English 2200 – Foundations of Literary Study

[Fundamentals of literary study: close reading, analytic writing, historical context, abstract reasoning in theory, creative expression. [3] (HCA)]

Engl. 2200.03 – Foundations of Literary Study:
“Lost and Found/ations of Literary Study”
John Bradley
TR – 9:35-10:50

Already enjoy getting lost in a good book? This course introduces you to approaches to reading and interpreting texts that are basic to the study of literature, and to get there we’ll be approaching the act of ‘getting lost’ and “loss” itself from many angles through our course theme: “Lost and Found/ations of Literary Study.”

Why “lost and found”? Here’s the idea: Serious study begins not with certainties, but with entering unfamiliar territory and facing thorny, often unsettled questions. As we study literary works of the 20th and 21st century, you will practice asking questions and develop the habits you need to confidently approach any literary text. To get there, we’ll face what it means to get a little lost ourselves and celebrate disorientation in and as a result of studying literary works, all in service of building a solid foundation for yourself as a student of literature.

Required reading will include Alice Oswald’s Memorial: A Version of Homer’s Iliad, Tom Stoppard’s Arcadia, William Faulkner’s The Sound and the Fury, Lorraine Hansberry’s A Raisin in the Sun, a unit on ecopoetry, and Jonathan Culler’s Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction. Writing assignments will include short analytical essays, a creative writing assignment, and a final project informed by research.

Engl. 2200.04 – Foundations of Literary Study:
“Modes of Power in Anglophone Literature”
Elizabeth Covington
MWF – 9:10-10:00

In this course, we will investigate the different modes of power and violence in Anglophone literary texts of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries from across the globe. These texts draw on themes of war, racism, patriarchy, heterosexual normativity, and class to contemplate the differential power relationships within and between people of various cultures. Incorporating frames of literary and critical theory, we will interrogate universal and culturally contextual modes of power and violence and consider the role of literary production in relation to the reproduction of and resistance to structures of domination.

Engl. 2200.05 – Foundations of Literary Study:
“Technologies of Print, Reading, and Interpretation”
Pavneet Aulakh
TR – 4:00-5:15

Most of us have been around books and reading for as long as we can remember; and even while we love passing hours huddled up with a good book, our familiarity with the book as an object and with reading as a silent and private practice can dull our sensitivity to the unique and complex histories of both reading and books. Indeed, as we shall learn, books are but one instrument in a history of reading that has relied on technologies ranging from scrolls and tablets to scrollable text on computer screens, iPads, and e-readers, each with their own protocols for use accompanied by distinct advantages and disadvantages. Reanimating our engagement with these instruments of knowledge, we will think critically about what it is we do when we read, and even how and why we read. Since books are the obvious objects of our study, over the semester we will read fiction, drama, and poetry that dramatize lessons in reading and interpretation, and raise the status of books from mere containers of information to objects with considerable power. In our encounters with books that damn (Marlowe’s Dr. Faustus), books that lead to madness (Cervantes’ Don Quixote), and magical books capable of enchanting an entire island’s inhabitants (Shakespeare’s The Tempest), we will enrich our awareness of the strange power of books as well as the cultural practices that govern their production and reading. In addition to the texts cited above, our readings will also include Renaissance poetry, Aphra Behn’s Oroonoko, and short stories by Jorge Luis Borges and Jhumpa Lahiri. Designed as a gateway to the English major, this course will introduce, develop, and refine the skills of close-reading, critical analysis, and argumentation that are fundamental to your success not just as a student of English literature but at the university at large.
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[Fundamentals of literary study: close reading, analytic writing, historical context, abstract reasoning in theory, creative expression. [3] (HCA)]

Engl. 2200.06 – Foundations of Literary Study:
“Modes of Power in Anglophone Literature”
Elizabeth Covington
MW – 3:10-4:25
In this course, we will investigate the different modes of power and violence in Anglophone literary texts of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries from across the globe. These texts draw on themes of war, racism, patriarchy, heterosexual normativity, and class to contemplate the differential power relationships within and between people of various cultures. Incorporating frames of literary and critical theory, we will interrogate universal and culturally contextual modes of power and violence and consider the role of literary production in relation to the reproduction of and resistance to structures of domination.