

## 2020-2021 SPECIAL TOPICS COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

**ENGL 2010 FDE: Special Topics: *The Fantastic* - TBD**

**ENGL 3011 FA: Special Topics: *Life Writing* - Dr. Scott Pound**

A community service learning writing course in which students partner with hospice volunteers and their clients to conduct life review exercises and create legacy projects. Students will learn the fundamentals of the memoir genre and work to develop their writing skills on two fronts: by writing a personal memoir and by completing a legacy project for their community client.

**ENGL 3011 FAO: Special Topics: - TBD**

**ENGL 3810 WAO: Special Topics in Women's Writing: TBD - TBD**

**ENGL 3911 FAO: Special Topics: *Postcolonial & Diasporic Cinema* - TBD**

**ENGL 4010WA: Honours Seminar: *Public Humanities* - Dr. Scott Pound**

“The Humanities” are the academic disciplines that investigate the expressions of the human mind: Anthropology, Philosophy, History, Musicology, Art History, Modern Languages, Linguistics, and Literary Studies foremost among them. The knowledge produced by these disciplines is highly specialized—it is made by academics for academics. Can these self-contained, self-referential, and self-serving disciplines also serve the public good? Can the knowledge produced by universities be made available to the public in a way that is accessible, engaging, and relevant? If so, how?

It is with these questions in mind that contemporary scholars propose “the public humanities” as a way to engage diverse publics in reflecting on the nature of creativity, meaning, memory, authority, judgment, and learning in relation to current conditions of civic and cultural life. In this course, we will trace the origins and development of the disciplinary humanities and then try to extrapolate from them a set of principles and methods that we can use to mount our own public humanities projects.

**ENGL 4010WAO: Honours Seminar: TBD - TBD**

**ENGL/INDI 4012 FA: Honours Seminar in Indigenous Literatures: *Indigenous Comics & graphic novels* - Dr. Judith Leggatt**

A study of the growing field of Indigenous comics, looking at translations of traditional stories into graphic form, the use of comics as ways of addressing social issues, the connections and differences between writers who work primarily in graphic form and Indigenous writers who have started working in the genre after becoming known in other

forms, and new Indigenous techniques that transform the comics genre. Graphic texts will be studied in the context of both comics theory and Indigenous storytelling.

**ENGL 4013 FA: Honours Seminar in Medieval and Early Modern Literatures:  
*Translating the Middle Ages* - Dr. Douglas Hayes**

Although the popularity of the Middle Ages (roughly 400 to 1450 CE) as an idealized, romanticized, studied, and re-inscribed period of European history began as early as the 16th century, with its obsession with chivalry and courtly love, and culminated in the vogue for rewritings of medieval culture and texts in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, from James MacPhearson's "translations" of the poetry of Ossian to the idealized Middle Ages of the Victorian Pre-Raphaelite movement, it was the twentieth century that gave rise to the idea of the Middle Ages as an area of academic study and specialized expertise. However, the codifying (and rarifying) of Medieval Studies did not lead to a decline in the popularity of the Middle Ages. Instead, re-inscriptions of medieval literature and culture, from the popular fiction of the medievalists C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien to the dinner theatre of Medieval Times, are more popular than ever. Medieval literary texts have also enjoyed a surge in popularity in recent years, with a number of well-known poets and a popular biographer producing Modern English translations of a number of the central texts of the medieval European literary canon. Our seminar will focus on these 21st-century re-inscriptions of medieval literature with an emphasis not just on the texts themselves but also upon the material and ideological conditions that have led some of today's most well-known poets and popular writers to re-present these texts in Modern English for 21st-century readers. Texts to be studied include Seamus Heaney's translations of *Beowulf* and the poetry of Robert Henryson, Ciaron Carson's translation of the *Tain*, Simon Armitage's translations of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and *Pearl*, J. R.R. Tolkien's newly posthumously published *Sigurd and Gudrun*, and Peter Ackroyd's 2009 prose retelling of Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*.

**ENGL 4014WA – Honours Seminar in 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> Century Literature: *Victorian Animalities* - Dr. Monica Flegel**

In this course, we will be examining literature of the Victorian period concerned with animal/human relationships and the animal/human divide. Texts such as Anna Sewall's *Black Beauty*, H. G. Wells' *The Island of Doctor Moreau* and L. T. Meade's *Scamp & I* all concern themselves with investigating the boundary between the animal and the human, while also demonstrating the extent to which that boundary is always essentially unstable. Some broader questions we will therefore concern ourselves with in this course may be: what are the ethics and politics of animal "representation"? To what extent are discussions about animals actually discussions about humanity? Is anthropomorphism wrong, necessary, or a bit of both? And what did the animal other mean for human animals in the Victorian period?

**ENGL 4017/5215 WA/WAO - Honours Seminar in Ecocriticism. *Global Environmental Justice Literature* - Dr. Cheryl Lousley**

This seminar course examines the diverse ways that contemporary writers and literary studies engage with globalization and the environment as a set of socio-economic, ethical, and political relations of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. The course will explore a range of theoretical approaches to ecocriticism, globalization and representation, which will be applied to close readings of twenty-first-century fiction, poetry, and drama from different parts of the world. Themes will include resource wars, climate change, refugees and migration, petrocultures, capitalism, the social distribution of pollution and risk, human-animal relationships, place and localisms, and social and economic inequalities.

**ENGL 5110/4013 FA – Honours Seminar in Medieval Literature: *Translating the Middle Ages* - Dr. Douglas Hayes**

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**ENGL 5211 FA – Honours Seminar in 17<sup>th</sup> Century Literature: *Shakespeare & Globalization* - Dr. Rachel Warburton**

**ENGL/SOCJ 5215 FA – Honours Seminar in Literature, Culture and Social Justice: *Narratives of Surplus and Sacrifice* - Dr. Max Haiven**

This course examines the articulation of racism and capitalism in contemporary and historical narratives (fiction and non-fiction) across a range of media (eg. literature, news, film) that explore themes of surplus and sacrifice. It offers an interdisciplinary approach to understanding the systems and structures that produce so-called "disposable populations" at the same time as they generate massive wealth (for corporations and the wealthy). We also take up racializing narratives of austerity, debt and success. Through these themes, students will be introduced to a range of approaches to theorizing how race, capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy are entangled.

**ENGL/SOCJ 5215/4017 WA/WAO - Honours Seminar in Ecocriticism. *Global Environmental Justice Literature* - Dr. Cheryl Lousley**

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**ENGL 5413 WA – Honours Seminar II: *Comics and Graphic Narratives* - Dr. Daniel Hannah**

This course will examine recent trends in graphic narrative and consider a range of theoretical approaches to reading the form of comics. Some of the questions this course will consider include: what kinds of questions about adaptation are raised by graphic rewritings of? what do graphic narratives reveal to us about the ethics and limits of representation? how do comics reconfigure familiar genres and narrative modes of life-writing, history, reportage, and fiction? what challenges do visual narratives (or imagetexts) pose to the conventions of literary criticism and theory?

**ENGL/SOCJ 5510WA – Special Topics in Postcolonial Literature: *Gender, Globalization and Literature* – Dr. Anna Guttman**

The language of globalization has long been both gendered and sexualized, with capitalist expansion understood in terms of “market penetration.” Increasingly, globalization itself is being recognized as a gendered experience. Using contemporary, global literature, and emphasizing non-western and Indigenous perspectives, this seminar explores a number of interrelated questions: How is gender and its articulation culturally-specific? What happens when diverse, culturally encoded ideas about gender

and sexuality encounter each other in the process of globalization, via the movement of people, goods, images and ideas? How does globalization impact our understanding of gender, and vice versa? How does globalization affect our understanding of identity? Texts will address a range of topics – from domestic labour, to sex work, to ecotourism – and a variety of gendered identities and sexual orientations.