



Undergraduate Course Descriptions Spring 2027

Note: WMU Essential Studies courses are indicated by (WES) after the course title.

ENGL 1100: Literary Interpretation (WES)

CRN: Multiple Sections | Mode: In-person

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 2: Discovery and Exploration – Artistic Theory and Practice Category.

An introduction to the study of literature, aimed at developing abilities to read literature and write about it with skill, sensitivity, and care. Students will read poetry, drama, and prose fiction, and through the writing of several papers will be introduced to terms and methods of formal study of literature. Course required for entry into most upper-level English courses.

ENGL 1215: Monsters, Witches, Sailors, Knights: Mythic Figures in Global Medievalism (WES)

CRN 14448 | Mode: In-person | Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00-12:15 | Dr. Jana Schulman

This course satisfies Western Essential Studies Level I: Oral and Digital Communication Category.

[Course description](#)

In this introduction to monsters, sailors, witches, knights and myths of the Middle Ages, we will examine medieval tales from around the globe that are retold, via current media, for multicultural audiences. What caused a sailor of Arab legend to pop up in European translations of Eastern works, then to morph centuries later into an American cartoon? And what happens when an Arthurian knight from medieval romance is played in 2021 by an Anglo-Indian film star? Analyzing texts and films, we will examine the cyclical and cultural production of mythic figures and their appeal from the Middle Ages to the present. This course meets the student learning outcomes in the WMU Essential Studies Level 1—Oral and Digital Communication Level I, Foundations: (1) demonstrate effective oral and digital communication abilities, and (2) apply information literacy.

Course goals and outcomes

To introduce you to monster theory (a way of understanding “monsters”); to the importance of the global medieval; to important works of medieval literature in translation; to examine texts in terms of the literary/historical periods they represent and how they continue to engage us today both in the original and in their adaptations; to teach you how to uncover information about print media and digital sources, evaluate those sources, and continue to develop writing and analysis skills through the assignment of short responses, an annotated bibliography, and an essay. Finally, you will present on a topic, demonstrating oral and organizational skills.

ENGL 2060: AI Writing (WES)

CRN 14704 | Mode: Asynchronous Online | Dr. Brian Gogan

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 2: Exploration and Discovery – Science and Technology Category.

This course introduces students to the language science behind artificial intelligence technology and teaches students how to write inputs for AI tools. Students will gain practice crafting semi-structured prompts that can be applied to real-world contexts in areas relevant to professional or personal pursuits. The course stresses use of AI technology that is effective, ethical, and equitable.

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level II: Exploration and Discovery – Science and Technology Category.

By the end of this course, you will:

- Demonstrate and apply scientific literacy in order to effectively, equitably, and ethically use AI technologies
- Increase foundational knowledge of the humanities by refining your ability to “prompt engineer,” which is the human capacity to use writing to craft AI inputs
- Build GAI Literacy through activities and projects that ask to recognize, analyze, evaluate, and intervene in human-machine writing workflows

English 2100: Film Interpretation (WES)

CRN: 10620 | Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:00-1:40 | Mode: In-person | Dr. Monty Ernst

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 2: Exploration and Discovery – Artistic Theory and Practice

In this course, we will study the motion picture as an art form. By viewing a wide variety of films and clips, completing homework such as online quizzes and persuasive writings, and discussing the material in class, students will develop skills in analytical thinking, understanding

terminology and technique, seeing films in historical/cultural context, identifying ideologies, and investigating narrative structure and function.

ENGL 2110: Folklore and Mythology (WES)

CRN 11381 | Mode: Asynchronous Online | Dr. Mustafa Mirzeler

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 2: Exploration and Discovery – World Language and Culture Category.

In this course students will explore the folklore and mythology of people who live in disparate parts of the world, in Africa, Central Asia, Mesopotamia, the ancient shores of Mediterranean Sea and Western Europe. Drawing from the contemporary folklore and mythology, this course historicizes and conceptualizes cultural and social contexts that produce folklore and myths around the world.

English 2230: African American Literature

CRN 13663 | Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:00-11:40 | Mode: In-person | Professor Shonda Buchanan

In this course students critically examine the diverse styles and genres in African American literature within a historical, cultural, and social-political context. Tracing a profoundly rich mosaic of literary contributions, specific topics will include the early influences of the classic Black oral tradition, the historic Harlem Renaissance period, New Negro Arts and the resilient Black Arts Movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s, and the role, impact and relationship with traditional Black Theatre and the Black church. Students will also examine the role of African American history, Black literature and the contemporary proliferation of African American authors, Black books in general as well as the contributions of Black women authors.

ENGL 2520: Shakespeare's Theater

CRN 14702 | Mode: In-person | Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:00-11:40 | Dr. Grace Tiffany

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 2: Exploration and Discovery – Artistic Theory and Practice Category.

This class is an introduction to the college-level study of Shakespeare, and is classified as a WMU Essential Studies (WES) class in Artistic Theory and Practice, Level 2. We will discuss and see portions, on video, of six of Shakespeare's best-known plays. While we will treat these plays as works designed for performance, careful reading of their dialogue will be necessary in order for them to be understood, and so we will go slowly. Some historical background of the age of Shakespeare will be provided throughout to enhance understanding of the plays.

The tests, staggered throughout the semester, as well as the final exam, are designed to

1.) increase foundational knowledge of the social sciences, humanities, and the arts, as well as to 2.) enable you to apply new methods of intellectual inquiry, investigation, and discovery. The assignments will be evaluated according to your ability closely to **a.) read Elizabethan texts and discern in Shakespearean dialogue and stage practices a range of possible meanings, and b.) practice reading scripts as scripts, with attention not only to language, but to elements of spectacle, stage business, and vocal intonation that are implied by the written dialogue.**

Assignments: In addition to the reading, assignments include six in class short-essay tests (worth 10% each of final grade), a final exam (worth 20% of final grade), and class participation in the form of attendance, attentive listening, and discussion (20%).

Readings: some sonnets, *As You Like It*; *The Merchant of Venice*; *Henry IV, Part 1*; *Macbeth*; *Hamlet*; *The Winter's Tale*. Texts: Folger single-play editions.

English 2660: Writing Fiction and Poetry (WES)

CRN: Multiple Sections | Mode: In-person and Fully synchronous online

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 2: Exploration and Discovery – Artistic Theory and Practice Category.

This is an introductory creative writing course that covers both fiction and poetry. It is a reading as well as a writing course; students will learn the basic elements of fiction and poetry, read selections of work in each genre, complete critical and creative writing exercises and assignments, and participate in workshop sessions that focus on discussion of their own work and the work of their peers.

ENGL 2790: Introduction to English Education

CRN 13117 | Mode: In-person | Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:00-3:15 | Dr. Jonathan Bush

Catalog states: An introduction to the responsibilities, aspirations, and professional knowledge of secondary English language arts teachers.

English 2790 will introduce you to the creative, exciting, and challenging world of teaching high school and middle school English by:

- Meeting and talking with public school English teachers and students;
- Reading narratives and viewing films about teaching;
- Learning and presenting about issues in the field;
- Sharing about your own interests and experiences studying English;
- Discovering ways to use the Internet and new technologies for teaching;
- Finding out about the job market for teachers;
- Learning about requirements, courses, tests, etc. to earn certification.

Decide if you want to earn a teaching certificate!

Open to students at all levels and in all majors and minors!

Required of all students earning teaching certificates in English as of catalog year 2016-17.

ENGL 2810: Youth Literature and Culture (WES)

CRN 12853 | Mode: In-person | Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00-3:15 | Kate Setzer

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 2: Exploration and Discovery – Artistic Theory and Practice Category.

The course will introduce students to terminology and key ideas of a particular literary and/or visual form within children's literature and youth culture.

ENGL 2980: Literary Publishing

CRN 14414 | Mode: In-person | Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:30-1:45 | Professor Shonda Buchanan

This course will introduce students to the world of literary publishing from both the writer's perspective and the editorial side. This includes understanding the process for searching literary portals for submission opportunities and contests, writing query/cover/submission letters to gain internships, submitting short works, book proposals and manuscripts in poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction to literary magazines, and to small, independent, university and trade publishers. From the editorial side, students will learn the structure of the literary publishing industry and gain knowledge of the production of a literary journal and publications by some involvement with, and presentations from, members of the editorial team for the Third Coast, WMU's literary journal. This course is designed to professionalize students pursuing careers as literary writers and/or as editors, agents, publishers or other positions in literary publishing.

ENGL 3080: Quest for Self (WES)

CRN 12941 | Mode: In-person | Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00-12:15 | Jonathan Riccio

The course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 2: Personal Wellness.

Our framework is organized around how we examine, construct, and receive identity during today's age of instantaneousness. Our readings—fiction, essays, poetry, and memoir—will address selfhood as part of a community and on a more minute level, family, with particular emphasis on media (anime, art, movies, and video games); race; gender/sexuality; travel narratives; names/naming practices; language/linguistics; food; fairy tales/mythology; and class

(what it means to come from humble beginnings in addition to how they're transcended). The knowledge we arrive at collaboratively is the most exciting aspect of Quest for Self, your ideas deepening this thing we call literature.

ENGL 3140: African Literature (WES)

CRN 15076 | Mode: In-person | Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:30-1:45 | Dr. Allen Webb

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 2: Exploration and Discovery – World Language and Culture Category.

This course seeks to use African literature, autobiography, memoir, film, library and on-line sources to begin to understand the complexity of contemporary Africa, the challenges facing the continent, and the many common issues Africans and Americans confront. Those common issues include especially the climate crisis, and also economic inequality, government corruption and challenges to democracy, educational opportunity, racism/Black Lives Matter, religious extremism, women's rights, refugees and more. A cornerstone of this course is the idea that we can make a difference through *collaboration and mutual respect*.

Africa is young and growing quickly; half of the population of Africa is under 20 years old. More than 70% of the world's population growth in this century will take place in Africa. Much of our reading will be about young people, many college age, their life experiences and how they are addressing issues and creating new possibilities.

ENGL 3160: Storytellers (WES)

CRN 13993 | Mode: Asynchronous online | Dr. Mustafa Mirzeler

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 2: Exploration and Discovery – World Language and Culture Category.

Relying on oral tradition and the written word, the storytellers work imaginatively within the realms of fantasy and reality. The fantasy element of their oral tradition and written literature is the link to a fabulous and grandly mythicized past created in oral epic tales, stories, and novels. In the world of the storytellers, what assuage the pain and suffering of people are the stories, the myths, and the imaginary worlds of the ancient past. In every age, human societies have produced their master storytellers who have moved tradition into new dispensations through the magic of words. In reading the accounts of these storytellers, the students will enter into their magical worlds and experience the magical truth of storytelling as well as the magic of the words.

ENGL 3210: American Literature II

CRN 13665 | Mode: In-person | Mondays, 4:00-6:20 | Dr. John Saillant

The making of modern American began when the Civil War ended in 1865. In the last 155 years, the United States fully embraced the industrial age; completed its expansion across the North American continent and acquired holdings overseas; took initial steps toward, retreated from, and then reengaged with civil rights for African Americans; provided the vote for women and citizenship for Native Americans; faced economic upheaval and income inequality; allied with others to win two world wars, entered the nuclear and then the digital ages; and has shifted a European-dominated to a multi-cultural society.

Writers from the last century and a half have registered these immense changes in their short stories, novels, poems, autobiographies, and essays. This class will examine the issues these authors addressed in their writings, issues of race and class, social conventions and gender roles, economics and politics. Participants will also interrogate the aesthetic methods for conveying the authors' conclusions about American life and encounter literary movements such as realism, naturalism, and modernism.

ENGL 3300: British Literature I

CRN 13203 | Mode: In-person | Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:30-1:45 | Dr. Daniel Knapper

This course will explore the first thousand years of literature in English, covering the four major periods of British literature pre-1800, from Beowulf's battle with Grendel and the dragon to Gulliver's shipwreck in the land of the Houyhnhnms. We will read some of the most influential writers in the history of English literature: Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton. We will read poems, plays, and stories about sex, gender, and desire, rage and destruction, heroism and exile, wisdom and godliness, politics and power. We will spend time in the company of priests and playwrights, knights and nuns, angels and shepherdesses, even God and Satan. We will consider the contexts—social, historical, political, cultural—within which the works were written and read, and examine how these works serve as forerunners of genres that remain popular today (for example, horror, romance, and science fiction). By completing the readings and assignments, we will cultivate an appreciation for the literature of the past, even as we consider how the literature speaks to us and our world.

Class assignments will include two essays, midterm and final exams, and regular reading quizzes. The text is *The Norton Anthology of English Literature: Shorter 11th edition*, ed. Greenblatt (volume 1).

ENGL 3670: Advanced Poetry Writing

CRN 13236 | Mode: In-person | Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:00-3:15 | Dr. Alen Hamza

English 3670 is a course in the craft of poetry writing. You will write, write, and write some

more. You will try new things and hone your craft. Because writing well requires reading well (and widely), we will read a good deal of published poetry, including two full single-author collections. We will also read essays on the craft of writing and on the genesis and growth of a writer's consciousness. We will enlarge our vocabulary and ways of speaking and of writing about poems from a writer's perspective. Generally speaking, one day each week will be a workshop day; we will use the other day to discuss an essay and/or a set of poems, or a book of poetry, as well as for in-class writing.

ENGL 3680: Playwriting

CRN 15381 | Mode: In-person | Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00-3:15 | Kristen Field

This writing course focuses on the creation of original plays. Initial playwriting exercises will complement class discussions on craft, technique, and mentor texts, all focused on the core tenets of playwriting - character, conflict, and environment. Students will have the opportunity to read existing theatrical works and discuss the ways they function as both literary texts and blueprints for performance. Playwriting exercises and class discussions on existing works will then shift to focus on the creation, development, and revision of new, individual scripts. Each student will submit two (2) ten-minute plays for workshopping. During these workshops, students will help the featured playwrights develop their work and, by doing so, deepen their understanding of effective playwriting. After each workshop, the featured playwrights will meet individually with the instructor regarding revision goals. Students will submit a final portfolio, which will include their exercise work and their revised ten-minute plays.

ENGL 3720: Development of Modern English

CRN 13392 | Mode: In-person | Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:00-11:40 | Dr. Adrienne Redding

From the catalog: English 3720 traces the development of modern English from its beginnings to the present, examining historic and linguistic influences on change in spoken and written English. It explores theories of language development, with emphasis on their practical implications.

Students who complete the course successfully will acquire the following:

- Language description skills, including proficiency in the International Phonetic Alphabet.
- Working knowledge of terminology used in the discipline of linguistics.
- Understanding of the external (social, political, intellectual) influences on language change.
- Understanding of the internal (linguistic) mechanisms of language change.
- Awareness of how standard varieties are authorized and institutionalized.
- Understanding of English as a global lingua franca and the implications of its influence.

ENGL 3820: Literature for the Young Child (WES)

CRN 12298 | Mode: In-person | Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:00-1:40 | Jamie Bienhoff

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 2: Exploration and Discovery – Societies and Cultures Category.

In this section of ENGL 3820 “Literature for the Young Child” we’ll do a deep dive into the animated films that made, and keep, Disney a household name for the past century. From beloved classics like Snow White (1937) to contemporary favorites like Encanto (2021), we will watch and explore how the media mogul engages with its target audience: young viewers. Students will develop skills to analyze positive and negative artistic choices for portraying power dynamics, cultural authenticity, and identity. Pairing this context with social, political, and cultural shifts that influence contemporary texts, students will track and comment upon potential trends in children’s film. In addition to regular class participation, assignments will include viewing quizzes, short written reflections, and exploration activities centered around the messaging and marketing of Disney’s animated films.

ENGL 3840: Adolescent Literature

CRN 13666 | Mode: In-Person | Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:30-1:45 | Kate Setzer

This course examines Dystopian Young Adult (YA) literature as a mode of critique and response to the contemporary social and political environment. ENGL 3840 Adolescent (YA) Literature explores the last twenty years of Dystopian YA, critically thinking about how these texts interest young people in discussions of culture, oppression, resistance, and identity. Students in this course will engage with critical approaches and discourse used by scholars, teachers, librarians, and others invested in literature for teens. We'll explore the ways that power relationships act as the basis of young adult lit as ideological forces within society, and we'll consider how and why diversity, inclusivity, and equity sit at the foundation of recent trends in discussions surrounding YA and adolescent literature. Course texts include *The Hunger Games* book and film (2008, 2012), *Marrow Thieves* (2017), *We Set the Dark on Fire* (2019) and *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* book and film (2020, 2023).

ENGL 4120: Climate Change and Culture (WES)

CRN 13400 | Mode: In-person | Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:30-4:45 | Dr. Allen Webb

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 3: Connections – Global Perspectives Category.

2023, 2024, and 2025 are not simply the hottest years in recorded history but likely the hottest years of the last 125,000 years. 75 years too early we are passing the Paris Climate Agreement target of 1.5 C set for the year 2100.

Now is a time of dire emergency for the Earth, a time when drastic and dramatic measures

must be taken so that our planet remains livable, yet the Trump Administration is championing fossil fuels – the primary source of greenhouse gases – and devastating climate action. How do we comprehend the climate crisis and what can we do about it?

In this class students will read powerful recent writing on climate change by social thinkers, creative writers, and activists. The course will emphasize the relatedness of all human and natural communities, the importance of climate justice, and ways we can act to preserve a habitable earth. Assignments will include educating others and making a difference.

ENGL 4440: Studies in Fiction

CRN 15077 | Mode: In-person | Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:00-1:40 | Dr. Jil Larson

The focus of our course is the shape novels take. Most centrally, we will explore the ideas and preoccupations of each of the books we read together, but we will also give special attention to concepts such as perspective, focalization, story and structure, voice, and a variety of other narrative choices that contribute to the form of each of the novels we'll be discussing. Some of our texts experiment with form and as such they will sharpen our skills as readers, encouraging us to be imaginatively open. Through our reading and writing about novels, we will explore and discuss such topics as family, race, class, the immigrant experience, history, grief, memory, and ethical and political questions of all sorts. We will also practice writing about literature both through informal writing-to-learn assignments as well as through the composition of more formal, researched, carefully argued essays. In short, expect to do a lot of reading and writing, but also anticipate a deepening of your knowledge and skills through plenty of practice.

Studies in the Novel fulfills the baccalaureate writing requirement, and as such the course will give you intensive experience writing about literature and working with literary criticism.

ENGL 4840: Culture in Children's Literature (WES)

CRN 13688 | Mode: In-person | Mondays and Wednesdays, 9:30-10:45 | Jamie Bienhoff

This course satisfies WMU Essential Studies Level 3: Connections – Local and National Perspectives Category. This course also meets the Diversity and Inclusion student learning outcome.

What does it mean to read children's literature as an adult? How are power and identity represented in children's texts? How do children's texts reflect and shape the culture and values of our society, and how does this influence the way young readers perceive the world around them? In ENGL 4840 we'll explore a wide variety of texts for young people, paying particular attention to how the world, local and national, are represented. In this in-person session, students will engage with various forms of children's media including poetry, picturebooks, novels, and comics to explore topics such as identity, family, and technology. In addition to regular class participation, assignments will include reading quizzes, short written

reflections, and exploration activities focused on representation, identity, and culture.

ENGL 4970: Grant Writing (WES)

CRN 15215 | Mode: In-person | Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00-12:15 | Dr. Brian Gogan

Make an impact. Improve your community. Write grants.

Grant writing is a kind of writing that has social impact. It turns ideas into reality by convincing stakeholders to build a program or fund a project.

And grant writing is a unique and increasingly marketable skill sought by employers in today's competitive job market. According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, grant writing jobs are expected to grow 7% in the next eight years, a rate that is "faster than the average for all occupations."

In this class, you'll learn how to make positive social impact through grant writing and improve your professional writing skills. You'll study successful grant proposals, practice grant writing strategies, and produce a grant proposal for a community organization.

This designated service-learning course features experience-driven learning: Class participants will engage in a major grant writing project with a Kalamazoo-area community partner, and a site visit to the nonprofit will be required of all class participants.

During this course you will:

- Investigate the habits of successful grant writers
- Examine the motivation behind giving
- Apply theories of rhetoric and writing to grant writing
- Practice crafting conventional parts of a grant proposal and a project pitch
- Conduct research to identify funding opportunities and stakeholder needs
- Produce a complete grant proposal and project pitch for a community organization

Major assignments include grant convention analyses, a case study, and a community-engaged, research-based grant proposal project for a Kalamazoo-area nonprofit.

This course satisfies elective credit for all English Department programs of study and counts toward the core concentration for Rhetoric and Writing Studies majors and minors.

ENGL 5360: Romantic Literature

CRN 15340 | Mode: In-person | Mondays, 4:00-6:20 | Dr. Christopher Nagle



“In the wake, the past that is not past reappears, always, to rupture the present.”
—Christina Sharpe, *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being*

What would it mean to study Romanticism not as a collection of “great works” by a handful of writers who took inspiration from nature and from the political fervor of the French Revolution and Napoleonic wars, while crafting new contours for a modern sense of self in poetry and novels? Instead, we could

center the world in which both its critics and creators were constantly navigating the tensions and stresses of formal and aesthetic innovation as well as the profoundly disturbing contours of slavery, subjugation, and human annihilation, all of which was part of what we call the Romantic movement.

This incarnation of the department’s core Romanticism course spans the broad range of rich literary offerings produced in Britain and its colonies from approximately 1770-1830 and will include the use of digital resources, especially to enrich our experience of the vast archive of visual culture (painting, illuminated manuscripts, illustrated “keepsake” volumes, satirical political cartoons, artistic works that inspired ekphrastic writing, etc.). We will center the debates within the period about the slave trade and its abolition, and incorporate the voices and perspectives of people of color who lived in this period or who wrote about it subsequently (e.g., Olaudah Equiano’s *Interesting Narrative*, the anonymous novella *The Woman of Colour*, the eponymous *History of Mary Prince*, 20th-century historian CLR James’ study of the Haitian Revolution – the first successful slave revolt against European colonizers, which took place in the wake of the French Revolution—and one of the most innovative and influential 21st-century works, m. nourbeSe philips’ *Zong!*, a genre-defying monument to history, lyric, law, and testimony).

This recentering of historical dynamics once seen as peripheral to the period should enable us to see anew what is “Romantic,” while we also explore a broad survey of diverse readings from across the traditional genres of British Romanticism—poetry, prose fiction, drama, essays, life-writing, along with the visual art created to illustrate some of these literary texts—representing the contributions of both canonical and non-canonical figures. We are likely to include at least one important film adaptation and view selected performances of *Zong!*. This course should be ideal for graduate students considering this exam area, or for those who simply lack familiarity with some of the most important influences on later writing—both creative and critical—of the 19th and 20th centuries, for advanced undergraduates considering graduate school, and for

anyone wishing to be prepared for teaching Romantic literature. This course will provide a broad representation of material essential to the field in the 21st century.

This 5000-level course will be conducted seminar-style, foregrounding shared class discussion and other forms of collaborative learning, with brief supplementary mini-lectures introduced when necessary. Students will be expected to make at least one presentation during the course of the semester (including both a written and oral component), to write at least one short response paper and one longer research project, and--most importantly--to contribute actively to class activities every week. Students will be encouraged to tailor their research work to an area of individual interest that directly connects with their broader field of study as scholars of literature, creative writing, education, or a combination of these (or other) areas.

ENGL 5660: Creative Writing Workshop—Fiction

CRN 15079 | Mode: In-person | Mondays, 6:30-9:00 | Professor Richard Katrovas

This will be a traditional workshop in which the group critiques one another's short stories and novel chapters. Some of the writing for the course may be in response to assignments, though this will be negotiable. Each student will generate a minimum of thirty pages of prose fiction. An aspect of the course will be a far-ranging conversation on the state of the art, and where it is going.

ENGL 5820: Studies in Children's Literature

CRN 15080 | Mode: In-person | Fridays, 1:00-3:20 | Dr. Meghann Meeusen

The field of children's and adolescent literature offers a vast array of critical perspectives, including traditional literary study, historical and archival research, theory-focused explorations, and pedagogy-based work. Yet one of the most popular approaches to children's literature in recent years is **cultural studies**, which offers a distinctive look at children's media as cultural artifacts, considering the ideological and social impact of texts and their ability to affect our perceptions of and engagement with the world around us. The Spring 2027 section of ENGL 5820 *Studies in Children's Literature* will delve into this approach by examining children's spaces, and in particular, the Walt Disney World theme parks.



This Spring, we'll study the nature of cultural studies criticism as a unique analytical approach, and to do this, we'll engage with the huge array of digital media that connects people to the WDW parks without ever stepping foot in Orlando. However, students will also have a chance to put a line of inquiry of their choosing into practice, as the course will have a **hybrid component**, including seven online meetings (in addition to seven in-person class meetings). During many of these digital meetings, Dr. Meghann Meeusen will be on site at the Walt Disney

World parks to connect students with the artifacts they wish to examine, allowing them to have the opportunity to build from their online and other research to delve even more deeply into cultural studies.

So why take ENGL 5820 in Spring 2027? If you **love Disney**, here's a chance to spend an entire semester studying it! If you're excited about **social media and influencer culture**, we'll examine such texts in depth, as well as how this kind of media overlaps with critical and academic research spaces. If you are **interested in cultural studies research**, a field that is growing in importance on the academic job market, you can not only learn about this approach, but also complete a study that demonstrates your ability to deftly traverse multiple critical and research approaches. Or, if you just want a **really fun hybrid class** with a professor who is over-the-moon excited to try out a new type of pedagogy, ENGL 5820 is right for you.



ENGL 5970: Memoir and Autofiction

CRN 15081 | Mode: In-person | Thursdays, 4:00-6:20 | Dr. Jil Larson

In 1977, Serge Doubrovsky coined the term “autofiction” to describe writing that occupies a place in between memoir and fiction. Some writers find themselves caught, as it were, between the two genres (or they feel at home in that indeterminate space). In this course, we will explore a variety of contemporary writers who are difficult to categorize simply as novelists or memoirists. Obvious examples are Rachel Cusk and Ocean Vuong. Cusk, who began as a memoirist, has commented on memoir’s lack of legitimacy, which became even more apparent to her when she went on to gain regard as a novelist (while clearly still writing from life). Vuong remarked that as a poet truth was invariably his starting point and so it is in *On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous*, a book he calls a novel even though it feels very much like a memoir. In this course, we will read some work categorized as literary memoir and some as fiction by writers thought of as experimenting with autofiction (e.g., Elizabeth Hardwick, James Baldwin, Ben Lerner, Annie Ernaux, J.M. Coetzee, Rachel Cusk, Ocean Vuong, Matt Young, Chris Kraus), and together we will explore the ideas of these writers as well as the questions of genre, style, and approach their work provokes.