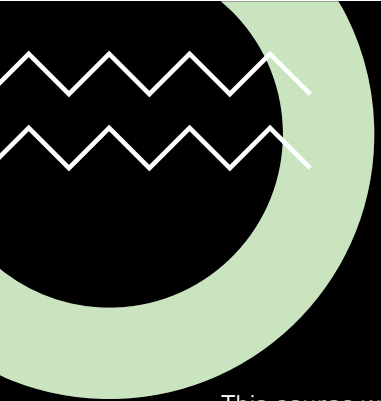




The Department of English

Spring 2026
Grad Seminars



The History of the Book in Modernity

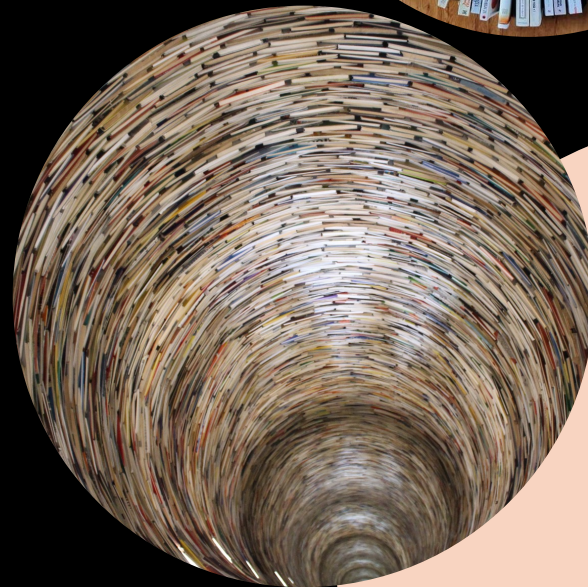
English 5612
Professor David Brewer

Tu, Th 12:45 - 2:05

This course will investigate books and the uses to which they were put (not all of which involved reading) from the advent of mechanized printing and paper manufacture in the early nineteenth century to the present. We'll range widely in terms of genre, language, and price point and will pay close attention to books both as material objects to be collected, displayed, passed from hand to hand, or destroyed and as bearers of beautiful, stirring, useful, or scandalous texts.

The course will be entirely embedded in the collections of OSU's Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, which means that you'll have the chance to examine and work with hundreds of books over the course of the semester, ranging from zines, political ephemera, and self-help books to now monumental (and very expensive) first editions of canonical literature, science, and visual art.

And at the close of the semester, you and your colleagues will collectively curate a pop-up exhibition of material from the Rare Books and Manuscripts Library that will be open to the public (and so give you the opportunity to engage in a more public-facing form of the humanities than most classes provide).



Narrative Theory, Comics Theory, and Comics

[Studies in Graphic Narrative]

English 5664

Professor Jim Phelan

Th 9:15 - 12:00

What can narrative theory and comics do for each other? How does narrative theory, including existing comics theory, illuminate the complex art of comics? How does that complex art, especially in the hands (!) of practitioners such as Art Spiegelman and Roz Chast, require revisions or extensions of existing theory? We'll explore these questions in relation to a range of graphic narratives, both fictional and nonfictional.



Utopia and Dystopia: A Literary Tour

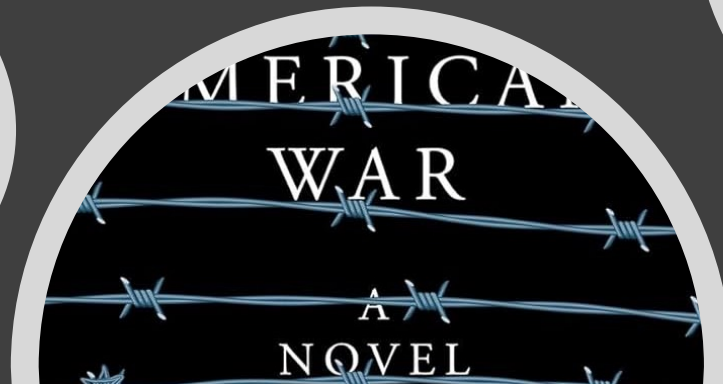
[Group Studies]

English 6788
Professor Beth Hewitt

W 12:15 – 3:00

In this class we will read across a few centuries of utopian and dystopian literature—from Thomas More (1516) to Omar El Akkad (2017). Along the way, we will read work by authors such as William Morris, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Sutton Griggs, H.G. Wells, George Orwell, Octavia Butler, Ursula LeGuin, and Margaret Atwood.

Following Fredric Jameson, we will ask what is lost with the historical shift from utopian to dystopian fiction and we read other important theorists of the genres and concepts.



Fieldwork and the Ethnography of Communication

(Intro to Folklore II)

English 6751

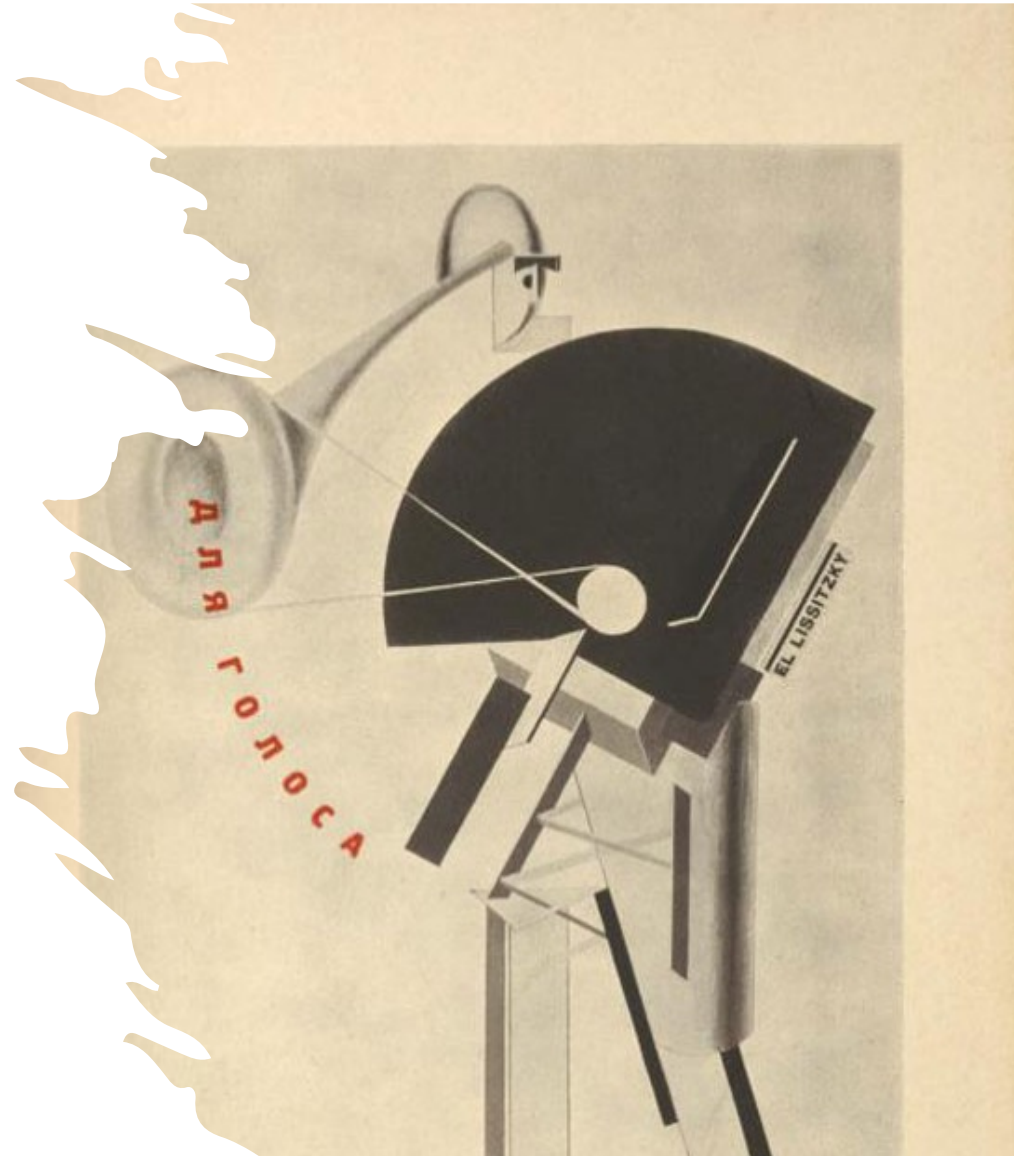
Professor Galey Modan

Tu 12:15 - 3:00

This course is a graduate-level introduction to ethnography that is rooted in the perspectives and practices of folklore, sociolinguistics, and linguistic anthropology.

Students will conduct semester-long mini-ethnographies on a topic of their choosing. You will develop skills in approaching members of a community, observing social interaction while participating in it, developing research questions, conducting interviews, and, ultimately, analyzing the discourse you've observed, participated in, and recorded using the tools of ethnography of communication. We'll talk about concrete and conceptual issues critical to conducting ethnography, including research ethics, collaboration and working relationships with community members, navigating tense situations, writing and using fieldnotes, and thinking through ethnographer positionality.

In the second half of the class, we'll read foundational and contemporary work in ethnography of communication, considering such issues as the politics of representation, the interplay of language and context in meaning making, speech genres and styles, and language ideologies. Your mini-ethnography will culminate in the preparation of a conference paper.





What is Global Anglophone?

(Intro to Grad Study in 20th Century Literature)

English 6767

Professor Jesse Schotter

Tu 9:15 - 12:00

Global Anglophone has become a prominent job market category in recent years for post-1945 literature. And yet since Global Anglophone is more a job category than an actual field, what's meant by Global Anglophone remains something of an enigma. This class attempts to make sense of this term by surveying a variety of lenses with which we might examine the vast number of novels written in English after 1945.

We'll look at literary historical categories—modernism, postmodernism, postcolonialism, and world literature. We'll look at institutions and how they structure literature—from the MFA program to the BBC to literary publishers to the CIA. And we'll look at temporalities, from historical fiction to cli-fi to speculative fiction. Writers may include Arundhati Roy, Sam Selvon, Jesmyn Ward, Marilynne Robinson, Toni Morrison, Kazuo Ishiguro, Ngugi wa' Thiongo, Amos Totuola, and J.M. Coetzee.



Introduction to Research Methods in Rhetoric and Composition

English 6795
Professor Christa Teston

M 9:15 – 12:00

This course will prepare you to conduct research about how people make meaning from and/or with texts. You'll be introduced to strategies for analyzing textual objects and their contexts, studying writing instruction, and researching literacy practices. We'll also discuss some of the ethical and epistemological issues related to these activities. When possible, you will be assigned readings that model methodological practices and have won awards from one of the flagship organizations in writing, rhetoric, and literacy studies and/or the social sciences.

The first six weeks of the semester will be devoted to acquiring a rich common vocabulary for talking about and doing qualitative research, including key concepts that scholars typically employ when they design researchable questions, plan research, conduct studies, and share findings. The second half of the semester is organized around practicing specific methodological approaches for analyzing texts, including: rhetorical analysis or criticism; corpus and/or content analysis; discourse analysis; conversation analysis; archival research; and meta-analyses.

Unlike the more advanced research methods seminar [English 7895], you will not be conducting pilot studies with human subjects during the semester. Rather, I'll prepare small scale, weekly mini-activities that will help you flex your qualitative data collection/analysis muscles.



The Arthurian World of Thomas Malory

English 7818

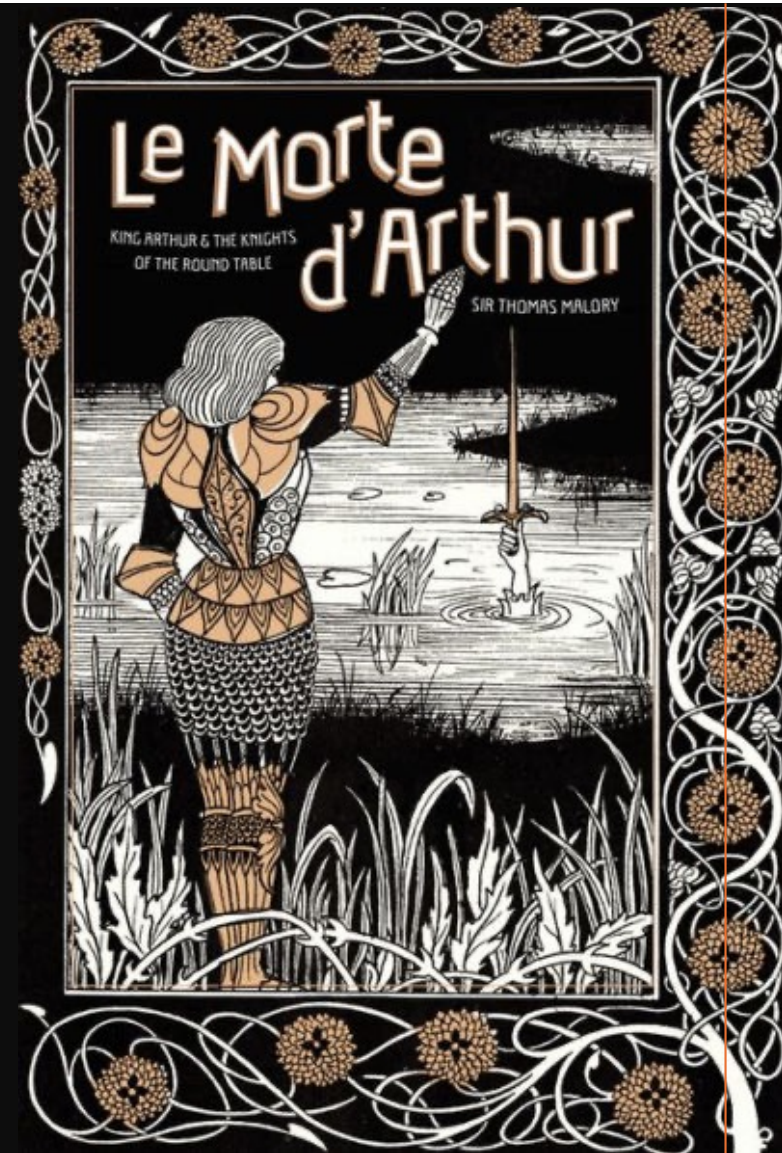
Professor Karen Winstead

Th 12:15 – 3:00

Sir Thomas Malory's magnum opus, the *Morte D'Arthur* [1470], is an extraordinary epic of the Arthurian world, a generic hybrid filled with complex characters who struggle to navigate a morally complex world.

The *Morte* is immensely rich and rewarding as a story, and especially so for those interested in narrative, gender and sexuality, women's history, popular culture, and history. It's important not only as a medieval classic but as an influence on post-medieval culture, from Renaissance epics to contemporary films, games, and TV shows.

We will explore Malory's text in its medieval context as well as in its remarkable afterlife. We will consider how Malory's troubled fictional universe speaks to our twenty-first century experience.





Discourse Analysis

[Seminar in English Linguistics]

English 7872

Professor Galey Modan

Th 12:15 – 3:00

Are you working on a project that involves conversations, rituals, interviews, political speeches, classroom discourse, or any other kind of language use, and you want to learn new ways to examine it? Are you a quantitative linguist who wants to complement your skills with a qualitative approach to discourse? Has your coursework touched on discourse analysis, and you'd like to gain a more in-depth understanding? This course is for anyone who is intrigued by discourse and wants to gain some tools for studying it.

While some approaches to discourse focus on what people say (the content), linguistically-based discourse analysis attends to the structure of discourse – how people say what they say, how the components of language are put together, what patterns emerge, and what effects those patterns have on the way that we understand and evaluate what's being said and who is saying it. Drawing from subfields including interactional sociolinguistics, pragmatics, conversation analysis, ethnography of communication, and critical discourse analysis, we will explore how the contexts of social interaction both construct and are constructed by discourse that occurs in or in relation to them. The approach that we will take to analyzing discourse is a micro-level one, focusing on the ways in which the details of linguistic structure convey social and political meaning.





Naked Classics

The Secret Life of Greco-Roman Rhetoric

(Seminar in Rhetoric)

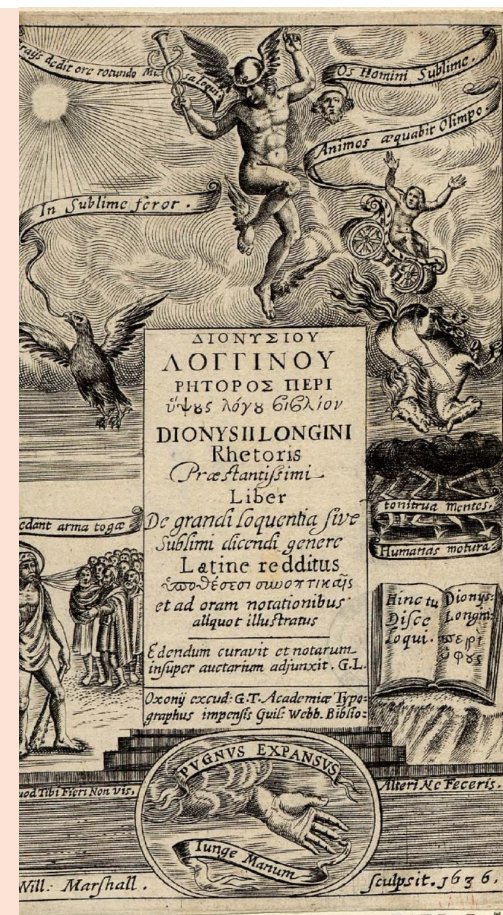
English 7879
Professor Jim Fredal

W 9:15 - 12:00

The title is borrowed from the Columbus Chamber Orchestra's ProMusica series called "Naked Classics," where they break down famous pieces (like Schubert's Death and the Maiden) to discuss how they were composed, how to listen to them, and what they mean.

In my Naked Classics, we'll break down ancient rhetorical practice alongside ancient rhetorical, political, and social theory to understand why rhetorical theory looks like it does, where it came from, how it was used, and what place it held in ancient Greek and Roman culture. We'll read oratory from Lysias, Antiphon, Demosthenes, Cicero and Favorinus, alongside theory from Plato and Aristotle, Dionysius and Demetrius, Hermogenes and Longinus. And we'll ask about social and cultural contexts for ancient oratory: adultery and homosexuality, relativism and truth, education and law, hypotaxis and parataxis, affect and character, chiasmus and diegesis, gymnastics and cooking.

Final projects may include research papers and syllabi, legal arguments and epideictic harangues, dissoi logoi and progymnasmata, and sublime sophistic declamations.



Seminar on Digital Media Studies

English 7889

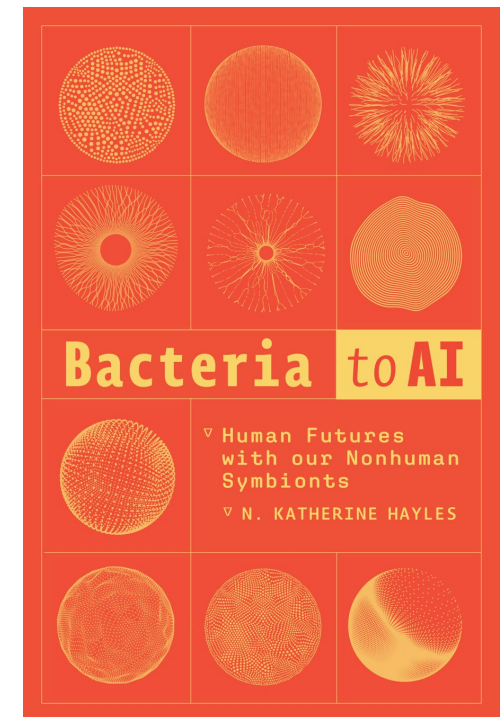
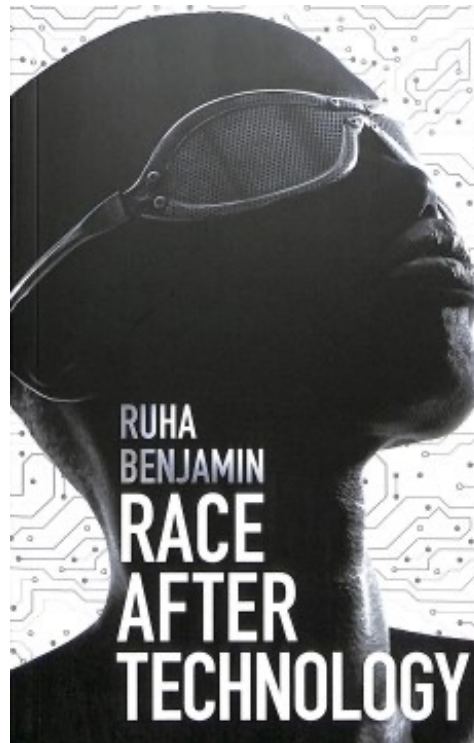
Professor John Jones

Tu 12:15 – 3:00

From television and newspapers to movie theaters and books, while the final media product may take different forms, it is nearly impossible to find a mass media that does not include digital tools in some stage of its production. Given the ubiquity of digital media, its study is inherently interdisciplinary and multifaceted. In this course, we will study the uses and impacts of digital media through its history and development in the 20th and 21st centuries with the goal of better understanding the origins of current digital communication technologies.

The course will touch on topics like the pre-history of digital media, networks, race, accessibility, multimodality, the digital humanities, maker culture, and rhetorics of code. While this course is located in the Writing, Rhetoric, and Literacy program, we will read widely in digital media theory and history.

Students from all concentrations are welcome.



care at the end of the world

dreaming of infrastructure
in crip-of-color writing

Seminar in Disability Studies Theory

English 7891

Professor Margaret Price

Th 9:15 – 12:00

This course is organized around the question *What does it mean to see disability?* We will begin by examining the common metaphor for disability awareness, “visibility,” moving from there to questions of staring, looking, gazing, and representing. For example, what does it mean to say a person has an “invisible” disability? What are the politics of the stare, and is that different from the gaze? What happens when disabled people stare back? In films, paintings, advertisements, magazines, and social media, how are disabled people represented—and who does the representing? What does “accessible” mean if we begin from the assumption that, as Georgina Kleege points out, “there are as many ways to be blind as there are to be sighted”? How do we, as composers and readers, want to intervene as analysts and makers in the complex world of disability, vision, and visuality?

Texts will include scholarly books and articles from critical disability studies, as well as podcasts, art, fashion, signage, iconography, spaces, and interfaces.