

**UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH GRADUATE COURSES**

**FALL 2021**

**ENGLISH 500 A01 RESEARCH METHODS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
(1.5 units)  
Dr. Janelle Jenstad**

English 500 is the foundational course of the English graduate program, orienting students within the broad field of the discipline of English studies and also forging a cohesive and collegial student cohort. The course has two functions: first, to introduce the concepts and practices that underpin advanced literary research skills and textual studies (including the practice of textual criticism and the history of the production and dissemination of printed texts); second, to enable students to develop their craft of professional scholarship (methods of research, advanced scholarly writing, digital tools and methods, diverse modes of research dissemination, academic conversation, and appropriate forms of citation and documentation as well as finding a position within established and emerging trends in English studies). Class meetings will be held weekly for 90 minutes for the full winter (Fall and Spring terms) in a Special Collections classroom, and the course will allow students to draw upon the rich materials in UVic Libraries as these fit with their research interests. The graduate program's opt-in Pro-D (Professional Development) seminars will complement the course.

**Note:** ENGL 500 is compulsory for all English graduate students without equivalent previous credit.

**Tentative Texts:**

MLA Handbook, 9<sup>th</sup> edition; Booth, Colomb, and Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed.; Abbott and Williams, *An Introduction to Bibliographical and Textual Studies*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed; and select readings related to graduate student life, research, textual studies, and professional development (to be distributed via BrightSpace).

**Tentative Assignments:**

Participation/preparation for class meetings (50%); short assignments tailored to students' own academic, research, and professional interests (50%). [While this class is not graded, all assignments must be completed successfully for a student to receive a COM mark and course credit.]

**ENGLISH 505 A01 STUDIES IN LITERARY THEORY: AREA COURSE  
*Intro to Theory*  
(1.5 units)  
Dr. Stephen Ross**

This course introduces students to contemporary theoretical paradigms, those currently dominating the critical landscape in literary, cultural, and media studies. The term will be broken into units on Media Theory, Indigenous Theory, Affect Theory, Post-Marxist Theory, Queer/Crip Theory, Posthumanisms, Eco-Theory, and Critical Race Theory. It will feature presentations and background lectures on key figures from Kant, Marx, and Hegel through to Derrida, Foucault, and Butler, but the bulk of the course readings will engage contemporary theorists such as Wendy Chun, Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, Slavoj Žižek, Lee Edelman, Eugene Thacker, Sianne Ngai, and Anna Tsing. We will focus on the common philosophical and theoretical roots of these widely disparate approaches, and on how they have diverged from those common origins. We will focus in particular

on questions of agency, systems, ideology, subjectivity, epistemology, and cultural relevance. Students will be encouraged to do additional background research on their own and for class, and to apply their learning to concrete examples in the world around them. Students will leave the course with a good general orientation toward the contemporary theoretical landscape, including its deep roots in continental philosophical traditions, so that they can go on with confidence to explore and contribute to emergent thinking today.

**Tentative texts:**

All readings will be provided in PDF format from contemporary sources.

**Tentative assignments:**

Background Presentation – 15%; Core text presentation – 15%; Short Paper – 15%; Paper Proposal – 5% ; Peer Critique – 15%; Term Paper – 35%

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**ENGLISH 550 A01      STUDIES IN THE LITERATURE OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY: AREA COURSE**  
***The Regency Period: Culture and Contexts***  
**(1.5 units)**  
**Dr. Kim Blank**

Because of the various recent bi-centenary anniversaries, interest in the Regency Period—its literature, its primary players, culture, politics, architecture, art, and so on—has brought forth significant reevaluation of the era’s values, beliefs, and practices. This course will tap into these new ideas about the Regency, while also offering critique of primary material; it will center around literature but expand all the way to topics like advertising and fashion and furniture—and even the idea of celebrity gossip. The period is odd and interesting at the same time, since the Prince Regent fashioned himself as the patron of all things and all tastes. What constitutes Regency style? Lots of cool stuff happens within the period: the Luddite riots, the defeat of Napoleon, the year without a summer, the death of Queen Charlotte, final shipment of the Elgin Marbles, the extraordinary spectacle of Brighton Pavilion, the Peterloo Massacre, the invention of “shopping” as activity (and the mall!), and the death of crazy George III, etc etc etc. A recent book title (2019) captures the flavor: *The Regency Years: During Which Jane Austen Writes, Napoleon Fights, Byron Makes Love, and Britain Becomes Modern*.

**Tentative Text List:**

Much of writing can be found in a few larger and available anthologies that also contain reviews and other material beyond literature. But the students will spend significant energies exploring primary archive material and bringing it onto class: magazines, journalism, advertising, and material beyond literature in order to, as it were, encounter the Regency. It was a booming era for printed material.

**Tentative Assignments:**

Presentation #1: Critical Review: 18% (ORAL ONLY); Presentation #2: Magazine/Newspaper Analysis: 24% (ORAL AND WRITTEN); Presentation #3: Close Reading (ORAL ONLY); Term Paper: 30%; Participation: 10%

**ENGLISH 571 A01  
COURSE**
**STUDIES IN AMERICAN LITERATURE 1914 TO THE PRESENT: AREA**
***Critical Race Narratives*  
(1.5 units)  
Dr. Corinne Bancroft**

Since Aristotle first differentiated narrative (art that requires a teller/ narrator/ speaker) from tragedy (art that relies on action or performance), literary critics have sought to identify and define the elements of narrative (the difference between the telling and the told; the reliability of the narrator; the relationship between the author and the reader; etc.). More recently, Critical Race Theorists have revealed the way narrative not only functions as a type of art but also contributes to the construction of race and the formation of social imaginaries. In this view, narrative can shape the way people understand the world whether we encounter it in a novel or on the news, in a comic book or in the courtroom. As Critical Race Theorists have shown, narratives can cause harm by perpetuating social antagonisms or effect social change by shifting readers' imaginaries. What happens when we bring narrative theory, which has historically been associated with literature and fiction, into conversation with Critical Race Theory, which developed through legal studies and is often associated with non-fiction? Can the language and tools of literary criticism be useful to the project of Critical Race Theory? How might Critical Race Theory help us revise and enrich our work as literary critics? What does this mean for how we read both novels and the world? While this class will focus on the U.S. context, students will be encouraged to transfer the ideas and concepts to their field of expertise.

**Tentative Text List:**

This course will focus on contemporary American novels that may include: *The Plague of Doves* by Louise Erdrich, *The Fifth Season* by N.K. Jemisin, *A Mercy* by Toni Morrison, *There, There* by Tommy Orange, and *The Tropic of Orange* Karen Tei Yamashita. In addition, we will discuss foundational and contemporary work from the fields of Critical Race Theory and narrative theory; this may include selections from: *Critical Race Theory: Key Writings that Formed the Movement* edited by Kimberlé Crenshaw, *Permissible Narratives: The Promise of Latino/a Literature* by Christopher González, *Narrative Theory: Core Concepts and Debates* by David Herman, James Phelan and Peter J. Rabinowitz, Brian Richardson, and Robyn Warhol, *Choctalking on Other Realities* by LeAnne Howe, *Critical Race Narratives: A Study of Race, Rhetoric, and Injury* by Carl Gutiérrez Jones, *Dog Whistle Politics* by Ian Haney López, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* by Toni Morrison, *Storying Violence: Unravelling Colonial narratives in the Stanley Trial* by Gina Starblanket and Dallas Hunt, and *The Dark Fantastic: Race and the Imagination from Harry Potter to the Hunger Games* by Ebony Elizabeth Thomas.

**Tentative Assignments:**

In-class presentations (20%); Term Paper Proposal (10%); Term Paper (40%); Discussion Questions and Engagement (30%)

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**ENGLISH 508 A01    DIGITAL LITERARY STUDIES: SPECIAL TOPIC**  
***Knowledge Construction in Literary Studies***  
**(1.5 units)**  
**Dr. Ray Siemens**

This seminar explores historical and contemporary theories of knowledge construction and conveyance in literary studies and related disciplines, as well as their applications, in the context of the digital humanities. In addition to surveying readings (theoretical, literary, epistolary, and beyond) related to pertinent traditions, participants can expect direct engagement with current applications and active experimentation in the area. Those involved will participate in in-person and online meetings of the group, which may integrate invited participants from other departments and institutions as well.

**Tentative Texts:** Materials for the seminar include readings (print and online) and pertinent software applications

**Tentative Assignments:** Reading group presentations and outlines (30%). Project and report (30%). Research paper or equivalent (40%)

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**ENGLISH 515        STUDIES IN MEDIEVAL ENGLISH LIT**  
***Medieval ‘Active Presentisms’***  
**(1.5 units)**  
**Dr. Joseph Grossi**

This iteration of ENGL 515 explores how a major institutional crisis—the fracturing of Roman ecclesiastical authority known as the Great Schism (1378-1417)—affected the public roles that late fourteenth- to early fifteenth-century English authors adopted in their writings. That diversity of genre itself should have enabled such authors to address contemporary social problems has been shown by, for example, the contributors to Robert Meyer-Lee and Catherine Sanok’s collection of essays *The Medieval Literary: Beyond Form* (Boydell and Brewer, 2018). A dizzying panoply of textual forms, Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*, Langland’s *Piers Plowman*, the *Alliterative Morte Arthure*, the anonymous poem *When Rome Is Removed*, various Wycliffite sermons and tracts, the second version of Julian of Norwich’s *Shewings*, and the *Book of Margery Kempe* all meditate on reforms to an ecclesiastical culture thrown into chaos by the Schism.

Given the nature of the crisis and of the era, those who sought to address Church corruption necessarily manipulated both Scripture and tradition, and in doing so deployed an early version of that “activist presentism” which Danielle Spratt and Bridget Draxler have recently urged as a means to boost the relevance of the public

humanities in our own crisis-ridden age.<sup>1</sup> Whether overtly urged or coyly insinuated, late medieval English reformers deployed ‘presentism’ *avant la lettre* by imaginatively repurposing the textual past in order to affirm (or invent) their own social privilege and re-shape their political present. Appropriately, then, this version of ENGL 515 employs “activist presentism” both as a reading strategy and as an ethical position. Just as the course foregrounds creative late medieval forms of textual resistance to oppression, it also invites students and the instructor to confront situatedness as a potential bridge rather than barrier between present and past.

### **Tentative Text List:**

Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales* (selections), 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., ed. Robert Boenig and Andrew Taylor (Broadview, 2013)

William Langland, *Piers Plowman* (selections), B-text as trans. by A.V.C. Schmidt (Oxford Univ. Press, 1992, repr. 2009), to be read alongside versions digitized at the *Piers Plowman* Electronic Archive (<http://piers.chass.ncsu.edu/>)

Gower, *Vox Clamantis*, Book III, in *The Major Latin Works*, trans. Eric Stockton (Univ. of Washington Press, 1962), pp. 113-64 (to be photocopied)

*The Alliterative Morte Arthure*, in *King Arthur’s Death*, ed. Larry Benson, rev. Edward Foster (Medieval Institute Publications, 1994; online)

*When Rome Is Removed* and Wycliffite sermons and tracts, as gathered in e.g. *Medieval English Political Writings*, ed. James Dean (Medieval Institute Publications, 1996; online)

*The Shewings of Julian of Norwich*, ed. Georgia Ronan Crampton (Medieval Institute Publications, 1994; online)

*The Book of Margery Kempe*, ed. Lynn Staley (Medieval Institute Publications, 1996; online)

Articles and book chapters from recent scholarship and cultural criticism

Excerpts from relevant high-medieval and late-medieval theological and political writings (e.g. Thomas Aquinas on justice; *Summa theologica* II.ii, *quaestio* 58, art. 1), to be supplemented with entries in the “Medieval Political Philosophy” section of the online *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

### **Tentative Assignments:**

Short fieldwork assignment: analysis of a recent polemical misappropriation of religious dogma or cultural tradition. Two pages, worth 5% of total grade; Short essay on a primary text. Five pages, 10%; Fifteen-minute presentation on a secondary text (article or book chapter), 10%;

Twenty-page research paper, to be submitted in stages:

- proposal (5%)
- annotated bibliography (10%)
- preliminary draft (10%)
- oral presentation (10%)
- final draft (30%)
- Class participation (10%)

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<sup>1</sup> “Pride and Presentism: On the Necessity of the Public Humanities for Literary Historians,” *MLA Profession* (spring 2019), at <https://profession.mla.org/pride-and-presentism-on-the-necessity-of-the-public-humanities-for-literary-historians/>, accessed 20 September 2020.

**ENGLISH 560 A01                    STUDIES IN 20TH-CENTURY BRITISH AND IRISH LITERATURE:  
AREA COURSE  
*Twentieth-Century British Poetry*  
(1.5 units)  
Dr. Magdalena Kay**

This course will survey the twentieth century in British poetry. Its emphasis will be upon major figures but also upon variety: no two poets we read will sound the same. We will talk about Modernism, anti-Modernism, and the "mainstream." We will discuss literary alliances and antipathies. We will talk about poetic form, and whether it makes sense to oppose experimental to traditional form. We will talk about major literary movements, though many of our poets will evade any neat placement within a movement. We will always bear in mind the historical backdrop against which these poets wrote (or continue to write) and query the fraught relationship between poetry and its socio-historical context.

**Tentative Texts:**

Tim Kendall, ed. *Poems of the First World War: An Anthology*.  
D. H. Lawrence, *Selected Poems*. (Ed. James Fenton.)  
W. B. Yeats, *Selected Poems* (Ed. Timothy Webb.)  
T. S. Eliot, *Collected Poems 1909-1962*  
W. H. Auden, *Selected Poems* (Ed. Edward Mendelson.)  
Philip Larkin, *Collected Poems*  
Ted Hughes, *Selected Poems 1957-1994*  
Geoffrey Hill, *Selected Poems*  
Seamus Heaney, *100 Poems*

**Tentative Assignments:**

**ENGLISH 585 A01                    STUDIES IN CANADIAN LITERATURE: AREA COURSE  
*"The courage of the beast": Animals and hunting in Canadian writing*  
(1.5 units)  
Dr. Misao Dean**

What is animal subjectivity? And can it be represented in literary works? What is the proper relationship between humans and animals, and how does our national history of exploitation of animals determine public policy, indigenous rights, and settler identity? What would an ethical relationship between humans and animals look like in Canada? These questions provide a thread that unites the post-Romantic writing of Susanna Moodie and Ernest Thompson Seton to the anti-modernism of Farley Mowat and Roderick Haig-Brown, to the contemporary fiction of Rudy Wiebe and Alissa York.

This course will offer an introduction to a broad range of Canadian literary texts, many that appear on the PhD list, as well as important historic and contemporary critical statements by Atwood, Frye, Roberts, Travis Mason, Tina Loo, and well-known international theorists such as Donna Haraway and J.M. Coetzee.

**Tentative Texts:**

Seton, *Wild Animals I have Known*, Saunders, *Beautiful Joe*, Mowat, *Never Cry Wolf*, Wiebe, *A Discovery of Strangers*, Thomas King, *Truth and Bright Water*, York, *Fauna*, Alexis *Fifteen Dogs* Houston *A Diet of Souls* (film)  
Selections from Roberts, Haig Brown, Moodie, Atwood, Loo, Thomas King, Leanne Simpson, etc.

**Tentative Assignments:**

Weekly blog posts 60%; one research essay 40%