

# ENGLISH

## For First-Years



The English department offers an exciting array of small, seminar-style classes, each focused upon a compelling theme, to introduce students to the study of literature. First-year students will find that the reading, thinking, and writing skills taught through close instruction in these intensive introductory English courses will serve them well in many different disciplines throughout their college careers. We therefore encourage all entering students to consider enrolling in ENGL 103 (fall) or ENGL 104 (spring) their first year.

Each section of ENGL 103 and ENGL 104 is writing-intensive and discussion-centered. Each will introduce students to texts from a range of historical periods and to genres including the epic, the novel, drama, lyric poetry, film, and the short story. Here is the list of courses available Fall 2023 (see below for full descriptions and scheduling information):

ENGL 103.01: *Translations, Transitions, Transcreation* (Brostoff)

ENGL 103.02: *Science, Fiction, and Science Fiction* (Brown)

ENGL 103.03: *The Writer in the Text* (Davidson)

ENGL 103.04: *The Assault of Laughter* (Grace)

ENGL 103.05: *Health and Healing* (Fernando)

ENGL 103.06: *Health and Healing* (Fernando)

ENGL 103.07: *Making a Life* (Heidt)

ENGL 103.08: *Making a Life* (Heidt)

ENGL 103.10: *Writing the Mind* (Matz)

ENGL 103.11: *Writing the Mind* (Matz)

ENGL 103.12: *Secrets and Confessions* (Murthy)

ENGL 103.13: *What's Love Got to Do With It?* (O'Neill)

ENGL 103.14: *Writing the Race* (Schoenfeld)

ENGL 103.15: *Authorship* (Suazo)

ENGL 103.16: *Waste Lands* (Tierney)

ENGL 103.17: *Denaturing "Nature"* (Quinn)

ENGL 103.18: *Monstrous Forms* (Fleming)

**\*\*Students may proceed to 200-level courses after taking ENGL 103 (or ENGL 104). Pre-med students should be sure to enroll in ENGL 103 or ENGL 104 in their first or second year, since these courses are typically not open to juniors and seniors. Students who intend to complete their humanities distribution requirement in English during their first year of study may do so by taking two courses at the 100 level or one course each at the 100 and 200 levels. Potential English majors should take a 100-level course (required for the major) right away. Students hoping to take ENGL 103 or ENGL 104 should have the CRNs of at least two alternates along with their first choice when they enroll online. Spring-semester creative-writing courses are open to first-year students; please see "Creative Writing Courses" below.**

\*\*\*Students may take any two sections of ENGL 103 or ENGL 104 to fulfill their humanities distribution requirement or they may complete their humanities requirement with either ENGL 103 or ENGL 104 plus another ENGL course. These courses (ENGL 103 and ENGL 104) are not typically open to juniors and seniors without permission of the department chair. Courses are offered annually in multiple sections.

**English 103.01 Translation, Transition, Transcreation**

TR 8:10 - 9:30

Professor Brostoff

Lentz House 204

Across, beyond, over, through: the prefix “trans-“ is on the move. Harboring a hefty history, “trans-“ signals movement between languages and identities, genders and genres, cultures and nations. But is the “trans-“ in “translation” the “trans-“ in transition? And is the “trans-“ in “transgender” the “trans-“ in “transnational”? How have these terms traversed time and place? And how do these terms, which negotiate conceptual borders, travel across geopolitical ones? In this course, we’ll map multiple modes of transing, as they flicker between persons and places, words and worlds. Our intention will be to pay attention to the tensions inlaid in literary and theoretical representations of transcreation, broadly conceived. Crucial to our consideration will be a comparative understanding of the poetics and politics of meaning-making. As we interpret the words we read, so too will we investigate the words we write. We’ll study many creative choices, both simple and sophisticated, that go into translating interpretations of a text to a reader. We may encounter multilingual works by Gloria E. Anzaldúa, Walter Benjamin, Paul Preciado, Clarice Lispector, Susan Stryker, Jorge Luis Borges, Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, Italo Calvino, Linn da Quebrada, and Valeria Luiselli, among others.

**English 103.02: Science, Fiction and Science Fiction**

MWF 12:10 – 1:00

Professor Brown

Keithley House 002



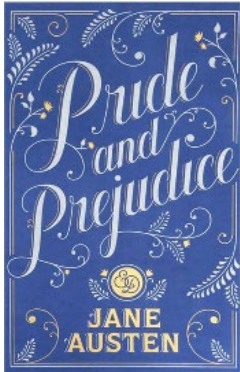
What is the relationship between literature and science? How does science fiction draw on both factual and fictional writing to make something distinctively new? In this course, we will, think about the place of literary studies in relation to other subjects in the Liberal Arts curriculum; explore the history of science and the development of scientific methods; and use science fiction as a test case for literary work. In the process, we will familiarize ourselves with the fundamentals of literary criticism, and read a variety of texts in poetry, prose, and drama including Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, Stoppard’s *Arcadia*, and Octavia Butler’s *Parable of the Sower*.

**English 103.03: *The Writer in the Text***

TR 9:40 - 11:00

Professor Davidson

Lentz House 204



This course will consider representations of artists and the act of writing in literature, drama, and poetry; it will analyze scenes of writing, portraits of literary creators and creations, views of writers on the craft of writing, and self-conscious expressions of literary self-fashioning. How do writers envision and define the process of putting pen to paper? How do the technologies of writing influence a digital age? What is the connection between the act of writing and memory, and between writing and oral tradition? How have the representations of writers and writing varied across historical periods? Does author biography help or hinder the understanding of the writer on the printed page? A diverse range of texts will include Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *The Tempest*, James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist*, Herman Melville's *Bartley the Scrivener*, Edwidge Danticat's *Create Dangerously*, and Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.

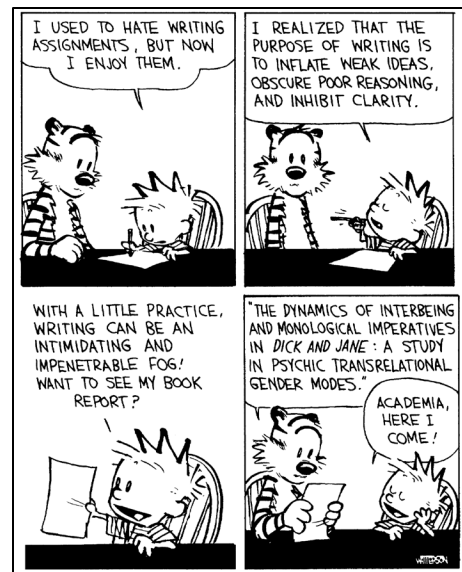
**English 103.04: *The Assault of Laughter***

MWF 9:10 – 10:00

Professor Grace

Horvitz Studio Arts 220

Mark Twain once said, "Against the assault of laughter, nothing can stand." Comedy can entertain, but it can also be an agent of sweeping societal change. In this course, we will look at a wide variety of comedic texts in multiple genres from William Shakespeare to Eddie Izzard in an effort to determine how laughter has changed the way we think about our world. How have writers used comedy as a form of political or social protest? How do comedic literary devices such as irony, satire, parody, exaggeration, and gender-bending do the serious work of forcing us to question the status quo? Does making fun of each other bring us closer together, or drive us apart, and does making fun of ourselves lead to self-awareness or misery? These are the types of questions we will attempt to answer as we develop our critical reading



and writing skills as we analyze the books on our reading list, which will include works by Shakespeare (*As You Like It*), Jane Austen (*Pride and Prejudice*), Zora Neale Hurston (*Their Eyes Were Watching God*), Alexander Pope (*The Rape of the Lock*), and poems by Sylvia Plath and Dean Young, Danez Smith, Jose Olivarez, Fatimah Asghar, Jamila Woods and others.

**English 103.05: Health and Healing**

Professor Fernando

MWF 9:10 – 10:00

Gund Gallery 102

By professing the Hippocratic Oath, every physician swears to “do no harm” to the patient. In this course, using the oath as a point of departure, we will attempt to expand our understanding of medicine, health, and illness as they figure in a range of literary texts. How is the relationship between a doctor and a patient imagined? How are mental



and physical illnesses, as well as the emotional experiences accompanying illness, imagined in various social contexts? If in the oath, physicians promise to “do no harm,” what qualifies as “harm” and who decides the “best interest” of the patient? How do the intersections of race, class, gender, and sexuality shape and challenge the practice of medicine? We will examine these and other such questions as they figure in a variety of fictional and non-fictional writings. The texts we will read include: Mary Shelley’s,

*Frankenstein*, Michael Ondaatje’s *Anil’s Ghost*, poems by Lucille Clifton, V.V. Ganeshanathan’s “Hippocrates,” selections from Atul Gawande’s *Complications*, Brit Bennet’s *The Mothers*, Sarah Moss’s *Bodies of Light*, Virginia Woolf’s “On Being Ill,” and more current writings about the pandemic.

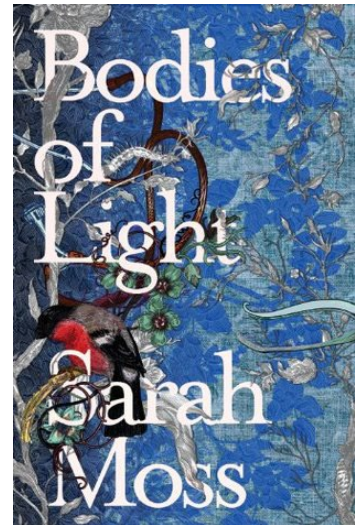
**English 103.06: Health and Healing**

Professor Fernando

MWF 10:10 – 11:00

Gund Gallery 102

By professing the Hippocratic Oath, every physician swears to “do no harm” to the patient. In this course, using the oath as a point of departure, we will attempt to expand our understanding of medicine, health, and illness as they figure in a range of literary texts. How is the relationship between a doctor and a patient imagined? How are mental and physical illnesses, as well as the emotional experiences accompanying illness, imagined in various social contexts? If in the oath, physicians promise to “do no harm,” what qualifies as “harm” and who decides the “best interest” of the patient? How do the intersections of race, class, gender, and sexuality shape and challenge the practice of medicine? We will examine these and other such questions as they figure in a variety of fictional and non-fictional writings. The texts we will read include: Mary Shelley’s, *Frankenstein*,



Michael Ondaatje’s *Anil’s Ghost*, poems by Lucille Clifton, V.V. Ganeshanathan’s “Hippocrates,” selections from Atul Gawande’s *Complications*, Brit Bennet’s *The Mothers*, Sarah Moss’s *Bodies of Light*, Virginia Woolf’s “On Being Ill,” and more current writings about the pandemic.

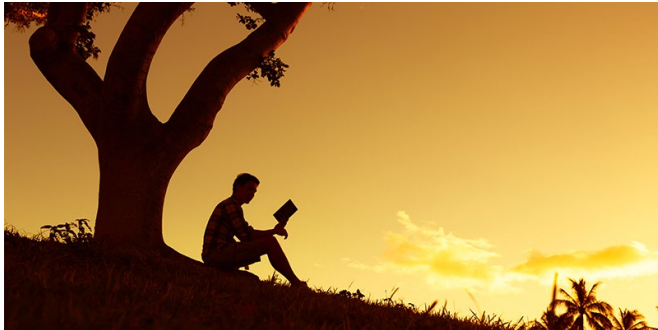
**English 103.07: *Making a Life***

Professor Heidt

MWF 2:10 - 3:00

Lentz House 204

How do we go about making our lives? How do we know whether we're making them well? And how can literature help us ask (and possibly begin to answer) those questions? In this course, we'll strengthen our abilities to read poetry, fiction, non-fiction prose, graphic narratives, and films, as well as to speak, listen and write with clarity and nuance. We'll also explore how the beauties and difficulties of literary and cinematic works can challenge us to richer,



more complicated ways of understanding our lives and the lives of others. What can a poem teach us about how to perceive, feel, and live more fully and deliberately? What can we learn from a play about how our lives shape the conditions in which others make their lives? Can a science fiction film lead us to rethink our assumptions about the limits and

possibilities of human lives? Can memoirs and novels help us understand how to connect to others around and through experiences of joy, love, suffering, and death? To explore such questions, we will read works by Emily Brontë, Walt Whitman, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Toni Morrison, Rebecca Solnit, Ruth Ozeki, Claudia Rankine, Nick Sousanis, and Maggie Nelson, among others.

**English 103.08: *Making a Life***

Professor Heidt

MWF 3:10 – 4:00

Lentz House 204

How do we go about making our lives? How do we know whether we're making them well? And how can literature help us ask (and possibly begin to answer) those questions? In this course, we'll strengthen our abilities to read poetry, fiction, non-fiction prose, graphic narratives, and films, as well as to speak, listen and write with clarity and nuance. We'll also explore how the beauties and difficulties of literary and cinematic works can challenge us to richer, more complicated ways of understanding our lives and the lives of others. What can a poem teach us about how to perceive, feel, and live more fully and deliberately? What can we learn from a play about how our lives shape the conditions in which others make their lives? Can a science fiction film lead us to rethink our assumptions about the limits and possibilities of human lives? Can memoirs and novels help us understand how to connect to others around and through experiences of joy, love, suffering, and death? To explore such questions, we will read works by Emily Brontë, Walt Whitman, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Toni Morrison, Rebecca Solnit, Ruth Ozeki, Claudia Rankine, Nick Sousanis, and Maggie Nelson, among others.





**English 103.10: *Writing the Mind***

Professor Matz

MWF 10:10 – 11:00

Keithley House 002

“Not I, but the poets discovered the unconscious”: so wrote Sigmund Freud, in recognition of literature’s role in psychological discovery. Poems, plays, and stories have long been our main way into the human mind; more than that, they have even shaped the mind, creating possibilities for thought and feeling that would only later come to seem natural. This course will study crucial examples of “writing the mind,” their motivations, and their implications for our understanding of the nature of literature. Stream of consciousness narration, confessional poetry, double consciousness characterization, the Shakespearean soliloquy, and the autism memoir will be some of our concerns. And we will explore them with the help of certain key theories about the relationship between literature and psychology—psychoanalytic theory, for example, and also more recent studies of the ways storytelling drives cognition and deals



with trauma. Our primary focus will be the psychological ingenuity of literary languages and forms as we explore the many ways literature has represented and shaped human consciousness.

**English 103.11: *Writing the Mind***

Professor Matz

MWF 3:10 – 4:00

Lentz House 104

“Not I, but the poets discovered the unconscious”: so wrote Sigmund Freud, in recognition of literature’s role in psychological discovery. Poems, plays, and stories have long been our main way into the human mind; more than that, they have even shaped the mind, creating possibilities for thought and feeling that would only later come to



seem natural. This course will study crucial examples of “writing the mind,” their motivations, and their implications for our understanding of the nature of literature. Stream of consciousness narration, confessional poetry, double consciousness characterization, the Shakespearean soliloquy, and the autism memoir will be some of our concerns. And we will explore them with the help of certain key theories

about the relationship between literature and psychology—psychoanalytic theory, for example, and also more recent studies of the ways storytelling drives cognition and deals with trauma. Our primary focus will be the psychological ingenuity of literary languages and forms as we explore the many ways literature has represented and shaped human consciousness.

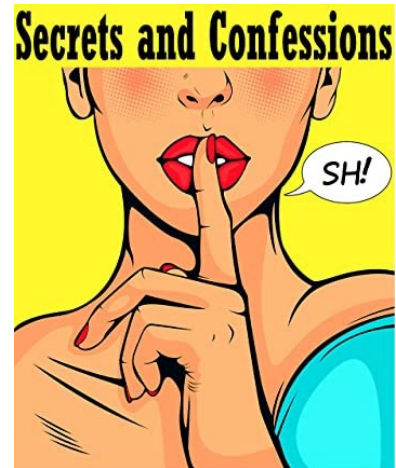
### English 103.12: *Secrets and Confessions*

Professor Murthy

MWF 3:10 – 4:00

Keithley House 102

What stories do we tell about our lives and ourselves? What do we choose to conceal or, perhaps, to reveal? These questions form the point of departure for our exploration of narration's pregnant pauses, deathly silences, quiet confessions, animated accounts, and everything in between. Reading across historical periods and geographical boundaries, we will pay attention to the power of secrets and the costs of keeping them. We will take note of how a person constructs the self in the course of narrating their life and how the listener – or the reader – demands complete transparency. As with our own stories, then, what lies and truths do these texts conceal or reveal? In addition to films, poetry, literary criticism, and short stories, course texts may include John Ford, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (c. 1630); R.L. Stevenson, *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886); Oyinkan Braithwaite, *My Sister, the Serial Killer* (2018); Shehan Karunatilaka, *The Seven Moons of Maali Almeida* (2022).



### English 103.13: *What's Love Got to Do With It?*

Professor O'Neill

MWF 9:10 – 10:00

Keithley House 002

Recent political debates about marriage rights have highlighted public disagreement about function of marriage in society. Is marriage a sacrament, or a civil right, or a civic responsibility? Is it fundamentally about procreation? Or is it the highest form of human friendship? In this course, we will read poems, stories, novels, nonfiction of all kinds in pursuit of the answer to a simple question: what is marriage for? How has the institution been shaped by law and culture over the centuries, and how has it shaped human lives in turn? Most importantly for us, how has it left its mark on the genres of English literature? Through literary readings spanning seven centuries, we will consider the institution's medieval inheritance (in our ideal of monogamous, lifelong marriage; and in "coverture," the legal doctrine of women's subordination to their husbands). We will also take up the sometimes vexed role of love within marriage; debates about marriage and citizenship in 19<sup>th</sup> century America and today; and finally, the role of marriage in today's consumer society. Readings by Plato, Geoffrey Chaucer, William Shakespeare, Jane Austen, Charles Chesnut, Jhumpa Lahiri, Dan Savage, and many others.



**English 103.14: *Writing the Race***

Professor Schoenfeld

MWF 11:10 – 12:00

Lentz House 104

What makes a person or a piece of writing “black”? In the twenty-first century, the idea that we can answer this question by looking at skin color or even at a family tree has been complicated, if not dismissed, by science. The question, however, was never really a simple one. This course will concentrate on ways in which writers on both sides of the color line have imagined black identity and/or black writing. Readings will begin in the eighteenth century with selections from Thomas Jefferson’s *Notes on the State of Virginia*, and selected poetry by Phillis Wheatley, continue through the nineteenth century with texts by Harriet Beecher Stowe, W.E.B. DuBois, and Booker T. Washington, and include twentieth century with texts from the Black Arts Movement and Toni Morrison, and extend into the twenty-first century with Claudia Rankine’s *Citizen*. The course will examine, among other things, the relationship between “minority” literature and the dominant culture. We will discuss, for example, debates about the criteria by which black artistic production should be judged, considering the relationship between, and relative importance of aesthetics and politics, as well as questions of assimilation and distinctiveness.



**English 103.15: *Authorship***

Professor Suazo

MWF 12:10 – 1:00

Gund Gallery 102

“What does it matter who’s speaking?” This line from Samuel Beckett, famously re-uttered by Michel Foucault in 1969, calls into question the assumed relationship between authors and their texts. Once texts are in the world—whether spoken, written, or otherwise—does it matter who created them or what their authors meant? Do they belong to their authors, or do they have lives of their own, subject to the whims of interpretation, appropriation, or adaptation? And for that matter, who gets to be an author and what does it mean to author a text? What are the ethics of authorship, and what are we able to know about the act of creation itself, about genius, about originality? In this course, as we read and discuss a range of texts and genres, we will address each of these questions, as well as consider the relationship between authorship and self-creation, especially as it takes the form of autobiography. We will also pay attention to how the concept of authorship and its boundaries are historical, to how the histories of women and other “minority” authors have changed the way we answer these questions. Core readings include works by Juan Francisco Manzano, Alison Bechdel, Mary Shelley, Ursula K. Le Guin, Oscar Wilde, and Virginia Woolf. We will also read shorter works or excerpts from a number of other authors and screen at least one film adaption.





**English 103.16: *Waste Lands***

Professor Tierney

MWF 9:10 – 10:00

Lentz House 104



Filth, garbage, trash, rubbish: literature is full of waste. This course explores the sticky, the disgusting, the discardable, and the recoverable through the lens of waste, discard, and sanitation to unpack the meanings behind what we throw away. We'll attend carefully to the representations of pollution and cleanness in literature and film and consider how writers have approached topics of sustainability,

landfills, vastness, excess, and recycling. We'll read poetry, short stories, and novels that engage with the themes of recycling, disposability, matter, and e-waste broadly, metaphorically, and thematically as well as watch films that address the environmental impact of landfills and garbage—and the people who occupy them. We will take the idea of waste as a starting point to ask: what is waste? What is wasteful about literature? We'll read texts by Tommy Pico, Allison Cobb, and Orlando Patterson, among others. Films may include *Waste Land* and *WALL-E*.

**English 103.17: *Denaturing "Nature"***

Professor Quinn

MWF 11:10 – 12:00

Keithley House 102

In their 2007 book *Ecology Without Nature*, the theorist Timothy Morton argues that the very idea of "Nature" is often what prevents us from achieving true ecological being. "Putting something called Nature on a pedestal and admiring it from afar does for the environment what patriarchy does for the figure of Woman," they say. In this class, we'll consider a variety of texts with Morton's claims in mind, examining how the concept of "Nature" has been socially constructed across cultures, genres, and times. What might happen if we dismantled the binary between "Nature" and "Culture"? How do ideas about "naturalness" intersect with categories of race and gender? How can we forge meaningful new relations with nonhuman beings in the age of the Anthropocene? Are humans capable of imagining what it's like to be a bat, or a slime mold, or a moonbeam? We'll dive into these and other questions as we read a variety of fiction, literary nonfiction, poetry, philosophy, and science writing. This class includes a Community-Engaged Learning component, so we'll be venturing out of the classroom to explore the more-than-human world as it exists on and around campus. This class will train students in the techniques of literary analysis, while also providing opportunities for creative and reflective writing. Possible authors may include: Callum Angus, Jane Bennet, William Blake, Lucille Clifton, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Louise Erdrich, Quinn Gancedo, Amitav Ghosh, Daisy Hildyard, Robin Wall Kimmerer, Jamaica Kinkaid, Ed Roberson, Leslie Marmon Silko, Jeff VanderMeer, and William Wordsworth, among others.

**English 103.18: *Monstrous Forms***

Professor Fleming

MWF 10:10 – 11:00

Lentz House 104

This course will introduce students to the practices of academic writing and critical reading by inviting you to explore texts about monsters. From the twelfth century to today, we will examine how literature, television, and film frequently uses monsters—witches, fairies, changelings, ghosts, vampires, zombies, and creatures—to speak to and provide rational explanations for things that are very human but that humans have trouble confronting outright: loss; death; political events; sexual, racial, and physical difference. As we engage with different media from different periods, we will pay particular attention to what forms (literary, visual, and physical) monsters take and consider how these forms shape our understanding of the societies that produced these narratives.



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**Students who wish to begin or to continue study in English at the 100-level in the spring 2024 may choose to enroll in one of the following sections of ENGL 104:**

- ENGL 104.01: *Translations, Transitions, Transcreation* (Brostoff)
- ENGL 104.02: *Translations, Transitions, Transcreation* (Brostoff)
- ENGL 104.03: *Bodily Matters* (Lau)
- ENGL 104.04: *What's Love Got to Do With It?* (O'Neill)
- ENGL 104.05: *Practitioners as Authors* (Scanlon)
- ENGL 104.06: *Seductions* (Lobanov-Rostovsky)



## 200-Level Courses

Students exploring English as a possible major should consider enrolling in one of the intermediate-level courses designated ENGL 210-299 as soon as they have completed ENGL 103 or ENGL 104. 200-level English courses are small, discussion-centered and writing-intensive literature classes that may focus on particular formal or generic studies, on individual historical periods and national traditions, or on specific critical problems. Future English majors are especially advised to consider enrolling in ENGL 213: *Texting: Reading Like an English Major* (spring semester), which will introduce them to key skills, methods, and critical approaches in the study of literature.

### 200-level courses offered in Spring 2024:

ENGL 211: *Theory and Practices Life Writing* (Heidt)

ENGL 213: *Texting: Reading Like an English Major*  
(Schoenfeld)

ENGL 215: *Prosody and Poetics* (Grace)

ENGL 227: *Love, Sex, and Desire in Medieval  
Romance* (O'Neill)

ENGL 232: *Renaissance Poetry* (Davidson)

ENGL 235: *Moderns and Early Moderns* (Brown)

ENGL 267: *Literature, Medicine, and Culture* (Lau)

ENGL 269: *Introduction to Caribbean Literature*  
(Fernando)

ENGL 280: *American Literary Modernism* (Matz)

ENGL 291.01: *Asian American Poetry* (Leong)

ENGL 291.02: *The Poetics of the Midwest* (Grace)

## Creative Writing Courses

Since 2018-2019, unless otherwise directed by a specific course description or by communication from the English department, students will no longer need to submit applications for 200-level creative writing courses, including ENGL 200 Introduction to Fiction Writing, ENGL 201 Introduction to Poetry Writing, ENGL 202 Creative Nonfiction Workshop, ENGL 204 Writing Fiction, Nonfiction, and Other Narrative Forms, and ENGL 205 Creative Writing: A Multi-Genre Workshop. Students are eligible to register for 200-level courses **beginning in the spring semester of their first year** and should enroll in only **one** 200-level creative writing course at a time. A number of seats will be reserved for students in each class year (i.e., sophomore, juniors, and seniors in the fall, and all four class years in the spring). Students unable to register for an introductory creative writing course should contact the department chair.

