

**CRN #** Spring 2021 Literature Cornerstone Seminar Course Descriptions

- 40576 ENG110-A, CS: Island Living/Island Leaving** **3 credits (Cornerstone Seminar)**  
**Prof. S. Cohen**  
 This seminar explores the literature of islands. This will be a semester-long inquiry into how the unique conditions of island living shape literature and culture. We will study texts about castaways, pirates, tourists, islanders, and adventurers in order to discern what makes stories about islands so compelling and enduring.  
 Fulfills First-Year seminar requirement and Literature Cornerstone requirement.
- 40577 ENG 113-A, CS: Machine Culture: Our Technology, Ourselves** **3 credits (Cornerstone Seminar)**  
**Prof. W. Peek**  
 This course explores the representation of technology as created by artists from ancient Athens to the 21st century. Questions we will pursue: is technology the friend or foe of humanity? Will machines enable our perfection or enhance our flaws? Should our machines be more or less like us?  
 Fulfills First-Year seminar requirement and Literature Cornerstone requirement.
- 40578 ENG 116-A, CS: Literature in Translation** **3 credits (Cornerstone Seminar)**  
**Prof. J. Golden**  
 Many of the texts that you read in your core courses are translations into English. What exactly does it mean to read a text in translation? We will ask and answer that question, using these 19th-century texts: Baudelaire, *Les Fleurs du mal/Flowers of Evil*; Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*; Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*.  
 Fulfills First-Year seminar requirement and Literature Cornerstone requirement.
- 40579 ENG 123-A, CS: In Sickness and in Health: Bodies in Literature** **3 credits (Cornerstone Seminar)**  
**Prof. H. Duncan**  
 Our thematic focus is the representation of human bodies in the works of poets, dramatists, novelists, and film makers at various significant moments in western cultural history. As we read some famous and influential literary texts alongside less familiar works, we will become acquainted with key concepts and methodologies employed in literary studies. The course is divided into two conceptual blocks: one is devoted to representations of the monstrous body, a subject that has preoccupied writers (and filmmakers) for a very long time and produced some of the great classics of the western literary canon two of which we read this semester, *Frankenstein* and *The Metamorphosis*. The other centers on the relationship between literature and medicine, and ranges widely from Giovanni Boccaccio's fourteenth-century account of the plague in Florence to David Feldshuh's late-twentieth century play about the infamous Tuskegee experiment in 1930s rural Alabama, to poetry by practicing physicians and healthcare workers.  
 Fulfills First-Year seminar requirement and Literature Cornerstone requirement.
- 40580 ENG 128-A, CS: Wonderlands** **3 credits (Cornerstone Seminar)**  
**Prof. L. Scales**  
 A portal opens to another world: what wonders will we find there? In this course, we will travel down rabbit holes, through secret doorways, across borders, and back in time, encountering the stuff of dreams—and sometimes nightmares. Along the way, we will ask what these alternate realities tell us about our own world and our own imaginations. Texts may include Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, J.M. Barrie's *Peter and Wendy*, The Wachowskis' *The Matrix*, Neil Gaiman's *Coraline*, Hayao Miyazaki's *Spirited Away*, Guillermo Del Toro's *Pan's Labyrinth*, Octavia Butler's *Kindred*, and short works by Margaret Cavendish, Jorge Luis Borges, Ray Bradbury, and Adrienne Rich.  
 Fulfills First-Year seminar requirement and Literature Cornerstone requirement.
- 40582 ENG 141-A, CS: Introduction to African-American Literature** **3 credits (Cornerstone Seminar)**  
**Prof. D. Itzkovitz**  
 An introduction to the major themes and issues in African American literature, from the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the present.  
 Fulfills First-Year seminar requirement and Literature Cornerstone requirement.
- 40583 ENG 148-A, CS: Sport Stories** **3 credits (Cornerstone Seminar)**  
**40588 ENG 148-B, CS: Sport Stories** **3 credits (Cornerstone Seminar)**  
**Prof. M. Borushko**  
 This course centers on the study of contemporary fiction and literary nonfiction that is about sports by authors such as Sherman Alexie, John Edgar Wideman, Joyce Carol Oates, and David Foster Wallace, among others.

Fulfills First-Year seminar requirement and Literature Cornerstone requirement.

**40584 ENG155-A CS: The Mirror of Friendship 3 credits (Cornerstone Seminar)**  
**Prof. J. Green**

"Without friends," wrote Aristotle, "no one would choose to live, though he had all other goods." For the Greek philosopher, in fact, friendship was a higher value than justice and one of the purest forms of love. Oscar Wilde, with tongue in cheek, had a somewhat different take: "Friendship is far more tragic than love. It lasts longer." In this course, we will examine the philosophy and literature of friendship from the ancient world to the contemporary era of one-click "friending" on Facebook. We'll look at friendship in its many hues: from the innocent relationships of childhood and the intensities of adolescent bonds to friendships that cross over into romantic love and friendships that spiral into dependency, rivalry, obsession, and betrayal. As we gaze into what Aristotle called the mirror that friends hold up for one another, we will also examine what the border-crossing power of friendship shows us about race, class, gender, and sexuality. Authors we will consider may include: Aristotle, Cicero, Michel de Montaigne, Francis Bacon, William Shakespeare, Oscar Wilde, David Mitchell, Achy Obejas, ZZ Packer, Junot Diaz, Sherman Alexie, and Mohsin Hamid. Frequent writing assignments will ask you to explore a variety of kinds of writing, such as "quotes and notes" annotations, blog posts, personal essays, and formal critical analysis. Special attention will be paid to developing basic writing and composition skills with an emphasis on formulating clear and persuasive arguments. We will also use Voice Thread as a way to converse with one another about these texts and our questions and ideas.

Fulfills First-Year seminar requirement and Literature Cornerstone requirement.

**40585 ENG 157-A, CS: Poetry, Migration, Exile 3 credits (Cornerstone Seminar)**  
**40586 ENG 157-B, CS: Poetry, Migration, Exile 3 credits (Cornerstone Seminar)**  
**Prof. S. Dasgupta**

This course will explore the themes and expressions of exile, migration, the loss of home, and the experience of estrangement through narrative and lyric poetry. We will study displacements of self and relations that arise because of changing perceptions of identity, threats, or new regimes. Selected poems—epic, odes, elegy, fragments, songs—will coincide with urgent questions of the body, passions, gender, background, national or global citizenship. With some review of examples from across the ancient and medieval worlds, the Renaissance and Romantic periods, (e.g. Sappho, Ovid, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Dickinson) the course will focus primarily on Twentieth Century works, including Marianne Moore, Elizabeth Bishop, James Wright, Derek Walcott, Seamus Heaney, Yusef Komunyakaa and contemporary poets, spoken word and rap artists.

Fulfills First-Year seminar requirement and Literature Cornerstone requirement.

**40587 ENG 159-A, CS: Whose Ireland? Writing the Immigrant Experience 3 credits (Cornerstone Seminar)**  
**Prof. E. Chase**

This seminar explores the concept of Irishness through the work of writers born in Ireland and those who immigrated into Ireland in the wake of the Celtic Tiger and the formation of the European Union. We will ask: How has what it means to be "Irish" changed after key moments in Irish history? Who "counts" as Irish? Is Irishness a geographic designation, a cultural concept, a political tool, or a literary construct? By examining seminal works by authors such as W.B. Yeats in conversation with contemporary authors including Oona Frawley and Melatu Uche Okorie, students will practice close reading of texts in order to form compelling arguments about the interactions between the nation, race, ethnicity, and literature.

Fulfills First-Year seminar requirement and Literature Cornerstone requirement.

**40589 ENG 159-A, CS: Twice Told Tales 3 credits (Cornerstone Seminar)**  
**TBA**

The title of this course is fittingly repurposed from Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Twice-Told Tales* (1837), a collection of short stories containing a variety of his own previously published works. Throughout the semester, students will read a series of republished and retold narratives as a way of considering the stakes of literary genre, narrative voice, cultural capital, and publication histories. By exploring narratives that have reverberated across multiple genres—drama, film, fiction, and poetry—students will explore how form shapes and contains the kinds of stories artists are able to tell. Reading closely for the ghost plots and literary echoes that haunt these "twice told tales," students will contemplate the aesthetic significance of repetition and revision and will examine the political and ethical stakes of recuperating lost stories.

Fulfills First-Year seminar requirement and Literature Cornerstone requirement.

**40590 ENG 163-A, CS: American Nightmare/American Dream: Dystopic & Utopic American Lit. 3 credits (Cornerstone Seminar)**  
**40591 ENG 163-B, CS: American Nightmare/American Dream: Dystopic & Utopic American Lit. 3 credits (Cornerstone Seminar)**

**Prof. C. Payson**

What do *The Hunger Games* and the Declaration of Independence have in common? Or Thoreau's *Walden* and Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech? Each offers a vision of a future American society and asks us to reexamine the principles that shape it. In this course we will explore how writers from John Winthrop to Charlotte Perkins Gilman to Octavia Butler have imagined America in literature.

Fulfills First-Year seminar requirement and Literature Cornerstone requirement.

**40592 ENG 164-A, CS: Introduction to Creative Writing 3 credits (Cornerstone Seminar)****Prof. A. Brooks**

In this course you will be introduced to world of creative writing. We will embark on weekly writing experiments and exercises drawing from your own experiences, identities, perceptions, and unique and wild imaginations. At the same time, we will read, listen to, and watch work read by contemporary authors in all genres to be in conversation with our own writing and the world in which we live. This course will get you thinking creatively and show you ways to approach writing as a creative outlet and form of self-expression to grapple with and explore the complexities of what it means to be human in this moment. Together we will build a close classroom community through weekly collaborations, feedback, discussion, reading, and exciting writing adventures. Students will learn fundamentals of writing poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction such as mini-memoir and personal narratives.

Fulfills First-Year seminar requirement and Literature Cornerstone requirement.

**40593 ENG 166-A, CS: Tales of Mayhem and Mystery: An Introduction to Detective Fiction 3 credits (Cornerstone Seminar)****Prof. G. Piggford, CSC**

With its roots in the Bible, ancient Greece, and medieval China and Arabia, the tale of mystery invites readers into a role of detection. We consider facts and solve cases, but also ponder mysteries that are sometimes supernatural, metaphysical, linguistic, or existential. Students in this course will consider stories such as "The Three Apples" and "The Chalk Circle," as well as works by Edgar Allan Poe, Arthur Conan Doyle, Agatha Christie, Raymond Chandler, Chester Himes, Thomas Pynchon, and Paul Auster, and film adaptations including *Witness for the Prosecution*, *The Third Man*, *Memento*.

Fulfills First-Year seminar requirement and Literature Cornerstone requirement.

**49594 ENG 168-B, CS: Global Fictions 3 credits (Cornerstone Seminar)****Prof. A. Opitz**

In this section students encounter work by contemporary authors and filmmakers from around the globe. We'll study this work within the broader framework of recent debates on colonization and post-colonization, globalization, migration, and war. We'll consider issues relating to belonging and displacement; the legacies of imperialism; the local and the global; the meaning of home; diasporic, migrant and refugee identities. In order to see how contemporary writers and filmmakers have engaged with these questions, we'll study work produced by artists from the Caribbean (Antigua, Haiti, and Martinique), Northern Africa (Syria, Iraq, and Iran), North, Central and South America (Canada, Mexico, and Columbia), and Europe (England).

Fulfills First-Year seminar requirement and Literature Cornerstone requirement.

**40733 ENG 169-A, CS: Poetic Idiom through the Ages 3 credits (Cornerstone Seminar)****Prof. J. Chichetto, CSC**

Using some of the most familiar and often taught works in each genre of poetry, this course will explore the poetic styles and forms of artistic expression that are characteristic of certain poets and periods of literature down through the ages. It will also examine the idiom of current songwriters like Lil Wayne and Taylor Swift and compare and contrast them with poets, both past and contemporary.

Fulfills First-Year seminar requirement and Literature Cornerstone requirement.

**40753 ENG170-A CS: What Ghosts Can Say: In/Visible Men & Women 3 credits (Cornerstone Seminar)****Prof. S. Gracombe**

"What ghosts can say—/Even the ghosts of fathers—comes obscurely."—Adrienne Rich

"Ghost stories represent the return of the repressed in its most literal and paradigmatic form."—Julia Briggs

What can ghosts say? More precisely, what can representations of ghosts in literature and film say? From *Macbeth* (1606) to *The Turn of the Screw* (1898) to *The Sixth Sense* (1999), ghosts make frequent appearances in fictional narratives. While ghost stories can be fun and spooky, they can also be means of investigating what haunts the cultural imaginary; they teach us not just about the dead but the living. In this course, we will examine a diverse array of "ghost stories"—understood as a flexible genre—in order to explore how fictional ghosts often reveal real psychological and historical trauma. For example, in novels about American racial injustice such as Jesmyn Ward's *Sing, Unburied, Sing* (2017) and Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987), ghosts make visible the invisible, telling the stories of

those whose have been erased or silenced until they return in spectral form. As a cornerstone English course, we will also practice close reading, collaborative discussion, and clear, persuasive writing, skills beneficial in and beyond college.

Fulfills First-Year seminar requirement and Literature Cornerstone requirement.