

Graduate courses 2018-19

DESIGNATIONS FOR GRADUATE COURSES IN THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM.

With the exception of the Proseminar, our graduate courses are designated as either **research intensive** or **reading intensive** (you can expect all of them to be writing intensive as well, no matter the designation). The difference between the two lies mainly in the kinds of writing assignments they require.

A **research intensive** course will focus on research methodologies and writing and will culminate a final research-based paper that might be turned into a publishable article.

A **reading intensive** course, by contrast, will primarily aim at coverage and culmination in a different sort of final project, for example, an annotated bibliography, likely with a sequence of shorter papers along the way.

We are trying to have balance between these two kinds of courses and in any given term and/or academic year. Please take these differences into consideration when you choose your courses.

Fall 2018

ENGL 8110 – Proseminar

Kathryn Schwarz

W 12:10-3

The proseminar provides an introduction to graduate studies through attention to practical, structural, and theoretical issues. We will consider various accounts of the university as an institution, with emphases that range from its status as a corporate entity, to its disparate investments in futurity, to its history as a locus of dissent. We will look closely at specific aspects of professionalization, drawing on the experience of invited guests to discuss such processes as the development of research questions, methodologies, and archives; preparation for comprehensive examinations; steps that lead to a dissertation project; and the stages through which an essay moves toward publication. We will also expand our inquiries outward, to consider paradigms with implications not only for how we practice our academic work, but for how we inhabit the social world: ideology and cultural capital, discipline and precarity, community and consent. As we move through the semester, students will have opportunities to assign texts – fictional, historical, critical, and/or theoretical – that represent the periods, forms, and approaches with which they are most concerned.

ENGL 8410 Studies in Romantic and Victorian Literature: Law, Theatricality, and Romantic Literature (reading-intensive)

Mark Schoenfield

M 12:10-3

Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very Heaven! O times,
In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways
Of custom, law, and statute, took at once
The attraction of a country in romance!

Wordsworth, Prelude, Book IX

Accused of murder in *Frankenstein*, Justine is convicted because she cannot produce a persuasive narrative, cannot perform the self Elizabeth had declared for her. Flummoxed by Mr. Collins, Mrs. Bennett laments that an entail--a legal device devised to direct inheritance -results in no knowing which way an estate will go, performing her "nerves" for familial, if not public, consumption. Francis Jeffrey, declaring the authority of his *Edinburgh Review*, grounds the journal on the legal authority or precedent and tradition, and on that authority, develops a legal practice grounding in his public court performance. Throughout the romantic period, issues of justice, property, and individual rights developed simultaneously with romantic aesthetics, theorizations of narrative persuasiveness, and proliferation of genres of the novel, poetry, and periodical prose. At the heart of this development is a problem of the self--at once a theatrical being and a legal fiction. We will explore authors such as Godwin, Wordsworth, Byron, Jane Austen, Mary Robinson, Walter Scott, P.B. Shelley, Mary Shelley, John Galt, and James Hogg, and consider how these authors engaged legal issues in their writing and how the pervasive legal cultures they inhabited shaped their works.

ENGL 8440 Studies in Comparative Literatures: Theories of the Vernacular (reading-intensive and research-intensive options)

Akshya Saxena

M 2:10-5:00 (may be changed)

In comparative literary studies, the vernacular usually refers to a language, to a literary style, and to knowledges. From its use by Dante in the early fourteenth century, the vernacular has been associated with notions of the mother tongue, with something native, local, non-dominant, and even, indigenous. And so, scholars in the humanities have recently looked favorably on the vernacular as the means to challenge the oftentimes homogenizing and imperializing frameworks of global, transnational, and national analyses. But despite their antihegemonic resonances, ideas of the vernacular have also played a formative role in colonially inspired projects of modernity and modernization in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This course considers the hegemonic *and* anti-hegemonic histories, theories, and politics of the vernacular. We are interested in the radical democratic potential of the vernacular as well as in its coercive logics. Drawing on a few different literary traditions as well as on areas of study such as film, architecture, and art history, we will explore a variety of literary, visual, and political vernaculars. Readings will include selections both critical and literary: Dante Alighieri, Jacques Derrida, Miriam Hansen, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Johann Gottfried Herder, Zora Neale Hurston, Édouard Glissant, Benedict Anderson, Sheldon Pollock, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, Vicente Rafael, Partha Chatterjee, and Mahasweta Devi among others.

ENGL 8450 Studies in early and 19th-Century American Literatures: Rituals of Belief and Practices of Law in the Americas (research intensive)

Colin Dayan

Th 2:10-5

This course will be an attempt to make sense of the relation between legal practice and spiritual belief in the Americas. From its beginnings law traded on the lure of the spirit, banking on religion and the debate on matter and spirit, corporeal and incorporeal in order to transfer the power of the deity to the corrective of the state. Few of the topics under consideration are peculiarly English; indeed most of them (slavery, civil death, penance, and possession) form part of the general history of the Western world. But our primary readings will be strictly limited to the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British West Indies and the United States. Through a close analysis of literary fictions and that peculiar genre called “gothic,” we will deal with the emergence, orchestration and function of law and the sacred as a kind of epistemological double whammy that redefined persons and property, spirits and things. The process by which words (such as race, blood, sacrifice, redemption, and judgment) are specified and by which their precise meaning over time is determined will be crucial to our investigations.

Primary readings: selected legal cases and sermons; the Bible (Leviticus, First and Second Corinthians, Galatians, Romans); Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland*; Melville's *Pierre* and *Piazza Tales*; Poe's *Poetry and Tales* and *Eureka*; Emerson's *Essays and Journals*; Lydia Maria Child, *A Romance of the Republic*; Nathaniel Beverley Tucker, *George Balcombe*; Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*; Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life*.

Collateral readings: Locke, *Essay on Human Understanding* and *Two Treatises of Government*; William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*; Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica*; Jeremy Bentham, *The Panopticon Writings*; De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* and *On the Penitentiary System in the United States*; Thomas R.R. Cobb, *An Inquiry into the Law of Negro Slavery in the United States*; James Kent, *Commentaries of American Law*; Elsa Goveia, *The West Indian Slave Laws of the Eighteenth Century*.

Spring 2019

ENGL 8351 – Studies in 20th and 21st century American literatures: African American Poetry

Vera Kutzinski

ENGL 8442 – Media Studies

Helen Shin

ENGL 8440 Studies in Comparative Literatures: Is Comparison Dead?: The Politics of Language, Translation, and Pluralism

Allison Schachter

**ENGL 8331 Studies in Medieval and early-modern British Literature: Subject to Sexuality
in the Early Modern Period.**
Lynn Enterline