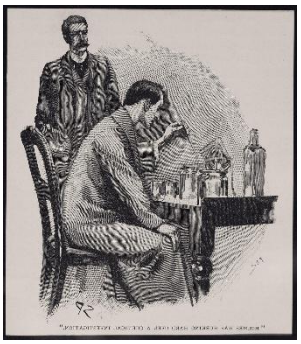
Department of English Course Descriptions
Spring/Summer 2026

ENGL CLASSES



ENGL 200: Mystery and Detective Fiction. Cothran. This course will explore the mystery and detective fiction genre, examining its presentation of both "the unknown" and "the unknowable." Students will discuss what it means to read a text that follows a familiar narrative structure; they also will discuss what happens when authors break that structure, frustrating the expectations of their readers. Specifically, we will be looking at texts by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Agatha Christie, and others. In addition to a formal research paper based on a mystery film, television show, video game, or novel (of your choice) read outside of class, students will be required to take a final exam and to write regular responses on the class discussion board. **CR&R.**

ENGL 203: Major British Authors. Cothran. Major British Authors covers representative British literary works from the Old English period through postmodernism. We will approach these works within their historical contexts, creating a deeper understanding of how literature both shapes and reflects culture. Students will engage in close reading, become familiar with literary terms and types of literary criticism, and learn to make evidence-based literary arguments. **Foundations. Crit R/R. Meets GNED GLOB, HIST, and HART requirements.**

ENGL 211: Major American Authors. Bickford. This course is a survey and study of the major periods, literary forms, and issues that characterize American literature, with a consideration of representative major works and authors over the course of American literary history. Students will explore how the landscape of America transforms with the changing voice and identity of Major American Authors. Students will complete regular reading quizzes, three-four tests, and a variety of writing and discussion assignments. **Foundations. Crit R/R. Meets GNED HIST and HART requirements.**

ENGL 305: Shakespeare. Koster. English 305 surveys Shakespeare's major plays and sonnets. Using a variety of approaches, we will analyze these works from the page to the stage, examining the texts as literary artifacts and dynamic scripts for performance as well as lenses for critiquing social issues, then and (especially) now. Critical articles, discussions with experienced performers, and filmed productions will help us understand the works of one of the most important literary artists in British literature. Class discussion is a required and vital element of the course, and you will write several papers of varying lengths and take a mid-term and a final exam. You

may feel free to pursue an interdisciplinary topic, especially if you are not majoring in English; anyone who loves language and insightful literature is welcome in this class. Opportunities to participate in a Spring Break trip to the American Shakespeare Center in Staunton, VA, will be provided; if *Hamnet* is streaming by the end of the term, we may watch and discuss it as well. Brownies provided. **CR&R**.

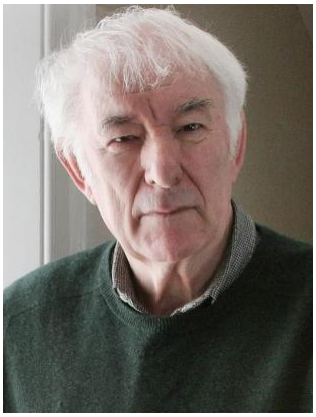
ENGL 307: The Arthurian Tradition. Koster. This course investigates the story of King Arthur from its earliest 6th century historical roots in Celtic Britain through its major literary and artistic representations up to present century lives such as *Legendborn* and *The Green Knight*. In addition to works of literature, we will be exploring the Arthurian tradition in art, music, film, politics, bad Japanese TV shows and even worse TNT adaptations, *really* bad Guy Ritchie movies, artifacts (not limited to the Holy Hand Grenade of Antioch), video games, and other cultural media. Two exams, two moderate-length papers, and a group project leading to a presentation will be required. Opportunities for student research will abound. Non-literature majors are welcome. Yes, there will be brownies. **Counts in the Medieval Studies Minor.** **Crit R/R**

ENGL 317: The Short Story. Bickford. Nobel Laureate Toni Morrison tells us "the function of freedom is to free someone else." The African American short story writers we study in this course, including Chesnutt, Dunbar, Fauset, DuBois, Toomer, Hurston, Ellison, Hughes, Walker, Kincaid, Morrison, and Danticat, among others, wrote to liberate readers' minds from the oppressive strictures of a racialized and racist society. We will begin with an inquiry into the short story as a genre and move into a consideration of the ways in which African American authors have used this form to undermine hegemonic discourse about race, sexuality, gender, and class in the U.S. Students will complete a number of short, close-reading papers, a longer researched analysis, and a final exam. **CR&R**

ENGL 333: Nancy Drew, Authorship, and Identity. Fitzgerald. This course offers a critical exploration of the globally recognized figure of Nancy Drew to explore fundamental questions of authorship, identity, gender, and mass media. We will deconstruct the myth of the single author by examining the Stratemeyer Syndicate, analyze how the character's identity was continuously revised over decades, and consider Nancy Drew's role in shaping young women's aspirations in the 20th and 21st centuries. Second half semester course, 1 credit. **Elective.**

ENGL 494/494H: Capstone. Koster. This capstone course is required of all English majors *in catalogs beginning with 2017-18* (except those seeking secondary certification as a secondary school teacher), preferably in the senior year. Students will complete assessment exercises; develop a capstone Project ready for presentation; research career options and prepare and revise career-readiness documents and texts; and present the results of their research orally, much as professional scholars do at a conference or writers do as they promote their published work. In sum, students will utilize the research, critical inquiry, and communication skills they have learned as English majors and Winthrop undergraduates. If you are confused as to whether you should take

ENGL 491 or ENGL 494, please check with Dr. Nail and/or Dr. Cothran. **Meets the Capstone requirement for students in the BA-ENGL track. Research and Creative Scholarship. Asychronous.**

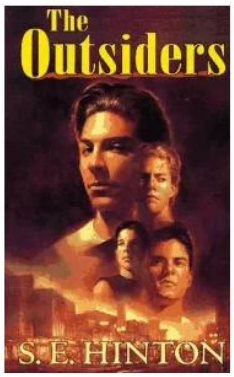


ENGL 501: Modern British Poetry. Hiner. Reeling from the destruction of two World Wars and global political upheaval, Modernist poets reacted to a collective sense of existential fragmentation by rejecting the Victorian impulse for order and propriety and by creating remarkably innovative, experimental, and radically authentic poetry. "Make it new," Ezra Pound famously declared, and poets such as Eliot and Auden insisted that poetry be "real," reflecting the brokenness and beauty of the world as people actually perceive and experience it. The result of these changes in sentiment was a radical shift in literary style that produced some of the most memorable and influential poems of the modern era. In this course we will study poetry of England and Ireland from the 20th century, including--but not limited to—the poetry of G. M. Hopkins, W. B. Yeats, D.H. Lawrence, T.S. Eliot, Katherine Mansfield, Seamus Heaney, James Berry, Eavan Boland, and Carol Ann Duffy. In lively and energetic discussions, we will spend time analyzing poems as well as considering their historical and cultural contexts. Discussions will explore literary responses to historical events such as the two World Wars and will include examinations of Modernist critical theory and of the significant literary trends of the twentieth century. Requirements include class participation, one short (4-5 page) essay, a longer (9-11 page) critical research essay, a paper proposal and annotated bibliography, and midterm and final exams. Graduate students will write longer papers and have one or two additional assignments, one of which will involve presenting new material in an oral report. For an opportunity to study the genre of poetry as expressed by English-speaking creative artists from a slightly different viewpoint, register for this thought-provoking course! **CR&R. Research and Creative Scholarship.**

ENGL 507: History and Development of English. Koster. This course is an introduction to the major changes in the English language from the Old English period to the recent Presidential executive order deeming English the official language of the United States, and it operates like a language class; you'll be talking about sounds, parts of speech, syntax, dictionaries, and similar materials. Primary emphasis will be on the kinds of changes that have taken place in our pronunciation, grammar, and word meanings, and how they have affected the English(es) we speak today. Secondary emphasis will be on the historical causes of these changes and their modern implications, since this course satisfies the Historical Perspectives requirement (yes, you will have

to learn names and dates). Students will participate in discussions, write an original research paper, submit homework exercises, complete two exams, and participate in creating and analyzing corpuses of data using Pinterest. If circumstances permit, you may be handling real examples of writing as old as 2300 B.C.E. in person at the Louise Pettus Archives. Yes, there will be brownies. **S/C/C Comm. Research and Creative Scholarship.**

ENGL 510: Literature of the Gilded Age in America. Richardson. The recent success of the television series *The Gilded Age* has introduced many people to this transformative time in American culture during the late nineteenth century. The name "the gilded age" actually comes from a satiric novel written by Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner. While excess definitely existed, this period also experienced tremendous innovation, progress, challenge, and instability as the country moved into the modern era. The literature of this time captures this period of change, and this course will allow us to study this period from a number of different perspectives: the high-class society world of Edith Wharton and Henry James, the Western frontier of Bret Harte and Stephen Crane, the realism of Mark Twain and William Dean Howells, the regionalism of Kate Chopin and Sarah Orne Jewett, the voices of African American writers such as Charles Chesnutt, and the Naturalistic voices of Jack London and Theodore Dreiser. Students will write short papers, take three exams, contribute to reading and discussion activities, and present on historical topics.

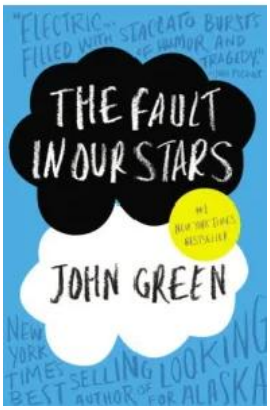


ENGE 519: Adolescent Literature. Nail. This semester Adolescent Literature will focus on the application of critical theory in two disciplines, education and English studies, and how these two different (but related) approaches overlap with YA lit at the center. We will read a mix of classic and contemporary Young Adult lit, as well as academic explorations of both interpretive and praxis-oriented approaches. Students will have the opportunity to explore YA lit in ways that increase its visibility, range, and engagement with students in middle and high schools (and beyond), while simultaneously deepening their own enjoyment and appreciation of the genre. All students with an interest in YA literature are welcome and encouraged to sign up. (Yes, this is technically not an ENGL class, but all students are welcome!) **Prerequisites: WRIT 101 and HMXP 102; minimum of sophomore status. CR&R.**

ENGL 611: Literature of the Gilded Age in America. Richardson. This course will be cross-listed with ENGL 510 "Literature of the Gilded Age in America." While the primary readings will overlap, this course will focus more extensively on the concepts of realism and naturalism as aesthetic movements. Graduate students will be responsible for reading additional nonfiction historical overviews of the period such as David Shi's *Facing Facts* and Joel Shrock's *The Gilded Age*. Graduate students will present on key changes in the period such as shifts in reading practices, advertising, education, dress, literary criticism, and architecture. They will also be responsible for leading class discussion, presenting on an additional author not represented by the main list, and developing a seminar project.

ENGE CLASSES

ENGE 390: Methods of Teaching English for the Middle and Secondary School Classroom. Nail. Students in this class will gain knowledge about and experience the underlying theories that guide Secondary English Language Arts (ELA) education. Special focus will be placed on developing effective lesson plans and assessments for secondary ELA classrooms in preparation for Internships I and II. Course designed for those interested in teaching careers. Should be taken the spring prior to the full-year internship experience in conjunction with EDCO 350. Prerequisite: Admission to the Educator Preparation Program (EPP). Notes: Specifically designed for students planning to pursue secondary English certification through an undergraduate program or Winthrop's MAT programs. This is the first in a series of two teaching methods courses. **Asychronous.**



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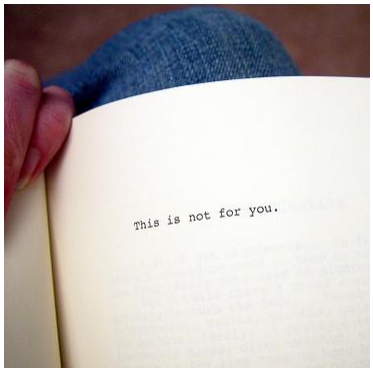
WRIT CLASSES

WRIT 200: Writing with Emerging Technologies. Listhartke. Technologies have always affected the development and creation of writing. The class will look at the history of writing technologies while also providing hands on writing practice with and in emerging technologies like generative AI and virtual reality. You'll be introduced to issues involved in creating texts with emerging technologies; the methods for analyzing such texts; and the skills needed to create texts with and in these spaces. Class will be in the Owens VR Lab. **Elective. Counts in the Writing Minor.**

WRIT 200: Introduction to Creative Writing. Sommers. In this introductory course, we'll focus on compression and precision as tools for writing compelling flash (very short) fiction, nonfiction, prose poetry, and drama. We'll read and discuss excellent published flash pieces, and we'll write our own, which we'll workshop as a community. We'll challenge and encourage each other to make every word count, working toward a creative writing practice that responds to this question: How can we do more with less? **Elective. Counts in the Writing Minor (Creative String).**



WRIT 300: Rhetorical Theory: Multimodal Rhetoric. Fitzgerald. The rules of persuasion are changing. In a 21st century defined by political polarization, rapid technological shifts, and instant global communication, how does rhetoric keep up? This course investigates how rhetorical theory and criticism have evolved to make sense of and offer strategies for our world today. We will read both classical and contemporary rhetorical theorists as well as experimental texts like *House of Leaves*. You will learn to intentionally blend written, visual, sonic, and kinetic modes of meaning-making. More critically, you'll develop the crucial skill of rhetorical affordance: understanding *why* a presentation works better than a paper for one goal, or *how* an infographic can make a complex argument more effective than an article. By the end of the semester, you'll have a portfolio of work that demonstrates not only *what* you can say, but how powerfully and strategically you can say it to any audience, for any purpose. **Frameworks. S/C/C Comm.**

WRIT 350: Introduction to Composition and Pedagogy. Nail. *The Proletariat's Guide to Teaching Writing*: There are many myths surrounding writing generally, and some that stem from the adage about "those who can" and “teaching." The most dangerous myth is that writing “just comes to you,” that some people can do it, and some people can’t. Implicit in this notion is the idea that writing can’t be taught, that any instruction in writing is really just editing and proof-reading. In fact, this is the opposite of writing instruction. But what of proletariats? Proletariats, as they are traditionally defined, have their work to offer, and writing is an activity that demands work. Yes, there is art involved, and perhaps that ability to capture art is something that is innate (to the level that it exists) in the individual. But it is also craft— learning to write better requires hard, dedicated work, and teaching others to write better requires hard, dedicated work. Edison famously said that “genius is one percent inspiration, ninety-nine percent perspiration,” and that applies to writing as well. Much of the focus of this class will be on the 99%, or on the unromantic, sweaty work of writing. **Frameworks. S/C/C Comm.**

WRIT 465: WRIT 465: Rhetoric in the Professional Workplace. Listhartke and Covington. What knowledge, skills, and experience guide the work of business and professional writers? What good habits help them succeed? How do professional writers make decisions about their writing, their collaborations with others, and the roles writing plays in their organizations? Given that learning isn’t confined to school, how do professional writers drive innovation and/ keep up with their fields? By considering these and other questions, this course will explore concepts, theories, and projects through an in-depth, hands-on investigation of professional writing. We’ll read texts written by both scholars and practitioners with a mix of academic and practitioner audiences in mind. We’ll consider how research and experience helps build theory, and how theoretical work connects to practice. And we’ll create a wide range of documents which help us perform, reflect on, and share what we learn in real world communities

and workplaces. **Prerequisite: Sophomore Status.** **S/C/C Comm. Oral and Writing Intensive Course**

WRIT 501: Writing for New Media. Listhartke. Digital technologies and online spaces have changed the way writing is created and circulated between audiences. Algorithms and platforms affect how things get circulated based on how audiences interact with digital texts. The course will include discussion of, and hands-on workshops in, writing about and with digital technologies, including the rhetorical, contextual, cultural, and ethical issues involved in creating such texts; the methods for analyzing such texts; and the skills needed to create such texts. Students will compose texts of multiple genres with that context in mind utilizing content strategy with accessibility and user experience in mind. Graduate

students taking this course will delve more in-depth into theoretical and scholarly conversations on digital rhetoric and media. Notes: Intensive Writing and Technology course. Prerequisites: HMXP 102 and a previous WRIT course above 199 with a grade of C- or better, or graduate status. **Critical Reading and Research. S/C/C Comm. Research and Creative Scholarship.**

WRIT 507: Advanced Fiction Writing. Bagwell. Building on the foundational skills practiced in WRIT 307, this class will dive into the deep, using *A Swim in a Pond in the Rain* by George Saunders as our guide. Students will draft, share in workshop, and revise multiple fiction pieces, applying to them the advanced craft and technique we will study. Students will become stronger writers. They will expand their fiction reading, writing, revising, and editing practices. They will broaden their writing community. This class is for students who are ready to engage rigorously with fiction writing and with their fellow writers to develop their strongest original work. **Prerequisite: WRIT 307 or graduate status. Counts in the Writing Minor (Creative Writing).**

WRIT 551: Advanced Creative Non-Fiction. Sommers. How might we begin to shape a voice and a style that is uniquely our own in the genre of creative nonfiction? Students in this course will look deeper into several different kinds of nonfiction writing including: investigative journalism, short-form biography, music memoir and reviews, book reviews, and even a bit of sports writing. The idea here is to broaden our perspective on what creative nonfiction can be in a multitude of diverse contexts. This is a workshop course where students will be asked to submit three major creative nonfiction projects for peer review. Students will then have the opportunity to revise their major projects into a revised final portfolio. **Prerequisite: WRIT 351 or graduate status. S/C/C Comm. Asynchronous.**

TENTATIVE SUMMER 2026 COURSES
(Just to whet your appetites!)

CRTW 201. Critical Reading, Thinking, and Writing. Four sections, online, asynchronous. B Term.

ENGL 550: Global Mythologies: Koster. Where do our stories come from? How and why are they used to build cultures and national narratives? In this class we will examine the mythological literatures of various western and non-western cultures, including Greece, Rome, the Fertile Crescent, Africa, China, Japan, India, the Celtic and Norse worlds, and the Americas. Subjects discussed will include the nature and identities of the pantheon; creation, fertility, flood, and trickster myths; and Armageddon/world's-end myths, all in a global context. We may also consider how creative writers construct mythologies and cosmologies for their fictional universes. Students will write short responses, contribute to online discussions, and complete a longer researched project (paper, digital project, creative work, or teaching materials) appropriate to their scholarly and professional interests. (Graduate students will be assigned additional reports using secondary scholarship to meet the requirements for scholarly rigor.) **CR&R. Asynchronous.**

WRIT 465: Rhetoric in the Professional Workplace. Listhartke. What knowledge, skills, and experience guide the work of business and professional writers? What good habits help them succeed? How do professional writers make decisions about their writing, their collaborations with others, and the roles writing plays in their organizations? Given that learning isn't confined to school, how do professional writers drive innovation and/ keep up with their fields? By considering these and other questions, this course will explore concepts, theories, and projects through an in-depth, hands-on investigation of professional writing. We'll read texts written by both scholars and practitioners with a mix of academic and practitioner audiences in mind. We'll consider how research and experience helps build theory, and how theoretical work connects to practice. And we'll create a wide range of documents which help us perform, reflect on, and share what we learn in real world communities and workplaces. **Prerequisite: Sophomore Status. S/C/C Comm. Oral and Writing Intensive Course.**

WRIT 510: Literature and the Environment. Fitzgerald. The more we know and learn about our environment, the more complex it becomes. But before we start our conversation about the many factors and complications of our environment, we should begin with the environment itself. What comes to mind when we think of our environment? Is it our natural surrounding—whether our immediate area and region or our larger planet and astronomical space? Is it our intellectual realm? Is it our physical dwelling? Is it both? What about the importance of nature in our philosophical ideals and theories? By voyaging through canonical and non-canonical texts by some of the most profound nature writers such as Emerson, Thoreau, Muir, Leopold, Carson, Dickinson, Whitman, Frost and others, we will aim to discover a deeper understanding of our natural environment and what makes it unique, beautiful, dangerous, and awe-inspiring. **Counts in most post-graduate certificate**

programs in the Department; check with Dr. Richardson or Dr. Fitzgerald if you have questions. May count in the Writing Minor. CR&R. S/C/C Comm.

Advising begins October 15. Remember to check pre-reqs when selecting courses!

Pre-Registration begins November 5 by time assignment.
If you don't know who your advisor is, ask Dr. Cothran or Ms. Sparrow!
Or email english@winthrop.edu!