ENG 518
Adolescent Literature
MW 1:15-2:45
Dr. Jameela Lares

Both children’s and young adult (“YA”) literature favor the narrative. There are, for example, few plays or lyric poem collections on the solid wall of young adult literature at Hattiesburg’s Books-a-Million. But though young adult literature is heavy with plots, characters, and settings, the genre is not limited to the realistic “problem novel,” though that genre represents some excellent texts. As we will see in our examination of YA literature (broadly defined as “texts for maturing persons or about maturation process”), various YA genres represent issues and conflicts in becoming adults, and arguably some genres represent some of these issues better than others. I hope that we can also make use of the extensive YA holdings in our excellent de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection.

Requirements: Thoughtful reading of texts, regular attendance and participation in seminar discussions; regular blog posts and/or responses on Canvas; an oral presentation on an additional YA text with a short written component; a class teaching session and teaching portfolio write-up; and a researched seminar paper. We will also make use of the extensive YA holdings in our excellent de Grummond Collection. This course is being taught concurrently with English 418.

Texts will probably include:
Brosgol, Anya’s Ghost
Bruchac, Code Talker: A Novel about the Navajo Marines of World War Two
Heiligman, Vincent and Theo: The Van Gogh Brothers
Hinton, The Outsiders
Jones, Fire and Hemlock
McCormick, Sold
Ness, The Knife of Never Letting Go
Salinger, The Catcher in the Rye
Thomas, The Hate U Give
Zarins, Sometimes We Tell the Truth

*fulfills non-traditional literature

*This course is by permission only. If you are interested in ENG 518, email Dr. Valint at alexandra.valint@usm.edu. However, registration priority will be given to students studying children’s literature.
ENG 569
Studies in British Literature
On the River: British Literature and Riparian Landscapes
TR 9:45-11:15
Dr. Nicolle Jordan

From the Thames to the Congo, rivers in British literature suggest important links between nation and nature. This is especially true for an island nation such as Britain, whose imperial stature was aided in no small part by its mastery of inland and oceanic waterways. This course explores rivers as both agents of nationhood and sites for negotiating national and regional identity. How do rivers aid or determine human activity, and vice versa? How does a provincial river like George Eliot’s fictional Floss differ from an urban behemoth like the Thames, and with what consequences for the landscape and its people? More broadly, what might a riparian—i.e., riverbank—literary criticism look like? Readings include The Wind in the Willows, The Mill on the Floss, Heart of Darkness and selected poetry by William Wordsworth and Alice Oswald.

*fulfills British Lit 1660-1890 OR British & American Lit 1890-1960

ENG 640
Critical Reading and Methods
M 6:30-9:45
Dr. Monika Gehlawat

ENG 640 is designed to introduce or review the methods of research in literary studies, the conventions of scholarly conversations about literary works, the critical approaches to literary analysis, and the components and mechanics of literary-critical essays. Students will read literature and theory, write two substantive critical essays, and be expected to present on their work for the class.

*required for MA in lit, MA in English Ed., PhD in lit, PhD in CW
ENG 644

Literary Theory: Psycho Marxism
T 6:30-9:45
Dr. Charles Sumner

This course will trace attempts by twentieth and twenty-first century philosophers and cultural theorists to wed the thought of Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud. After covering this basic history, we will then consider how to resurrect a version of “Psycho-Marxism” that can be used to refute the claims of some of the most contemporary approaches to literary criticism, such as "thing theory" and "surface reading."

*fulfills literary theory

ENG 672

Topics in American Literature
R 3:00-6:15
Dr. Katherine Cochran

Mississippi lays claim to some of the most esteemed and celebrated American writers, including multiple winners and nominees of the National Book Award, the American Book Award, the Newbery Award, the O. Henry Award, the Pen/Faulkner Award, the Pen/Malamud Award, and the Pulitzer Prize, as well as a two-time U.S. Poet Laureate and a winner of the Nobel Prize for Fiction. Given the number of great authors from the state, it’s no surprise that one of the ways in which Mississippi markets itself is as the home of important American writers. But how are these authors being marketed, and to what effect?

This course will investigate the place of Mississippi writers through the lens of literary tourism by reading texts by selected twentieth and twenty-first century authors—like Margaret Walker Alexander, Ellen Douglas, William Faulkner, Kiese Laymon, Willie Morris, Lewis Nordan, Walker Percy, Natasha Trethewey, Jesmyn Ward, Eudora Welty, Tennessee Williams, and Richard Wright—along with secondary/theoretical works relevant to the literary tourism industry. We will also take a trip over the Fall Break to sites of Mississippi literary tourism in Jackson, Oxford, Clarksdale, Greenville, Natchez, and Gulfport. Required components of the course, in addition to regular and substantive class participation, will include presentations and an article-length seminar essay.

*fulfills literatures in English after 1960 OR non-traditional literature
ENG 690
Practicum in the Theory and Teaching of Composition
TR 11:30-1:00
Dr. Joyce Inman

This course surveys theories and practices that guide the teaching of writing. In order to be reflective and successful teachers, it is important to understand why we make specific pedagogical decisions in our classrooms. This course will give you an opportunity to examine and reflect on your teaching practices as you work to develop a pedagogy that you can build on throughout your teaching career. One of the primary goals of this course is to enable you to explain to your students, to your peers, to future employers, and to yourself why you have chosen particular pedagogical strategies and to encourage you to critically reflect on the ways you are working to meet the needs of students and the emotional and intellectual demands of the writing classroom.

* required of graduate teaching assistants

ENG 721 (H001)
Seminar in Fiction Writing
W 3:00-6:15
Dr. Olivia Clare

In this course you will share your own short stories and novel excerpts in a workshop setting. You will also analyze and discuss various techniques employed in assigned readings. In addition, we’ll make a bit of time for in-class writing exercises.

We will discuss: craft topics (beginnings, characterization, dialogue, setting, pacing, momentum, compression, expansion, volume, subtlety, syntax, syncopation, tension, anticipation, endings, and style), your creative life, your reading habits, your writing habits, revision, publishing, and literary citizenship. Additionally, you’ll think about some of the harder questions you have for your writing. No doubt you know what some of those questions are already, and you’ll discover more in this class.

Writers who work in other genres are welcome.

Readings:

- Short stories and novel excerpts by: Lauren Groff, ZZ Packer, Jamel Brinkley, Denis Johnson, Samantha Hunt, and others
- *The Dark Dark*, Samantha Hunt
- *Never Let Me Go*, Kazuo Ishiguro
ENG 721
Fiction Workshop
W 3:00 – 6:15
Joshua Bernstein

Though all styles of literary fiction will be welcome in this workshop, we will focus on one in particular this semester: dark humor. Through a series of in-class prompts and activities, we’ll try our hands at writing it, and we’ll look at a number of works that might be said to encompass it, including masterworks by Nathanael West and Thomas Pynchon. If you’re feeling gravely serious, however—ba-dum ching—you’re welcome to write in soberer style. We’ll pay attention to the normal aspects of craft—scene-building, plot development, perspective, tense, pacing, and conflict—as well as those that are perhaps most pertinent to dark humor: dialogue, concision, the use of wordplay, farce, deadpan, and more. Both novels and stories are welcome, as are writers working primarily in other forms, including poetry. Finally, since most of us aspire to live past forty (unlike West) or at least enjoy a share of the limelight (unlike Pynchon), we’ll talk a bit about professionalization and the day-to-day aspects of publishing. Corpses not included.

Readings:
Miss Lonelyhearts, Nathanael West
The Crying of Lot 49, Thomas Pynchon
Selected stories by Roxane Gay, Vladimir Nabokov, Amina Gautier, Faulkner, and others

ENG 722
Seminar in Poetry Writing
T 3:00-6:15
Dr. Adam Clay

In the Seminar in Poetry Writing, we’ll explore possibilities of critiquing creative work through adaptations to the workshop. In addition to these weekly workshops, students will design and complete weekly prompts to generate creative work through various forms of experimentation. The course will culminate with the submission of a creative portfolio, which we’ll view as a section of a manuscript or a chapbook. At the end of the semester, we’ll critique these excerpts from each student, providing feedback on thematic issues, structure, and line-level edits as well.
Although the Victorian period is often associated with realism, in this course we will trace the rich history of Victorian fantasy. As Stephen Prickett writes, Victorian fantasy authors “tried to extend and enrich ways of perceiving ‘reality’ by a variety of nonrealistic techniques that included nonsense, dreams, visions, and the creation of other worlds.” We will start with Lewis Carroll’s influential (and endlessly adapted) *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* and then explore the “other worlds” created by authors such as William Morris, H. Rider Haggard, Begum Rokeya, and George MacDonald; we will even delve into the mathematical fantasy *Flatland* by Edward Abbott. Much Victorian fantasy was written for children, and we will read works by Lewis Carroll, Edith Nesbit, and Charles Kingsley. In also including Bram Stoker’s vampire classic *Dracula* and H. G. Wells’s early science fiction, we can consider the relationship and overlap between fantasy and gothic and between fantasy and science fiction. Throughout our reading, we will examine how fantasy manifests cultural wishes and desires. We will debate fantasy’s potential for political and ethical critique. J. R. R. Tolkien, himself influenced by the texts we will read, famously identified “Faërie” as a “a perilous land”—as we read, we will stay attuned to the “enchantment,” “peril,” “richness and strangeness” of these fantasy worlds.

*fulfills British Lit 1660-1890 OR British & American Lit 1890-1960*