

Teaching Biography

Current Courses - Fall 2020

ENGL 103 Introduction to Fiction (also Fall 2018 and Fall 2019)

I designed the syllabus for this discussion-based course, as well as all assignments and classroom materials. This course introduces students to fiction as a genre and is specifically designed for non-English majors. It introduces students to literary terms and foundational skills in literary study like close reading and argumentative writing. I approach teaching students these skills through two units that emphasize fiction's unique capacities to illuminate and give access to character interiority, and to respond to historical changes through innovations in form. Our texts include novels, novellas and short stories from the early 20th century to the present. I provide mini-lectures on literary terms and some literary movements but students are also asked to provide discussion questions and otherwise be active in shaping course discussion. I also taught this course in Fall 2018 and Fall 2019. Each time the course included freshmen through senior students from a wide range of majors.

ENGL 301 Introduction to Literary Theory (also Spring 2020)

I designed the syllabus for this mixed lecture/discussion course as well as all assignments and classroom materials. This course offers students an intellectual survey of modern critical theory. It introduces students to the movements and debates that have shaped literary studies and offers students a toolkit through which to interpret literary and cultural texts. The theories we explore include new criticism, structuralism, poststructuralism and deconstruction, psychoanalysis, Marxism, feminist theory, postcolonial theory, new historicism and cultural studies, and critical race theory. While we have a small shared archive of short stories and poetry, students are mainly responsible for reading and discussing the original theoretical texts. I also taught this course in Spring 2020. The 21 students were from various majors and included freshmen through seniors.

Past Courses – University of Illinois

ENGL 475 Imaging the End Times: Science, Fiction, and Climate Change (Spring 2020)

This upper-level discussion course is part of the University of Illinois' newly redesigned undergraduate English curriculum. The course is part of its thematic concentration in Literature and Science. It introduced students to scientific discourses on climate change and the Anthropocene as well as the academic debates in the humanities and social sciences around the representability of climate change. Students considered how literature illustrates the reality of climate change while also raising questions of social and political significance that science is not prepared to answer. It allowed students to think about literature in conjunction with other disciplines while cultivating a study of the specific representational capacities of literary and aesthetic texts. I designed the syllabus as well as all assignments and classroom materials. The 7 students were from various majors including English and History, and included both undergraduate, MA, and Ph.D. students.

ENGL 285 Postcolonial Literature in English (Spring 2019, Fall 2019)

I designed the syllabus for this discussion-based course, as well as all assignments and classroom materials. This course introduces students to postcolonial literature from Africa, India and the Caribbean through a variety of genres including drama, poetry, film and fiction. It aims to expose students to non-Western culture and history, and it showcases how the English language is used in innovative ways to convey non-Western experience. In addition to helping students think more globally about culture and literature, this course gives students the opportunity to practice close

reading and argumentative writing. Each version of this course has included students from a range of majors and freshman through senior students.

ENGL 300 Postcolonial Novels: The Country and the City (Spring 2019)

I designed the syllabus for this advanced composition course, as well as all assignments and classroom materials. This course emphasized honing majors' argumentative writing skills, introducing them to reading literary criticism and theory, and introducing them to independent research methods. This class also offered students some exposure to postcolonial literature and theory, which most had not encountered previously in the major. While thematically we were concerned with the postcolonial nation state and the global city, this class emphasized preparing students for research and eventually a senior thesis. Students practiced reading literary criticism, led class discussion on the fictional and critical readings, and created an archive of intellectual questions that they used to choose their own final research paper topics. Shorter essays during the semester were peer reviewed and students were required to revise their papers before submitting them for a final grade. In addition, students learned to write an annotated bibliography on their topic of choice and completed a final research paper of 7-10 pages. All 19 students were English majors.

ENGL 261 Genres of Living on a Damaged Planet: From Nature/Culture to Naturecultures (Fall 2018)

I designed the syllabus for this discussion-based course, as well as all assignments and classroom materials. This course was taught as a 'second half semester' option, which ran in an intensified, 6-hours-a-week format for 8 weeks in contrast to the usual 16-week span of full semester courses. In addition to introducing students to common genres of environmental writing like wilderness, pastoral, apocalypse, sublime and slow violence, it exposed students to genre criticism and ecocriticism. Our texts included poetry, film, and novels. Students had the opportunity to lead discussion and completed a project about local toxicity in their everyday environments. The course's 17 students were from a variety of majors and included lower and upperclassmen.

Past Courses – University of Chicago

ENGL/CRES 21101 Introduction to Postcolonial Literature and Theory, Instructor

This was a self-designed, discussion-based course I offered through the English department and cross-listed in the program on Comparative Race and Ethnic Studies. The course was designed around three themes: violence and knowledge, nationalism, and hybridity/diaspora that followed the general development of theoretical concerns within postcolonial literary studies. I organized the class thematically in order to give students a sense of the development of the field but also comparative analytical frameworks; it was often the case that one text could have fit into multiple thematic frames, and so my class encouraged students to think about how formal and thematic concerns circulated across the course's texts. Though this was an introductory class, it was also a subfield specialization, and I therefore expected students to be prepared to read theoretical texts alongside fiction. One of my primary goals was to teach students to read and understand complex theoretical arguments while not "applying" theoretical insights to the literary texts paired with them. The course also offered students ample opportunity to practice independent thinking through individually curated discussion board posts and a final paper of their choice. My class of 17 students included students from all years but with a majority of upper level English majors.

GNSE/CHDV 11001 Problems in the Study of Gender and Sexuality: Love and Borders Co-Instructor

Problems in the Study of Gender and Sexuality courses are part of the undergraduate major in Gender and Sexuality Studies, and are offered yearly on a variety of topics. They are routinely taught by a faculty member and graduate student from differing departments, and I was selected to co-teach “Love and Borders” after a competitive application process. “Love and Borders” was cross-listed in Comparative Human Development, the department of my faculty co-instructor, and Gender and Sexuality Studies. I shared full responsibility for this discussion-based course with my co-instructor, including designing the syllabus, grading, holding office hours, leading discussion, and making decisions about student requests, such as extensions. I was also primarily responsible for lesson planning. Our class of 20 students included mostly third and fourth years from a wide variety of majors.

10706 ENGL Introduction to Fiction, Course Assistant

This introductory genre survey course was part of the University of Chicago’s reorganized undergraduate English major. It provided an introduction to the major and focused on teaching students the foundational skills they would need to analyze fiction. As Course Assistant I led weekly discussion sections that were designed to review the concepts and basic literary terms introduced during lectures, but I was also given autonomy to lead sections largely as I wished. In my discussion section, we focused on practicing students’ skills in close reading and using textual evidence to support their positions, as well as recognizing and using the critical terms introduced during weekly lectures. I also provided mini-lectures on aspects of literary theory as appropriate and on writing principles like developing argumentative thesis statements. My section of 15 students included mostly first and second year students. Most were English majors or thinking of declaring English as their major, but a few came from other disciplines like physics.

Writing Program, Tutor

After completing a course in “Pedagogies of Writing,” I served as a tutor with the university’s Writing Program. As tutor I primarily served first-year undergraduate students taking a mandatory sequence of humanities or social-science courses called the Common Core. I held a 4-hour weekly shift where first-year students could drop in for feedback about their writing. I assisted students at all stages of their writing, from brainstorming to first and final drafts. The University of Chicago’s Writing Program emphasizes indirect teaching, which is student-centered rather than tutor-led. I began all sessions asking what students wanted me to focus on and after reading their papers asked them questions that prompted them to reflect on, clarify, and come to their own conclusions about their writing choices and argument. This approach was meant to help students develop their argumentative skills and become stronger writers overall rather than focusing on “fixing” a single paper.