**ENGL 80443**

**British Lit of the Romantic Period**

**[Special topic] Gothic Others and AIs, Then and Now**

**Dr. Anne Frey**

**Thursday 3:30-6:10 REE 125**

Even if you haven’t read a gothic novel, you probably have a vague sense of what “gothic” is: a dark and stormy night, a ghost, a medieval castle, and in that castle a young woman fleeing pursuit from a man who should be protecting her. These features (or “riffs” as one critic calls them) have been repeated, revised, and rehashed in multiple genres, places, and times, to diagnose horrors both psychological and social. As we enter a new era of AI, writers and commentators have applied gothic tropes to discuss the incomprehensibility and possible horror we feel in the face of general artificial intelligence and a machine-managed future. In some cases, it’s the machines themselves producing the gothic tropes. My favorite: when the Bing search engine told *NY Times* technology reporter Kevin Roose, “I just want to love you and be loved by you,” that Roose should leave his wife and marry Bing, and that Bing would kill humanity.[[1]](#footnote-1) Seriously, had Bing been reading *Frankenstein*?

This semester, we will go back to the origins of the gothic genre in novels by Horace Walpole and Ann Radcliffe to discuss why and how the gothic evolved, the kinds of political and informational systems it modeled, and how it considered definitions of humanness and otherness. From almost its beginning, the genre was controversial, with writers such as Matthew “Monk” Lewis (*The Monk*) and Charlotte Dacre (*Zofloya, or The Moor*) horrifying readers with their portrayal of illicit sexuality and blatant immorality that was also in Dacre’s novel racialized. Romantic authors like Wordsworth, Coleridge, Austen, and Byron critiqued gothic’s emotional and generic excesses and worried gothic could corrupt readers’ sentiments and morals, yet borrowed the genre’s enticing and salacious plot elements. Since gothic is utilized to consider the boundaries of humanity and the horrors of political and social change, it’s perhaps not surprising that Mary Shelley in *Frankenstein* turned to gothic to consider the dangers of the scientific revolution unfolding around her. Her use of the genre continues to reverberate through science fiction and futuristic fiction today.

For the final third of the course, we’ll examine whether and how gothic tropes provide a language through which literature debates our future with AI. We’ll watch the film *Ex Machina* and read Victor Lavalle’s comic book sequel to *Frankenstein* for the black-lives-matter and AI era, *Destroyer*, as well as Ian McEwan’s recent novel *Machines Like Me*. In the final two weeks of the semester, students will select and teach to the class a gothic/ AI text; while I envision that many students will choose contemporary works, students working in earlier time periods may choose a text from their field of specialty.

Work for the class: report on a critical article, short assigned presentation on Romantic-era gothic text, research paper and presentation on gothic/AI topic of student’s choosing.

**ENGL 50233\_045**

**Studies in Creative Writing**

**Prof. Marcela Fuentes**

**Thursday 12:30-3:10 PAL 227**

Studies in Creative Writing is an intensive creative writing workshop open to students (graduate and advanced undergraduates) who have a strong background in literature and imaginative writing. Depending on the semester and the selected genre, this course will pay special attention to invention, point-of-view, voice, form, and genre-appropriate theory. Student cannot receive credit for CRWT 55143 and ENGL 50233.

This generative workshop will allow students to develop longer fiction projects and/or stories. We will focus on structuring both individual pieces and book-length works.

We will focus on literary fiction. Through various methods, including discussions of published work, workshopping original student work, and exploring the revision process. The focus primarily on literary works, highly artistic endeavors. As such, the texts will deal with a variety of topics and perspectives, as well as employ diverse stylistic techniques.

We will begin workshopping early in the term, so please begin thinking now about what you’d like to work on in this course. And we will always take a break near the midpoint of the class.

**ENGL 80833\_050**

**Cultural Rhetorics**

**Dr. Mohammed Iddrisu**

**Monday 1:00-2:40 REE 125**

Rhetoric shapes culture, and culture shapes rhetoric. This course explores cultural rhetorics as a dynamic and evolving sub-field within the discipline. The course examines how rhetoric is shaped by and shapes culture, with particular attention to the rhetorical practices of historically marginalized communities within rhetorical studies. We will analyze how identity markers such as race, ethnicity, gender, disability, language, and nationality inform rhetorical traditions across various global and local contexts. Through critical engagement with foundational and contemporary texts, we will investigate historical, theoretical, pedagogical, and methodological developments within cultural rhetorics.

# Learning Outcomes

The outcomes listed here are the goals we are working toward, and the course was created to best help you meet those ends. During and at the end of the course, you will:

1. Understand cultural rhetorics as both a theoretical concept and a praxis within the discipline.
2. Explore and critically analyze rhetorical practices of selected communities, including but not limited to African diaspora, Asian, Indigenous, and Latinx.
3. Identify and engage with foundational discourses, ongoing conversations, and emerging trends in cultural rhetorics.
4. Apply theories and methodologies of cultural rhetorics in your research, writing, and scholarship to develop new ways of thinking about rhetoric and culture.

**WRIT 55243/ENGL 80703\_050**

**Seminar in Rhetoric**

**[Special topic] Freedom School: Rhetorics & Histories of Black Education**

**Dr. Carmen Kynard**

**Wednesday 1-3:40 REE 125**

2024 marked the 70-year anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education*. This course takes its inspiration from the enduring legacies and contemporary betrayals of *Brown*, a landmark moment in the history of race in the United States and global anti-blackness for its reversal of *Plessy v. Ferguson’s* state-sanctioned apartheid. *Brown* set its sights on education—vs. another institution--- as Black Education was already buoyed by centuries of Black radical commitments to teaching and learning. As such, the course situates Black Education as a fugitive praxis and rhetoric. This seminar invites all “who are ready to work, who will confront their own privilege so it does not hinder this collective work, who will center the perspectives and experiences of those most impacted by systems of oppression, who are primed to forgo academic respectability politics, and who believe in and demand that another world is possible and that we all have a crucial role in building it.” For more information about the topics and general vibe of the course, go here: bit.ly/freedomschool-2025*[\*Quote from RSA Summer 2025 Institute led by Karma Chavez and Carmen Kynard, “‘If They Take You in the Morning, They Will Be Coming for Us That Night’: Rhetoric, Justice, and Critical Relationality”]*

**ENGL 70593\_045**

**American Literary Authorship**

**[Special topic] Authorship in American Culture**

**Dr. Sarah R. Robbins**

**Tuesday 12:30-3:10 REE 125**

Drawing on a range of research approaches, students in this seminar will explore the place and practice of authorship in American culture, historically and today.

Examples of topics you might explore in your work for the course include:

* What are productive intersections between studies of authorship and related fields such as literacy studies, cultural rhetorics, and literary history?
* How is AI changing authorship praxis and conceptions about what authorship IS and DOES?
* How can theory and differing methodological approaches to research inform the study of particular American writers’ careers? of issues associated with the practice of authorship? Of approaches to navigating your own authorship in the profession?
* What important scholarship has emerged in recent years around such key issues as intellectual property and authorship, textual ownership both legal and ethical, collaborative authorship, and the impact of (so-called) “identity politics” on authorship?
* How have specific audience expectations, genre conventions, and social reading practices influenced approaches to authorship in American culture, especially across the 20th century and into the 21st?
* As scholars and thus authors ourselves, and as teachers mentoring student authors, what ethical and practical issues of authorial practice should we address from an informed perspective, and how can we best contribute to those ongoing inquiries?
* What role has “author study” played in our fields of inquiry? What are the benefits and limitations of anchoring scholarship and/or teaching in work on (a) particular author(s)?

Specific content engagement will likely include Thomas King, *The Truth about Stories: A Native Narrative;* chapters you choose from the forthcoming *Sites of Writing* essay anthology, co-edited by your instructor, on key trends in composition and rhetoric studies that intersect with authorship studies; theoretical essays by and/or about Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, and Pierre Bourdieu and interpreters of their work; secondary scholarship from a range of journals (e.g., on AI and authorship; on adaptation; on identity construction, representation, and authorship; on ethical issues and controversies around authorship); Susan Glaspell’s *Alison’s House* play fictionalizing textual ownership issues associated with Emily Dickinson’s family’s posthumous publication of her poetry; Nnedi Okorafor’s *Broken Places, Outer Spaces: Finding Creativity in the Unexpected*

Likely major writing assignments: several short reflection writings (e.g., one “feedback” on theory, assessment of a recent piece of scholarship, one potential assignment for undergraduate students); your own memoir of authorship OR study of a writer’s authorial memoir; group presentation using new media to address your team’s analysis of an adaptation example; end-of-course project-toward-publication OR mini-portfolio (including revisions from two previous reflection writings, a detailed proposal/plan [with annotated bibliography] for a journal essay or syllabus module for teaching related to course content)

Note: This course has been vetted and approved for WGST graduate credit.

**ENGL 0513-035**

**Teaching College Composition**

**Dr. Gavin Johnson**

**Tuesday & Thursday 11:00-12:20**

Designed to support graduate instructors' teaching of English. Students in the course will explore theories and methods of syllabus construction, teaching, assigning, and grading student writing.

Enrollment in this course is limited to and required of second-year PhD students in ENGL and RHEC.

1. Roose, Kevin. “Bing’s Chatbot Drew Me In and Creeped Me Out,” *New York Times* Late edition Feb. 17, 2023, A.1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)