Courses held in Hatch Auditorium, Baker Building; Section Meetings (most but not all Fridays) held in Baker Rms 217-20 as indicated on your Section Assignment handout.

Prof. H. L. Meakin (hlm8)
Office Hours: Tuesdays 2-3 pm, Thursdays 1-3 pm and by appointment
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Ms. Darcy Brandel (dlb23)
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Mr. Brad Ricca (bjr8)
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Course Description

To be or not to be? To read or not to read? This course suggests these are related questions. We will address such questions in various forms with more sophisticated tools, models and “lab rats” (literary works): why read (the ethics of reading and that underrated experience, pleasure); how to read (interpretation); how to write about what we read (interpretation again); what to read (literature and other kinds of writing); and why we should or should not listen to what other people tell us to read (canonicity). How does the imagination contribute to and articulate our sense of being human? being a community? Rather than provide definitive answers to such questions, however, the course is designed to offer you multiple approaches to language and literature. We’ll be using various methodologies drawn from the disciplines of rhetoric, linguistics, philology and poetics to think about literary language and the ways in which it can be read, and talked or written about. We will also look at examples of the three main generic forms: drama, fictional prose, and poetry. For those who intend to pursue further study of English and related subjects this course will provide a set of basic principles you can apply in subsequent study. For those who do not, it should offer different strategies for interpreting the variety of discourses you will encounter throughout your life.

Course Objectives

• to understand and apply to individual texts some of the basic tools, concepts and methods of literary study
• to analyze some of the major stylistic and expressive features of English verse
• to recognize and articulate some of the ways narratives are organized and achieve their effects
• to improve one’s ability to think and write critically and creatively about fictions in verse and prose
• to develop one’s ability to think critically about the many kinds of language we encounter outside the classroom in our everyday lives

Course Prescription

Required Texts:
ALL TEXTS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE CAMPUS BOOKSTORE.
FOR YOUR OWN SANITY, PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU BUY THE CORRECT EDITION.
*****PLEASE NOTE: The first four texts listed below have been “bundled” for you by the publisher at a special price. These bundles are available at the campus bookstore.

• Falling Into Theory: Conflicting Views on Reading Literature. Edited by David H. Richter. Bedford/St. Martin’s.
• Mary Shelley, Frankenstein. Edited by Johanna M. Smith. Bedford/St. Martin’s.
• Ray Bradbury, Fahrenheit 451. Ballantine Books. (we start with this one so buy it today!)
• Toni Morrison, Paradise. Plume Books.

Recommended Texts:
• Oxford English Dictionary (available on-line through CWRUnet)
• MLA Style Guide

All students are more than welcome to drop by during office hours or schedule an appointment to ask questions, continue discussion of issues from class, or to offer comments. This is especially true during the first week of class and especially true for students with disabilities who are registered with the Coordinator of Disability Services (368-5230) and who may need individual arrangements. Make use of your professors!! We’re here to help you learn and we don’t expect you to be perfect (who is?). We regard intelligent questions and an eagerness to improve one’s abilities as evidence of an A student more than written work alone. There is no such thing as a stupid question, although there is such a thing as a lazy question. Check this syllabus, the website, and all hand-outs before asking. Thanks!

Term Work:
• class participation
  (includes web discussions, reading journal, section assignments) 30
• 2 essays (6 pages each; 1 on poetry, 1 on fiction) 40 (2x20%)

Final Examination: 30

100%

N.B. ALL components of the evaluation must be completed and receive a passing grade in order to pass the course.

N.B. Use the following as a rough estimate: to earn a B in this course, plan to devote 2 hours to thoughtful reading and writing outside of class for each hour of class time.
N.B. All English majors and anyone who thinks he/she might declare an English major should keep a portfolio of all written work.

TERM WORK:
Class Participation:
• CLASS ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY. Attendance will be taken at every class. More than 3 unexcused absences will mean you receive a substantially lower grade or that you fail the course. Extended holidays, doctor’s appointments, sports events, etc. are not valid excuses for missing class. Note the term “EXTRA-curricular”! If you are ill, please e-mail or call us before class to let us know you’ll be absent.

What you say and do in class matters! If we (the instructors) are the only ones talking, this class will not be successful. We will fill in background and set up a context for discussions, but you will not fully understand the literature unless you actively participate in class discussions. Your reading outside of class should also be active and exploratory: mark up your texts (in pencil), ask questions as you read. Use a bookmark! Expect to read and re-read texts if you want to master them. We reserve the right to pop a quiz (to be calculated as part of “class participation” grade) unannounced if we suspect the reading is not being done (i.e. if class discussions are less than energetic!).

• Web Discussions:
There will be a Blackboard web site set up for the course. Students will be required to post responses to the reading on the bulletin board at least FIVE times during the semester. The aim of this exercise is to widen the discussion in a way some students find more comfortable than talking in class (although you must do this as well!). We also want you to interact with as many of your fellow students as possible and in different combinations (section meetings, class, bulletin board, etc.) so that no one dominates and no one feels left out!

• Reading Journal:
Over the course of the semester, choose THREE works (poems, stories) from your anthologies. These choices will be texts you’ve explored on your own rather than anything that’s been assigned for class. Write a response of any length (whatever you want to say about it—loved it, hated it; just make sure you explain why you feel this way) and turn them in to your group instructor. You can say anything you want about the texts. We will read all submissions and keep track of them but they will not be graded. However, these three responses are REQUIRED in order for you to complete the course. See due dates in reading schedule.

• Section Assignments:
There will be a few of these as indicated in the schedule of readings. They are all due on the date indicated, at the beginning of the section meeting. They will be explained in detail in the prior week’s section meeting.

Essays:
• We cannot urge you strongly enough to come in and talk to us about your papers. It helps to clarify one’s argument when one has to talk about it with someone else. Remember, there’s nothing we love more than talking about books!! Talk to each other about what you’re reading and proofread each other’s work. We also strongly recommend visiting The Writing Center on Bellflower Road (368-3798) if you are feeling shaky about your technical and stylistic abilities.
The people in Educational Support Services (KSL, 368-5230) are also valuable resources. Remember the old proverb: an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

• Your papers must be word-processed, double-spaced with margins of 1 inch on every side, and your papers must use a 12-point font. Please number your pages and staple them together. Students should keep copies of all work submitted.

• Revision policy: You will have the option of revising your first essay for resubmission within two weeks if you are not satisfied with your grade. We expect you to do your best the first time around; therefore, the first grade will remain recorded, but obviously an improved grade on the revised paper will improve your overall grade.

• WE DO NOT ACCEPT LATE PAPERS EXCEPT ON COMPASSIONATE GROUNDS (primarily serious medical illness supported by a doctor’s note or a death in the family). Failure to submit papers on the due date will result in a grade of 0 for that paper.

• We reward plagiarism with a 0 for the assignment and possibly for the course. Further action by the university may also be taken. Please familiarize yourselves with the university policy on plagiarism, and refer to the handout on plagiarism which accompanies this syllabus. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism or how to cite sources properly, don’t hesitate to come and ask one of us for help.

N.B. Your section leaders will be marking your assignments, reading journals, web postings, papers, exam, etc. However, Professor Meakin will review all written work before it is returned. If you have a question about your grade, please ask your section instructor about it but know that Professor Meakin has seen the grade and considers it fair!!

Bonus Marks!!
You will notice there are four film screenings (all on Friday evenings, beginning at 6:30) and one marathon reading of Dante’s _Inferno_ (during Humanities Week in September). All of these events are optional. However, if you do choose to attend the screenings and participate in the discussion afterwards, or if you attend the Dante reading, you will receive a bonus mark of a 1% increase in your final grade for each event you attend. Attending all five events means a substantial boost to your final grade. Furthermore, if you present a playbill from a theater production you’ve attended during the semester, you will also receive a 1% bonus.

Recommended General Web Sites:
• Search engine:
  [http://www.google.com](http://www.google.com)
• Writing Essentials: An online reference for writing papers for all disciplines.
  [http://www.wwnorton.com/we/](http://www.wwnorton.com/we/)
• Common Errors in English:
  [http://www.wsu.edu/~brians/errors/index.html](http://www.wsu.edu/~brians/errors/index.html)
• History of the Book and Printing:
  [http://www.libraries.psu.edu/crsweb/select/sxh/hisbk.htm](http://www.libraries.psu.edu/crsweb/select/sxh/hisbk.htm)
• Voice of the Shuttle Web Page for Humanities Research
  [http://vos.ucsb.edu/](http://vos.ucsb.edu/)
• The Academy of American Poets
  [http://www.poets.org](http://www.poets.org)
Schedule of Readings

N.B. We reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus during the semester.

+ Please arrive in class having already completed the readings listed for that date.

+ Please bring your texts to class in order to participate meaningfully in discussion.

UNIT ONE (2 weeks): Wanted Dead or Alive: Literature

Questions for discussion:
1. What is literature and why should we read it? 2. Is it dead (i.e. irrelevant) or dying? 3. Why has it stuck around for so long? 4. Why do some people consider it dangerous?

Some terms for definition and discussion:
- censorship
- dystopia/ utopia
- literature; literary; language
- omniscient narrator
- narrative; story
- metaphor

WEEK ONE: “There must be something in books, things we can’t imagine, to make a woman stay in a burning house; there must be something there.”

- Aug 27
  Course Introduction: Education…Seduction…
  + Student Questionnaire
  + Sectional meeting lists distributed.

- Aug 29
  ☒ Bradbury, Fahrenheit 451 (F 451) pp.3-68.

- Aug 31
  ☒ F 451 pp.71-110.
  ☐ Handout: censorship assignment for first sectional meeting on Sept. 7

COME JOIN US FOR A SCREENING OF FRANÇOIS TRUFFAUT’S FILM ADAPTATION OF FAHRENHEIT 451: Friday, August 31 6:30 pm in Guilford 323.

WEEK TWO: “A book is a loaded gun in the house next door.”

- Sept 3: LABOR DAY HOLIDAY: NO CLASS

- Sept 5
2. *from* Graff, “Disliking Books at an Early Age” in Richter pp. 41-44; 48 (last paragraph).

☐ Optional reading (on reserve at KSL): Saul Bellow, “The distracted public”.

- Sept 7 SECTION MEETING
  +Censorship Assignment due.

### UNIT TWO (3 weeks): “For poetry makes nothing happen”

**Questions:**
1. How are the pleasures of poetry different from the pleasures offered to Montag and Mildred by their culture in *Fahrenheit 451*? According to their culture, poetry and pleasure are mutually exclusive!
2. “What, then, are the pleasures we find in poems that we cannot find in a prose paraphrase of the same poem or in an essay advocating the same ideas?” (*Vendler* 68)

**Some terms for definition and discussion:**
- lyric
- metaphor
- pleasure
- rhythm
- rhyme
- trope

### WEEK THREE: “You are the speaker of every lyric poem you read” (*Vendler*, 14).

**Sept. 10**
- 1. **PPP Ch. 1:** “The Poem as Life” (pp.3-24).

**Sept 12**
- 1. **PPP Ch. 2:** “The Poem as Arranged Life” (pp.25-65).

**Sept 14**
- 1. **PPP Ch.3:** “Poems as Pleasure” (pp.67-88).
- 2. Additional poems from *Vendler*: Cervantes, “Poem for a Young White Man” (361); Coleridge, “Kubla Khan” (253); Dickinson, “The Brain—is wider than the Sky” (402); “Much
Madness is divinest Sense—“ (402); “My Life had stood—a Loaded Gun—“ (403); Moore, “Poetry” (483); Stevens, “The Planet on the Table” (548);

3. Handout: Shakespeare, etc….

☐ Optional reading (on reserve at KSL): Audre Lorde, “Poetry is not a Luxury”; Adrienne Rich, "'What would we create?'"

GO TO HELL!!
MARATHON READING of DANTE’S INFERNO on SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 15, Guilford Parlor beginning at 12 noon. Food and drink! Prizes! Bonus Marks!

WEEK FOUR: “Words, words, words.”

• Sept 17
  📖 PPP Ch. 4: “Describing Poems” (pp.101-43)

• Sept 19
  📖 1. PPP Ch. 4 cont’d
  📖 Handout: Shakespeare, Sonnets: 20, 23, 27, 29, 55, 64, 76; Wordsworth, “Nuns Scorn Not”; Yeats, “Leda and the Swan” (V, 589);

• Sept 21: SECTION MEETING
  Poetry reading workshop
  📖 Handout: Sonnet Assignment
  ✫ Reading Journal #1 Due

WEEK FIVE:

• Sept 24
  📖 1. PPP Ch.5: “The Play of Language” (pp.145-69)
  2. Handout: Shakespeare, Sonnets: 20, 23, 27, 29, 55, 64, 76; Wordsworth, “Nuns Scorn Not”; Yeats, “Leda and the Swan” (V, 589);

• Sept 26
  📖 PPP Ch.6: “Constructing a Self” (pp.171-209)

• Sept 28 SECTION MEETING
  ✫Sonnet Assignment Due

UNIT THREE (2 weeks): PROSE FICTION FORMS
  + Questions to be posed:
1. What are some of the elements of prose narrative and how can they be used to make meaning? 2. What can a short story do that a novel cannot? What can a novel do that a short story cannot? 3. How can we talk about a “national” literature? 4. How does a “theme” work in a prose narrative? 5. How is Nature—on its own and in its relationship to human beings—represented by various authors? 6. What do we mean when we talk about the “tone” of a narrative voice?

**Some terms for definition and discussion:**
- point of view
- allusion
- tone
- theme
- metaphor
- style

**WEEK SIX: Canadian Lit, eh?**

- **October 1**
  1. Atwood, “Death by Landscape” *(Story 62-73)*;
  2. Gallant, “1933” *(Story 565-70)*;
  3. Lawrence, “The Mask of the Bear” *(Story 842-58)*;
  4. Munro, “Meneseteung” *(Story 1035-51)*;


- **October 3**

- **October 5 SECTION MEETING**

**WEEK SEVEN: Not bad for a nineteen-year-old.**

- **October 8**
  Shelley, *Frankenstein* pp.19-95 (Intro, Preface, Letters I-IV, Chapters I-X)

- **October 10**
  Shelley, *Frankenstein* pp.95-189 (Chapter XI-XXIV)

- **October 12 SECTION MEETING**

**FIRST ESSAY DUE**
COME JOIN US FOR A SCREENING OF KENNETH BRANNAUGH’S MARYSHELLEY’S FRANKENSTEIN, Friday, October 12, Guilford House 323 at 6:30 pm.

UNIT FOUR (1 week): DRAMATIC FORM

WEEK EIGHT:

• October 15
  📚 Shakespeare, The Tempest

• October 17
  📚 Shakespeare, The Tempest

• October 19: SECTION MEETING
  📚 Shakespeare, The Tempest
  + Reading Journal #2 Due

COME TO A SCREENING OF PETER GREENAWAY’S FILM, PROSPERO’S BOOKS (warning: not a straightforward adaptation of Shakespeare’s play!). Friday Oct 19, 6:30 pm in Guilford 323.

UNIT FIVE: (2 weeks) Poetry

WEEK NINE:

• October 22: FALL BREAK: NO CLASS

• October 24: TBA

• October 26: TBA

WEEK TEN:

• October 29: TBA

• October 31: TBA

• November 2: PROFESSOR MEAKIN AWAY AT CONFERENCE: NO CLASS
UNIT SIX (1 week): Student Choice of Section Meeting
Sign up for ONE of the following sections depending on your preference for the following texts from Story to be studied with the instructor:
• Raymond Carver (Mr. Brad Ricca)
• James Baldwin, Ralph Ellison (Ms. Erika Smith)
• Gertrude Stein, Charlotte Perkins Gilman (Ms. Darcy Brandel)

WEEK ELEVEN:

• Nov 5: SPECIAL SECTION MEETING

• Nov 7: SPECIAL SECTION MEETING

• Nov 9: SPECIAL SECTION MEETING

+ Reading Journal #3 Due

UNIT SEVEN (4 weeks):
WEEK TWELVE: “...the refuge of art....”

• Nov 12
  📘 Nabokov, Lolita, Foreword and Part One pp.3-142.

• Nov 14

• Nov 16: SECTION MEETING

+ COME TO A SCREENING OF Adrian Lyne’s Lolita. Friday Nov 16, 6:30 pm Guilford 323.

WEEK THIRTEEN:

• Nov 19
  📘 Nabokov, Lolita

• Nov 21
  📘 Nabokov, Lolita

• Nov 23: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY: NO CLASS
WEEK FOURTEEN: “Scary things not always outside. Most scary things is inside.”

- Nov 26
  Morrison, Paradise “Ruby” through “Seneca”

- Nov 28
  Morrison, Paradise “Divine” through “Lone”

- Nov 30: SECTION MEETING
  Morrison, Paradise “Save-Marie”

WEEK FIFTEEN:

- Dec 3
  Morrison, Paradise

- Dec 5
  Morrison, Paradise

+ SECOND ESSAY DUE

- Dec 7: EXAM REVIEW