

Courses for the Music Education Certification

English Literature Requirement

Recommended Courses at Carnegie Mellon University:

76-201 Literature and the Social

76-227 Comedy [includes classic literary works] - 9 units

We can't, of course, expect to come up with an absolutely complete definition of the comic, but for our purposes we can consider it as an embodiment of the opposite of "gravity". Comedy is characterized by its levity. This does not mean, of course, that it is any less "serious" than tragedy, even if "or especially" because it tends to favor the superficial over the profound. Indeed, if tragedy is adolescent, then the mature, adult mode is the comic, being more social and rational. A key characteristic of comedy is wit or simply intelligence. Comedy involves a lot of pure play of the mind. It turns out that there have been a few notable attempts to help us understand just why comedy is the "social" genre beyond all others, why the comic attitude is the civilized, urbane, mature view of life. And we'll consider some of those theories while trying to understand why some things are comic and some are not. We'll consider the following texts, and some representative funny movies: Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*; Shakespeare, *As you Like It*; Congreve, *Way of the World*; Voltaire, *Candide*; Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest*; Samuel Beckett, *Endgame*; Evelyn Waugh, *The Loved One*; Joseph Heller, *Catch-22*; Wylie Sypher, ed., *Comedy*.

76-221 Studies in Classical Literature: Books You Should Have Read By Now – 9 units

It may seem more and more difficult to get a good classical, liberal education these days. The demands of professional training force many of us to skimp on our understanding of major artistic achievements. So, this class is for those people who should have read some of the best books around, but haven't managed to yet; books you should have read by now. In some cases you may have read one or two of our texts already, but that is not a problem. You should find this experience of re-reading considerably different. Kurt Vonnegut's character Kilgore Trout sings the praises of Dostoevski's *The Brothers Karamazov*, (and the same thing might be said about *Crime and Punishment*) pointing out that it contains everything you need to know about life. He then ruefully adds that unfortunately that's not enough any more. It may not be enough, but it might be a place to start. Each book will be considered in itself for whatever it might offer by way of understanding the world, then and now. Finally we shall use the idea that literature is equipment for living as a way of understanding and evaluating our experiences with 'great' books, to see if we think they really deserve the reverence they have often been accorded. A recurrent interest will be in improving our language ability in general, our ability to read and understand.

76-231 Studies in British Literature and Culture

76-233 Studies in American Literature and Culture

76-239 Introduction to Film Studies - 9 units

This course is an introduction to the technology, history, semiotics, and ideology of film. It is a required pre-requisite for most other film classes at CMU. In this class, we focus on the Hollywood film, with special concentration on the studio era of that form, 1920-1950. The course will be organized more or less historically, beginning with early films, moving through the development of different cinematic styles in European and American silent features, and then into the sound era. Throughout the course, we will be concerned with the ideologies present in the films we see, especially those concerning gender and class. At several points, we will focus specifically on a theory of film criticism, including feminism and auteurism. In general, our approach will be to draw connections between the films and the larger culture.

Prerequisites: 76101

76-245 Shakespeare - 9 units

We will be reading eight plays—three histories from early in Shakespeare's career and five tragedies from later—and considering films of some of them. The course will approach these plays from two angles. First, we will try to see them in relation to the culture for which they were written and which they helped shape--the newly established public theater in London, prevailing notions about social class and gender, Puritan attacks on playgoing, and the like. In addition, we want to see these plays in terms of "what's in it for us"—how current audiences and readers can enjoy and interpret these plays. We will be considering how complicit the plays are with the authoritative institutions and discourses of their time, and how well or poorly they speak to us now that those institutions and discourses have been replaced by others. Students will be required to attend and participate regularly, submit brief responses in class and/or over email from time to time, write two prepared essays, and take a final exam.

76-294 Interpretive Practices [interpretation of literary and public sphere texts] - 9 units

This course introduces students to the theories and practices of interpretation. Combining the approach of critical theoretical study with close textual analysis, we will consider how meaning is produced through language and narrative. Theoretical approaches include those that explore the role of the author, those emphasizing the workings of language, such as structuralism and post-structuralism, as well as those that underscore the relationship between texts and contexts, such as feminism, critical race theory, and postcolonial studies. Texts will be drawn from a range of periods, genres and geographical origin and include non-literary as well as literary.

76-330 Medieval Literary and Cultural Studies - 9 units

Topics will vary by semester. Consult the course descriptions provided by the department each semester for current offerings. EXAMPLE: Women's Lives/Men's Lives. Some contemporary critics argue that fictions about individual agency began with Shakespeare (the invention of the human, as Harold Bloom puts it); are they right? This course will consider records from as early as the 700s and as late as the 1400s. We will explore the distinctive ways medieval men and women represented themselves in texts, their sober thoughts and their flights of fancy, including well-known fictions like Beowulf, The Song of Roland, Inferno, various Arthurian tales, and writing by women. Students will also choose one twentieth-century fiction based on medieval materials to read and report on. Course requirements include regular attendance and participation in discussions, three brief papers and a final exam.

76-331 Renaissance Literary and Cultural Studies - 9 units

Topics will vary by semester. Consult the Course Descriptions provided by the Department each semester for current offerings. EXAMPLE: X-Files of the Seventeenth Century. Ghosts, monsters, prodigies, demons, and other strange phenomena: many of these so called "preternatural" occurrences were becoming the object of overlapping (and sometimes conflicting) forms of explanation during the seventeenth century. Whereas some of these phenomena could be explained philosophically - with reference to natural causes - others belonged to religious debate or seemed exclusively to exist in the imagination. Using a broad range of texts, we will examine the widespread interest in the preternatural in seventeenth century culture, exploring the political, religious, and ideological consequences of this fascination. Texts for the class will include images of natural "marvels" and "monstrosities," collections of "curiosities," plays by William Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, utopian fiction by Margaret Cavendish, selections from Edmund Spenser's Faerie Queene, seventeenth century crime pamphlets, philosophical texts by Francis Bacon, Robert Hooke's images from the microscope, readings in Renaissance and classical poetics, and various religious texts. Students can expect the reading for this class to be demanding but interesting. Several written assignments, a final exam, and conscientious participation in class discussion will be required.

76-333 18th Century Literary and Cultural Studies

76-334 19th Century Literary and Cultural Studies

76-335 20th Century Literary and Cultural Studies - 9 units

Topics will vary by semester. Consult the course descriptions provided by the department for current offerings. EXAMPLE Fall 2006: Introduction to Race and Representation. This class examines the way in which race makes meaning in American culture through images and narrative. The class focuses most clearly on racial identities, such as blackness and whiteness, as important symbols that have tangible social and cultural consequences. We will also address issues of identity more generally in our theoretical readings and discussions. How do we know, understand, and live these identities? We will examine literature and films as a means to approach the question of how race comes to be understood and conveyed in culture. In what ways do such texts use race to make meaning? Texts include D.W. Griffith's Birth of a Nation, Toni Morrison's short-story Recitatif and excerpts from Morrison's Playing in the Dark, William Faulkner's Go Down Moses, speculative fiction by Octavia Butler, and Anna Deveare Smith's Twilight, plus several films. Thomas Cripps, Slow Fade to Black William Faulkner, Go Down Moses Manthia Diawara, Black American Cinema bell hooks, Reel to Real Robert Gooding Williams, ed. Reading Rodney King Reading Urban Uprising Octavia Butler, TBA

76-336 Romantic Age Literary and Cultural Studies

76-337 The Beat [writings of Kerouac, Ginsberg, etc. of 1949-1970]

76-344 Literature & Environment

76-346 Modern Poetry

76-347 American Literary and Cultural Studies – 9 units

Topics will vary by semester. Consult the course descriptions provided by the Department each semester for current offerings. EXAMPLE: Fall 2006 American Fiction. American women, American writers. In this course we will examine novels written by some of the greatest novelists and short story writers of early 20th century. They range from the haunting beauty of the stories of the Southwest by Willa Cather and Katherine Anne Porter, to the controversial Southern stories of Kate Chopin, and the inspiring memoir of Eudora Welty. We will also look at the women who confronted urban issues like immigration and labor strife, including Harriet Arnow and Mary Heaton Vorse, in their novels The Dollmaker and Strike! Throughout the course we will think about what it means to call something "American literature" and the categories of "author" vs. "woman author." We will also consult essays and ideas found in Feminist Theory, using readings drawn from a popular reader in Feminist Literary Theory.

76-348 19th Century American Literature

76-353 Reading Feminisms

76-363 Reading in Forms: Poetry - 9 units

We will explore the multifaceted relationship between modern science and poetry, discussing the ways in which poetry has taken on the language and theories of science as well as relating how science has been influenced by poetic thought. The course is designed for English majors who are not necessarily trained in the sciences, as the essays and original poems aim for an audience of general college-level readers. We will also view—during class time—the entirety of Brian Greene’s *The Elegant Universe* as a means of spurring discussion on the philosophy underlying both poetry and science. We will employ Greene’s wildly popular, and poetic, video portrayal of the ways in which we experience and make sense of the cosmos in order to augment the poetry and essays assigned during the course—be it at the microscopic level of disease or at the macroscopic level of the discovery of satellites orbiting Jupiter in the seventeenth century. Readings from the anthology *Verse and Universe: Poems about Science and Mathematics* will be occasionally included in course handouts. Some of the poetry we will read and discuss includes work by: Alice Fulton; William Carlos Williams; Forrest Gander; Miroslav Holub; Marianne Moore; A. R. Ammons; and Albert Goldbarth.

76-364 Reading in Forms: Fiction - 9 units

Writers have always turned to their predecessors for inspiration and in this class we will do that. We will read and discuss several novels, some short stories, and look at some film and television narratives, though our primary focus will be on the novels. Using these works as master texts, we will examine some essential questions about the art of fiction, including (but not excluding other critical analysis) how a novel is structured, what determines character, how the point of view informs the narrative, how voice is established; we’ll look at the different ways narratives develop, we’ll consider how stories conclude, and we’ll discuss why and how fiction moves us. You do not have to be a writer to take the course but the focus of our readings and discussions will be on the writer’s craft. Reading List might include: *The Sun Also Rises*, Ernest Hemingway, *Sound and Fury*, William Faulkner, *Franny and Zooey*, J.D. Salinger, *Beloved*, Toni Morrison, *The Secret History*, Donna Tartt, *A Tale for the Time Being*, Ruth Ozeki, *The Space Between Us*, *Thrity Umrigar*, *Break it Down*, Lydia Davis.

76-366 Reading Contemporary Fiction - 9 units

This course will focus on reading and analyzing late 20th century and contemporary fiction. Specific works and topics will vary by semester. The goal of the course is to help students develop a deeper understanding and awareness of recent fiction.

76-377 Rhetoric of Fiction - 9 units

Wayne Booth’s book, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, is one of the classic discussions of the ways in which fiction communicates, moves or motivates us. It is a commonplace to assume that literature has a message, but it is still not at all clear just how an imaginative representation of the world does, or can, communicate. Booth had particular difficulty understanding how fiction could communicate a felt sense of life and value when there was doubt about narrative authority, or the “reliability” of the author. So, postmodern fiction (from Joyce on) caused him problems. In an attempt to develop a postmodern rhetoric of fiction we shall be looking at texts that deal directly with issues of persuasion, or texts that seem directly to address the reader. Of particular interest will be texts that indirectly implicate the reader, and achieve a kind of implicit rhetoric even when they apparently frustrate normal expectations of communicative language (e.g. the apparent fact that the reader is also a character in Calvino’s ‘novel’). The reading will include the following: Jane Austen, *Persuasion*; Henry James, *The Turn of the Screw*; James Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*; Fedor Dostoevsky *Notes From Underground*, Gustave Flaubert *Madame Bovary*; Italo Calvino, *If on A Winter Night a Traveller*; selections from Wayne Booth, Kenneth Burke, and Mikhail Bakhtin.

76-392 Rhetoric and Public Policy - 9 units

Rhetoric and public policy have been linked in the public imagination: in the Athenian polis, in the politics of Machiavelli, and, more recently, the rhetoric of the Nazi Regime, the Cold War, and the New Global Economy. The term “rhetoric” has become synonymous with the power of language to deceive, control, and emancipate the public. For Cicero, rhetoric, ethics, and public action were inseparable. For Machiavelli, the ends justified the means. But rhetoric’s role in public policy has been far less visible in contexts that are highly contested, uncertain, debatable, and -- in some cases -- risky. Rhetoric in this sense is not merely words, but an art, a technique, a process, a mode of invention for the production of public knowledge, public argument, public problem-solving, public action, public response, and public critique. In this course, students read classical and modern theorists in order to understand the role of rhetoric in public decision-making, public argument, and the construction of public knowledge and to rethink rhetoric as a theory of public discourse.

76-431 Advanced Seminar in British Literacy and Cultural Studies - 9 units

Topics will vary by semester. Consult the course descriptions offered by the department for current offerings. EXAMPLE Fall 2006: The Long Eighteenth Century. EBA Majors: 76-294 and 76-394 are pre-requisites for this and all 400-level EBA seminars. This period in British history, 1660-1790, plays an important role in what we call “the modern.” “Reason,” “enlightenment,” “the public sphere,” “the rights-bearing individual,” indeed, modern imperialism and the nation-state, while not originating during this time, took on characteristic forms that are recognizable as “modern” from our historical perspective. This course focuses on how present-day historians and literary scholars construct the years between 1660 and 1790: what cultural events punctuate historical narratives of this time period? What writers and texts are important to those events? The heart of this course is a wide sampling of imaginative literary texts prose, fiction, poetry, and drama from the beginning to the end of the long eighteenth century. Obviously, this reading list will have to be highly selective. To keep us aware of and honest about these choices, we will also study histories of the period that have been influential in the field of literary and cultural studies. These texts should help us consider how the stories we tell about the past and the texts we chose to study from that past mutually determine each other. Six kinds of historical narratives have come to dominate current cultural approaches to this period. We can think of these as dominant, or at least important, frameworks for interpreting and defining eighteenth-century studies. They determine many of the stories we tell about eighteenth-century culture and they lie behind the on-going formation of the canon...(see English Department for full description) Prerequisites: 76294 Corequisites: 76394

76-434 James Joyce

76-441 Chaucer - 9 units

Geoffrey Chaucer is sometimes thought of as the author of universal, timeless fictions containing "God's plenty" (in Dryden's famous phrase). This course, however, will stress the ways in which Chaucer's fictions are situated within specific, but complex and fluid, 14th-century political, social, and religious controversies. We will read *The Canterbury Tales* and *Troilus and Criseyde* in Middle English (which is not hard to learn, but fun to know), and look at other representations of medieval English culture as it saw itself and as we see it from a 20th-century vantage point. Regular attendance, participation in classroom discussion, and brief oral presentations from time to time are required. Each of you will be asked to take a special interest in one of the Canterbury pilgrims and try to see the unfolding saga from that character's point of view. Writing assignments include two brief papers and one longer one, but no final exam. Graduate students will meet for an extra hour a week to discuss additional readings. Prerequisites: 76294

76-444 Enlightenment Sexualities [modern and 18th Century novels, autobiographies]

76-453 Postcolonial Literature and Theory