

ENGLISH 301, THIS IS ENGLISH: FIELDS + METHODS

Section 0701, online synchronous, Mon/Wed 2:00-3:15

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ZOOM MEETINGS: Please remain available for Zoom meetings during our scheduled time block. We will start out with two synchronous meetings per week (Mon/Wed), then mostly shift to one per week (Wed). **If Zoom crashes and will not restart, I will email the class a Google Hangouts link.**

GET IN TOUCH: I will hold some small group and one-on-one Zoom sessions during our Monday time block (when we are not meeting as a larger group). Please email me to set up a virtual appointment at another time.

WHAT IS THIS COURSE ABOUT?

"English" is a little word that means a lot of things. Are you looking for literature, or linguistic study? For writing--creative, critical, or professional? For theater, or debate? For film, or even video games? Do you want to encounter stories across a vast range of media--from the live human voice to printed books, from film to the web? "This is English," the gateway course for the English major, introduces you to all of these areas and more, as well as to our unique resources for studying and enjoying them. The English discipline includes three main interpretive fields: Literary and Cultural Studies; Language, Writing, and Rhetoric; and Media Studies. This course brings together the fundamental concepts and methods for reading and viewing practiced in these fields, launching you into English studies and helping you to choose the major track that is right for you.

We will also discuss how English courses are transferrable to a wide range of professional and civic contexts. You will learn about the discipline of English and its place in the University. You will interview a faculty member in the department and give a brief presentation about what you discover. And we will have virtual visitors who will introduce you to programs including the UMD Writing Center, the English Honors Program, the ARHU Career Center, Study Abroad, the Undergraduate Teaching Assistants Program, and the Maryland General Assembly Internship Program.

This version of 301 is designed to re-imagine learning at distance and in pandemic.

We will use English studies to forge new kinds of connection - to each other and to our new social world.

We will read a broad sampling of poetry, drama, narrative, rhetoric, and media, with a sub-theme on ecological and environmental change. No particular experience or focus in those areas is required - all that's required is a spirit of curiosity about what to explore as an English major.

WHAT MATERIALS DO I NEED?

- *Climate Changed: A Personal Journey Through the Science*, by Philippe Squarzonni. Abrams ComicArts, 2014. ISBN: 9781419712555.

Check www.bookfinder.com and www.amazon.com for used copies.

All additional required reading will be available on ELMS course reserves.

I run a need-based scholarship program for textbooks; please email me for information about how to apply.

HOW WILL MY LEARNING BE ASSESSED?

- Preparedness and active participation (20%)
I grade participation based on thoughtful, consistent engagement with the class. This is not simply about speaking often; more important is how you listen and respond to your peers.
- Quizzes and social engagement assignments (20%)
I will assign guided reading exercises and social engagement activities including a faculty interview assignment. We will have a public-facing writing assignment that will take the place of a final exam. We will also have brief quizzes about course content including the following terms you will need to be able to define:

Aesthetics	Canon	Gender	Interpellation
Alienation	Discourse	Genre	Queer
Agency	Essentialism	Historicism	Representation
Audience	Form	Ideology	Race

- Book club assignment (10%)
This assignment will unfold over the course of the term. The goals are: 1) to convene a virtual book club that engages a "public" beyond this course, 2) to connect your readings and discussions to our present cultural moment, 3) to write about the outcomes of your book club in a short paper (2-3 pages), and 4) to reflect on your work via social media.
- Literary and Cultural Studies paper (10%)
A research paper of 3-4 pages
- Language, Writing, and Rhetoric paper (10%)
A research paper of 3-4 pages
- Media studies paper (10%)
A research paper of 3-4 pages
- Weekly blog submissions and comments (20%)
Blogging will be a key part of this course. You will do a lot of your writing in this format, and class discussion will emerge from what you say online. The goal is to write a response to the current week's readings and to make at least

one comment on peer's post. **Weekly blog posts and comments are due by the end of the day Tuesday.**

Please bookmark the blog here and sign up for email updates:

<https://english301fall20.school.blog>

The first step will be responding to an auto-generated invitation that you will receive via email. Check for messages from a Wordpress email address, accept the invitation, and follow the instructions for registering with the site. For privacy reasons, **please choose a username that includes your first name but not your last name.** I have set the preferences to discourage search engines from indexing the course blog, but it is available on the open web.

Remember to make a post of your own **and** at least one comment per week. To make a post, it is best to use the "Write a new post" link, in the "Get to work" column on the right (using the drop-down menu sometimes leads to confusion). Your grade will reflect how thoughtfully you engage with fellow students, so you will need to read the blog each week and respond to your classmates' ideas. I will typically provide discussion prompts in the righthand column of the blog, but you are welcome to choose your own topic instead.

Posts should generally focus on the reading for the current week. This means that you will need to have completed the reading before you post. That said, it's okay to pick up on something that came up during the previous week's discussion. It's also okay to focus on something from the previous week that we did not have time to discuss. Just make sure that most of your posts touch on the current week's material.

HOW WILL I SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE?

This will be a challenging semester for many students. Some might have unreliable wifi access, inconsistent computer access, trouble accessing a quiet workspace, financial insecurity, etc., and some members of our community may fall ill or need to care for relatives. If you need an extension or an alternative assignment, or if you are struggling and want to discuss strategies for success, **please email me so that I can help or refer you to someone who can.**

TIPS FOR SUCCESS:

- **Participate.** Discussions and group work are a critical part of the course. Learning in English studies is not a "canned" process: at the core of the discipline is the back-and-forth process of working through ideas with your peers and your professors.
- **Manage your time.** Make time for your online learning and participation each week. Give yourself plenty of time to complete assignments, including extra time to handle any technology related problems.
- **Log in regularly.** Log in to ELMS-Canvas and navigate to our course blog several times a week to view announcements, prompts, posts, and replies to your posts.

- **Do not fall behind.** This class moves at a quick pace and each week builds on the previous. It will be hard to keep up with the course content if you fall behind.
- **Use ELMS-Canvas notification settings.** Be sure to enable announcements to be sent instantly or daily.
- **Ask for help if needed.** If you need help with ELMS or other technology, contact IT Support. If you are struggling with course material, reach out to me, and your classmates, for support.

WHAT ARE THE COURSE POLICIES?

- If you have to miss an online session, follow these steps:
 - 1) Send me a brief email to let me know that you cannot attend.
 - 2) Make an extra post or comment on the course blog. Make-up posts are in addition to your weekly blog posts: they do not count as your post for the week. Failing to submit make-up posts will result in lower or failing grades for participation.
 - 3) Obtain notes. Find a partner and exchange contact information early in the semester to help with this.
- **Please be respectful of me and your classmates by focusing exclusively on this class during synchronous sessions.** It is difficult to remain focused on Zoom. I get it. But it will be a much better experience for everyone if you refuse to multi-task or let your attention wander.
- You are responsible for following the university code on academic honesty. If I detect plagiarism, I will report it to the Honor Council, and you will be subject to receiving an "XF" for the course, with the notation on your transcript, "Failure due to academic dishonesty."
- If there are hardships that will affect your course performance, I encourage you to let me know. We can discuss strategies for succeeding.
- It is my intent that students from diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and learning needs be well served by this course and that the diversity students bring to class be viewed as a resource and strength. Dimensions of diversity include intersections of sex, race, age, national origin, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, intellectual and physical ability, primary language, faith and non-faith perspectives, income, political affiliation, marital or family status, education, and any other legally protected class. I endeavor to present materials and activities that foster a positive learning environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Please let me know of ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or other students or student groups.
- Your pronouns, gender, race, sexuality, religion, and dis/ability, among all aspects of your identity, are your choice to disclose and should be self-identified, not presumed or imposed. I will do my best to address and refer to all students accordingly, and I ask you all to do the same.
- All assessment scores will be posted on the course ELMS page. If you would like to review any of your grades or have questions about

how something was scored, please email me to schedule a time for us to meet and discuss.

Final Grade Cutoffs									
+	97.00%	+	87.00%	+	77.00%	+	67.00%	+	
A	94.00%	B	84.00%	C	74.00%	D	64.00%	F	<60.0%
-	90.00%	-	80.00%	-	70.00%	-	60.00%	-	

- For further information on course policies and related resources, see <http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html>

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO HELP ME?

- **Basic Needs Security**
If you have difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or lack a safe and stable place to live, please visit UMD's Division of Student Affairs website for information about resources the campus offers you and let me know if I can help in any way:
<https://sph.umd.edu/content/student-resources-and-services>
- **UMD Counseling Center**
The University of Maryland Counseling Center provides comprehensive support services that promote the personal, social, and academic success of UMD students. They are continuing to operate virtually; contact them at 301-314-7651 or <http://www.counseling.umd.edu>.
- **Accessibility and Disability**
The Accessibility and Disability Service office (1101 Shoemaker Building) has information and resources for students with disabilities. All ADS services can now be processed virtually; see <https://www.counseling.umd.edu/ads/>. Those in need of accommodations should contact ADS and me during the first two weeks of the semester.
- **The Writing Center**
The UMD Writing Center is an excellent resource for students of all writing abilities who are looking for feedback on their writing. Peer consultants can help you with any aspect of your writing, from generating ideas to organizing your thoughts to drafting, revising, and editing. The Writing Center will continue to operate virtually; to make an appointment, visit <https://umd.mywconline.com>
- **Advising**
English advisors are available to help English majors with academic and career planning, preparation for graduate school or study abroad, and navigating university resources. To reach an English Advisor, email english@umd.edu.

WHEN ARE THINGS DUE?

Below is a course schedule. Be sure to complete the readings and other assignments in the order listed. **Please note that you should refer to www.elms.edu for a full course schedule.** The outline below does not include all assignments, and it is subject to change.

Week 1, August 30 - September 5

Overview

- Post in the "Icebreaker" discussion thread in ELMS
- Complete syllabus quiz
- Attend Zoom session on 8/31

What Is English?

- Read Terry Eagleton, "The Rise of English" (in *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, 3rd ed.)
- Read Kim Stanley Robinson, "The Coronavirus Is Rewriting Our Imaginations"
- Create an account on the course blog
- Attend Zoom session on 9/2

Unit 1: Literary and Cultural Studies

Studying literature requires detailed attention to the ways of expression as well as to what is being expressed; it also requires attention to how literature, as a cultural force, is caught up in national and global conflicts, networks, and imaginings. This unit introduces students to the history, theories, and methods relevant to the study of literature (poetry, prose, drama) and cultural expression. By the end of the module, students will be able to define key terms in literary and cultural studies, close-read a literary or cultural text, and use preliminary research skills important in cultural studies.

Week 2, September 6 - 12

Introduction to literary and cultural studies

- Read William Carlos Williams, "This is just to say"
- Read Jonathan Culler, "What is Literature and Does It Matter?" (in *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*, 2nd ed.)
- Read Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author"

- Blog post due 9/8 (by midnight)
- Attend Zoom session on 9/9

Week 3, September 13 - 19

Voice, tone, and diction

- Read Thomas Wyatt, "They flee from me"
- Read John Keats, "This Living Hand"
- Read Robert Browning, "My Last Duchess"
- Read Langston Hughes, "Weary Blues"
- Read Sylvia Plath, "Daddy"
- Read Gwendolyn Brooks, "We Real Cool"

- Attend Zoom session on 9/14

Figurative language

- Read Robert Herrick, "Upon Julia's Breasts"
- Read Williams Carlos Williams, "The Red Wheelbarrow"
- Read Emily Dickinson, "A Route of Evanescence" and "Fame is a bee"
- Read Audre Lorde "Coal"
- Read Li-Young Lee, "Persimmons"

- Blog post and comment due 9/15 (by midnight)
- Attend Zoom session on 9/16

Week 4, September 20 - 26

Rhythm and meter

- Read Andrew Marvell, "Bermudas"
- Read Lord Byron, "So We'll Go No More A-Roving"
- Read Alfred Tennyson, "Break, Break, Break"
- Read Robert Frost, "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening"
- Read e. e. cummings, "anyone lived in a little how town"
- Read Wallace Stevens, "Anecdote of the Jar"

- Browse the library research guide for the major:
<https://lib.guides.umd.edu/english>
- Attend Zoom session on library research tools with English librarian Pat Herron on 9/21
- Complete survey assessment on library session, due online

Performance

- Read Chantal Bilodeau, *Forward*
- Read Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution" (in *The Performance Studies Reader*, ed. Bial, 2nd ed.)

- Book club assignment blog post due 9/22 (by midnight)
- Attend Zoom session on 9/23

Week 5, September 27 - October 3

Narrative

- Read E. M. Forster, "The Machine Stops"
- Read Octavia Butler, "Speech Sounds"

- Annotated bibliography due 9/27
- Attend Zoom session on 9/28
- Begin first paper: post an extract on the blog by 9/29
- Attend writing workshop on 9/30

- **Paper due 10/4 (upload by midnight)**

Unit 2: Language, Writing, and Rhetoric

Studying the essential tools of writing, communication, presentation, and persuasion involves working with rhetorical and linguistic principles as well as local discourse conventions and audience beliefs, both past and

present. This unit introduces students to foundational concepts in Western rhetorical education and the branches within rhetoric and writing studies. By the end of the unit, students will be able to understand what rhetoric and writing encompass, recognize key terms and strategies used in developing rhetorical discourse from the Western rhetorical tradition, and apply the concepts to analyzing a text of their choice.

Week 6, October 4 - 10

Introduction to rhetoric

- Read Wayne Booth, "How Many Rhetorics"
- Read Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1354a-1357a
- Read Sonja Foss, "The Nature of Rhetorical Criticism"
- Read Sonia Shah, "It's Time to Tell a New Story About Coronavirus"

- Quiz on literary and cultural studies, 10/5

The canons of rhetoric

- Read Richard Toye, "The Five Canons"
- Read Sam Leith, "Invention"

- Blog post and comment due 10/6 (by midnight)
- Attend Zoom session on 10/7

Week 7, October 11 - 17

Style and composition

- William Keith and Christian Lundberg, "Style"
- Janice Lauer, "Rhetoric and Composition"

- Small group check-in about book club assignment on 10/12

Language and identity

- Lisa Delpit, "No Kinda Sense"
- Rusty Barrett, "You Are What You Speak: Language Variation, Identity, & Education"
- Lewis Thomas, "Living Language"

- Book club assignment blog post due 10/13 (by midnight)
- Attend Zoom session on 10/14

Week 8, October 18 - 24

Cultural rhetorics

- Read Malea Powell, "A Basket Is a Basket Because...: Telling a Native Rhetorics Story"
- Read Victoria Gallagher, "Displaying Race: Cultural Projection & Commemoration"

- Faculty interview clip (less than one minute) due on ELMS by 10/18
- Brief Zoom presentation about faculty interview on 10/19
- Blog post (about your faculty interview) and comment due 10/20 (by midnight)
- Attend Zoom session on 10/21

Week 9, October 25 - 31

Environmental rhetoric

- Read Jennifer Peeples, "Discourse/rhetorical analysis approaches to environment, media and communication"
- Read Richard Hamblyn, "The Whistleblower and the Canary: Rhetorical Constructions of Climate Change"
- Read Elizabeth Kolbert, "The Catastrophist"

- Attend Zoom session on 10/26
- Begin second paper: post an extract on the blog by 10/27
- Attend writing workshop on 10/28

- **Paper due 11/1 (upload by midnight)**

Unit 3: Media Studies

Studying media requires close attention to materials, technologies, and cultural practices of transmission. This unit introduces students to media studies, an interdisciplinary field that investigates the nature and history of mass media; the materiality of media artefacts, processes, and networks; as well as the global social, political, and human institutions that shape media production, circulation, and reception. By the end of this unit, students will be able to identify and compare diverse types of media in order to understand how they shape meaning individually and in combination.

Week 10, November 1 - 7

What is media?

- Read Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, 18-35
- Read Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media*, 21-50

- Quiz on language, writing, and rhetoric, 11/2

What is mediatization?

- Read Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility"

- Blog post and comment due 11/3 (by midnight)
- Attend Zoom session on 11/4

Week 11, November 8 - 14

Page and Stage

- Read John Milton, *A Maske Presented at Ludlow Castle*
- Read Whitney Trettien, "Media, Materiality, and Time in the History of Reading: The Case of the Little Gidding Harmonies"

- Book club assignment reflection paper due 11/10 (by midnight)
- Attend Zoom session 11/11

Week 12, November 15 - 21

Image and Moving Image

- Read Philippe Squarzoni, *Climate Changed*
- Watch Mike Judge, dir., *Idiocracy* (online streaming reserves)
- Read Nicole Seymour, "'I'm No Botanist, but...': Irony, Ecocinema, and the Problem of Expert Knowledge"
- Blog post and comment due 11/17 (by midnight)
- Attend Zoom session 11/18

Week 13, November 22 - 28

- Optional Netflix Party to watch *Black Mirror*, 11/23

Thanksgiving Break!

Week 14, November 29 - December 5

Media Theory

- Read Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, 1-24
- Read Lisa Gitelman, *Always Already New*, 1-12
- Read Eitana Friedman-Nathan, "Paratext of Dystopia: An Analysis of Narrative Devices and Social Commentary in *Black Mirror*"
- Attend Zoom session on 11/30
- Begin second paper: post an extract on the blog by 12/1
- Attend writing workshop on 12/2

Week 15, December 6 - 12

- Quiz on media studies on 12/7
- **Paper due 12/8 (upload by midnight)**

Career Paths and Lifeways

- Attend Zoom session on career paths and the English major on 12/9

Week 16, December 13 - 19

Conclusions

- "Music video" blog post due 12/13 (by midnight)
- Attend Zoom session on 12/14
- Public-facing writing assignment due 12/19 at 3:30pm

**It is difficult
to get the news from poems
yet men die miserably every day
for lack
of what is found there**

**---William Carlos Williams
from "Asphodel, That Greeny
Flower" (1955)**