

Department of English  
Fall 2011 Electives for Majors and Minors

**ENGL 127 Creative Writing Fiction. (Elam)**

*Course Description:* This course examines the craft of fiction, explored from the perspective of both the writer and reader. Students will study the elements of successful fiction writing, aided by assigned text and various fiction excerpts and short stories provided by the instructor. Through these readings, students will analyze fiction's architectural details – including voice, imagery, character, plot, dialogue, narrative, description, resolution, etc.

Students will learn the fundamentals of fiction writing and be able to craft three full-bodied short stories (600 wds, 5 pages, 8 pages) consisting of a beginning, middle and end. They will understand the necessity of creating strong, three-dimensional characters, an arc/moment of truth, specific details, etc. Students will also learn how to critique one another's work with precision, specificity and compassion. The course will culminate with a public reading of student work.

*Prerequisite(s):* Students must obtain written permission from the instructor based on prior submission of creative writing samples. For more information about portfolio submissions for review, contact Professor Elam, Locke Hall 112; [pelam@howard.edu](mailto:pelam@howard.edu)

**ENGL 206 Major Author: Langston Hughes. (Jordan)**

*Course Description:* This course will examine Langston Hughes as poet, short story writer, novelist, dramatist, autobiographer and journalist. We will explore publications from the Harlem Renaissance to his death in the 1960s. Attention will be paid to Hughes' political interests as a leftist from the Depression to the 1960s and as a proponent of socialism and Pan-Africanism. Students will be exposed to Hughes poetry from its folkloric form to the more esoteric modernist expressions during the fifties and the sixties. We will examine his fiction from the Simple tales to his first novel.

*Prerequisite(s):* This course is reserved for students who have successfully completed with at least a "C" English 002, 003, Sophomore Seminar I and Sophomore Seminar II. A completion of African-American Literary Foundations is recommended so that students may place Hughes in the context of the larger African-American literary tradition. Students are expected to understand the process and vocabulary of literary analysis and to be familiar with library and internet research and documentation according to the MLA style. Student writing, including a 15-20 page research paper, will constitute the majority of the student's grade so it is imperative that students be competent writers.

**ENGL 245 Modern and Post-Colonial British Literature. (Arana)**

*Course Description:* Concentrating on significant literary trends in British writing from 1901 to the present, students examine a wide variety of celebrated poems, plays, and short stories by major writers including Thomas Hardy, George Bernard Shaw, William Butler Yeats, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, D. H. Lawrence, W. H. Auden, Dylan Thomas, Philip Larkin, Harold

Pinter, Salman Rushdie, Kazuo Ishiguru, Hanif Kureishi, Carol Ann Duffy, Grace Nichols, Angela Carter, Jackie Kay, Jeanette Winterson, and Zadie Smith. The course concludes with a special unit on writing by contemporary Black Britons. ENGL 245 satisfies the period/cross-cultural genre course requirement for English majors.

*Prerequisite(s):* ENGL 104 (Sophomore Seminar I) with the grade of <C> or better. While concurrent enrollment in ENGL 105 (Sophomore Seminar II) is allowed, successful completion of 104, 105, and 113 (British Foundations) is recommended.

### **ENGL 250 Comparative Literature. (Shinn)**

*Course Description:* Using a global cultural studies' framework, this course will examine the comparative study of race and ethnicity, focusing primarily on Asian American, African American, U.S. Latino/a, and Native American literatures, photography, music and film. We will discuss matters of citizenship, color, and otherness; modernity and globalization; canonicity and the culture wars; hybridity, diaspora, and transborder crossing; nation and nationalism; gender and sexuality; and art, politics, media, and popular culture. Writers may include Jhumpa Lahiri, Don Lee, Kaiji Kawaguchi, Gwendolyn Brooks, James Baldwin, Toni Morrison, Luis Valdez, Lorna Dee Cervantes, and Sherman Alexie. We will be watching Ang Lee's *Pushing Hands*; Lauren Lazin's *Resurrection* (on the life and music of Tupac Shakur); Lourdes Portillo's *Corpus* (on the life and music of Selena Quintanilla-Perez); and Sherman Alexie's *Smoke Signals*. Requirements will be two short essays, exams, a class presentation, and a final paper.

*Prerequisite(s):* ENGL 104 (Sophomore Seminar I) with the grade of <C> or better. While concurrent enrollment in ENGL 105 (Sophomore Seminar II) is allowed, successful completion of 104, 105 and the Foundations series is highly recommended.

### **ENGL 281 Topics in Literature and Writing (Forensic Linguistics). (Tovares)**

*Course Description:* Forensic linguistics deals with the application of the theories and methods of linguistic analysis in legal settings. This course offers an introduction to this relatively new subfield of linguistic inquiry. Topics for discussion include courtroom discourse, language as evidence, language-based crimes (e.g., conspiracy, solicitation, perjury, threats), author attribution, linguistic profiling, and others. Students in this class will explore the role of a linguist and linguistics in a variety of legal contexts and learn how systematic knowledge about language can inform communication and decision-making processes in the legal field. This class will be a combination of lectures, discussions, problem-solving exercises, and independent and group research projects. Special attention will be given to creating practical guides, brochures, pamphlets, or PowerPoint presentations that provide relevant linguistic information to law enforcement officials, lawyers, judges, and citizens. Required textbooks: Malcolm Coulhard and Alison Johnson's *An Introduction to Forensic Linguistics: Language in Evidence* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007); Lawrence Solan Peter Tiersma's *Speaking of Crime: The Language of Criminal Justice* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2005).

*Prerequisite(s):* Pre-requisite ENGL 104 and ENGL 110 with <C> or higher.