

Special Topics

The courses described below are offered under “Special Topics” course numbers. Departments offer Special Topics only occasionally and the selection is different every semester. Special Topics courses do not repeat material presented by regular semester courses.

AH 497/597 Section 1 Orientation

This seminar explores the Western printmakers in Japan from 1900-1950, investigating the impact of gender, sexual orientation and Orientalism in their work. The exhibition lays the groundwork for a possible exhibition.

AH 497/597 Section 2 Michelangelo

This seminar deals with the life, works and influence of Michelangelo, the artist who dominated Italian art in the 16th century. Students will concentrate on research projects resulting in oral and written reports.

AH 497/597 Section 3 Desire

We will investigate “Desire” in art and theory: from the Surrealist fetish to the commodity desires of Pop and the cinematic gaze. Lacan’s idea of desire as lack will be played off Deleuze’s vision of desire as excess. Students will curate an exhibition.

ANTH 490/620 Section 1 Emergence of Modern Humans: Archaeological, Biological, and Genetic Evidence

This course examines the current state of knowledge about the evolution of the human lineage over the ~200k years. Topics include human/neanderthal interaction, the origins of biological variability in modern humans, origins of language, cultural transmission, and the origins of “creativity.”

ART 10 All Sections Art Matrix

Students are to check in at the Art Department Student Services Office, FA4-106 for a syllabus for this class.

CHIN 490/590 Section 1 Contrastive Analysis of English and Chinese

Designed for students who plan to teach the Chinese language or do research in Chinese linguistics. Contrastive analysis of phonological, morphological, syntactic and discourse aspects of English and Chinese. Analysis of students’ errors occurred in learning Chinese.

CHIN 490/590 Section 2 Selected Readings from Chinese Literature

This course will focus on studying representative works by major Chinese authors from 18th century to the present. The literary works will be analyzed in their theoretical and aesthetic contexts.

CHLS 490 Section 1 Inequality and Latino Education

This course will focus on the way U.S. society responds to race, ethnicity, gender and class and how its outcome is unequal access to education for Latinos. It will explore the various ideologies and philosophies pertaining to inequality, the history of educational inequality and Latinos, the present patterns of inequality, and contemporary public policy issues pertaining to improving educational access for Latinos and other racialized groups.

CLSC 490 Section 1 Monuments of Rome

This course is a study of the archaeological history of Rome, the Eternal City, from the Iron Age through Late Antiquity. In addition to studying specific monuments, and the ever changing urban environment of Rome. Prerequisite: Classics 110- Introduction to the Classical Archaeology or the instructor’s permission.

CLSC 490 Section 2 Roman Myth

Roman Myth will focus on several issues: the use(s) of Greek myth; essentially Roman myth; and the conscious creation of myth(s).

CLSC 490 Section 3 Ancient Eats

Class focuses on food in the Roman Empire and elsewhere in the ancient world. Topics will include ingredients and recipes, production, trade and purchasing, processing, cooking and eating tools, eating and drinking, and food in ancient myth, cult, and philosophy. Tasting sessions too!

COMM 490 Section 1 Hip Hop Criticism

Through discussions, presentations, and written assignments students will turn a critical eye towards race, resistance, authenticity, and gender in hip hop writing. The goal of the course is to consider from a rhetorical perspective how public discourse about hip hop shapes our perceptions of it.

COMM 490 Section 2 Communication in Development and Fund Raising

This course examines the nature and role of communication in development and fundraising in organizations; emphasis is on theory and application in nonprofit organizations.

CWL 349 Section 1 Literary Movements: Postmodernism

This course will focus on a study of the key ideas, the cultural history, the social and political issues underlying the movement of “postmodern” literature, the prominent movement in contemporary literature, focusing on selected works by several of the world’s major authors.

CWL 448/548 Section 1 Existentialism in the 20TH Century Novel

Beginning with Fyodor Dostoevsky and Friedrich Nietzsche in the 19th Century, this course will study some of the principal writers associated with philosophical existentialism emphasizing their influence on major novelists of the 20th Century.





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CWL 449/549 Section 1
Continental Writers-Nobel Prize
laureates: Sarte, Beckett, Pirandello,
Mahfouz, Naipaul

This course will examine selected works of Jean-Paul Sarte, Samuel Beckett, Pirandello, Naguib Mahfouz, and V.S. Naipaul, all Nobel Prize laureates (between 1934-2001) from five different countries, who played a major role in the march of world literature. We will also examine the modalities surrounding the Nobel Prize reception or occasionally, rejection.

CWL 452/552 Section 1
Myth and the Stages of Life

While myths provided traditional cultures with models for living through the various stages of normal human life and with the “information” needed to get through the crises of the points of passage between those stages, our culture seems to lack those mythic guides. We will read such mythic texts as Innana, The Popol Vuh, and The Odyssey and others in this light. But we will also look at such twentieth-century literature as Shaffer’s Equus and Hesse’s Steppenwolf.

ENGL 469 Section 1
Jane Austen

This course provides an in-depth investigation of the novels of Jane Austen, with attention to recent critical developments in Austen Studies. Along the way, we will explore Hollywood’s recent fascination with Austen, querying why she is such a current box-office success.

ENGL 469 Section 2
Wroth, Cavendish, Philips

This course will explore the works of three of the most important women writers of the seventeenth century, Mary Wroth, Katherine Philips, and Margaret Cavendish. The aim is to provide you with a good sense of the political, historical, economic, and social climate in which they worked.

ENGL 479 Section 1
Edith Wharton

An in-depth, comprehensive treatment of the career of a major twentieth-century American novelist, focusing on Wharton’s works of fiction in longer form. In addition to matters of style and craftsmanship in her writing, we will explore the many rich social and cultural contexts of Wharton’s work.

ENGL 489 Section 1
Critical Studies in Major Topics in
Literatures Written in English:
Bloomsbury

Our primary focus will be on selected fiction, essays, diaries, letters, and biographies by Woolf, Forster, and Strachey. In particular, we will trace currents of influence between and among other Bloomsbury voices, such as James Strachey’s translations of Freud published by Virginia and Leonard Woolf, and Roger Fry’s influential theories of modern art.

ENGL 489 Section 2
Literature of Los Angeles

This course will examine the literature associated with greater Los Angeles and its surroundings, from pueblo-days beginnings to the present. Special emphasis will be placed on prose fiction—novels and short stories—but we will also consider other representative texts such as literary and social histories, writings for the screen, and works of regional creative nonfiction.

ENGL 498 Section 1
Teaching ESL Academic Writing

This course surveys various basic issues of second-language writing arising in the past thirty years, mostly as they relate to ESL learners enrolled in college. To complement theory is a practical component concentrating on data analysis. Therein actual learners’ written products are provided to the class for evaluation, based on which strategies to foster improvements are formulated.

ENGL 498 Section 2
Poetry and The Self

This course centers on the development, clarification, and articulation of a personal esthetic for poetry. It involves the confronting of a wide variety of poetic styles, deciding and evaluating not only what does and does not ‘work’ for you in poetry, but why. Students will read and discuss literary theory as well as contemporary poems written from widely different esthetic positions.

ENGL 681 Section 1
Chaucer and Courtly Traditions

An intensive introduction to Chaucer’s “courtly” poetry, including Troilus and Criseyde, the Parliament of Fowls, the Legend of Good Women, and the parts of the Canterbury Tales that make the most use of courtly conventions, and to the works by the Gawain poet that are most indebted to the cultural and literary traditions associated with medieval courts.

JOUR 490 Section 1
Media and Politics

This course will examine the campaign for the White House as it begins to dominate the national news, a study of the nature of the relationship between the mass media and governance with particular attention to the role and impact of the media in political election campaigns and policy making.

SOC 490 Section 1
Sociology and Pop Culture

This course will apply sociological analysis and methods to studying popular culture in America. Topics include film, music, sports, gaming, and toys, and include explorations of historical developments and marketing trends.

SOC 492 Section 1
Sociology of Youth

This course will examine the stage of life known as “youth” in all its complexity. By providing an in-depth understanding of youth and young people, the course also will offer students a unique and incisive view of American society itself.

SOC 494 Section 1
It’s an Urban World

This course examines how our urban worlds have become connected to these global flows and the implications for our everyday lives. The course is broken down into three parts. The first part will cover basic theories of urban sociology. Second, we will examine a series of major processes that have shaped cities over the past 40 years. The third part examines how globalization has helped to initiate a new round of urban restructuring by transforming local economies, increasing the ethnic diversity of cities, and deepening social inequalities.

**SPAN 490 Section 1
Research Methods**

This course on methodology aims to introduce advanced undergraduate students interested in pursuing M.A. degrees and M.A.-level students to the craft of research. In addition to learning basic research methods, students will be introduced to key literary and cultural theories that are integral to understanding and performing literary criticism.

**UNIV 300I Sections 1-4
Art and Social Action: A Global
Perspective**

This course will combine perspectives from art and sociology to explore the effects of globalization on such critical human problems as human trafficking, child labor, and HIV/AIDS. The goals are to introduce students to the theoretical and practical implications of globalization, and to understand how art can be an instrument for social action confronting these problems.

