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Why You Should Take This Course
No other species seems to do language like humans do, and in this class you’ll learn allllll the things you’re doing when you produce and perceive language. In doing so, you’ll learn a lot about the structure of language, the nature of communication, and also about how researchers figure this stuff out.

This course is cross-listed with PSYC 1524, CRN 19506.
Why You Should Take This Course

Do you like things that go bump in the night? Do ghosts and ghouls and creepy crawlies excite you? Did you ever dance with the devil in the pale moonlight? (sorry, that’s The Joker)

In the world of cinema, horror movies are a multi-million dollar a year industry. In 2022, the genre alone accounted for 9% of total profits. So, why are we so fascinated by fear? In this class, we will explore what scares us and how short fiction is an excellent medium for stories that raise the hairs on the backs of our necks. From the monsters of mythology to Poe’s Roderick Usher to Faulkner’s Miss Emily Grierson (just to name a few), we will examine the structural elements of this genre and delve into the darkness together to determine why horror is so popular.
I love spooky stories and am intrigued by how much we like to be scared. On any given evening, you can find me either curled up with Gothic horror or some sort of British murder show. My kids say I may have a problem, but I just enjoy good writing.

**Why I Am Teaching This Course**

*From Ingrid Johnson*

I love spooky stories and am intrigued by how much we like to be scared. On any given evening, you can find me either curled up with Gothic horror or some sort of British murder show. My kids say I may have a problem, but I just enjoy good writing.

**ENGL 1614: Intro to Short Fiction**

**Why You Should Take This Course**

Comics and graphic narratives are a vital part of today's literary landscape. In this course, you'll learn how to read them, how to talk about them, and how to appreciate the creative work that goes into making them. The course offers footing in the history and theory of the comics medium—its cultural positioning, and how it functions on the level of form—before embarking on a tour of contemporary practice. Focusing on the heterogeneous American tradition, our survey will include a broad range of formats and their associated genres: syndicated comic strips, superhero comic books, alternative comics and graphic narratives, and more. Along the way, we'll be testing the boundaries of "fiction" as a category: as Lynda Barry's cartoon self asks, "Is it autobiography if parts of it are not true? Is it fiction if parts of it are?"

Comics and graphic novels today have won the Pulitzer Prize (*Maus*); their adaptations fill Broadway theaters (*Fun Home*); while their film versions represent some of our biggest box office hits; they stud the shelves of every bookstore; they hail from dedicated publishing imprints; they grace the covers of elite journals; and—yes—they populate university syllabi. Guiding questions for the class include:

- How can we understand and talk about the formal language, or "grammar," of comics?
- What distinguishes comics from its neighboring forms in the world of film, painting, photography, prose, and poetry?
- What are the dominant genres in today's comics/graphic narrative scene?
- How have comics borne witness to historical catastrophe? How does the hand-drawn image function as "evidence"?
- How can comics provide a medium of self-expression for a range of ethnic, racial, gendered, queer, differently abled subjectivities and identity formations?
- How can comics respond to our contemporary moment?
ENGL 1614: Intro to Short Fiction

Why I Am Teaching This Course
From Emmy Waldman

I didn’t grow up reading comics. I’d never even heard of graphic novels until I got to graduate school. On a whim, I joined a “Graphic Novel” seminar taught by a visiting professor, Hillary Chute. We had to read Art Spiegelman’s *Maus* and Alison Bechdel’s *Fun Home*, alongside a range of other texts I now teach in my own classes. I was completely hooked, and it’s my hope that I can now introduce you to this versatile, subtle, supple, and so often denigrated and misunderstood storytelling medium.

ENGL 1624: Intro to Detective Fiction

Why You Should Take This Course
From the dread of nuclear annihilation to ecological collapse, amid so much disagreement and division, ours is an era of seemingly slipping human certainties. So exploring how we’ve seen and narrated crime, innocence, justice, human psychology, and our often desperate search for evidence, is especially relevant, especially crucial. As anguished as all this sounds, it will also be fun and funny—partly because being able to laugh about and within such stories is crucial both for coping and problem-solving. In fact, one steady solace here is that our traumas aren’t new. Many of humankind’s earliest and most ingenious narratives involve figuring out who did what, to whom, and how, and why, and what that all means about human nature, survival, and justice. Dusting for fingerprints can point our way onward...
ENGL 1624: Intro to Detective Fiction

Why I Am Teaching This Course
From Bob Canter

The short answer is that it’s because I didn’t go to law school. Meaning that I was very tempted to do so to become a prosecutor, having worked with many victims of violent crime during my years as a social worker. So, my urge to make justice happen remains, fueled by a probably-for-the-best career frustration. (I also have some expiating to do of the non-violent but dicey deeds I myself did as a rebellious teen). Plus, I plain love both well-made narratives and tracing how we track down evidence, patterns, crimes, criminals, and that elusive, beautiful thing called “justice.”

ENGL 1704: The Harry Potter Phenomenon

Why You Should Take This Course
Harry Potter books are, quite simply, a joy to read. Maybe you have read them before and are interested in revisiting them from a more academic, literary viewpoint. Maybe you have always meant to read them and are now ready to dive in. Whatever level of familiarity you have with the Potterverse now, this course will be incredibly fun. We will go through all seven novels and discuss them as readers, fans, and literary scholars.
Why You Should Take This Course
You should take this course because language, too, is among the ways food is seasoned. Our writing projects will be food-focused; we will write, engage in dialogue, eat, and develop a vocabulary for food writing practices while practicing food writing.

ENGL 2014
CRN: 15137 with Derek Mueller
T R | 12:30—1:45 p.m.
3 Credit Hours

Why I Am Teaching This Course
From Lily Corwin
I am teaching this course because I love these books. I have read them several times for my own pleasure and am currently reading them to my 9-year-old son (we are just starting Book 6), and I find new things to enjoy or puzzle over every time I read them. In addition to being fun, the books are a perfect way to start discussing literary criticism. I am very much looking forward to leading students through them this Spring!
ENGL 2014: Food Writing

Why I Am Teaching This Course
From Derek Mueller

My background in writing and rhetoric spans technical and creative pursuits, and these encompass interests in everyday food writing, experimental cooking, and the kinds of writing that circumscribe food (food sources and production, food awareness, consumption habits, and cultural meaning).

ENGL 2664: Being Human
War & Human Violence

Why You Should Take This Course
You should take this course, because war and violence are always with us, from front-page conflicts like the wars in Ukraine and Israel, to violence consumed as entertainment in true-crime podcasts and video games. Given its ubiquity, it is worth exploring humans’ capacity for, and relationship with, violence. We will read and discuss literature that help us to consider key questions:

- How does violence affect a text’s literary aspects, such as plot and character development?
- How do we judge whether or not depictions of violence are gratuitous?
- How should we feel about consuming violence through games and media?
- How is violence defined, and who defines it?
- How does violence impact the people involved, both perpetrators and victims?
- How is violence justified?

ENGL 2664
CRN: 15148 with Jared Gibbs
T R | 12:30–1:45 p.m.
3 Credit Hours

Pathways Area 2 - Critical Thinking in the Humanities
ENGL 2664: Being Human

Why I Am Teaching This Course
From Jared Gibbs

I am teaching this course, because I love reading and discussing books with students. I am particularly drawn to literature that explores the limits of human experience, because engaging with such challenging literature is one of the best ways to discover our world and consider our places in it.

Why You Should Take This Course
Appalachia is one of the most exploited and most misunderstood regions of the United States. It has long been painted by the broad strokes of stereotypes: white, rural, uneducated. Consider for a moment a technique a good many film and television shows use: if you want a dumb character, then give them a Southern accent. Ugh. Come read about the Appalachia of African American writers Crystal Wilkinson and Frank X Walker. And the Appalachia of the LGBT+Q community of Silas House and Jeff Mann. And the Appalachia of second generation immigrant writers like Denise Giardina, Michael Corley and Neema Avashia. And the Appalachia of Cherokee writers Marilou Awiakta and Annette Saunooke Clapsaddle. They write about the sense of place and displacement that helps define the region. They write of family, work, change and challenges – like the opioid crisis and climate change. They write about what it means to be human. Come experience the rich diversity of what Appalachian Literature has to offer. Connect with authentic voices from the hills.

ENGL 3624: Appalachian Literature

Why You Should Take This Course
Appalachia is one of the most exploited and most misunderstood regions of the United States. It has long been painted by the broad strokes of stereotypes: white, rural, uneducated. Consider for a moment a technique a good many film and television shows use: if you want a dumb character, then give them a Southern accent. Ugh. Come read about the Appalachia of African American writers Crystal Wilkinson and Frank X Walker. And the Appalachia of the LGBT+Q community of Silas House and Jeff Mann. And the Appalachia of second generation immigrant writers like Denise Giardina, Michael Corley and Neema Avashia. And the Appalachia of Cherokee writers Marilou Awiakta and Annette Saunooke Clapsaddle. They write about the sense of place and displacement that helps define the region. They write of family, work, change and challenges – like the opioid crisis and climate change. They write about what it means to be human. Come experience the rich diversity of what Appalachian Literature has to offer. Connect with authentic voices from the hills.

ENGL 3624
CRN: 15195 with Alice Kinder
M W F | 9:05—9:55 a.m.
3 Credit Hours

Pathways Area 7: Critical Analysis of Identity and Equity in the U.S.
Pathways Area 9: Intercultural and Global Awareness
ENGL 3624: Appalachian Literature

Why I Am Teaching This Course
From Alice Kinder

I love Appalachia and the rich and diverse literature that has emerged from her many voices. By sheer good luck, I happened upon an Appalachian Literature class as an undergraduate (eons ago), and that course nearly saved my life. Leaving home for college and being the first in my family to attend college, I discovered that I had an ‘accent’ and that I was viewed differently because of it. Learning the history of my region and reading the literature of her writers made me want to learn more. So, I am a life-long student of the region, and every year I am grateful to you — the students — who teach me new ways of thinking about Appalachia and her writers and new perspectives about life in general.

And a head’s up - you will probably hear a story or two about our grandchildren. This is our youngest - Hope Cleome.

ENGL 3654: Latinx Literature, Art, and Environments

Why You Should Take This Course

You should take this course because not only will it be fun and educational but because Latinx experiences and stories and environmental issues are becoming increasingly relevant in our contemporary world.

This course offers us an overview of the relationships that Latinx people (people of Latin American descent, primarily inhabiting the U.S. but with ties to countries around the world) from diverse ethno-racial groups have with their environments. It will carry us throughout the U.S. and the globe to expose the socio-historical and natural processes that shape Latinx people’s experiences with their environments. During our time together, we will work to uncover Latinx people’s cultural relationships to various natural and geopolitical spaces, and in our travels, we will find ourselves on soccer fields, in chicken houses, gardens, agricultural fields, mountains, highways, sweatshops, and factories, among other places. Along the way, we will also study film, art, and music.

ENGL 3654
CRN: 20657 with Geovani Ramírez
M W | 5:30–6:45 p.m.
3 Credit Hours
ENGL 3654: Latinx Literature, Art, and Environments

Why I Am Teaching This Course
From Geovani Ramirez

I am teaching this course because it combines my interests in and commitments to promoting ecological awareness (and sustainable practices) and sharing cultural productions and histories by diverse ethno-racial groups.

I love to share the transformative power of literature with others, and I continue to marvel at the ways literature can bring about positive change and connect and unite diverse peoples.

ENGL 3684: Literature and the Law

Why You Should Take This Course
You should take this course because we will explore exciting, important literary fiction, films, and drama—from multiple cultures and time periods—regarding what the law means, how it is applied, and what it does (or does not) have to do with justice. We will think about crime and punishment, guilt and innocence, order and chaos, retribution and redemption. We will hold a mock trial, with witnesses and argument, of Antigone, a surprisingly modern heroine of a classical Greek play. The law itself is a work in progress, a work under investigation. And literature itself is one of the ways in which it is investigated, interrogated, and explored.

ENGL 3684
CRN: 15196 with Shoshana Milgram Knapp
T R | 3:30–4:45 p.m.
Instructor: 3 Credit Hours
ENGL 3684: Literature and the Law

Why I Am Teaching This Course
From Shoshana Milgram Knapp

I am teaching this course because I’m very interested in questions of justice (what it is, why we need to have an idea of justice and why we need it in the world) and in questions of truth (what is so, how we know, and what we should do). I love considering these issues, in the company of inquiring students. It is better to raise an issue without settling it than to settle it without raising it. We ask questions, but we do not answer them once and for all. There is room for words other than last words. Also, I love literature. As you will see in the photos of me in front of my undergraduate university library and in front of my current Shanks office library, I hold all the books I can, and I hug them to my heart.

Why You Should Take This Course
You’ll get to ask questions about topics you care about and learn how to thoroughly and efficiently find answers to your questions through qualitative research methods. To start, we’ll consider how diverse social and cultural identities impact not only the questions we ask, but also the results we find and the way we write up and disseminate our information (hello positionality, goodbye objectivity!). You’ll then get practice in doing research the way most of your faculty do it: annotated bibliographies? Nah. Useful reference management software (like Zotero and Mendeley) with highlights and notes? Yes! Along the way, we’ll play around with language and style to best communicate the answers to our questions to diverse audiences, including ourselves. Ultimately, we’ll get real acquainted with academic genres and also turn them upside down.

ENGL 3754: Advanced Writing & Research

Why You Should Take This Course
You’ll get to ask questions about topics you care about and learn how to thoroughly and efficiently find answers to your questions through qualitative research methods. To start, we’ll consider how diverse social and cultural identities impact not only the questions we ask, but also the results we find and the way we write up and disseminate our information (hello positionality, goodbye objectivity!). You’ll then get practice in doing research the way most of your faculty do it: annotated bibliographies? Nah. Useful reference management software (like Zotero and Mendeley) with highlights and notes? Yes! Along the way, we’ll play around with language and style to best communicate the answers to our questions to diverse audiences, including ourselves. Ultimately, we’ll get real acquainted with academic genres and also turn them upside down.

ENGL 3754
CRN: 20662 with Megan Weaver
T R | 12:30—1:45 p.m.
3 Credit Hours

Pathways Area 1a: Advanced/Applied Discourse
ENGL 3754: Advanced Composition

Why I Am Teaching This Course
From Megan Weaver

I hope to show just how important the content of this class is to students’ everyday lives. I’m a curious person, and I ask a LOT of questions. I love to know a little bit about a lot of things because it helps me connect with new people I meet and find new internet rabbit holes to fall down in my spare time. Making sense of the overload of information we receive on a daily basis through analysis and synthesis is fascinating to me! I also love to play with language, upend academic writing conventions, and find new ways to communicate academic findings to wider audiences who care about the same things I do; and if they don’t, I enjoy trying to persuade them to care!

ENGL 4054: History of the English Language

Why You Should Take This Course
You should take this course because you will learn about the twists and turns that the English language has gone through for a millennium and a half to result in what it is today. While we will learn about how sounds, word shapes, and sentence structures have changed, we will spend more time on all of the historical and social factors that led to many of those changes. Every wonder why American English is spelled differently than British English? Ever wonder why the English language does something funny or unexpected? We’ll find out why. We’ll see a number of interesting videos to set historical context and you’ll go out into the world to gather information about how English is really used.
ENGL 4054: History of the English Language

**Why I Am Teaching This Course**

*From Joe Eska*

I like teaching this course because it's multiple courses in one. It's a language sciences course, it's a history course, it's a sociology course, and it's an anthropology course. There's always something to talk about and from multiple perspectives.

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ENGL 4204: Hybrid Forms

**Why You Should Take This Course**

This is an advanced workshop for writers interested in contemplating the often messy but delightful terrain of blurring genres across poetry and prose. From the musicality of a lyric fragment in spoken word to the crossing of visual theory, art, and performance writing, this class strives to ignite a bountiful spirit of experimentation in your work. Alongside breaking formal constraints, reading and writing assignments will offer new ways of thinking about hybridity. There will only be one required book: *Dictee* by Theresa Hak Kyung Cha.

ENGL 4204
CRN: 20660 with Sophia Terazawa
T R | 9:30–10:45 a.m.
3 Credit Hours
I’m excited to teach this course because of my own shape-shifting practice as a poet and performance artist. The classroom space, for me, transforms into a non-hierarchical space of collaboration where playful modes of creation arrive through conversations and writing prompts catered directly to student interests. Please bring your obsessions and your animal selves!

ENGL 4374: Special Topics in Professional & Technical Writing

Why You Should Take This Course
You can learn about applying and critiquing social research on games and related technologies, preparing you for work in the games industry, science writing, and scholarship.

ENGL 4374
CRN: 20627 with James D. Ivory
T R | 11–12:15 p.m.
3 Credit Hours
ENGL 4374: Special Topics in Professional & Technical Writing

**Why I Am Teaching This Course**

*From James D. Ivory*

I want to share more than two decades of experience with social and behavioral research related to games, simulations, and virtual environments with students who can apply that knowledge to careers in professional writing and the games industry.

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ENGL 4664: Contemporary Fiction

**Empire and Resistance Fiction**

**Why You Should Take This Course**

It will feature some of the world’s best fiction of the last few decades, which happen to be wrestling with the legacy of empire and how literature can be part of resistance.
ENGL 4664: Contemporary Fiction

Why I Am Teaching This Course
From Rebecca Hightower-Weaver

This course involves literature that I read for fun, just because it’s so complicated, passionate, and sometimes funny. There’s a reason why the Booker Prize (given every year for the world’s best novel in English) is so often given to writers from formerly colonized countries. They have some of the best stories to tell!

ENGL 4824: Science Writing

Why You Should Take This Course

The important role of communication in science is becoming increasingly recognized. In many ways, writing enables the rapid progress of scientific research through information sharing and correspondence. Good writing can improve access to scientific information and to a wider net of thinkers with diverse perspectives. This course will help you better understand the ecosystem of writing in and about the sciences. You will learn theoretical concepts of scientific communication and gain skills in collaborative writing, reporting on experimental and other empirical studies, displaying data visually, and communicating to publics. We will pay particular attention to the ways in which writing can enable or impede equitable scientific information sharing. This course is writing intensive, but it will not feature graduate-level writing genres because of its focus on foundational concepts.

The course will be relevant to students in the College of Science or Engineering and to English or other liberal arts majors alike, as we will divide the course into units on internal writing among experts and on public communication of science to non-experts. You will benefit from working with students from diverse disciplines. Moreover, this course will be taught in an asynchronous but interactive format, allowing for flexibility in your schedules while still enabling meetings with the instructor and discussion with classmates.

Finally, this 4000-level class will lead to writing samples for future job searches or graduate school applications.

ENGL 4824
CRN: 20624 with Julie Gerdes
Asynchronous Online
3 Credit Hours
**ENGL 4824: Science Writing**

**Why I Am Teaching This Course**
From Julie Gerdes

I am deeply concerned with the historic and damaging chasm between the sciences and the humanities. I believe that scientists and communicators are stronger together, and I see this course as a means of bridging the disciplines. Outside of teaching, I work with scientists on a near-daily basis as a researcher trained in rhetoric and writing. This work is fulfilling, theory-driven, and yet practical. Scientific information pervades contemporary social and cultural lives and impacts much of what we understand about our worlds. I hope that Virginia Tech learners will walk away from their educational experiences empowered to be change makers. I am passionate about the role of science in our society, and I want to share that passion with you!

**ENGL 4964: Field Study**
Words & Pictures

**Why You Should Take This Course**
You should take this course because you thrive on creativity and want experience in an industry that values everything it encompasses. As a member of the Words & Pictures Team, you will write stories, take pictures, produce videos, design a variety of materials, and assist with social media for the Virginia Tech Department of English. This field study course is for the person who wants professional examples for their portfolio, has an interest in higher education communications, and a desire to increase their skill set to meet industry standards. For the first half of the semester, we will have weekly workshops to make sure you have the skills you need for success, while the second half will allow you to focus on a specific area that interests you most based on what we have explored.

This course serves as a Bridge Experience. While it is a class, it is also an internship.

**ENGL 4964**
CRN: 21580 with Leslie King
T R | 9:30—10:45 a.m.
3 Credit Hours
Ever since my first photography course as an undergrad, I have self-identified as a photographer. Over the years, I have done portrait, commercial, and editorial (and fine art) photography as the main stays of my career. But an early mentor once gave me advice that opened up my world. He knew I had an interest in writing. To help further my career, he suggested that I do both: photography and writing. This quickly also included honing my graphic design, audio storytelling, and moving pictures skill set. Working at the intersection of words and pictures is where I have found much joy and fulfillment. I would like to share this passion with students and help them thrive in a world where they are writers, photographers, video-creators, and designers, often in combination. The job market is also very competitive for writers and communicators. I want to provide opportunities for students to explore and build a skill set that will help them have a leading advantage for their future employment.