

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Spring 2026 Course Descriptions

These course descriptions are subject to change. While we make every effort to keep these online course descriptions as current as possible, you are advised to check with the instructor of a particular course to verify the information below.

Contact information for all English Department faculty is available via the English website at

<http://www.siu.edu/artsandsciences/english/>.

ENG 200-001: Introduction to Literary Study

MW 12pm – 1:15pm

Helena Gurfinkel

The course introduces the students to the scholarly study of literature and prepares them for future courses in the English major or minor. We will practice close readings of fiction, drama, and poetry and think both of the distinct characteristics of each genre and of ideas linking various texts. Literary analysis will take place both in class discussions and in written assignments. Learning to write effective analytical papers will be one of our most important goals.

ENG 201-001: Intermediate Composition

TR 9:30am – 10:45am

Kimberly Sutherland

English 201 delves deeper into the fascinating world of rhetoric and writing. It builds on the research and argumentation skills developed in earlier writing courses, and places emphasis on academic reading strategies, analysis, and critical thinking as keys to the writing process. We will work collaboratively to examine rhetoric as an art form and engage with a variety of texts as a means to analyze and solve problems. At its core, this course approaches all academic writing as part of a series of ongoing conversations that have different sets of rules, purposes, and audiences. The ultimate aim of the course is to equip students to participate in those conversations, understand their audiences, and navigate their various conventions.

ENG 201-002: Intermediate Composition

TR 11am – 12:15pm

Matthew Johnson

In this class, by exploring areas such as health, poverty, labor, privacy, digital communication, and artificial intelligence, we will examine differences between writing for the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Doing so will reveal that all academic writing is part of ongoing conversations, conversations that tend to have different sets of rules, purposes, and audiences that form disciplinary boundaries. However, writing is also done across academic fields, and in these spaces of contact, we see new questions being asked and new approaches being taken. (It's in these often collaborative,

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interdisciplinary, in-between spaces where exciting change frequently happens, where rhetorical approaches can get pretty interesting!) The course is designed to enhance your abilities to find, analyze, and write texts for academic audiences; participate in discussions across disciplines; and negotiate field-based conventions.

ENG 204-WS1: Studies in Fiction (Winter Session) **Online - Asynchronous** **Nancy Ruff**

In this fully online, asynchronous, intensive (three week) course, we will read, discuss, and write about short stories. The course will focus on the tools that fiction writers use and introduce you to some of the best writing in the genre. NOTE: This intensive course covers 15 weeks of material in three weeks.

ENG 205-501: Introduction to African American Texts **Online - Asynchronous** **Donavan Ramon**

In this online asynchronous course, we will explore major texts from all genres of African American Literature: prose, drama, and poetry. We will study the texts chronologically, including music, visuals, folklore, and other media types. Students in this course will explore important creative techniques, themes, ideological perspectives, and more that shape African American literary studies, from the colonial era to the present. We will grapple with the following questions: How do these writers negotiate multiple identities through their texts? How is identity fundamentally tied to space and place? What is the relationship between self and community? How do African American writers negotiate both public and private selves? How have Black writers responded to and interrogated American history?

ENG 209-001: Topics in Modern British Literature: Romantics, Victorians, and Moderns **TR 12:30pm - 1:45pm** **Jill Anderson**

Manners and Mobs! Revolution and Reaction! Empire and Decolonization!
From romanticism and realism to modernism, existentialism, absurdity, and post-modernism, English 209 explores 250 years of British literature (1789 to present). In our Spring 2026 course, we will explore the canonical British tradition while considering its transatlantic impact on contemporary American consumers of Britishness. What do we value in the British literary tradition? What gets our attention? What do we want to leave behind? With these and other questions in mind, students will (1.) read British poems, stories, novels and plays and (2.) document their work by participating in class discussions, maintaining reading logs, and developing semester projects.

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ENG 215-001: Topics in World Literature: Renaissance to Modern: Travel and the Exotic

TR 3:30pm – 4:45pm

John Pendergast

In this course we will read texts from across a broad expanse of time and through diverse cultures with an emphasis on dynamic interactions between the traveler and the people and places visited. The texts are a combination of poetry, fiction and non-fiction.

ENG 225: Introduction to African American Literary Studies

Multiple sections: please see CougarNet for dates & times

This course explores African American literature and culture through short stories, poetry, essays, and visual works. Together, we will study how these works reflect history, creativity, and cultural identity while practicing key methods of literary analysis. Must be enrolled in Boundless Scholar Experience (BSE).

ENG 290-001: Introduction to Creative Writing

MWF 10:00am – 10:50am

Lauren Gerber

This 3-credit course provides an introduction to the basic genres of creative writing (fiction, poetry, drama, and creative non-fiction) with an emphasis on craft and the writing process. This course will introduce you to the fundamentals of these four basic genres, teach you terminology, and provide an overview of techniques for writing— some of which are applicable to individual genres where others will apply across the board. Overall, it will expose you to a variety of texts, styles, and methods that will enrich your experience of writing, no matter your purpose or goal.

ENG 290-002: Introduction to Creative Writing

TR 11am – 12:15pm

Joshua Kryah

This course introduces students to creative writing practices and procedures, paying particular attention to terminology, technique, and genre. We'll read plenty and from our readings conduct several imitative experiments to familiarize ourselves with the creative writing process. These readings will be taken from canonical and contemporary texts and authors, focused on specific elements of writing. There will be lots of writing in many genres, including, though not limited to, poetry, fiction, and drama. We'll look forward to creating our own work during the semester, without the aid of any AI generated assistance.

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ENG 290-003: Introduction to Creative Writing

MW 1:30pm – 2:45pm

Treasure Redmond

English 290 is an introduction to the four genres of creative writing: fiction, poetry, creative non-fiction, and drama. A special emphasis is placed on craft and on revision as a part of the creative process. Students will be asked to write both poetry and prose, and to provide critical feedback to their peers' work. At the end of the semester, students will turn in a portfolio of the creative work they have generated.

ENG 301-001: Introduction to Literary Theory and Criticism

MW 3:00pm – 4:15pm

Helena Gurfinkel

The study of theory is a truly eye-opening experience, and its reward is the acquisition of critical-thinking and writing skills that can be used both in, and far beyond, a literature classroom. Theoretical texts, though fascinating, are often quite complex and challenging, and the course format requires an intensive engagement with assigned readings. The course provides students with an overview of the principal schools of modern literary theory, both earlier ones, such as New Criticism, and contemporary ones, such as Animal Studies and Disability Studies. All students will acquire the skills to apply various theories to literary texts. Future English teachers will learn new strategies for engaging with literary texts in the classroom. We will accomplish these goals through reading, discussions, and the writing of analytical papers.

ENG 306-001: Introduction to the Bible

MWF 9am – 9:50am

John Savoie

We will read the Bible as any other book, only more so, with special attention to first the individual books, then the collective whole, and to the Bible *as* and *in* literature.

ENG 332-001: Argument

TR 2pm – 3:15pm

Anushiya Ramaswamy

In this course, we will critically investigate the history of argument – actual arguments, their historical contexts, and argumentative strategies and theories as they have developed over time. We will also be analyzing arguments (our own and those written/spoken by others) for their potential to persuade a particular audience in a specific context. While argument texts often focus on intended audience, we will also explore what happens when unintended audiences are reached, an intended audience is reached in an unintentional way, and how the context (time, place, speaker/writer, audience, and other circumstances) in which arguments are made have the potential to drastically affect their degrees of persuasiveness. Given that this is a writing course, we will, of course, be composing our own arguments.

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What's more, the focus of this course will be predominantly on academic argument making, in that we will challenge the exceedingly common binary argumentation (that is, the traditional "debate" style of argument that has only two sides) in order to reveal the complexity of even seemingly simple issues – which tend to be multifaceted upon closer examination. Yet while we focus on making academic arguments ourselves, to do so, we will be considering how argument works in law and in contemporary American culture.

ENG 333-001: The Rhetoric of Videogames

TR 9:30am – 10:45am

Matthew Johnson

Yes, for sure, we *will* be playing videogames in this course. Also worth noting, that before the now pervasive "videogame" came on the scene, scholars were investigating concepts of play (fun, amusement, recreation) and the games (rule-based behavioral systems) that facilitated these activities (and feelings). In the foreword of *Homo Ludens*, Johan Huizinga's 1950 study of play (based in part on lectures he delivered as early as 1933), Huizinga begins with "the conviction ... that civilization arises and unfolds in and as play." Lofty, eh? In this course, we will investigate theories of game and play as they manifest in videogames, arguably the latest in a long line of media objects (that include television, film, and the novel) designed to both entertain and educate, that has been met with extreme disdain and amazing celebration. Specifically, we will analyze the rhetorical implications (that is, how and in what ways videogames uniquely *persuade* and *change* audiences) and effects of videogames, and the impact that they have, or are believed to have, on our culture. We will examine how videogames represent particular groups, and how they render (figuratively and literally) social structures and hierarchies. We will read about, write about, analyze, play, and create videogames, all while studying the culture and texts that surround them. *NO previous experience in videogaming, computers, consoles, software, or programming is necessary for this course!* (Hopefully this description is dry enough that you're convinced we'll be *working* in this class; but I don't mind repeating that we're going to be *playing* seriously, too. I mean, it's essential – am I right?!)

ENG 334-500: Scientific Writing

W 1:30pm – 2:45pm + Online AS

Brian Henderson

We live in a world that depends heavily on scientific thinking and advancements for everything from the development of digital technologies that you use every day to NASA's experimental plasma propulsion systems to the production of medical tools, where science produces vaccines to protect public health and it produces the communication tools used by anti-vaccine fear-mongers. As Edward R. Murrow once said, "The speed of communication is wondrous to behold. It is also true that speed can multiply the distribution of information that we know to be untrue." ENG 334 is, in part, an attempt to make sense of the role scientific research plays—or should play—in the contemporary world. This course is premised on the assertion that opinion and unverifiable anecdote are no substitute for peer-reviewed evidence and theorizing. Whether your path leads you to become a researcher, an educator, and/or a savvy reader of science, ENG 334 will help you develop tools you will need.

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ENG 342-001: Topics in African American Literature: Harlem Renaissance **MW 3pm – 4:15pm** **Angel Dye**

This course will engage texts by the major authors of the Harlem Renaissance period, as well as some by lesser-studied authors, with an emphasis on underground cultural productions including salons, speakeasies, and rent parties. It will uncover the political stakes of the era that scholar Alain Locke termed the "New Negro Renaissance" through explorations of novels, poetry, fiction, and essays written by black writers of the 1920s.

ENG 345-001: African American Poetry and Folklore: Sound and Close Listening in African American Poetry **MW 12pm – 1:15pm** **Treasure Redmond**

"Though we are familiar with the logocentric emphasis of western thought and culture, the importance of sound cannot be denied. Tone and intonation of a human voice create connotation. Sound creates and affects meaning. Sound produces feeling" (Redmond). In this course we will listen to a variety of recorded performances of African American poets and learn about the aural techniques they use to impact listeners.

ENG 369-500: Grammatical Analysis **MW 10:00am - 10:50am + Online AS** **Kristine Hildebrandt**

In ENG 369, students engage in the analysis of formal spoken and written English sentences, along with some consideration of how these patterns vary in more informal contexts. Through a variety of in-class and assigned activities, this course encourages critical thinking about conceptions of grammar. This course helps students gain a greater awareness of our (mostly unconscious) knowledge of language. This class is especially useful for those pursuing secondary education licensure or those pursuing language teaching professions more generally. But it is also useful for those who are interested in the English language more generally, especially as it is (and has been) structured in formal environments and in everyday use.

ENG 392-001: Fiction Writing **TR 11am – 12:15pm** **Nicola Schmidt**

This course emphasizes the elements of fiction and the writing process, focusing on the literary short story. We will read and discuss short stories, we will collaborate informally on writing exercises and activities and small workshops, and students will work on writing assignments to help them deepen their understanding of the craft of fiction. By the end of the semester, each student will develop, draft, and revise a complete short story.

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ENG 403-001: History of the English Language

MW 3pm – 4:15pm

Larry LaFond

This course will take you on a journey through some 5,000 years and thousands of miles as we follow the development of the English language. ENG 403 will introduce you to the history of the English language from two perspectives: first, the internal history (the linguistic changes in the phonological, morphological, and syntactic systems of English) and, second, the external history (the political, social, and intellectual forces that influenced the development of English at various stages). In addition to providing an overview of Old, Middle, and Modern English, the course will also familiarize you with the kinds of questions, goals, and methodologies that linguists use to investigate changes within the English language. We will also examine issues of language standardization and social justice in the English-speaking world.

ENG 411-001: Internship in Writing

TBA

Individualized Learning

Involvement in developing workplace writing. Supervised by selected faculty member and cooperating site. Prerequisite: ENG 102 with grade of C or better.

ENG 416-001: Language and Society

TR 2pm – 3:15pm

Seran Aktuna

How does the way we talk reflect our geographical roots, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and gender? When, why, and how do people develop special codes to communicate with each other? How does the way we communicate differ across cultures and subcultures? Can we be discriminated against on the basis of our speech patterns? And what is happening to the English language as more people learn and use it in different parts of the world? These are some of the main questions we will discuss in ENG 416. The goal of this course is to build your awareness of major topics in sociolinguistics and help you examine their applications/implications for solving problems in education, communication and other areas of life. No prerequisite needed.

ENG 444-001: Creative Nonfiction

MW 12pm – 1:15pm

Valerie Vogrin

This class is designed as an immersion into the art and craft of writing creative nonfiction—an expansive, vibrant genre. Students will examine and write pieces in a variety of subjects and modes, i.e. memoir, personal essay, lyric essay.

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ENG 464-001: Topics in Forms and Genders: Racial Passing in Film and Literature

TR 11am -- 12:15pm

Donavan Ramon

When most people hear the phrase “racial passing,” they often associate it with slavery and Jim Crow, without realizing how passing occurs today. Indeed, racial passing refers to light-skinned African Americans who have pretended to be white, to bypass the atrocities they would have had to endure. Today, passing can occur in a variety of ways: some people assume a higher-class status, a different religion, and/or a heteronormative sexuality. Others still jump the color line to live as white and forget their black pasts. It is no longer strictly about *race* but is about desiring another identity to circumvent oppression and stereotypes from dominant groups. In this course, we will interrogate racial passing in literature and film to uncover related themes of education, gender, geography, writing, and death, among other topics. We will interrogate how identities are more fluid today than they have ever been.

ENG 471-001: Something Old, Something New

MW 12pm - 1:15pm

John Savoie

With the First Folio at 400 years and counting, we will delve into Shakespeare with an emphasis on discovering fresh insights into familiar poems and plays as well as venturing beyond to explore less famous, but no less excellent, works.

ENG 477-001: Analyzing the Works of Toni Morrison

TR 9:30pm – 10:45am

Cindy Reed

This course is an expansive study on the fiction and nonfiction writing of Toni Morrison. Students will uncover why she is one of the most prolific and vital authors of the 20th and 21st century, as they examine how Morrison uses language, novelistic structures, themes, and tropes to trace African American traditions, construct African American communities, and create literary art that leaves a lasting impression.

ENG/WMST 478-001: Studies in Women, Language and Literature: Ancient and Medieval

TR 3:30pm – 4:45pm

Nancy Ruff

This course examines the role of women as subject, author and audience of western literature from 750 BC - 1500 AD. 3 credit hours.

The course aims to provide a broad view of the nature of women's lives, thoughts and accomplishments as seen through their writings as well as through those of others, both contemporary and modern.

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ENG 480-001: Major Authors: Audre Lorde's Library
MW 1:30pm – 2:45pm
Laura Soderberg

Even if you don't know her name, you've probably heard snippets of Audre Lorde's writing on social media, whether it's about "self-care" or the "master's tools" or how "your silence will not protect you." This course goes beyond quotation to not only study Lorde in depth as a writer but also to examine her as a careful and dedicated reader of other women of color and queer authors. That means we'll dive into her work on its own and in the context of her Black, Latina, and lesbian collaborators and earlier artists who shaped her.

ENG 490-001: Advanced Composition
TR 11am - 12:15pm
Anushiya Ramaswamy

This is an advanced writing course designed for students to explore various rhetorical styles and techniques. In the course of the semester, students will learn the various steps involved in writing for different audiences. We will work at understanding different kinds of writing with an emphasis on the politics of style. We will begin with personal narratives and move onto more formalized writing, identifying the choices we make in terms of diction, tone, organization, and even subject matter.

ENG 491-501: Technical and Business Writing
Online - Asynchronous
Margaret Black

In this class, we'll investigate many of the genres of technical and business writing you'll encounter in the workplace and put those insights into practice. If all goes well, you will leave this class with a greater understanding of a variety of professional documents (including emails, resumes, proposals, reports) as well as instruction and practice in writing for nontechnical audiences and document design. This course is intended for English majors as well as those in engineering, business, nursing, basic and applied sciences, social sciences, public administration, and all professional schools with the aim of preparing students for writing in professional settings as distinct from academic settings. Because this is an online course, students must have reliable Internet access on a daily basis. The course will be conducted primarily through Blackboard, SIUE's course management system. It is assumed that students will be familiar with Blackboard and seek assistance as necessary before the course begins. Support for using Blackboard is available by calling 618-650-5500. A "course check-in" will happen via SIUE email on (or just before!) the first day of regular classes. Prerequisites: 102, junior standing.

ENG 491-D01: Technical and Business Writing
Online - Asynchronous
Margaret Black

In this class, we'll investigate many of the genres of technical and business writing you'll encounter in the workplace and put those insights into practice. If all goes well, you will leave this class with a greater

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understanding of a variety of professional documents (including emails, resumes, proposals, reports) as well as instruction and practice in writing for nontechnical audiences and document design. This course is intended for English majors as well as those in engineering, business, nursing, basic and applied sciences, social sciences, public administration, and all professional schools with the aim of preparing students for writing in professional settings as distinct from academic settings. Because this is an online course, students must have reliable Internet access on a daily basis. The course will be conducted primarily through Blackboard, SIUE's course management system. It is assumed that students will be familiar with Blackboard and seek assistance as necessary before the course begins. Support for using Blackboard is available by calling 618-650-5500. A "course check-in" will happen via SIUE email on (or just before!) the first day of regular classes. Prerequisites: 102, junior standing.

ENG 492-001: Advanced Fiction Writing **MW 4:30pm – 5:45pm** **Valerie Vogrin**

Students will gain further practice implementing the elements of craft covered in ENG 392, such as characterization, scene-building, and point of view. Reading and writing assignments will encourage the bending and subversion of short story conventions, including the adoption of multiple points of view, omniscient narrators, and innovative structures. Students will regularly share their work in small-group and full-class workshops.

ENG 493-001: Advanced Poetry Writing **TR 12:30pm – 1:45pm** **Joshua Kryah**

The focus of this creative writing course is on procedure, how we come to create the imaginative work we imagine for ourselves in our poems. To do this, we'll trace the movement in 20th century poetry from conventional forms (like the sonnet) to more exploratory forms (like erasure). At the same time, we'll consider procedures and operations intended to create self-induced constraints in our writing: chance operations, found language, etc. Like traditional poetic forms, these procedures will help us create individual work while participating in larger theoretical questions, e.g. how are poems made and what are they intended for? Though we'll consider recent advances in technology as they relate to writing, we'll look forward to creating our own poetry during the semester, without the aid of any AI generated assistance.

ENG 497A-001: Senior Seminar: "Belonging: Writing the Self into the Nation." **TR 3:30pm – 4:45pm** **Anushiya Ramaswamy**

How do we know that we belong: to a family, religion, class, town or a country? Is it possible to study the bonds that hold certain ideas about identity together? What might challenge claims to a land or home? What happens when things fall apart, and the lines that tie one to a place or group disappear? We will read Toni Morrison's *Sula*, Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried*, and Ralph Ellison's *Invisible*

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Man, alongside short fiction by James Baldwin, Lorrie Moore, Lauren Groff and others, as we think through the ways we claim or refuse identity markers.

ENG 499-001: Readings in English

TBA

TBA: Individualized Learning

Independent study in specific area of interest. Extensive reading. For English students only; may be repeated to a maximum of 6 hours. Requires consent of department chair and instructor.

ENG 505-001: Topics in Forms and Genres: Revenge Tragedy

R 6pm – 8-50pm

John Pendergast

The subject of revenge produced some of the most violent scenes in Early Modern culture. This was due largely to the brief popularity of Revenge Tragedies. We will read two or three Shakespeare revenge tragedies and plays by his contemporaries as well as excerpts from the classical texts and plays that inspired them.

ENG 526-001: Studies in African American Texts: Toni Morrison and African American Literary Studies

T 6:00pm – 8:50pm

Elizabeth Cali

You've heard about the Toni Morrison class at SIUE? Maybe you've taken it! Maybe, you were one of the students in the class who asked, "is there a Morrison 2.0 course we can take?" Why, yes, there is. Toni Morrison and African American Literary Studies will examine the astounding impact that Toni Morrison's literary contributions have had on the larger field of African American literary studies. In this class we will read key works by Toni Morrison, of course, and we'll also explore critical conversations and debates taking place in and around the field about her work, about African American literature, and about Black creative production. Our focus will be to examine, analyze, and contribute to the discourse on how Morrison's works impacted the expansion of literary production from a significant number of Black women creative writers, shifted and shaped the subject matter, the conversations, and the convenings around Black literature from the 1970s to our present moment, and much more. You're ready? I'll see you there, Tuesday nights 6-8:50pm.

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ENG 583-501: History of Rhetoric I: The Classical Period to the Renaissance

W 6pm – 8:50pm

Brian Henderson

This course will offer you a chance to examine an array of approaches to rhetoric beginning with the Sophists and traveling chronologically to key rhetoric texts from the Renaissance. At the same time, we will explore readings that help us think about the relationship of those early texts to their historical context as well as to contemporary scholarship and pedagogy. Of course, we will not be looking at rhetoric as a unitary term that must be defended or attacked *in toto*; rather, we will attempt to tease out how rhetoric and rhetorical histories have been employed in different cultural contexts for varying purposes in order for us to gain insights into both its historical and contemporary possibilities. Neither “rhetoric” nor “history” will be taken as mere givens in this class. Rather, our collective task is to engage some of the most enduring conversations about rhetoric from the past so that we may productively respond to the scholarly, pedagogical, and political problems that the study of rhetoric calls to our attention in our own time.