

LITERATURE SUBJECTS

Course 21L Supplement to the Bulletin



“There is then creative reading as well as creative writing. When the mind is braced by labor and invention, the page of whatever book we read becomes luminous with manifold allusion.” — Ralph Waldo Emerson

Images: (Left) *Moonlight* (2021 Barry Jenkins); (Middle) “Icarus,” plate VIII from the illustrated book “Jazz,” Henri Matisse, 1947 pochoir/stencil; (Right) *In the Mood for Love* (2000, Wong Kar-Wai) (Bottom) Algae cyanotypes by Anna Atkins, 1843–53



LITERATURE SECTION

77 Massachusetts Ave, Building 14N-407 | Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 253-3581 | litacademics@mit.edu | lit.mit.edu

FALL 2025

21L	UNITS	CREDIT	SUBJECT TITLE	INSTRUCTOR	DAY	TIME	ROOM	PRE-1900
INTRODUCTORY								
21L.003	3-0-9	H; CI-H	Jane Austen [Reading Fiction]	Buzard, James	TR	2:30-4P	5-216	Yes
21L.004	3-0-9	H; CI-H	Reading Poetry (1.1)	Tapscott, Stephen	TR	3-4:30P	2-151	Yes
21L.003	3-0-8	H; CI-H	Reading Poetry (1.2)	Jackson, Noel	MW	11-12:30P	56-166	
21L.004	3-0-9	H; CI-H	Reading Poetry (1.3)	Tapscott, Stephen	TR	7-8:30P	4-145	Yes
21L.005J	3-0-9	A; CI-H	same as 21T.141 Introduction to Drama	Alexandre, Sandy	MW	11-12:30P	66-160	
21L.010J	3-0-9	H; CI-HW	same as 21W.042J Writing with Shakespeare	Henderson, Diana	TR	1-2:30P	1-375	Yes
21L.011	3-3-6	A; CI-H	Introduction to Film Studies	Doyle, Caitlyn				
			Lecture		T	3:30-5P	3-133	
			Screening		M	7-10P	3-270	
			Recitation 1		R	1:30-3P	5-233	
			Recitation 2		R	3:30-5P	5-233	
21L.032J	3-0-9	H; CI-H	same as WGS.130 Afrofuturism, Magical Realism and Other Otherwise Worlds	Terrones, Joaquín				
			Lecture		TR	3:30-5P	2-143	
			Breakout Room 1		TR	3-3:30P	2-143	
			Breakout Room 2		TR	5-5:30P	2-143	
21L.040J	3-0-9	H; CI-H	same as 21G.041J, meets with 21G.141, 21G.541 Foundations of East Asian Literature and Culture: From Confucius to the Beats	Denecke, Wiebke	MW	9:30-11A	2-103	Yes
21L.050	3-0-9	H; CI-H	The Art of Seeing Things [Reading Nonfiction]	Mangrum, Ben	TR	11-12:30P	14N-112	
SAMPLINGS (6 - UNITS)								
21L.345	2-0-4		Around the World in Short Film [On the Screen] (Full Semester)	Doyle, Caitlyn	T	7-9P	2-103	
INTERMEDIATE including subjects taught in Global Languages								
21G.421	3-0-9	H	Franz Kafka: A Novelist for 21st Century (Taught in German)	Jaeger, Dagmar	MF	2-3:30P	14N-225	
21L.433	3-0-9	H	Kubrick [Film Styles and Genres]	Brinkema, Eugenie	T	1-4P	14N-325	
21L.438	3-0-9	H	Intersectional Feminist Memoir	Williams, Brianna	TR	9:30-11A	5-216	
21L.450	3-0-9	H	Ecofeminism [Global Environmental Literature]	Mangrum, Ben	TR	1-2:30P	1-136	
21L.474J	3-0-9	H	same as CMS.422 Representing Girlhood	Gubar, Marah	MW	1-2:30P	4-257	
21L.480J	3-0-9	H	same as WGS.245 Identities and Intersections: Queer Literatures	Terrones, Joaquín	TR	1-2:30P	5-232	
21L.487	3-0-10	H	Modern Poetry	Jackson, Noel	M	2-5P	4-253	
21L.489J	3-0-9	A	meets with CMS.845; same as 21W.765, CMS.618 Interactive Narrative	Montfort, Nick	W	2-5P	2-135	
21L.492	3-0-9	H	same as 21G.042, CMS.359, 21H.352 Three Kingdoms: From History to Fiction, Comic, Film, and Game (Reading in Translation)	Teng, Emma	TR	11-12:30P	14E-310	Yes
21L.601J	3-0-9	H	same as 24.916J Old English and <i>Beowulf</i>	Bahr, Arthur	MW	9:30-11A	4-144	Yes
21L.607	3-0-3		Greek I (First Half Term: Ends Oct 17)	Driscoll, Eric	MW	2:30-4P	2-103	Yes
21L.608	3-0-3		Greek II (Second Half Term: Begins Oct 20)	Driscoll, Eric	MW	2:30-4P	2-103	Yes
21L.620J	3-0-9	H	same as 21G.320 Introduction to French Literature (Taught in French)	Rezvani, Leanna	MW	9:30-11A	14E-310	
21L.626J	3-0-9	H	Same subject as: 21G.325J, WGS.233J New Culture of Gender: Queer France (Taught in French)	Perreau, Bruno	R	7-10P	14N-313	
21L.639J	3-0-9	H	same as 21G.739J Globalization and its Discontents: Spanish-speaking Nations (Taught in Spanish)	Terrones, Joaquín	TR	9:30-11A	2-103	
21L.640J	3-0-9	H	same as 21G.740J The New Spain: 1977-Present (Taught in Spanish)	Resnick, Margery	T	7-10P	14N-325	
21L.S89	3-0-9	H	French Modernity [Special Subject in Literature] (Taught in French)	Songolo, Aliko	T	7-10P	14N-313	
SEMINAR								
21L.703	3-0-9	H; CI-M	Murder and Mayhem Remade [Studies in Drama]	Raman, Shankar	TR	9:30-11A	4-251	Yes
21L.704	3-0-9	H; CI-M	The Poetry of Witness [Studies in Poetry]	Tapscott, Stephen	M	7-10P	14N-112	
21L.706	3-3-6	H; CI-M	meets with CMS.830 On Love [Studies in Film]	Brinkema, Eugenie	W	10-1P	56-169	
21L.707	3-0-9	H; CI-M	The Art of War and Peace [Problems in Cultural Interpretation]	Denecke, Wiebke	MW	11-12:30P	5-216	Yes



INTRODUCTORY

21L.003 (H, CI-H) Jane Austen Reading Fiction

James Buzard

TR

2:30-4P

5-216

Pre-1900

One way to learn the art of reading fiction with insight and pleasure is to sample a variety of types; another is to dig deep into one author whose work is worth the attention. This class takes the latter approach: we'll read all six of Jane Austen's completed novels — *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Emma*, *Mansfield Park*, *Persuasion*, and *Northanger Abbey* — plus (time permitting) the unfinished *Sanditon*. We'll investigate Austen's penetrating analyses of social, familial, and romantic relationships and her matchless comic style. Through reports and other projects, students will learn about the era and culture in which Austen worked. We will probably also watch some of the many film or TV adaptations that have been made of her novels. As a CI-H subject, the class will include a substantial amount of student writing and oral presentation.

21L.004 (H, CI-H) Reading Poetry

Stephen Tapscott

Section 1

TR

3-4:30P

4-146

Pre-1900

Section 3

TR

7-8:30P

4-146

Pre-1900

An introduction to poetry in English. We will explore poems written during several periods and in several genres (nature-poems, narratives, the epic, sonnets, odes, experimental forms).

Focus will be less on names and dates than on tactics of analytic reading. Poets whose work we'll read include William Shakespeare, John Milton, John Keats, Emily Dickinson, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Robert Frost, Langston Hughes, Sylvia Plath, Elizabeth Bishop, June Jordan, Seamus Heaney, Derek Walcott, Li-young Lee, Marilyn Chin, and others. Special course-related events (readings, lectures, film screenings) will take place on selected evenings throughout the term. Regular classroom hours will be reduced in the weeks for which a special event is scheduled.

INTRODUCTORY

21L.004 (H, CI-H) Reading Poetry

Noel Jackson

Section 2

MW

11-12:30P

56-167

An introduction to poetry in English, chiefly by British and American poets, spanning more than 400 years of literary history. The aim of the class is to demystify and make approachable poetry that has been deemed to be “great,” and to analyze this work collaboratively for insight and pleasure. We will explore Renaissance, eighteenth-century, Romantic, and modernist poetry in some detail. Though the organization of the subject is mostly chronological, our focus will be less on names and dates than on cultivating skills in careful reading and effective writing. Poets to be read may include William Shakespeare, Jonathan Swift, John Keats, Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, Elizabeth Bishop, and Claudia Rankine.

21L.005[J] (A, CI-H) Introduction to Drama

Same subject as 21T.141[J]

Sandy Alexandre

MW

11A-12:30P

66-160

In her autobiographical play, *To Be Young Gifted and Black* (1969), the playwright Lorraine Hansberry wrote: “I think that virtually every human being is dramatically interesting.” In our own lives—through our own verbal and body language—we alternate between deprecating and eagerly embracing what it means to be dramatic: “Oh gosh, he is so dramatic,” we accuse! “Yes, honey! I’m absolutely a drama queen,” we might hear someone proudly profess. “Dee-rahmuh!” we drawl to diagnose a scandalous story. Drama is everywhere around us asserting itself: provoking us, amusing us, challenging us, prompting us, inspiring us, catching the conscience of Kings even—effectively acting on us in some way or another. By reading plays and watching video recordings of some of them, we will attempt to understand what drama does best and uniquely as a literary genre. Toward the end of the semester, we will also consider the various forms drama can take. Where, for example, do we situate a TikTok video, a historical reenactment, a staged protest, a walk down the runway of an underground ballroom, or a flash mob in an Introduction to Drama course? Our encounters may include, but are not limited to, plays by Samuel Beckett, Quiara Alegria Hudes, Lorraine Hansberry, August Wilson, David Henry Hwang, Suzan-Lori Parks, and Shakespeare.

INTRODUCTORY

21L.010[J] (H, CI-HW) Writing with Shakespeare

Same as 21W.042J
Diana Henderson

TR

1-2:30P

1-375

Pre-1900

William Shakespeare didn't go to college. If he could time-travel like Dr. Who, he would be stunned to find his words on a university syllabus. But he would not be surprised at the way we will be using those words in this class, because the study of rhetoric was essential to all education in his day. We too will focus on communication using words, with Shakespeare as a capacious model and inspiration for dialogue, self-presentation, and writing. By writing 'with' Shakespeare—critically, creatively, in groups, and in a variety of media—you will have ample opportunity to explore the elements and occasions that shape effective, meaningful communication. We will consider how his plays have in turn been reinterpreted across the globe: in addition to reciting famous speeches, we will analyze both text and film versions of the comedy *Much Ado About Nothing* and the tragedy *Othello*, and you will explore an online MITx module as preparation to perform dramatic scenes from what is now a 'problem play,' *The Merchant of Venice*. Finally, we will look at how Shakespeare revises his stories and style in the late 'romance' *A Winter's Tale*. In the process, you will get to 'play' a Shakespeare scholar, and debate the reasons for the playwright's enduring power. Nevertheless, our aim is less to appreciate his works as an end in themselves than to draw on his remarkable drama (including its vocabulary, variety, verve, and verbal command) in order to help you improve your own writing, speaking, analytic thinking, use of resources, and understanding of media today.

INTRODUCTORY

21L.011 (A, CI-H) Introduction to Film Studies

Caitlyn Doyle

Lecture	T 3:30-5P	3-270	Screening	M 7-10P	3-270
Recitation 1	R 4-5P	1-273	Recitation 2	R 3-4P	1-273

Films are familiar to you; this course should make them strange again.

The Film Experience serves as an introduction to film studies, concentrating on close analysis and criticism. Students will learn the technical vocabulary for analyzing cinematic narrative, framing, editing, color, sound, and lighting; develop the critical means for turning close analysis into interpretations and comparative readings of films; and explore theoretical issues related to spectatorship, reflexivity, and ideology. We will look beyond the surface pleasures of cinema to ask how films are put together; what choices are made formally, narratively, and politically in the constructions of different types of films; and how films have changed historically and in different production and national contexts. We will study a wide example of works made between 1895 and 2023 and heralding from over a dozen countries, ranging from early silent experiments, documentary and avant-garde films, and canonical European art cinema, to contemporary Hollywood blockbusters, Hong Kong melodrama, and Iranian cinema. Directors include Ana Lily Amirpour, Maya Deren, Sergei Eisenstein, Jean-Luc Godard, Greta Gerwig, Howard Hawks, Alfred Hitchcock, Stanley Kubrick, Akira Kurosawa, David Lynch, Roberto Rossellini, Quentin Tarantino, Orson Welles, and Wong Kar-wai.

Format: one required 90-minute lecture, one required evening screening, and one discussion hour per week.

21L.032[J] (H, CI-H) Afrofuturism, Magical Realism and Other Otherwise Worlds

Same as WGS.130

Joaquín Terrones

Lecture	TR 3:30-5P	2-143
Breakout Room 1	TR 3-3:30P	2-143
Breakout Room 2	TR 5-5:30P	2-143

Is this the only possible world? Or are there others free of white supremacy, colonialism, capitalism, patriarchy, and ecological devastation? What might it mean not just to imagine these possibilities but to listen for other worlds that already exist alongside our own? In this course, we will examine how Afrofuturism, magical realism, and other forms of the fantastic in North and Latin America not only envision alternatives to the current order but also identify existing ways of being otherwise in the world. In addition to analyzing texts and films, we will incorporate theoretical insights from black studies, latinx studies, queer studies, and feminism into our discussions. Some of the authors we will read include Octavia Butler, N.K. Jemisin, Samuel Delany, Gabriel García Márquez, José María Arguedas, and Alejo Carpentier; films we will watch include *Candyman*, *Nope*, *The Devil's Knot*, and *Embrace of the Serpent*; and pop culture narratives we will study include Janelle Monáe's *Dirty Computer*, Ta-Nehisi Coates' *The Intergalactic Empire of Wakanda*, Barry Jenkins' *The Underground Railroad*, Disney's *Encanto* and Beyoncé's *Black is King*.

INTRODUCTORY

21L.040[J] (H, CI-H) Foundations of East Asian Literature and Culture: From Confucius to the Beats

Same as 21G.041[J]; Meets with 21G.141, 21G.541

Wiebke Denecke

MW

9:30-11A

1-136

Pre-1900

Today we have the luxury of reading more literatures in more languages than ever before, giving us the opportunity to explore the great diversity of what is called “literature” across the time and space of world history. This course introduces you to some of the most seminal and thought-provoking texts from East Asia (China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam), and is conceived as complementary to the Foundations of Western Literature course in the Literature curriculum. We persistently ask how “literature” looks different when viewed through the literary heritage of East Asia: what does poetry written in Chinese characters accomplish that alphabetic poetry cannot? How does Buddhist reincarnation change the way you tell stories and devise novels? Why is Japan the world’s only major literature where female authors dominated certain literary genres as early as the 11th century? How did the complex interplay in Japan, Korea, and Vietnam between high-brow literature in the cosmopolitan language of Literary Chinese, and vernacular or popular literatures expand the possibilities of literary expressivity, gender figuration, and identity play? What was it that made American avantgarde writers of the Beat generation so ecstatic about classical Chinese and Japanese poetry?

Our strategic journey through East Asian literatures and cultures will take us through philosophical master texts such as Confucius, Laozi, and Zhuangzi; Tang poetry; China’s classical novels such as *Journey to the West*; Japan’s female-authored tales and diaries, such as *The Tale of Genji* and *The Pillow Book*; Korea’s classical novel *The Nine Cloud Dream*, and the heart-wrenching pansori play *Song of Ch’unhyang*.

21L.050[J] (H, CI-H) The Art of Seeing Things Reading Nonfiction

Same as 21G.041[J]

Ben Mangrum

TR

11A-12:30P

14N-112

An introduction to reading and writing creative nonfiction. We will explore essays and memoirs written in different periods and cultural traditions. We will focus on how writers use language to represent ordinary experience in reflective and artistic ways. Writers whose work we’ll read include Joan Didion, Zadie Smith, James Baldwin, and Henry David Thoreau, among many others. Students will regularly give and receive feedback in writing workshops.

SAMPLINGS

21L.345 Around the World in Short Film On the Screen

Full Semester
Caitlyn Doyle

T

7-9P

2-103

“Around the World in Short Film” explores the short film genre through a global lens. Students will engage with films from various cultural and national contexts, analyzing how filmmakers across the world use this form, to express ideas, challenge norms, and innovate cinematically. The course will blend academic inquiry and creative practice. Students will write critical responses, participate in discussions, and produce their own short films.

INTERMEDIATE

21G.421 (H) Franz Kafka: A Novelist for 21st Century

Dagmar Jaeger

MF 2-3:30P

14N-225

Explores Kafka's world and his observations on a fundamental dehumanization of modern life that transcends time and culture and still resonates today. Through in-depth analysis, investigates the ways in which alienation and estrangement — two profound themes in Kafka's work — are portrayed in relation to bureaucracy and systems, technology and war, and the individual and the state. Examines these themes, which have come to be known as Kafkaesque, through the lens of contemporary digitalization and digitally mediated life. Students develop a research topic that is refined during the term through in-class discussion and workshops, writing, and oral presentations, culminating in a final paper. Taught in German.

21L.433 (H) Kubrick Film Styles and Genres

Eugenie Brinkema

T 1-4P

14N-325

This seminar explores the films of the American director Stanley Kubrick. Though he made only 13 films, he is widely regarded as one of the greatest and most influential directors in film history. The course will closely study films from across his career, and spanning genres including noir, the war film, satire, science fiction, and horror. Our focus will be close analysis of Kubrick's unique formal language—his use of color, staging, editing, use of space(s), choreographed camerawork, and his extraordinary manipulations of sound and music. We will also analyze his use of satire, parody, and irony; his stylistic deployment of photography, theatricality, and reflexivity; and his complex relationship to war, violence, technology, gender, and sexuality.

21L.438 (H) Intersectional Feminist Memoir

Same subject as: 21W.738[J], WGS.238[J]

Brianna Williams

TR 9:30-11A

5-216

Explores the memoir genre through a feminist intersectional lens, looking at the ways in which feminist writers ground personal experience within a complex understanding of race, gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity, immigration status/nationality, and dis/ability. Gives particular attention to the relationships between the personal and the political; form and content; fact, truth, and imagination; self and community; trauma and healing; coming to voice and breaking silence. Readings include books by Audre Lorde, Janet Mock, Daisy Hernandez, Jessica Valenti, and Ariel Gore, and shorter pieces by Meena Alexander and Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha. Drawing on lessons taken from these works, students write a short memoir of their own.

INTERMEDIATE

21L.450 (H) Ecofeminism Global Environmental Literature

Ben Mangrum

TR 1-2:30P

1-136

This class introduces students to major international writers who explore the intersections of the environment and pressing social issues related to gender and sexuality. Writers to be considered include Han Kang, Sayaka Murata, Margaret Atwood, J. M. Coetzee, and Ruth Ozeki, among others.

21L.474[J] (H) Representing Girlhood

same as CMS.422

Marah Gubar

MW 1-2:30P 4-257

How have Americans experienced and represented girlhood, over time and across genres? In this course, we will trace how girlhood has been portrayed in the U.S. from the eighteenth century to the present, with a special focus on works that center the experiences of Black, Jewish, Asian American, trans, and Muslim girls.

We will begin close to home, with two writers who composed their famous works in and around the Boston area: the enslaved Black teenager Phillis Wheatley (who published the first volume of poetry by an African American in modern times) and the white feminist and abolitionist novelist Louisa May Alcott (whose girls' book *Little Women* quickly became a classic that has inspired multiple generations of women). To build community and learn more about these authors, we will take field trips to local sites such as the African American History Museum and Alcott's Orchard House (where *Little Women* was written and set).

As we shift into studying 20th and 21st century films, novels, TV shows, and pop songs about girlhood, we will examine how such cultural artifacts themselves invite us to consider the role that cultural artifacts play in shaping girlhood. We will also encounter and analyze the popularity of both gender and age drag in contemporary portrayals of girlhood. In so doing, we will focus not just on the uneasy sense of displacement, unease, and exclusion that sometimes attends girlhood, but also on cultural artifacts that center girls' positive feelings of rootedness, kinship, and joy, celebrating their inspiring ambitions and invigorating desires.

INTERMEDIATE

21L.480[J] (H) Identities and Intersections: Queer Literature

Same as WGS.245
Joaquín Terrones

TR

1-2:30P

5-232

This course will focus on LGBT literature from the late nineteenth century to the present with an emphasis on fiction and poetry. In particular, we will analyze how LGBT identities and their literary representations have changed over time. Our discussion will give special attention to the ways in which race, class, and disability intersect with sexuality and gender. Some of the authors we will read include James Baldwin, Virginia Woolf, Samuel Delany, Tony Kushner, Alison Bechdel, Cherrie Moraga, Janet Mock, and Audre Lorde.

21L.487 (H) Modern Poetry

Noel Jackson

M

2-5P

5-231

Study of major poems and manifestos from the late 19th century through the early 21st century. Examines works written in English, with some attention to Modernist texts from other cultures and other languages as well. Poems by T. S. Eliot, W. C. Williams, Langston Hughes, Robert Frost, Pablo Neruda, Hilda Doolittle, Charles Baudelaire, Anna Akhmatova, Bertolt Brecht, Rabindranath Tagore, and others. Comprised primarily of discussions, short papers, and a final project. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if content differs.

INTERMEDIATE

21L.489[J] Interactive Narrative

Meets with CMS.845; same as 21W.765, CMS.618

Nick Montfort

W

2-5P

2-135

Provides a workshop environment for understanding interactive narrative (print and digital) through critical writing, narrative theory, and creative practice. Covers important multisequential books, hypertexts, and interactive fictions. Students write critically, and give presentations, about specific works; write a short multisequential fiction; and develop a digital narrative system, which involves significant writing and either programming or the structuring of text. Programming ability helpful.

21L.492 (H) Three Kingdoms: From History to Fiction, Comic, Film, and Game

Same subject as 21G.042[J], 21H.352[J], CMS.359[J]

Emma Teng

TR

11-12:30P

14E-310

Analyzing core chapters of the great Chinese epic novel, *Three Kingdoms*, and its adaptations across diverse media, considers what underlies the appeal of this classic narrative over the centuries. Through focus on historical events in the period 206 BC to AD 280, examines the representation of power, diplomacy, war, and strategy, and explores the tension among competing models of political authority and legitimacy. Covers basic elements of classical Chinese political and philosophical thought, and literary and cultural history. Final group project involves digital humanities tools. Readings in translation. Films and video in Chinese with English subtitles.

21L.601[J] (H) Old English and *Beowulf*

Same as 24.916[J]

Arthur Bahr

MW

9:30-11A

4-144

hpæt pe gardena in geardagum þeodcýninga þrym gefrunon hu ða æþelingas ellen fremedon...

Those are the first words of the Old English epic *Beowulf*, and in this class you will learn to read them.

Pre-1900

Besides being the language of Rohan in the novels of Tolkien, Old English (also called Anglo-Saxon) is a language of long, cold, and lonely winters; of haunting beauty found in unexpected places; and of unshakable resolve in the face of insurmountable odds. It is, in short, the perfect language for MIT students.

We will read greatest hits from the epic *Beowulf* as well as moving laments (*The Wanderer*, *Wulf and Eadwacer*, *The Wife's Lament*), the personified Cross's psychedelic and poignant account of the Crucifixion (*The Dream of the Rood*), and riddles whose solutions range from the sacred to the obscene but are always ingenious.

INTERMEDIATE

21L.607 Greek I & 21L.608 Greek II

Eric Driscoll

MW 2:30-4P

2-103

Pre-1900

Greek I (First Half Term: Ends Oct 17) & Greek II (Second Half Term: Begins Oct 20). Introduces basics of ancient Greek: the language of Plato, Sophocles, Thucydides, Euclid, the New Testament, and more! Aimed at laying a foundation to begin reading ancient and/or medieval texts. Greek I and II may be combined (after completion of both) to count as a single HASS-H.

21L.620[J] (H) Introduction to French Literature

Same subject as 21G.320

Leanna Rezvani

MW 9:30-11A

14E-310

A basic study of major French literary genres — poetry, drama, and fiction — and an introduction to methods of literary analysis. Authors include: Voltaire, Balzac, Sand, Baudelaire, Apollinaire, Camus, Sartre, Ionesco, Duras, and Tournier. Special attention devoted to the improvement of French language skills. Taught in French.

21L.626[J] (H) New Culture of Gender: Queer France

Same subject as: 21G.325[J], WGS.233[J]

Bruno Perreau

R 7-10P

14N-313

Is French culture queer? Who are the new LGBTQIA+ authors in France? What are the main concerns of the young queer generation? The class introduces students to the main classical references of queer subcultures from Proust and Vivien to Hocquenghem and Wittig. It also studies debates on postcolonial and globalized LGBTQIA+ identities exploring essays, songs, movies, and novels. Among the authors studied: Didier Eribon, Anne Garréta, Abdellah Taïa, Monique Wittig, Nina Bouraoui, Édouard Louis. Taught in French.

INTERMEDIATE

21L.639[J] (H) Globalization and its Discontents: Spanish-speaking Nations

Same as 21G.739[J]
Joaquín Terrones

TR

9:30-11A

2-103

What do we actually mean by “Latin America”? Is it possible to talk meaningfully about a common identity in a region with such enormous racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity? We will tackle these questions by studying contemporary film, literature, popular music, television, and visual art. In particular, we will study cultural exchanges between Latin America and the rest of the world. How do Latin Americans consume (or resist) foreign goods, ideas, and influences? How do Latin American writers, directors, and artists create work that speaks to both local and international audiences?

Course materials will include a focus on work produced by Black and Indigenous authors, filmmakers, artists, and performers from the region. Taught in Spanish.

21L.640[J] (H) The New Spain: 1977-Present

Same as 21G.740[J]
Margery Resnick

T

7-10P

14N-325

Deals with the vast changes in Spanish social, political and cultural life that have taken place since the death of Franco (1975). Topics include the transition to democracy, new freedom from censorship, the re-emergence of strong movements for regional autonomy (the Basque region and Catalonia), the new cinema including Almodóvar and Saura, educational reforms instituted by the socialist government, the changes in the role of the Catholic church, the emergence of one of the world's most progressive gender environment, and new forms of fiction. Special emphasis on the mass media as a vehicle for expression in Spain. Materials include magazines, newspapers, films, television series, fiction, and essays. Each student chooses a research project that focuses on an issue of personal interest. Taught in Spanish

INTERMEDIATE

21L.S89 (H) French Modernity Special Subject in Literature

Aliko Songolo

T

7-10P

14N-313

“French Modernity” will study a variety of representative texts from French-language literary movements dating from mid-nineteen century France to the present and beyond the boundaries of France. Modernity is understood as a rejection of tradition and norms of writing and living of the past. It invents and espouses new forms of writing and thinking about life and culture. The old ways of writing were considered no longer adequate to reflect rapid social change fueled by the industrial revolution and the invention of new technologies. The course will cover all three literary genres (poetry, theater, novel) and even a selection of artists such as Henri Matisse. It will include Francophone writers such as Aimé Césaire from Martinique in the Caribbean and Léopold Senghor from Senegal in Africa. Taught in French.

Students will learn how to analyze short poetic texts and to write imitative responses to the poetry. They will also learn to perform a short play throughout the semester. Original research into a literary movement of choice will be the subject of a brief class presentation, to be developed into a short paper for the end of the semester.

SEMINAR

21L.703 (H, CI-M) Murder & Mayhem Remade Studies in Drama

Shankar Raman

TR

9:30-11A

4-251

Pre-1900

This seminar will explore the drama of revenge – from the horrific to the comic and the parodic – across a range of time periods and cultures. Our aim is to come to a deeper understanding of the tragic mode by examining the mechanics, ethics, and aesthetics of payback. Works studied may include Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, plays by Shakespeare and his contemporaries, as well as films by Peter Greenaway and Park Chan-Wook.

21L.704 (H, CI-M) The Poetry of Witness Studies in Poetry

Stephen Tapscott

M

7-10P

14N-112

In our moment, the lyric poem has become one of the few vehicles for the formal of subjective experience, the voice of “the personal.” At least, that is how we popularly characterize the work the lyric does. But what happens when the lyric’s commitments to the personal, the sublime, or the psychological about the facts of the social and political worlds and ideologies? How does the “personal” lyric reform when challenged by repressive regimes, absolutist ideologies, or historical traumas? How do poetic forms and ambitions change? does the lyric poem adapt or resist, under such pressures? –or [less defensively], can lyric poetry serve a documentarian purpose? A subversive purpose? Can it bear moral witness or provoke political change? Does poetry really make nothing happen?

We begin the term by looking at several Anglo-American models for comparison –in part because in some cases international writers read those models as well [Walt Whitman, W.C. Williams, W. H. Auden, Audre Lorde, Langston Hughes]. We move through various genres and thematic modes [pressures on the lyric under totalitarian/rightist regimes, under occupation, under conditions of extreme poverty, in situations of repression based on gender or object-choice, in exile, under threat of linguistic extinction, and in other situations.] We consider whether literary Modernism was a dead-end, or incomplete project, and we consider how satire, or pastiche, or laughter, or formal reorganization, can also forms of social “testimony” or witness. We work through poems by South American and Spanish writers [Federico García Lorca, Gabriela Mistral, Antonio Machado, Pablo Neruda], Greek/North African [Constantine Cavafy], Russian [Anna Akhmatova, Boris Pasternak], Ukrainian and the Ukrainian Diaspora [Taras Shevchenko, Ilya Kaminsky], Caribbean [Aimé Césaire], Palestinian [Mahmoud Darwish]. German [Paul Celan, Bertolt Brecht, Nelly Sachs]. and Polish [Czesław Miłosz, Wisława Szymborska].

Two disclaimers: (1) the reading-list tilts toward Eurocentrism because the languages of those countries are languages I feel confident about discussing (other competencies are welcome and invited!); (2) North America’s robust tradition of poems-of-witness are not the focus of this seminar, because attention to those works is the focus in other seminars (where, I hope, students will encounter them). Discussion-format, in-class reports, final project. No final exam.

SEMINAR

21L.706 (H, CI-M) On Love Studies in Film

Meets with CMS.830
Eugenie Brinkema

W 10-1P

56-169

This seminar explores the topic of love through the encounter of cinema and philosophical and film-theoretical accounts of care, desire, friendship, passion, intimacy, and both sanctioned and risky forms of entwinement. Films include *His Girl Friday*, *The Graduate*, *Casablanca*, *Before Sunrise*, *All that Heaven Allows*, *Brokeback Mountain*, *In the Mood for Love*, *Blue is the Warmest Color*, *Ali: Fear Eats the Soul*, *Audition*, *Amour Fou*, *The Worst Person in the World*, *Stranger by the Lake*, *Moonlight*, *Anora*, and *Her*. Readings from *Aristophanes*, *Barthes*, *Berlant*, *Bersani*, *Derrida*, *Freud*, *Hegel*, *Stendhal*, *The Dictionary of Untranslatables*, and film theorists. Each week, we will closely analyze the aesthetic features of a range of films in order to ask how cinema explores conceptual problems related to love, including whether eros is a matter of closure/resolution or aperture/rupture; whether it involves a search for similitude or an encounter with difference; whether love is a form of knowledge or an intimacy based on strangeness; and love's relation to sincerity versus cynicism, physical desire versus spiritual purity, and the eternal versus the ephemeral or provisional. We'll explore love of the friend, self, stranger, and love's relationship to its opposites: hatred, the death of love, the memory of love. We'll ask of our films whether their account of love is marked by affects of joy, ecstasy, satisfaction, happiness, or whether their theory of love is marked by pathos, melancholy, anxiety, disgust, resentment, loneliness? We'll wonder whether love itself (or a certain myth of love) requires reinvention, and how might cinema imagine or propose that reinvention? Pre-requisite: One prior course in film or permission of instructor.

SEMINAR

21L.707 (H, CI-M) The Art of War and Peace Problems in Cultural Interpretation

Wiebke Denecke

MW 11-12:30P

5-216

Pre-1900

Barring natural catastrophes, the single most important factor enhancing human flourishing has been a society's ability to conduct war with other means: diplomacy. This closely connects the arts of war to the arts of peace. Over the past two centuries Western European and American hegemony have globally enforced the "Westphalian system" of diplomacy, which relies on principles of the equal sovereignty of states, contractual obligations, and coalition-building. Yet, this system is currently failing in the face of strongman politics, world order polarization, mass migration, deep-rooted ethnic conflict, climate injustice, and gross inequality. How can we remake our diplomatic order in the service of collective human flourishing? And what diplomatic models across world history have encouraged the art of peace-making?

We explore this question through six modules. First, we take stock of our historical moment, examining the roots of today's Westphalian world order and of the current failure of diplomacy. Next, we build our conceptual toolbox by reading strategy classics for War & Peace, including Sunzi's Art of War, Kautilya's Treatise on Statecraft, Machiavelli's The Prince, Napoleon's Military Maxims, Joseph Nye on soft power and more. We then explore different diplomatic systems across world history through historical and literary texts, including Chinese, Japanese, and Korean diplomatic poetry, Ferdowsi's Shahnameh, The Book of Kings, Luo Guanzhong's Romance of the Three Kingdoms. This prepares us to become creative, critical and constructive in our last three modules. We will play games of diplomacy with experts from the MIT Game Lab and work through the K-Drama Queen Seondeok to create a theory of K-drama diplomacies. These two modules help us assess how our media culture primes us for success—or failure—of peace-making and human flourishing and will inspire us to reflect on how to design diplomacy games and TV series that prime us for better diplomacy. The class reaches its highpoint with a "New Diplomacy Summit," where students present their final projects—strategies and tools for building a better world through better diplomacy. We can test our ideas against the real world in a final zoom meeting with diplomats and policy-makers associated with the [Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator](#).



Date: Mondays (except holidays) during the semester

Time: 4:15pm - 5:45pm

Location: Building 14, 14N-417



COME BY FOR SNACKS & TEA WITH
LITERATURE SECTION FRIENDS,
INSTRUCTORS, & STUDENTS!



LIT TEA



FOR MORE INFO: LIT@MIT.EDU



21L Literature Major, Minor, & Concentration Information

COURSE 21L MAJOR

The **major in Literature** is well-suited to those students who want to experience a wide range of literary and filmic texts across historical periods. Can be completed along side any other major at MIT as a double major with the following degree requirements:

180 UNITS TOTAL BEYOND THE GIRS

TEN SUBJECTS IN LITERATURE

- No more than **three** subjects may be introductory, at least **three** must be intermediate subjects, and at least **three** must be seminars.
- Minimum of **three** subjects that focus on pre-1900 texts.

COURSE 21E OR 21S MAJOR

The **joint major in Literature** is another pathway for students interested in combining study of Literature with a STEM field. Please see the bulletin for more details.

180 UNITS TOTAL BEYOND THE GIRS

AT LEAST EIGHT SUBJECTS IN LITERATURE

- At least **eight** subjects in Literature... along with at least **six** subjects in the science or engineering field of the student's choice.
- Of the **eight** Literature subjects, no more than **three** may be introductory subjects, at least **two** must be intermediate subjects and at least **two** must be seminars.
- Minimum of **three** subjects that focus on pre-1900 texts.

MINOR

The **minor in Literature** allows for an exciting focus either in film or literature. The minor program in literature requires **six subjects**:

The **minor program with a film focus** also requires **six** subjects including at least **three** subjects from the following list:

- At least **one** and no more than **two** introductory Literature subjects
- **Two to three** Literature intermediate subjects. Six-unit samplings subjects may be petitioned to count for a maximum of **two** twelve-unit intermediate subjects
- At least **two** pre-1900 courses
- At least **two** seminars

- 21L.011 Introduction to Film Studies
- 21L.431 Shakespeare on Film and Media
- 21L.433 Film Styles and Genres
- 21L.435 Literature and Film
- 21L.706 Studies in Film

For more info on either minor programs, please email: litminoradvisor@mit.edu

CONCENTRATION

The **concentration in Literature** requires **three** subjects including **one** subject from the intermediate tier (400-, 500-, 600-) and **one** subject from the seminar (700-) tier. **Two** six-unit samplings courses (from the 300 and 600 tier) may be combined by petition to count as one intermediate-tier subject. Certain subjects from outside of Literature may also qualify as part of a Literature concentration with

permission of the instructor. To propose a concentration, you must meet with a concentration advisor, please email

litconcentrationadvisor@mit.edu

**AT LEAST THREE
SUBJECTS IN LITERATURE**

