and cultures. We will explore the way that these tales have been told in various cultures, how they are shaped by their cultures, and how they shape their cultures. We will also discuss the history of their reception through the centuries.

ENGL 415 “Tolkien” Professor Boeing

Tolkien’s works are informed by his study of the mythic systems of diverse cultures—particularly those of ancient Greece and Rome, medieval Iceland, and medieval Finland. The objectives of this course are (1) to study the ways Tolkien used the mythic systems and religious narratives of pre-Christian cultures to create his own myths, merging them with Christian ideology and fashioning them into an English national mythic narrative, (2) to explore how Tolkien reacted to the events of the twentieth-century, particularly its two World Wars, in creating his works, and (3) to investigate the ways they have been received as a cultural icons in the years subsequent to their publication.

ENGL 415 “Alfred Hitchcock” Professor Morey

More than thirty-five years after his death in 1980, Alfred Hitchcock remains one of the most important figures in the history of cinema, leaving behind a body of work that continues to influence filmmakers and fascinate film scholars. He was one of the first directors whose work was deemed worthy of serious study in the academy, in part because he engaged in one of the earliest, and certainly one of the most successful, efforts at turning his directorial persona into a brand. This course will use Hitchcock as a lens through which we construct a film history that explores questions of canon, reputation, influence, the director’s relations to his critics and imitators, and the changing status of film within the academy.

Continued on page 4.
ENGL 481 “Childhood in American Literature from the Colonial Period to the Turn of the 20th Century” Professor Hodgson

This course will explore American literature and culture from the colonial period through the nineteenth century with a focus on representations of childhood, literature for children, and literature written by children. We will examine what child characters, child audiences, and child writers can tell us about how Americans have understood their world and expressed themselves over time and across cultures. Selected readings will reflect a variety of genres, from novels, short stories, plays, poetry and children's literature to periodical literature, autobiography, and political discourse. Readings will allow students to study how conceptions of children and childhood vary over time and reflect changing understandings of race, gender and class difference.

ENGL 481 “The Middle Ages and its Representations” Professor Warren

This course jointly considers medieval texts and cultural phenomena in their own historical moments and later representations of those texts and phenomena. We will investigate what sorts of literary, historical, and political questions get negotiated through engagements with the Middle Ages. We will ponder why particular characters, tropes, and themes recur so persistently in texts of various genres. We will consider such figures as Joan of Arc, Julian of Norwich, and King Arthur, among others. Students will be expected to participate actively, read both extensively and intensively, and conduct research using both primary and secondary sources.

ENGL 481 “Inventing the Caribbean, Reinventing the World” Professor Jackson

This course explores how and why the Caribbean has come to serve as a space of wealth and play for Europe and the Americas while being culturally marginalized, chronically underdeveloped, and consistently reduced to any number of consumable signs (Malibu rum, bananas, coconuts, beaches, dreads, steel drums, etc.). Our object of study will collectively be the Anglophone, Francophone and Hispanophone Caribbean configured through course readings at three moments in the region’s cultural, historical, and economic development: 1) beginnings, 2) resistance, 3) independence and underdevelopment. By the end of the course, students will have a greater knowledge of the following: the social and political history of the region; the relationship between race and capital; the relationship between regional culture and world political and economic systems; and a deeper knowledge of empire and post/neo/colonialism.

For full course descriptions and reading lists, please visit http://english.tamu.edu/course-descriptions/

Is a class you want too full?

The Undergraduate Office saves a few seats in many English courses to help our majors and minors get into the classes they need. But, forcing is done on a first-come, first-serve basis. You must come to the Undergraduate Office during your preregistration time in order to be forced into a class. If you can’t get an appointment, please come as a walk-in. Just be prepared to wait in line for a bit if necessary. We can only force students into our own courses (ENGL/LING); if you need to be forced into a class outside our department, you’ll have to speak with an advisor in that department.
Contests and Awards!
Show off your skills and earn some rewards! For more information please contact undergrad-office@tamuenglish.org

2016 English Essay Contests and Awards

English Research Essay Contest
Recognizes and rewards outstanding undergraduate research writing at Texas A&M University with an award of $250.

Eligibility:
* Researched essay, treating any literary subject or writer, between 2500 and 5000 words.
* Written for a 300-400 level English class at Texas A&M University by an undergraduate student during the calendar year of 2016.

Deadline: December 19, 2016

Rhetoric and Discourse Essay Contest
Recognizes and rewards an outstanding undergraduate paper at Texas A&M with an award of $250.

The competition is open to any analysis or treatment of a topic related to Rhetoric, Linguistics, or Discourse Studies.

Eligibility:
* Address rhetoric, linguistics, or discourse studies in some way.
* Have been written for English or Linguistics class at TAMU by an undergraduate student during the calendar year of 2016.

Deadline: February 24, 2017

The English Faculty Graduating Senior Award
Recognizes and rewards an outstanding undergraduate English student at Texas A&M University with an award of $250.

Eligibility:
* 3.5 GPA Overall
* 3.75 GPA in English
* The selection committee considers GPA, number of Honors courses taken; awards, prizes, scholarships earned, participation in cultural activities, activities in student life and government; as well as the best paper the candidate has written for an English class at TAMU.

Deadline: March 3, 2017

Science Fiction and Fantasy Creative Writing Contest
Alert: All Enrolled Undergraduate Texas A&M Students
Win cash prizes and perform your work at a Public Reading!
Submit up to 3000 words by February 10th, 2017
To submit your story visit the Awards/Contest tab on the English Department website
undergrad-office@tamuenglish.org

Presented By The English Department of Texas A&M
Funded By
The English Department is offering six Undergraduate Professional and Research Experience Program (UPREP) projects for Spring 2017. Not only will it look great on your resume, but you will learn valuable skills that will prepare you for your professional pursuits as well as earn $750! The application deadline is **November 23, 2016 at 5 pm.**

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**Seventeenth-Century News with Donald Dickson.**

Working on this project would help the student gain valuable practical experience as a magazine or journal editor, while helping me substantially with my research. In the past five years, all of my former UPREPs have found employment as editors or technical writers in part through the experience the gained with me. Seventeenth-Century News is a book review journal sponsored by the Milton Society of America, though it seeks to keep its international readership abreast of the best new scholarship in all fields of seventeenth-century studies—art, history, literature, including continental and American, music, and philosophy. A student assistant who would like to learn something about scholarly editing could (1) help me establish the copy-text and verify it against the first printed editions, and (2) help track down material in the library for notes and annotations. Basic computer skills are required, such as familiarity with Microsoft Word. Knowledge of InDesign would be helpful. This is an opportunity for a student to learn—through hands-on experience—about editing.

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**Reading Re-formed: Early English Prayerbook Project with Nandra Perry.**

Reading Re-formed is a digital project that traces our own habits of reading to the beginning of both the English Reformation and the book trade in England. First published by royal decree in 1549, The Book of Common Prayer ordered both private devotions and public worship for generations of post-Reformation English readers. Since most early modern English readers would have learned to read in order to read their Bibles, and since most would have read their Bibles in the order and according to the rituals prescribed by The Book of Common Prayer, one might usefully think of it as the original English Bible “app.” This project will help students and researchers alike better understand what kind of reader such an “app” was likely to produce. Since the Bible in use at the time is not available in a print or digital edition, the student researcher will be responsible for entering passages of scripture from the Great Bible into the database.

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**Shakespearean Performance History with Laura Estill.**

The World Shakespeare Bibliography Online (WSB Online) contains entries for professional Shakespearean performances (plays, mixed media performances, musical performances, films, opera and ballet premiers, recorded music, radio broadcasts, and staged and recorded readings) from all over the world. The student selected for the Shakespearean Performance History project will learn about all these production aspects and will also learn how to create entries for the World Shakespeare Bibliography. They will also gather data through theatre company websites, occasional correspondence with theatre companies, books, theatre publications and databases, performance reviews, and articles; will determine what data needs to be included in the WSB Online; will research histories of particular productions; and will compose and submit entries to the WSB’s editors. The student will develop skills in research and bibliography and will learn a great deal about Shakespearean performances, as well as trends in production techniques and performance scholarship, from all over the world. Additionally, the student will benefit from involvement in an ongoing and well-established digital project that is crucial to early modern and Shakespearean scholarship. This could help prepare the student for a career in editing or publishing as well as provide training that will be useful in graduate school.

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Continued on page 7.
Using Digital Humanities in the Classroom with Shawna Ross.

Using Digital Humanities in the Classroom is a peer-reviewed book coming out from Bloomsbury Academic in 2017. Its Web Companion offers a suite of resources for faculty members who wish to use digital humanities approaches in their classes but do not know where to start. To strengthen this Web Companion, one student will field-test all of the suggested assignments and activities, providing feedback that will fuel the revisions that needed to be done before the book is officially published.

Beowulf’s Afterlives with Britt Mize.

I seek an assistant for the revision, complete updating, and further development of a database of all Beowulf adaptations (there are several hundred), begun by Dr. Marijane Osborn but not maintained since 2000, and recently handed off to me. The eventual outcome will be an online resource that will supersede Osborn’s website. The work will include exploratory information-gathering, fact-checking, and possibly basic website editing. It will bring the student into contact with a large body of varied and extremely interesting material—films, graphic novels, musical compositions, stage plays, children’s books, science fiction versions, etc., etc.—and can easily be paired with a Directed Study (ENGL 485) for course credit. The minimum qualifications are diligence and attentiveness to detail, and all who have these characteristics are encouraged to apply. Prior interest in medieval literature or medievalism is helpful but not necessary. Enhancing (but not expected) qualifications might include competence in one or more non-English languages and experience with web design, XML, or XHTML.

Cosmogamy Digital Journal Project with Gabriel Scala.

The Cosmogamy Digital Journal Project is a collaborative project to build a new digital journal in science fiction and fantasy. During the grant year we will develop a concept for the journal in collaboration with faculty in the English department and the Science Fiction and Fantasy Research Collection housed in Cushing Library, build the site utilizing a Wordpress platform, and populate the site with content. We will also work on marketing and distribution plans, calls for submissions, establishing a database of peer reviewers for critical submissions, compiling a list of volunteer readers for creative submissions, and managing communication between submitters and editorial staff. The student will learn about digital publishing and editing through the creation of a new online journal—from concept to final design and launch.

Advice From a Former UPREP Aggie!

Dr. Nelson asked me to proofread and edit the transcript of a 18th century diary which was stored on microfilm. I was able to fill in some missing/ illegible sections and discovered that I really enjoyed the painstaking job of trying to decipher a 18th century 13 year old’s handwriting.

The project led me to take technical writing classes while at A&M where I learned more about style guides and editing, but the diary project led me to where I am now. I’m currently pursuing my Masters in Library Science at the University of Texas. Once I graduate, I’d like to find a position doing historical research, digital preservation, and archiving, with a focus on 18th-19th century documents.

-Molly McGee ’16

For full project descriptions, please visit http://english.tamu.edu/undergraduate-research/
Gasoline

Generally, the gas pump smells like summer and gasoline tastes like memories I couldn’t burn off and empty pages sound just like brick walls and houses make like bottles and bottles make like empty and empty makes like angry and angry makes an empty house and empty house makes me grab gas cans like bottlenecks and summer burns my throat and memories don’t like my liver so my liver reached out to empty pages so it could angry out the empty so my angry turned to empty so the pages broke bricks like bottles so the bottlenecks sound just like memories so who knows how far the price of summer will fall when empty tells me it is holy when holy house makes me angry, when gasoline sounds just like pouring but all it ever does is burn.

Bailey Payne

Explorations welcomes scholarly and creative submissions of general interest from any discipline. They highlight the most curious and innovative undergraduates pursuing intellectual and aesthetic experiences outside of the classroom. Published articles have been from a wide range of academic fields: music, creative poetry, cancer biology, computer algorithms, business, sociology, etc. Explorations is accepting research and scholarly synopsis submissions until December 2, 2016.

Thanks & Gig ‘Em

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