

SPRING 2018

# LITERATURE SUBJECTS

Course 21L Supplement to the Bulletin



“Poetry is not only dream and vision; it is the skeleton architecture of our lives. It lays the foundations for a future of change, a bridge across our fears of what has never been before.”

—Audre Lorde

*Invisible Man* by Diana Bryan



LITERATURE SECTION

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Note: Rooms and times subject to change

21L Literature Subject Descriptions - Spring 2018

Subject #	Units	Designation	Subject Title	Sp 18 Faculty	Days	Times	Rooms
<b>INTRODUCTORY</b>							
21L.001	3-0-9	H CHH	<b>Foundations of Western Literature: Homer to Dante</b>	Frampton, S.	MW	3:30-5p	8-119
21L.004 (Sec 1)	3-0-9	H CHH	<b>Poems and how to use them [Reading Poetry]</b>	Fuller, M.	MW	1-2:30p	2-103
21L.004 (Sec 2)	3-0-9	H CHH	<b>Reading Poetry</b>	Jackson, N.	MW	9:30-11a	1-375
21L.005	3-0-9	AH CHH	<b>Introduction to Drama</b>	Henderson, D.	TR	11-12:30p	5-234
21L.007	3-0-9	H CHH	<b>21st Century Global Voices [World Literatures]</b>	Terrones, J.	TR	9:30-11a	56-167
21L.008	3-0-9	AH <small>CHH - Same subject as 24.912J, 21A, 114J, 21H, 106J, 21M, 630J, 21W, 741J, WGS, 190J</small>	<b>Black Matters: Intro to Black Studies</b>	Degraff, M.	T	1-4p	32-144
21L.009	3-0-9	H CHH	<b>Shakespeare</b>	Donaldson, P.	TR	3:30-5p	16-628
			<b>The Film Experience (Lecture)</b>		T	4-5p & 7-8p	3-270
			The Film Experience (Screening)		T	8-10p	3-270
21L.011	3-3-6	A CHH	The Film Experience (R1)	Thorburn, D.	R	3-4p	1-277
			The Film Experience (R2)		R	3-4p	1-273
			The Film Experience (R3)		R	4-5p	1-277
			The Film Experience (R4)		R	4-5p	1-273
<b>SAMPLINGS 6-UNITS</b>							
21L.310	2-0-4		<b>Literature Without Borders [Bestsellers] (Ends March 23)</b>	Kelley, W.	TR	1-2:30p	4-144
21L.325	2-0-4		<b>Collections and Citizens [Small Wonders] (Begins April 2)</b>	Kelley, W.	TR	1-2:30p	4-144
21L.338	2-0-4		<b>Reading in the Original (Begins April 2)</b>	Frampton, S.	MW	7-8:30p	2-103
<b>INTERMEDIATE</b>							
21L.430	3-0-9	H HASS Meets with CMS.920	<b>Use and Abuse of the Fairy Tale [Popular Culture and Narrative]</b>	Donaldson, W.	TR	9:30-11a	4-253
21L.435	3-3-6	H HASS Meets with CMS.840	<b>Literature and Film</b>	Fleche, A.	MW	11-12:30p	1-135
21L.449	3-0-9	H HASS Elective	<b>The Wilds of Literature</b>	Gubar, M.	TR	1-2:30p	2-103
21L.488	3-0-9	H HASS Elective	<b>Street Haunting in the Global City [Contemporary Literature]</b>	Abramson, A.	TR	11-12:30p	5-217
21L.490	3-0-9	H <small>Same subject as 21G.077J Subject meets with 21G.618</small>	<b>Introduction to Classic Russian Literature</b>	Khotimsky, M.	TR	2:30-4p	14N-217
21L.504	3-0-9	H Same subject as WGS.140	<b>Woke Lit: The Protest Tradition Today [Race and Identity in American Literature]</b>	Terrones, J.	MW	7-8:30p	8-119
21L.580	3-0-9	A	<b>Translations</b>	Tapscott, S	M	7-10p	2-105
<b>INTERNATIONAL LITERATURES</b>							
21L.601J (Sec 1)	3-0-9	H Same Subject as 24.916	<b>Old English and Beowulf</b>	Bahr, A.	MW	1-2:30p	4-253
21L.601J (Sec 2)	3-0-9	H Same Subject as 24.916	<b>Old English and Beowulf</b>		MW	3-4:30p	2-103
21L.613/614	2-0-4	H	<b>Latin Readings (Ends March 23)</b>	Frampton, S.	MW	7-8:30p	4-146
21L.639J	3-0-9	H Same subject as 21F.739	<b>Consuming Latin America [Globalization and its Discontents: Spanish-speaking Nations]</b>	Terrones, J.	MW	3:30-5p	1-242
<b>SEMINAR</b>							
21L.702	3-0-9	H CH-M	<b>Novels and Professions [Studies in Fiction]</b>	Kelley, W.	TR	9:30-11a	4-144
21L.704	3-0-9	H CH-M	<b>Songs, Sonnets and the Story of English [Studies in Poetry]</b>	Henderson, D.	TR	3:30-5p	4-253
21L.705	3-0-9	H CH-M	<b>Chaucer and the Canterbury Tales [Major Authors]</b>	Bahr, A.	MW	9:30-11a	2-103
21L.706	3-3-6	H <small>CH-M meets with CMS.830 HASS</small>	<b>The Contemporary Horror Film [Studies in Film] (Lecture)</b>	Brinkema, E	W	1-4p	1-375
			<b>The Contemporary Horror Film [Studies in Film] (Screening)</b>		M	7-10p	1-379

TIME	Monday/Wednesday	Tuesday/Thursday
9:00 AM		
9:30 AM	21L.705 AB 9:30-11a 2-103	21L.430 WD 9:30-11a 4-253
10:00 AM		21L.702 WK 9:30-11a 4-144
10:30 AM		21L.007 JT 9:30-11a 56-167
11:00 AM	21L.004 Sec2 NJ 9:30-11a 1-375	
11:30 AM	21L.435 AF 11-12:30p 1-135	21L.005 DH 11-12:30p 5-234
12:00 PM		21L.488 AA 11-12:30p 5-217
12:30 PM		
1:00 PM	21L.004 Sec1 MIF 1-2:30p 2-103	21L.310 WK 1-2:30p 4-144
1:30 PM	21L.706 EB W 1-4p Lecture 1-375	21L.325 WK 1-2:30p 4-144
2:00 PM		Ends March 23 Begins April 2
2:30 PM		21L.449 MG 1-2:30p 2-103
3:00 PM		
3:30 PM	21L.601 Sec2 AB 3-4:30p 2-103	21L.009 PD 3:30-5p 16-628
4:00 PM	21L.639 JT 3:30-5p 1-242	21L.704 DH 3:30-5p 4-253
4:30 PM		21L.011 DT R 3-4p Recitation 1&2
5:00 PM		21L.011 DT R 4-5p Recitation 3&4
		21L.011 DT T 4-5p & 7-8p 3-270 Lecture
7:00 PM		
7:30 PM	21L.580 ST M 7-10p 2-105	
8:00 PM	21L.613/614 7-8:30p 4-146	21L.338 SF 7-8:30p 2-103
8:30 PM	21L.706 EB M 7-10p Screening 1-379	21L.504 JT 7-8:30p 8-119
9:00 PM		21L.011 DT T 8-10p 3-270 Screening
9:30 PM		

## INTRODUCTORY

### Foundations of Western Literature: Homer to Dante

21L.001 (H, CI-H)

MW 3:30 - 5:00 PM

Instructor: **Stephanie Frampton**

Room: 8-119

Masterpieces of European literature read with an emphasis on understanding the roots of an expansive classical tradition stemming from ancient Greece and Rome. Core texts will be Vergil's *Aeneid*, the Homeric *Odyssey*, and Dante's *Inferno*. We meet heroes and monsters, gods and demons, and read deeply into three of the foundational texts of Western literature. We ask what it means to be "a classic" and explore the ways in which literary authority comes into being in the context of history and society.

### Reading Poetry Poems and how to read them

21L.004 (H, CI-H) [Section 1]

MW 1:00 - 2:30 PM

Instructor: **Mary Fuller**

Room: 2-103

How do you read a poem? Intuition is not the only answer. In this class, we will investigate some of the formal tools poets use – meter, sound, syntax, word-choice, and other properties of language – as well as explore a range of approaches to reading poetry, from the old (memorization and reading out loud) to the new (digitally enabled visualization and annotation). We will also think collectively about how to approach difficult poems. In the process, we will read a wide variety of work in English, from the early middle ages up through the present; the spread might include T.S. Eliot, Derek Walcott, Elizabeth Bishop, Gregory Pardlo, Walt Whitman, James Weldon Johnson, Emily Dickinson, Adrienne

Rich, Gwendolyn Brooks, Dr. Seuss, W.C. Williams, John Milton, Nick Montfort, Louise Gluck, Wallace Stevens, Tyehimba Jess. The last two weeks will be devoted to readings proposed and presented by the class.

### Reading Poetry

21L.004 (H, CI-H) [Section 2]

MW 9:30 - 11:00 AM

Instructor: **Noel Jackson**

Room: 1-375

An introduction to poetry in English, chiefly by British and American poets. We will explore Renaissance, eighteenth-century, Romantic, and Modernist poetry in particular detail. Though the organization of the subject is 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 Shakespeare, Sidney, Wordsworth, Keats, Dickinson, Frost, Eliot, and Elizabeth Bishop.

### Introduction to Drama

21L.005 (A/H, CI-H)

TR 11:00 - 12:30 PM

Instructor: **Diana Henderson**

Room: 5-234

Drama as a genre combines the literary art of storytelling (and often poetry) with live performance in a shared space. As a form of ritual as well as entertainment, drama has served to unite communities and challenge social norms, to delight and disturb its audiences. We will study drama from the outside in and the inside out: class members will analyze plays that exemplify different kinds of dramatic structure and functions; attend and review theatrical performances; compose dialogue; and perform short scenes in class. Readings will

include plays from a variety of times and places, including examples of classical Greek and English Renaissance tragedy, medieval and modern comedy, Japanese Noh drama, and contemporary plays from the United States, Europe, and Africa.

## World Literatures

### 21st Century Global Voices

21L.006 (H, CI-H)  
T R 9:30 - 11:00 AM  
Instructor: **Joaquin Terrones**  
Room: 56-167

Literature has always reached across borders, hemispheres and oceans in order to explore the conflicts and connections between cultures. In this course, we will discuss contemporary novels, short stories and graphic novels by non-Western authors in order to analyze how they intervene in the current global cultural landscape. We will study the ways in which these works of fiction reflect and refract the political, economic, and religious forces shaping the world, as well as the specific national contexts in which they were written.

Authors studied will include:  
Chimamanda Adichie (Nigeria), Patrick Chamoiseau (Martinique), Mia Couto (Mozambique), Santiago Gamboa (Colombia), Mohsin Hamid (Pakistan), Yuri Herrera (Mexico), Adriana Lisboa (Brazil), Haruki Murakami (Japan), Arundhati Roy (India), Marjane Satrapi (Iran) and Kyung-Sook Shin (South Korea).

## Black Matters: Introduction to Black Studies

21L.008 (A/H, CI-H) [Same subject as 24.912],  
21A.114J, 21H.106J, 21M.630J, 21W.741J, WGS.190J]  
T 1:00 - 4:00 PM  
Instructor: **Michel Degraff**  
Room: 32-144

Interdisciplinary survey of people of African descent that draws on the overlapping approaches of history, literature, anthropology, legal studies, media studies, performance, linguistics, and creative writing. Connects the experiences of African-Americans and of other American minorities, focusing on social, political, and cultural histories, and on linguistic patterns. Includes lectures, discussions, workshops, and required field trips that involve minimal cost to students.

For more information about this subject, contact History.

## Shakespeare

21L.009 (H, CI-H)  
T R 3:30 - 5:00 PM  
Instructor: **Peter Donaldson**  
Room: 16-628

This term, Shakespeare (21L.009) approaches some of the playwright's most enduring works through close reading of the text(s) and through their vibrant and varied afterlife in performance and on film, including scenes from productions from across the world in the MIT Global Shakespeares Video and Performance Archive. In addition to several papers, work for the subject will include class discussion, notes on each play, short student presentations, and plays will include *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *The Merchant of Venice*. We may also attend one or more theatrical performances, depending on what is available in the Boston area during the semester.

## The Film Experience

21L.011 (A, CI-H)

T 4:00 - 5:00 PM & 7:00 - 8:00 PM - Room 3-270

T 8:00 - 10:00 PM - Room 3-270

R 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM Room 1-277

R 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM Room 1-273

R 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM Room 1-277

R 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM Room 1-273

Instructor: **David Thorburn**

This course is an introductory survey of classic films. Emphasis falls equally on cultural and on artistic matters: on films as anthropological and historical artifacts that articulate the values and assumptions of particular societies and eras and on films as works of art. The course aims to sharpen students' analytic skills, to give them a sense of the history and cultural significance of movies, and to improve their writing. The course is organized in three segments: the silent era (films by such directors as Chaplin, Keaton and Murnau); Hollywood genres (Capra, Ford, Huston, Hitchcock, Fosse); international masters (Renoir, DeSica, Kurosawa, Wong Kar-wai).  
Format: two lectures, one recitation section, one three-hour screening each week.

## SAMPLING

### Bestsellers

#### Literature Without Borders

21L.310 (Ends March 23)

T R 1:00 - 2:30 PM

Instructor: **Wyn Kelley**

Room: 4-144

This class examines popular novels that trouble the boundaries between nations or states. In books by bestselling authors like Louise Erdrich, Edwidge Danticat, Art Spiegelman, Mohsin Hamid, and Ruth Ozeki, we will encounter stories of global migration and itinerancy, questions about identity, family, and the past, and narratives of a search for home. At the same time, these works

break out of established or familiar boundaries, engaging with terror and risk at the borders of self, nation, and literary form.

### Small Wonders Collections and Citizens

21L.325 (Begins April 2)

T R 1:00 - 2:30 PM

Instructor: **Wyn Kelley**

Room: 4-144

Taking as a model Claudia Rankine's *Citizen*—a call to action and at the same time an artful gathering of poems and images—this class will study collections whose principles of design call attention to themselves and to the roles of citizens in a complex society. Along with Rankine we will look at Walt Whitman's "Live Oak With Moss" group and Emily Dickinson's *Fascicle 24*, two collections of poems written in the context of sectional strife and civil war in the U.S. Ralph Waldo Emerson's *Representative Men* and Jorge Luis Borges's *A Universal History of Infamy* present imaginative biographies that raise questions about what it means to be a hero—or a criminal. Two short-story collections, Herman Melville's *Piazza Tales* and Jhumpa Lahiri's *Unaccustomed Earth*, offer narratives of catastrophic displacement and unsettlement across a global span. What do collections say about humans as citizens? How can they offer new routes for imagination, inquiry, and activism?

### Reading in the Original

21L.338 (Begins April 2)

M W 7:00 - 8:30 PM

Instructor: **Stephanie Frampton**

Room: 2-103

Begin to read ancient Greek literature in the original language. Our text this semester is Lucian's *True Story*, considered one of the first

examples of science fiction in the Western tradition. This course provides a bridge for students with one semester or more of formal Greek training (Greek 1/2, high school Greek, or equivalent) between the study of Greek grammar and vocabulary and the reading of Greek authors. May be repeated for credit if the content differs.

## INTERMEDIATE

### Popular Culture and Narrative Use and Abuse of the Fairy Tale

21L.430 (H) [Meets with CMS.920]

T R 9:30 - 11:00 AM

Instructor: **William Donaldson**

Room: 4-253

This course takes a deep look at a big subject. We ask where Fairy Tales come from, surveying the work of the famous Brothers Grimm, before moving on to historic fairy belief in traditional Celtic societies. We look at the structure of Fairy Tales, and how they are conditioned by oral transmission, and inherited story-telling techniques.

We ask what Fairy Tales mean, considering a range of Freudian and Jungian interpretations, and the claims made for them as a key psychological tool.

There follow two case studies of the abuse of Fairy Tales, firstly by the Nazis in 1930s Germany for the purposes of political indoctrination, and, secondly, by Walt Disney in the famous series of animated movies starting with Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. We consider the filmic techniques involved, and the charges of sexism and political conservatism frequently laid at Disney's door.

We end with a close study of modern literary Fairy Tales from writers including Hans Christian Andersen, Charles Dickens, L. Frank Baum, Margaret Atwood, and Angela Carter.

The goal of the class is to teach students how to approach cultural history in a broad-based multi-disciplinary manner, using a blend of folklore, history, psychology and film and textual studies. The student will gain a detailed appreciation of the links between oral tradition and print, and the means by which culture is transmitted down the centuries via a wide range of media.

### Literature & Film

21L.435 (H) [Meets with CMS.840]

M W 11:00 - 12:30 PM

Instructor: **Anne Fleche**

Room: 1-135

When the Russian director Sergei Eisenstein wanted to explain his theory of film editing, he turned to the haiku: what is the poem, he asked, but a list of separate shots? Best-selling writer Ben Mezrich writes his books only after he's sold the movie rights. In this course we'll ask, how does literature anticipate film? And how does film shape the work of literature? We'll mine our own experiences with reading, writing and film watching, ask questions about things like racial imagery and global reading, and consider forms like narrative, the lyric, and the drama, as well as their film adaptations.

No previous technical knowledge of literature or film studies is required.

### The Wilds of Literature

21L.449 (H)

T R 1:00 - 2:30 PM

Instructor: **Marah Gubar**

Room: 2-103

Nowadays, when we think about the interaction between human beings and nature, we tend to focus on environmental damage: deforestation, pollution, climate change and the catastrophes to which it has contributed. In this course, however,



we will be reading Anglo-American literature that represents the interaction between humans and the natural world as joyous, sublime, revelatory, and mutually sustaining. We will traverse the Alps with William Wordsworth, immerse ourselves in Walden Pond with Henry David Thoreau, and rove the Yorkshire moors with Frances Hodgson Burnett. We will listen to African-American poets and Jewish tunesmiths “sing America” and read breathtakingly beautiful short stories and nature writing about plants and animals, hiking and fishing, the earth, the ocean, and the sky. Without denying that human beings have damaged the world we inhabit, and that certain groups of people have been systematically barred from enjoying equal access to its beauties and bounty, we will focus on the role that pleasure, resilience, wonder, and hope might play in helping us to envision new modes of engagement with each other and an ever-changing environment.

## **Contemporary Literature** **Street Haunting in the Global City**

21L.488 (H)  
T R 11:00 - 12:30 PM  
Instructor: **Anna Abramson**  
Room: 5-217

In this course we will walk alongside narrators and characters as they wander city streets leading through New York, Calcutta, London, Brussels, Los Angeles, and Lagos. We will focus on everyday explorations that open onto some of the most pressing issues in contemporary literature: terrorism and drone warfare, climate change and superstorms, national belonging in the face of shifting borders, identities marked by legacies of slavery and colonization. Course participants will consider not only how protagonists peel back these fascinating layers of urban and national history, but also how contemporary authors self-consciously reach back to literary techniques that were championed by an earlier generation of modernist writers. In addition to writing analytical papers, students will have the option to explore the city streets of Boston/Cambridge and to

subsequently produce their own creative writing, as part of our collective effort to understand what it means to write fiction – right now.

Primary texts will include Amit Chaudhuri’s *A New World*, Teju Cole’s *Open City*, Ian McEwan’s *Saturday*, Karen Yamashita’s *Tropic of Orange*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Americanah*, and Ben Lerner’s *10:04*.

## **Introduction to the Classics of Russian Literature**

21L.490 (H) [Same subject as 21G.618]  
T R 2:30 - 4:00 PM  
Instructor: **Maria Khotimsky**  
Room: 14N-217

Explores the works of classical Russian writers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, including stories and novels by Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Chekhov, Bunin, Nabokov, Platonov, Solzhenitsyn and others. Focuses on their approaches to portraying self and society. Examines how writers responded to pivotal events in Russian history, including revolutions, wars, years of the Soviet regime, and the collapse of the communist system. Taught in English with a project that requires research in Russian.

For more information about this subject, contact Global Studies and Languages.

## Race and Identity in American Literature

### Woke Lit: The Protest Tradition Today

21L.504 (H) [Same subject as WGS.140]  
 MW 7:00 - 8:30 PM  
 Instructor: **Joaquin Terrones**  
 Room: 8-119

What role do writers play in a social movement? How does literature today respond to systemic racism and rampant xenophobia; travel bans and deportation sweeps; police brutality and mass incarceration? Can a poem, a novel, or an essay make a difference? This course will tackle these questions by pairing contemporary literature, music, film, and television with works by earlier writers who used literature to speak out, fight back, and bear witness.

The pairings we will analyze and discuss include:

James Baldwin and Ta-Nehisi Coates  
 Audre Lorde and Toni Morrison  
 Frederick Douglass and Colson Whitehead  
 Gloria Anzaldúa and Valeria Luiselli  
 José Martí and Lin Manuel-Miranda  
 Nina Simone and Solange Knowles  
 Marvin Gaye and D'Angelo  
 W.E.B. DuBois's *The Souls of Black Folk* and Jordan Peele's *Get Out*  
 Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* and Sam Esmail's *Mr. Robot*

## Translations

21L.580 (A)  
 M 7:00 - 10:00 PM  
 Instructor: **Stephen Tapscott**  
 Room: 2-105

In this subject we'll work with literary texts, chiefly poems. We'll read theories of translation (Is it possible? Is it necessary-but-undesirable? Is it even ethical? Is it imperialistic or politically-charged?

Is it more like paraphrase or transformation or musical-performance?), will do comparisons of texts-in-their-original-languages and texts-in-translation, and will try some translations and "versions" ourselves. We'll consider whether transferring from one medium or genre (e.g., a poem or a novel) to another (e.g., film, opera) is a mode of "translation"—and also what to do when a text is considered sacred (what happens when we translate the Bible?) Or when a machine does the work? Or when a language is historically compromised (how does a Jewish writer use German after the Shoah?).

No other languages-competence except in English is required (we can discuss the processes and theories of "translating" texts from languages one doesn't know); students who do know other languages, however, are welcome.

Theorists include Walter Benjamin, Benjamin Whorf, Nancy Chodorow, George Steiner, Jon Felstiner, William Gass. Artists whose work we'll read include Basho, Li Bai, Ezra Pound, Xu Zhimo, Lam Thi My Da, Ngo Tu Lap, Cesar Vallejo, Robert Frost, Dante, Alfred Lord Tennyson, Rainer Maria Rilke, Pablo Neruda, Gabriela Mistral, Paul Celan, Czeslaw Milosz, Wislawa Szymborska, Aimé Césaire, Samuel Beckett, Constantine Cavafy, Robert Lowell, Charlie Chaplin... and probably others.

## Old English and Beowulf

21L.601 (H)[Same subject as 24.916]  
 [Section 1] MW 1:00 - 2:30 PM  
 Room: 4-253

[Section 2] MW 3:00 - 4:30 PM  
 Room: 2-103  
 Instructor: **Arthur Bahr**

hƿæt ƿe gardena in geardagum ƿeodcyninga ƿrym 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.

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 a host of riddles whose solutions range from the sacred to the obscene but are always ingenious. We will also try our hand at composing our own sentences—and maybe even poems—in Old English.

## INTERNATIONAL LITERATURES

### Latin Readings (Ends Mar. 23)

21L.613/614 (H)  
MW 7:00 - 8:30 PM  
Instructor: **Stephanie Frampton**  
Room: 4-146

Begin to read Latin literature in the original language. Our text this semester is Pliny the Younger's *Letters*, some of the most immediate and intimate documents of Roman life under Emperor Trajan. This course provides a bridge for students with one semester or more of formal Latin training (Latin I/2, high school Latin, or equivalent) between the study of Latin grammar and vocabulary and the reading of Latin authors. May be repeated for credit.

## Globalization and its Disconnects: Spanish-Speaking Nations Consuming Latin America

21L.639J (H) [Same as subject 21F.739]  
MW 3:30 - 5:00 PM  
Instructor: **Joaquin Terrones**  
Room: 1-242

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 focus on 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 include readings by Roberto Bolaño, Valeria Luiselli, Eduardo Galeano, Rita Indiana, and Yuri Herrera; films such as *The Motorcycle Diaries*, *Miss Bala*, *7 Boxes*, and *Wild Tales*; and the work of visual and musical artists including Frida Kahlo, Fernando Botero, Rubén Blades, Celia Cruz, and Calle 13. *Taught in Spanish.*

## SEMINAR

### Studies in Fiction Novels and Professions

21L.702 (H, CI-M)  
TR 9:30 - 11:00 AM  
Instructor: **Wyn Kelley**  
Room: 4-144

With a focus on women authors in the United States—considering, among others, Fanny Fern, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Harriet Jacobs, Kate Chopin, Edith Wharton, Nella Larsen, Louise Erdrich, Toni Morrison, Alison Bechdel—we will

examine novels as productions of women's labor. Studying a history of artistic achievements, we will also read women's literary work as an index of artistic, political, and social change. Writing during periods of intense conflict, these authors turned to and reshaped the novel, and, in different and surprising ways, profess their commitment to literary work in a society where writers often struggle. Issues will include the role of unpaid domestic labor in women's lives, urbanization and social conflict, autonomy and self-expression, and authorship among other professions like commerce, business or the law.

### Studies in Poetry

## Songs, Sonnets and the Story of English

21L.704 (H, CI-M)

T R 3:30 - 5:00 PM

Instructor: **Diana Henderson**

Room: 4-253

Sex, death, God, and rock 'n' roll: from the first century of Modern English until today, the sonnet and other seemingly simple lyric forms have told of enduring obsessions and social change, of politics, gender, and religion. We will explore a range of these poems, as well as theoretical and critical analyses, in order to understand and test the limits of poetic form, genre, and tradition.

Our attention will move between past and present, sound and sight, creativity and communication. Readings will include some of the great Elizabethan sonnet sequences, the heart-rending meditations of Milton, Keats, and Lady Mary Wroth, nineteenth-century exposés of moral and political corruption from Wordsworth to George Meredith, and twentieth-century women's and men's expansions of poetic authority and form across class, race, and nations. Song will vie with written verse, but the surprising range of sonnets in English will provide our anchor as we consider why lyrics, the metaphor of poetic voice, and the legacy of the past remain so compelling—

and important—in the modern world of innovation where talk is cheap.

### Major Authors

## Chaucer and the *Canterbury Tales*

21L.705 (H, CI-M)

M W 9:30 - 11:00 AM

Instructor: **Arthur Bahr**

Room: 2-103

In this course we will read Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, a narrative and poetic collection that is variously stately, bawdy, moving, disturbing, and hilarious. It is also almost always thought-provoking and beautiful. We will read about drunken millers, man-hungry serial monogamists, alchemists who can't stop blowing things up, glad-handing social climbers, bitter provincial bureaucrats, and cooks with disturbingly lax standards of personal hygiene (and more). These pilgrims will in turn tell stories of how nerdy scholars can get the girl while simultaneously humiliating thuggish rivals, why crows are black and can no longer speak, what one thing all mortal women most desire, and whether you can seek out Death without dying yourself (and more). No background in medieval literature or Middle English is expected; enthusiasm for challenging but rewarding material very much is, and will be repaid with interest.

### Studies in Film

## The Contemporary Horror Film

21L.706 (H, CI-M) [Meets with CMS.830]

W 1:00 - 4:00 PM - Room 1-375

M 7:00 - 10:00 PM - Room 1-379

Instructor: **Eugenie Brinkema**

While one popular image of horror is the 1970s American slasher film, the cinema of repugnance and fear is a vibrant transhistorical and transnational mode of filmmaking that has undergone extraordinary shifts in the last thirty

years. This seminar will focus on horror films of the last three decades hailing from a dozen different countries, examining films comparatively, noting stylistic connections and theorizing the many ways violence, shock, trauma, disgust, anxiety and every manner of the terrible are portrayed. Each week will focus on a different conceptual area, including monstrosity, surrealism, rules, reflexivity, gender and sexuality, extremity, and the postmodern turn.

Films include: *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, *Halloween*, *The Shining*, *Pan's Labyrinth*, *Ringu*, *Let the Right One In*, *Shaun of the Dead*, *Haute Tension*, *Martyrs*, *Scream*, *[REC]*, *Saw*, *The Human Centipede*, *Rubber*, *The Cabin in the Woods*, *Only Lovers Left Alive*, and *A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night*. Readings from philosophers and film theorists will help us understand the way horror films negotiate violence, trauma, and pain; how they grapple with ethics, politics, and historical allegory; their representations of gender, sexuality and embodiment; formal questions, including narrative, sonic and visual style; and how their relationship to violence intersects with (is influenced by, is in dialogue with) or departs from (even opposes, radically upends), our more ordinary language sense of "horror film."



## CONCENTRATION

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Students come to Literature to fulfill their Concentrations for many reasons. Some love to read great books, plays, or poems, or want to explore film and media studies. Some wish to hone their skills in thinking and writing about literary questions. Others enjoy participating in lively discussion in small classes. Many have favorite authors or periods they want to know better.

Concentrations may be organized by genre (poetry, drama, fiction, film), historical period and/or national literature (Renaissance, nineteenth-century British and American literatures, modern American literature), subject of study (popular culture, media studies, literature and aesthetic theory), or theme (race and imperialism, literature and the city, etc.).

## MINOR

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A Literature Minor lays the foundation for advanced study by enhancing the student's appreciation of major narrative, poetic and dramatic texts in relation to the cultures that produced them. In addition, it allows the student to develop a familiarity with interdisciplinary approaches, and encourages engagement with film and newer media.

The Literature Minor is designed to allow a student to make a smooth transition from a prior Concentration in Literature, as well as to progress smoothly towards a Major in Literature (should the student so desire).

## MAJOR

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Majoring in Literature at MIT combines a broad coverage of a range of different literary and cultural fields with the in-depth exploration of particular domains. To ensure coverage, students organize their restricted electives in Literature according to one of two rubrics: Historical Periods or Thematic Complexes. More sustained exploration of specific domains is achieved by taking Seminars in areas of interest. In addition, students contemplating graduate work in Literature or a related field are encouraged to consider completing a Literature Thesis.

Students considering majoring in Literature should first see our Undergraduate Academic Administrator to declare interest and to arrange a Major Advisor.

For a list of current term advisors, consult the Literature Section website <http://lit.mit.edu/academic-advisors/> or the bulletin board outside Literature Headquarters, 14N-407. For more information, contact Daria Johnson at 617-253-1659 or email [dalseej@mit.edu](mailto:dalseej@mit.edu).

