

## Topic Courses – Spring 2024

### **ENGL 169T – Film Noir Femme Fatales (Skeen)**

According to critics Gledhill and Place, “Women in [film noir] tend to work on the fringes of the underworld and are defined by the male criminal ambience of the thriller—bar-flies, night-club singers, expensive mistresses, femmes fatales, and ruthless gold-diggers [...]; and then there are women on the outer margins of this world, wives, long-suffering girlfriends, would-be fiancées who are victims of male crime, sometimes the objects of the hero’s protection, and often points of vulnerability in his masculine armor.” We’ll examine, challenge, support, and conflate these assumptions in class.

### **ENGL 250T – Abolitionist Poetics (Gordon)**

This course will examine the history of antislavery and abolitionist literature, art, and aesthetics in relation to abolition as a social movement from the inauguration of the transatlantic slave trade through the U.S. Civil War and Reconstruction. We will study the evolution of abolitionist environmentalism, science, rhetoric, and poetics; the relationship between literature and social justice; the challenges and possibilities for scholars working in the archive of slavery; as well as the uptake of abolition in contemporary literature, visual art, and racial & environmental justice activism.

### **ENGL 250T – Feminist Rhetorics (Wang)**

Women’s Rhetoric uses a rhetorical lens to study histories and theories of women’s speaking and writing. This course considers the ways that gender, race, class, and culture affect scholarly treatments of women rhetors in local and global contexts. The course attends to such issues as gender and rhetorical space, the public voice of women, connections between the “discourse horizons” of women’s rights and human rights, and comparative/transnational feminist rhetoric. Students will develop a research project they can pursue throughout the semester that contributes to the scholarly conversation.

## Seminars in English – ENGL 193

### **ENGL 193 – Virginia Woolf in Conversation (Foster)**

This course studies the works of Virginia Woolf from the perspective of her modernist formal experimentalism, her feminism, and the effect and legacy that she has had on other writers. We will cover *A Room of One’s Own*, *The Voyage Out*, *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, *The Waves*, and as well as essays and polemical writings. We will pair Woolf’s fiction and essays with short excerpts from Audre Lorde, Simone de Beauvoir, Zadie Smith, Hope Mirrlees, Alice Walker, Toni Morrison, and Sarojini Naidu. Two papers, a final digital humanities project, and an in-class presentation will be required.

### **ENGL 193 – Contemporary Literary Studies in Masculinity (Arce)**

This course is designed to introduce students to major theories, concepts, and debates in literary studies of masculinity. The readings for the course engage masculinity as a socially constructed gender subject to dynamic historical and cultural forces. Consequently, the readings follow the changing nature of American masculinity from Post WWII Beat writers to the action-packed movies of John Wick. The different sections of the course recognize the full range of masculinities in the U.S. and they invite analysis of these masculinities in conjunction with issues of race, class, disability, and sexuality.