

# Courses in Children's Literature

2020-21

## **ENG 528: CHILDREN'S BOOK ILLUSTRATORS (4)**

**Phillips**

The role of art in children's literature; a survey of traditional and contemporary works emphasizing but not limited to the European and American tradition; an examination of how artists interpret and reinterpret the text.

## **ENG 535: RETELLINGS AND ADAPTATIONS IN CHILDREN'S AND YA LITERATURE (4) Department**

From its earliest roots in older oral and written sources, literature for children has a rich tradition of retellings and adaptations. This course explores how adaptation works in various forms and genres for young readers and audiences, from alphabet books to film series. The particular focus of each section will vary.

## **ENG 536: THE FANTASTIC IN CHILDREN'S AND YA LITERATURE (4)**

**Department**

From OZ and the Hundred Acre Wood, to the Night Kitchen and the Road Not Taken, to Middle-earth and Outer Space and a contemporary graveyard, the Fantastic has been a major element in children's and YA fiction and picture books for over 125 years. The Fantastic needs to be understood as different from realistic fiction, a category with its own rules for writing and its own approaches in criticism.

## **ENG 538: CULTURAL REPRESENTATION IN CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE (4)**

**Department**

This course will examine contemporary picture books, chapter books, and middle grade novels. What themes emerge in these books? What do the characters look like? Who are their families? What are their obstacles? How do these stories contribute to a larger cultural narrative? What are the elements that render a "multicultural" book universal? Guided by questions such as these class participants will engage in close reading and discussion in an attempt to define this category while identifying particular artistic decisions evident in the texts.

## **ENG 539: CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AND CRITICAL THEORY (4)**

**Department**

The distinctive character of literature written for young people requires a careful and critical approach to the use of existing literary theories; merely applying a theoretical model oriented to peer-directed work (that is, adults writing for other adults) often results in a distorted reading of a children's text. This course will thus serve as an introduction to the literary and critical theories that have developed around notions of subjectivity, authority, readership, and textuality, but will also involve an examination of how these theories may (and must) be adjusted to gain a fuller understanding of works that function not only as aesthetic objects, but also as apprentice texts for the acquisition of both literary and literacy competencies. Special attention will be given to recent developments in cognitive studies and multimodal theories so that we can develop a more nuanced understanding of picture books and children's poetry as well as traditional narrative.

## **ENG 542: HISTORY AND CRITICISM OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE (4)**

**Coats**

An introduction to British and American literature for children, from its roots in the oral tradition and medieval literature through 20<sup>th</sup>-century works. Required for all students; offered every year.

## **ENG 545: CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN TRANSLATION (4)**

**Department**

Is translated children's literature a means of bridging cultural differences or of obscuring them? What survives in the process of translation, and what is the spectrum of choices along with translators of children's literature must decide to place themselves? Knowledge of one or more languages besides English is desirable, but not necessary.

## **ENG 551: ANALYSIS OF AWARD WINNERS (4)**

**Department**

Writers, librarians, publishers, teachers, and readers all await the announcement of the annual winner of The Newbery Award given by the ALSC for "the most distinguished American children's book published the previous year." But who decides what makes a work the most distinguished, how is that decision made, and what is the criteria for bestowing the coveted bronze medal?

This critical study of recent award-winning books focuses on the answers to those questions and, in

particular, considers what has made contemporary children's book "most distinguished." It will also familiarize students with criteria for other major awards for children's literature.

**ENG 558: STUDIES IN MYTH AND FOLKTALE (4)**

**Department**

An examination of myths and folktales from diverse cultures and the ways in which they express and shape collective values. Geographical focus will vary (i.e., African Diaspora, Scandinavian, Celtic).

**ENG 560: THE CRAFT OF WRITING FOR CHILDREN (4)**

**Department**

Writing books for children and adolescents involves a two-fold trick. The author, usually an adult, must craft a narrative that convinces the reader that they have the authority to report on the authentic experiences of childhood and adolescence. Additionally, they must build a text, using techniques such as figurative language and sensory details, to create a fully realized world and satisfying story. We'll be examining the forms of several genres as well as age categories in order to uncover the tricks of the trade, and how to apply the same approaches in our own writing.

**ENG 561: GENRE STUDY IN THE CRAFT OF WRITING FOR CHILDREN (4)**

**Homzie**

Study of a particular genre or theme, with subject matter varying from year to year. Offered every year.

**ENG 565: INQUIRY INTO FAIRY TALES (4)**

**Department**

Each term this course will focus on fairy tales' relationship with other constructs or ideas: these might include ideology, other traditional literature, narrative and oral traditions, revisions and updates, or psychology, for instance.

**ENG 572: STORYTELLING (4)**

**Department**

Storytelling literature, the history of storytelling, and the practical applications of storytelling will be surveyed, but the practice of telling stories orally will receive the major emphasis. Students will be introduced to techniques for selecting and learning stories. Performance techniques will be demonstrated by the instructor. While the focus will be on traditional tales, some time will be devoted to an exploration of the telling of original, personal, family, historical, and ghost stories. Students will be expected to read certain texts on the art of storytelling, to familiarize themselves with traditional folktales, to select appropriate stories for telling, and to learn, workshop, and perform at least three stories for the class. Students will begin the development of a personal style and repertoire of stories.

**ENG 576: CRITICAL STUDIES IN FORM AND GENRE (4)**

**Martin**

Close analysis of a particular form or genre (e.g., picture books, poetry, young adult novels, historical fiction, science fiction). Students will apply critical approaches to academic essays about literature.

**ENG 577: GENDER STUDIES IN CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE (4)**

**Attebery**

Literature for young readers is a powerful tool for examining how we acquire identities, including gender roles and the finding of selfhood. From the beginnings of children's literature to the present, some books have been concerned primarily with the maturation of boys and designed explicitly for a male reading audience, while others have been concerned with the maturation of girls and written primarily for them. Some genres, such as historical fiction, represent our culture's traditional gender divisions, while others, such as fantasy and science fiction, may reconceive them. Varying iterations of this course will explore in depth one or more aspects of gender and identities.

**ENG 583: ADVANCED CREATIVE WRITING TUTORIAL (4)**

**LaFaye Graduate**

tutorial seminar in the generation, examination, and interpretation of texts in children's literature in the light of literary history and theory with attention to the writing of the students in the class. The exact contents of any given seminar will be determined by the needs and interests of its members. Limited to students in the M.F.A. program in children's literature. Prerequisite: permission of instructor. Offered every year.

**ENG 597: CHILDREN'S LITERATURE GRADUATE INTERNSHIP (4)**

**Fraustino**

This course provides experiential learning experiences through supervised internships in professional areas related to the academic study of children's literature, illustration, and culture. Through applied

practice, students will become active participants in the diverse community of creators, publishers, sellers, sharers, and others who work with texts and images intended for children and young adults.

In order to receive graduate credit for internship, all students will be required to:

- Identify objectives for seeking an internship with a particular sponsor.
- Research the company or sponsor where interning and provide a paragraph on what the company does as it relates to student's objective.
- Document the experience of the internship in detail.
- Reflect on experience gained through the internship through a narrative essay.
- Present learning outcomes to advisor and share with other students through Moodle.

**ENG 598: CAPSTONE SEMINAR (8)**

**Department**

M.A. students may undertake ENG 598: Capstone Seminar in place of ENG 599: Thesis. The capstone seminar consists of a written examination of three short essays and an oral examination based on a reading list and accompanying essay.

**ENG 599: THESIS (8)**

**Department**

M.A. students may choose either a scholarly or a creative thesis. Students who choose to do a creative thesis must have taken ENG 510: Creative Writing Seminar or ENG 560: The Craft of Writing for Children and ENG 561: Genre Study in the Craft of Writing for Children or ENG 562: Creative Writing Workshop.

M.F.A. students will complete a book-length manuscript of fiction, poetry, drama, or literary nonfiction for children. Theses in both programs are accompanied by an essay situating the work in the historical and critical context of children's literature.