

**SUMMER I, 2011
UNDERGRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT**

Note: Courses designated as meeting core area requirements may also count as electives in the English major and minor.

*Please note prerequisites for upper-level courses (3000-4000) as stated in the Undergraduate Course Catalog and University Timetable.

English 1604: Introduction to Poetry

(Meets and Area 2 Core Requirement)

Voros, G.

This reading and discussion intensive course examines the literary genre of poetry across historical periods with emphasis on close reading, an understanding of poetic forms and conventions, and a heightened sensitivity toward the nuances of language. Students will learn to enter into the experience a poem offers and to identify the aesthetic choices a poet makes in creating a poem. They will investigate the larger social world of the poem in its historical and geographical contexts; they will examine poems as spatial and temporal art forms; and they will interpret poems as carriers of cultural values and attitudes. The course will include a brief overview of contemporary forms such as slam, spoken word, performance, and graphic poetry. Students will practice reading poems out loud. Requirements: three forum discussion postings per week; two weekly homework writing assignments; a mid-term and a final exam; a final project consisting of a five-minute video in which students discuss a favorite poem and recite it aloud.

English 1614: Introduction to Short Fiction

(Meets a Writing Intensive Core Requirement and an Area 2 Core Requirement.)

Siegle

This course introduces the knowledge and skills required to read and understand short stories and novellas. Reading trace the development of short fiction from the fable and myth to contemporary narrative forms.

English 2515: Survey of British Literature, I

(Meets an Area 2 Core Requirement.)

Swenson, K.

We will read selections from the first eight centuries of English literature. Students will gain a clearer sense of cultural and literary history, will become more accustomed to using specialized literary terminology to discuss literature, and will become more familiar with specific significant texts. We will deliberately read texts from a truly wide range of genres and modes (epic, romance, mystical vision, miracle play, sonnet, travel literature, satire, etc.) as we move through centuries of tradition and change. Issues relevant to the survey context, such as canon formation and changing traditions, will be considered within the course. Students will take regular quizzes on the assigned material and will write several short pieces during this six-week semester. Some of the writing assignments will involve using both images and words.

English 3544: Literature and Cinema

(Meets a Writing Intensive Core Requirement)

Bliss

In this on-line version of Literature and Cinema, we'll explore the nature of criminality and criminals by reading three novels and viewing their cinematic counterparts. Questions to be discussed may include: what are the psychological motivations for criminal behavior? What are the social and ethical implications of crime? What are the representational and thematic differences between the book and film versions of the stories to be explored? Book/film pairings to be studied are *The Third Man*, *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, and *The Godfather*. Coursework will include daily writing, end-of-week short essays, weekly quizzes, and a final, extended essay.

English 3764: Technical Writing

(Meets a Writing Intensive Core Requirement)

Canter

Extensive conceptual and practical study of the major types, templates, issues, requirements, and possibilities involved in Technical Writing and Presentations. Students will perfect grammar, punctuation, precision, economy, sentence variety, paragraph cohesion, transitions, metaphor usage, and reasoning; learn the correct formats for a broad range of professional documents, including e-mail, memos, letters, instructions, proposals, studies, lab reports, progress reports, summaries, abstracts, and technical articles; analyze the needs, biases, and interests of a range of readers, including lay people, novices, managers, and experts; and edit professional writing for clarity and concision. Students will also learn how to integrate different documents into a large, multi-part Project while working together in Writing Groups. Large sections of this Project will be extensively revised. An Oral Presentation will also be part of this Project. Frequent quizzes, a mid-term, and a final exam. This course requires 20-25 pages of writing over multiple assignments.

Kinder

English 3764 will prepare you to present information professionally in clear, concise, practical, and appropriate formats. This writing-intensive course examines the principles and procedures of technical writing (including audience and purpose analysis) and provides practice with such specialized forms as abstracts, instructions, proposals, and technical correspondence. Students will be evaluated on the basis of a midterm and a final, numerous shorter writings and homework, completion of the Department's Grammar Gym (Introductory Level), a discipline-specific portfolio of professional writing, and a major formal report which will be presented to the class.

Mengert, J.

This course is designed to introduce students to the types of written and oral work that will be expected of them in the work force. Students will draw from their specific majors to write manuals, various reports, proposals, summaries, lay articles, memos, and letters. Other types of work-related documents will be reviewed and discussed on-line. The course will stress grammatical correctness, audience awareness, and clarity of expression. Students will have the opportunity to have their peers review and help to revise their work. A final project will require students to write a sustained document which incorporates many of the techniques discussed in the class. Students will prepare and give a Power Point presentation on the same topic as the final written project. Because we will not be using a textbook, each student is responsible for materials on Blackboard and distributed by email.

Brumberger, E.

The Technical Writing course is designed to prepare you for writing in the workplace. Students will use a reader-centered approach in evaluating the needs and demands of the audience. We will work on grammar and mechanics of writing as we work on documents that include proposals, letters/memos, instructions, and reports. This is a writing intensive course with a strong emphasis on professional presentations.

English 4044: Language and Society

(Meets a Writing Intensive Core Requirement)

Dannenberg

This course will investigate the impact of society on language variation and change, as well as the influence of language variation and change on society. Correlation between language and ethnic, gender, regional, socioeconomic, and gender identities in American society will be the primary focus of the course. The course intends not only to explore the structure of American English dialects utilizing contemporary language data, but also to address the fundamental properties of language construction and identity negotiation in American society. Issues that will be addressed include, but are not limited to, dialect construction, configuration, and maintenance; principles of sociolinguistic research; language prejudice; and socialization of language. Students will be required to complete weekly quizzes and five out six of class projects.

English 4165: Shakespeare I

(Meets an Area 2 Core Requirement)

Anderson

Students will have an opportunity to explore plays written during the earlier part of Shakespeare's career, including selections from the histories (such as *Henry V* and *Richard III*), tragedies (such as *Titus Andronicus*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Romeo and Juliet*) and comedies (such as *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Merchant of Venice*). Students will study Shakespeare's works from multiple perspectives, including, but not limited to, cultural traditions, historical contexts, and theatrical performance. The course will examine various aspects of and approaches to the plays, such as close reading, analysis of historical context, thematic development, character presentation, imagery, dramatic dialogue, and staging. The emphasis will be on discussion, rather than lecture. Grading will be based on papers, exams, in-class quizzes, and class participation. At least 10 pages of writing, exclusive of exams, will be expected. Graduate students taking the course for credit will be required to complete additional work.

English 4814: Writing for the Web (online)

(Meets a Writing Intensive Core Requirement)

Collier

We will examine how users read on the web, how authors should write their web pages, and, accordingly, how to design rich, appropriate content for web sites. In so doing, this course offers a practicum in the novice and intermediate use of content management systems, (X)HTML, HTML editors, graphics, and presentation software. Finally, we will analyze how on-line communities organize, use, and distribute knowledge and information simply and effectively.

English 4964: External Field Study

Kark

Put your English major or minor to work before you graduate! This field study—also known as an *external internship*—gives you the opportunity to gain valuable workplace experience performing a variety of tasks related to your English degree and skills. Depending upon the placement (some are off-campus; some are on), you might find yourself doing anything from writing to editing, from producing

publicity campaigns to developing web sites, and more. Good for your resume—great for your confidence! Additional information can be found at the Internship Program web site:

<http://athena.english.vt.edu/~intern/welcome.htm>.

(NOTE: Students seeking placement in an internship should contact Steve Kark, Internship Coordinator, at skark@vt.edu prior to enrolling for this course.)

English 4984: SS: London Calling 2011 Study Abroad

Wemhoener

The four-week study will be punctuated by frequent cultural events (especially theatre-going), field trips to Bath, Greenwich, and Oxford, and a long weekend for student pursuit of an individual study project that will have received prior faculty approval. Besides the project, course requirements will include reading journals, attendance at all class and tutorial sessions in Britain, attendance and participation in all program events (theatre, walking lectures, etc.) and faithful, collegial engagement in the group travel experience.

For more information, please contact Jane Wemhoener. Her email is: jwemhoen@vt.edu

