

LITERATURE

The Literature Section's mission is to maintain a level of excellence and innovation consistent with the best universities while remaining responsive to MIT's distinctive intellectual environment. The curriculum emphasizes interdisciplinary approaches to literary texts as well as theoretical, generic, and thematic subjects that range across geographical and historical boundaries.

The Literature Section accommodates students with a wide variety of interests and diverse career choices. The major provides a solid grounding in the discipline but remains flexible enough to allow students to explore the particular domains that most interest them. Students graduating from the MIT Literature program have in recent years been admitted into the best doctoral programs in the country and abroad. For those not pursuing literature as a career, the program nonetheless develops transferable skills in writing, comprehension, and analysis relevant to a variety of different professional paths—from journalism, law, and medical school to work in the gourmet food industry or computer game design.

Depending on the depth of one's engagement, a student may major, minor, or concentrate in Literature. Regardless of the individual choice, our subjects will introduce you to the pleasures of reading and interpretation, expose you to different ways of thinking about the world, and lead to a competence in writing and communication that will remain with you the rest of your life.

A supplement to this catalog is available before each semester, either online (<https://lit.mit.edu>) or from Literature Headquarters, Room 14N-407. It offers detailed descriptions of all subjects being taught that term and includes specific information about subject content and required texts.

Undergraduate Study

The Literature curriculum is arranged in four graduated categories:

- **Introductory** subjects (21L.000[J] to 21L.024) focus on major literary texts grouped in broad historical and generic sequences; all introductory subjects carry HASS and Communication-Intensive credit.
- **Samplings** (21L.310[J] to 21L.338, 21L.345 to 21L.355) are 6-unit subjects that provide both an alternative route into literary and filmic study and a less intensive means for students to sustain a commitment to reading and textual interpretation. Their focus is on critical exploration, comprehension, and group discussion, with less sustained attention to analytic writing skills. Students can combine most 6-unit Samplings subjects to count as a HASS subject in the Humanities category and the equivalent of a subject in the Intermediate tier. However, no more than four 6-unit subjects may be combined in this manner. See the HASS Requirement website for information about samplings (<https://registrar.mit.edu/registration-academics/>

[academic-requirements/hass-requirement](#)) or contact Literature Headquarters (lit@mit.edu) for details.

- **Intermediate** subjects (21L.400 to 21L.639[J]) explore literary and visual forms as well as critical analysis in greater depth. Some subjects center on historical periods, literary themes, or genres; others focus on media studies, comparative cultural studies, or national literatures.
- **Seminar** subjects (21L.640 to 21L.715) are usually restricted to students who have taken at least two previous subjects in Literature and encourage a greater degree of independent work, such as oral reports and other special projects. Enrollment in seminars is strictly limited to a maximum of 12 students.

The Literature Section also offers a few subjects in languages other than English (21L.607 to 21L.640[J]) for students with adequate preparation. If appropriate, they may count toward the Literature major and minor requirements after consultation with the major/minor advisor.

In addition, the Literature Section often offers 6-unit special subjects for credit during IAP. Students may also choose to take special subjects (21L.S88 to 21L.S97) and independent study or research supervised by a faculty member (21L.900 and 21L.901) during the fall and spring terms.

Concentrations in Literature are available in particular genres (e.g., poetry, drama, fiction) and in historical periods (e.g., ancient studies, 19th-century literature, modern and contemporary literature), as well as in media and film studies, world literatures and cultures, popular culture, minority and ethnic studies, literary theory, and a range of national literatures.

Bachelor of Science in Literature (Course 21L)

The program in Literature leading to the Bachelor of Science in Literature (<https://catalog.mit.edu/degree-charts/literature-course-21l>) is equivalent to the curricula in English (or literary studies) at major liberal arts institutions. The Literature curriculum is notable also for its integration of materials drawn from film and media, popular culture, and minority and ethnic cultures.

The major consists of at least 10 subjects, including no more than three introductory subjects, at least three intermediate subjects, and at least three seminars. A minimum of three subjects in the overall degree program must focus primarily on material prior to 1900.

Joint Degree Programs

Joint degree programs are offered in Literature in combination with a field in engineering or science (21E, 21S). See the joint degree programs (<https://catalog.mit.edu/schools/humanities-arts-social-sciences/humanities/#undergraduatetext>) listed under Humanities.

Minor in Literature

The minor aims to lay a foundation for advanced study and to enhance a student's appreciation of major narrative, poetic, and dramatic texts in relation to the cultures that produced them.

Students may opt either to pursue a minor centered on literary texts or one focused on film.

Literature Focus

A minor centered on literary texts consists of six subjects arranged into three levels of study as described below; at least two subjects (chosen in consultation with the minor advisor) must focus primarily on material prior to 1900.

Tier I: Introductory Level

Select at least one and no more than two subjects from the following: 9-24

21L.000[J]	Writing About Literature
21L.001	Foundations of Western Literature: Homer to Dante
21L.002	Foundations of Western Literature: From Shakespeare to the Present
21L.003	Reading Fiction
21L.004	Reading Poetry
21L.005[J]	Introduction to Drama
21L.006	American Literature
21L.007	World Literatures
21L.008[J]	Black Matters: Introduction to Black Studies
21L.009	Shakespeare
21L.010[J]	Writing with Shakespeare
21L.011	Introduction to Film Studies
21L.012	Forms of Western Narrative
21L.013[J]	The Supernatural in Music, Literature and Culture
21L.014[J]	Introduction to Ancient and Medieval Studies
21L.015	Children's Literature
21L.017	The Art of the Probable
21L.018	Introduction to English Literature
21L.019	Introduction to European and Latin American Fiction
21L.020[J]	Globalization: The Good, the Bad and the In-Between
21L.021	Comedy
21L.024[J]	Literature and Existentialism
21L.025	A History of the Book from Papyrus to Pixel
21L.040[J]	Foundations of East Asian Literature and Culture: From Confucius to the Beats

Tier II: Intermediate Level

Select two or three subjects from the following: ¹ 21-36

21L.430	Popular Culture and Narrative
---------	-------------------------------

21L.431	Shakespeare on Film and Media
21L.432[J]	Understanding Television
21L.433	Film Styles and Genres
21L.434	Science Fiction and Fantasy
21L.435	Literature and Film
21L.449	The Wilds of Literature
21L.451	Literary Theory
21L.455	Ancient Authors
21L.458	The Bible
21L.460	Arthurian Literature
21L.471	Major Novels
21L.475	Enlightenment and Modernity
21L.485	Modern Fiction
21L.486[J]	Modern Drama
21L.487	Modern Poetry
21L.488	Contemporary Literature
21L.489[J]	Interactive Narrative
21L.490[J]	Introduction to the Classics of Russian Literature
21L.494[J]	Classics of Chinese Literature in Translation
21L.501	The American Novel
21L.504[J]	Race and Identity in American Literature
21L.512	American Authors
21L.590[J]	The Spanish Incubator
21L.601[J]	Old English and Beowulf
21L.638[J]	Literature and Social Conflict: Perspectives on Spain
21L.639[J]	Globalization and its Discontents: Spanish-speaking Nations

Tier III: Seminar Level

Select at least two of the following: 24

21L.640[J]	The New Spain: 1977-Present
21L.701	Literary Methods
21L.702	Studies in Fiction
21L.703[J]	Studies in Drama
21L.704	Studies in Poetry
21L.705	Major Authors
21L.706	Studies in Film
21L.707	Problems in Cultural Interpretation
21L.709	Studies in Literary History
21L.715	Media in Cultural Context

Total Units

66-72

¹ In most cases, two 6-unit Samplings subjects (<https://lit.mit.edu/curriculum/samplings>), or two 6-unit Literature subjects taught in Greek or Latin, may be combined to substitute for an intermediate-level subject. In addition, 6-unit Greek or Latin Reading subjects may be repeated once to substitute for an intermediate-level subject.

Film Focus

A film-centered minor in Literature consists of three required subjects arranged into three levels of study, and three restricted electives.

Tier I: Introductory Level

21L.011	Introduction to Film Studies	12
---------	------------------------------	----

Tier II: Intermediate Level

Select one of the following: ¹	12
---	----

21L.431	Shakespeare on Film and Media
---------	-------------------------------

21L.433	Film Styles and Genres
---------	------------------------

21L.435	Literature and Film
---------	---------------------

Tier III: Seminar Level

21L.706	Studies in Film	12
---------	-----------------	----

Restricted Electives

In consultation with the minor advisor, select three subjects from the Literature curriculum, including at least one complementary subject that does not focus on film but ties into the student's interests with regard to film. ¹	27-36
--	-------

Total Units	63-72
--------------------	--------------

¹ At most, two subjects in which film analysis is the primary focus may be taken in a section outside of Literature or transferred in from a program outside MIT.

Inquiries

For further information on subjects and programs, contact Literature Headquarters (lit@mit.edu), Room 14N-407, 617-253-3581.

Faculty and Teaching Staff

Sandy Alexandre, PhD
Associate Professor of Literature
Head, Literature Section

Professors

Arthur W. Bahr, PhD
Professor of Literature

Joshua Bennett, PhD
Professor of Literature
(On leave)

Eugenie Alexandra Brinkema, PhD
Professor of Literature

James Buzard, PhD
Professor of Literature

Wiebke Denecke, PhD
S.C. Fang Professor of Chinese Languages and Culture
Professor of Literature

Mary C. Fuller, PhD
Professor of Literature
(On leave, fall)

Diana Henderson, PhD
Arthur J. Conner Professor
Professor of Literature

Bruno Perreau, PhD
Cynthia L. Reed Professor of French Studies and Language
Professor of Literature

Shankar Raman, PhD
Professor of Literature

Stephen James Tapscott, PhD
Professor of Literature

Associate Professors

Stephanie Ann Frampton, PhD
Associate Professor of Literature
(On leave, fall)

Noel B. Jackson, PhD
Associate Professor of Literature

Benjamin Mangrum, PhD
Associate Professor of Literature

Margery Resnick, PhD
Associate Professor of Literature

Assistant Professors

Jessica Ruffin, PhD
Assistant Professor of Literature
(On leave, fall)

Lecturers

Caitlyn Doyle, PhD
Lecturer in Literature

Eric Driscoll, PhD
Lecturer in American Medieval Studies
Lecturer in Literature

Joaquín Terrones, PhD
Lecturer in Literature

Professors Emeriti

Peter S. Donaldson, PhD
Professor Emeritus of Literature

Wyn Kelley, PhD
Senior Lecturer Emerita in Literature

Alvin C. Kibel, PhD
Professor Emeritus of Literature

Ruth Perry, PhD
Professor Emerita of Literature

Irene Tayler, PhD
Professor Emerita of Literature

David Thorburn, PhD
Professor Emeritus of Literature

The subjects listed below are arranged in three graduated categories or tiers:

- 1) *Introductory subjects (21L.000[JJ]-21L.024[JJ]) all carry HASS Distribution and Communications Intensive (CI-H or CI-HW) credit.*
- 2) *Samplings (21L.310-21L.338, 21L.345-21L.355) are 6-unit subjects that provide both an alternative route into literary study and a less intensive means for students to sustain a commitment to reading and textual interpretation. Their focus is on critical exploration, comprehension, and group discussion, with less sustained attention to analytic writing skills. Students can combine two 6-unit Samplings subjects to count as a HASS subject in the Humanities category and the equivalent of a subject in the Intermediate tier. See the HASS Requirement website (<https://registrar.mit.edu/registration-academics/academic-requirements/hass-requirement/substitutions-within-hass-requirement>) or contact Literature Headquarters for details.*
- 3) *Intermediate subjects (21L.430-21L.639[JJ]) explore literary and visual forms in greater depth and center on historical periods, literary themes, or genres; others focus on media studies, comparative cultural studies, or national literatures.*
- 4) *Seminars (21L.640[JJ]-21L.715) are more advanced and are often communication intensive.*

A supplement to this catalog, available online and from the Literature Section offices, offers more detailed descriptions of all literature subjects and includes specific information about required texts, writing assignments, and examinations.

Introductory Subjects

21L.000[JJ] Writing About Literature

Same subject as 21W.041[JJ]

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Intensive focus on the reading and writing skills used to analyze literary texts such as poems by Emily Dickinson, Shakespeare or Langston Hughes; short stories by Chekhov, Joyce, or Alice Walker; and a short novel by Melville or Toni Morrison. Designed not only to prepare students for further work in writing and literary and media study, but also to provide increased confidence and pleasure in their reading, writing, and analytical skills. Students write or revise essays weekly. Enrollment limited.

W. Kelley, I. Lipkowitz

21L.001 Foundations of Western Literature: Homer to Dante

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Studies a broad range of texts essential to understanding the two great sources of Western conceptions of the world and humanity's place within it: the ancient world of Greece and Rome and the Judeo-Christian world that challenged and absorbed it. Readings vary but usually include works by Homer, Sophocles, Aristotle, Plato, Virgil, St. Augustine, and Dante. Enrollment limited.

S. Frampton

21L.002 Foundations of Western Literature: From Shakespeare to the Present

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

A broad survey of texts, literary, philosophical, and sociological, studied to trace the growth of secular humanism, the loss of a supernatural perspective upon human events, and changing conceptions of individual, social, and communal purpose. Stresses appreciation and analysis of texts that came to represent the common cultural possession of our time. Enrollment limited.

J. Buzard

21L.003 Reading Fiction

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Samples prose narrative from different traditions, examining texts that feature distinctive styles and formal rhythms in their social and historical contexts. May include European and US classics, alongside global and contemporary authors. Considers writing and reading as forms of social engagement, with special attention to the ways that authors borrow from and innovate on the past. Enrollment limited.

J. Buzard, W. Kelley, D. Thorburn

21L.004 Reading Poetry

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Concentrates on close analysis of poems written in English in various forms (lyric, epic, dramatic). Syllabus varies from term to term but typically includes Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Blake, Keats, Whitman, Dickinson, Frost, Eliot, Langston Hughes, Lowell, and Plath. Enrollment limited.

A. Bahr, S. Tapscott, M. Fuller, N. Jackson

21L.005[J] Introduction to Drama

Same subject as 21T.141[J]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A; CI-H

A study of the history of theater art and practice from its origins to the modern period, including its roles in non-Western cultures. Special attention to the relationship between the literary and performative dimensions of drama, and the relationship between drama and its cultural context. Enrollment limited.

A. Fleche, D. Henderson

21L.008[J] Black Matters: Introduction to Black Studies

Same subject as 24.912[J], 21H.106[J], 21W.741[J], CMS.150[J], WGS.190[J]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A, HASS-H; CI-H

See description under subject 24.912[J].

D. Wood, D. Harrell, M. DeGraff

21L.009 Shakespeare

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Focuses on the close reading of six to eight of Shakespeare plays, as well as their adaptation for stage and/or film. Selected texts cover the range of genres in which Shakespeare wrote (i.e., history, comedy, tragedy, and romance). Special emphasis in some terms on performances and adaptations of Shakespearean drama around the world. Plays studied vary across sections and from term to term, and have recently included *Henry IV Part 1*, *Hamlet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *King Lear*, *Othello*, and *The Tempest*. Enrollment limited.

S. Raman, P. Donaldson

21L.010[J] Writing with Shakespeare

Same subject as 21W.042[J]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Focuses on writing and speaking using Shakespeare as a model and means for mastery of English language skills. Emphasizes the development of students' ability to write clearly and effectively in a range of genres with an awareness of audience. Designed to increase students' confidence and pleasure in verbal communication and analysis of language. Students write frequently, give and receive feedback, improve their work through revision, and participate actively in class discussions and presentations. Enrollment limited.

D. Henderson

21L.011 Introduction to Film Studies

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-3-6 units. HASS-A; CI-H

Concentrates on close analysis and criticism of a wide range of films, including works from the early silent period, documentary and avant-garde films, European art cinema, and contemporary Hollywood fare. Through comparative reading of films from different eras and countries, students develop the skills to turn their in-depth analyses into interpretations and explore theoretical issues related to spectatorship. Syllabus varies from term to term, but usually includes such directors as Eisenstein, Fellini, Godard, Griffith, Hawks, Hitchcock, Kubrick, Kurosawa, Tarantino, Welles, and Wiseman.

E. Brinkema

21L.012 Forms of Western Narrative

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Examines a wide assortment of narrative forms, from Homer to the present, and considers why and how stories are told. Focuses on the close reading of literary and cultural issues, the emergence of different narrative genres, and how different media affect the construction and interpretation of narratives. Syllabus varies by term, but usually includes materials such as epics, novels, tales, short stories, films, television programs, graphic novels, and interactive games. Enrollment limited.

*S. Frampton***21L.013[J] The Supernatural in Music, Literature and Culture**

Same subject as 21M.013[J]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-A, HASS-H; CI-H

See description under subject 21M.013[J]. Limited to 36.

*C. Shadle, M. Fuller***21L.014[J] Introduction to Ancient and Medieval Studies**

Same subject as 21H.007[J]

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

See description under subject 21H.007[J].

*S. Frampton, E. Goldberg***21L.015 Children's Literature**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Analyzes children's literature from a variety of eras and genres, taking even the most playful texts seriously as works of art and powerful cultural influences. Considers the types of stories adults consider appropriate for children, and why; how opinions about this subject have changed over time and across cultures; and the complex interplay of words and images in children's books. Enrollment limited.

*M. Gubar***21L.016 Gods and Mortals**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Introduces students to moral and philosophical questions that emerge from the study of pre-modern literature, such as how humans have grappled with life on earth and negotiated their relationships with the known and unknown, nature and the cosmos, past and future, the physical and the metaphysical, life and death, one another, and the divine. Focuses on careful reading of major works and authors, including selections from Sappho's lyric poems, Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, Virgil's Aeneid, Augustine's Confessions, and Dante's Inferno. Develops skills in close reading and in persuasive and personal analytical writing. Students have the opportunity to present on their readings and research in a variety of forms.

*S. Frampton***21L.017 The Art of the Probable**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Examines literary texts and/or films in relation to the history of the idea of probability. Traces the growing importance of probability as a basic property of things and the world, as well as a measure of the reliability of our ideas and beliefs. Connects the development and use of probabilistic reasoning (e.g., in the lottery and in statistics) with literary and cultural concerns regarding the rationality of belief, risk and uncertainty, free will and determinism, chance and fate. Discussion of the work of scientific and philosophical pioneers of probabilistic thought (e.g., Pascal, Leibniz, Bernoulli, Laplace) in conjunction with works by Shakespeare, Voltaire, H. G. Wells, Pynchon and Stoppard, among others. Enrollment limited.

S. Raman

21L.018 Introduction to English Literature

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Examines the rich heritage of English literature across genre and historical period. Designed for students who want to know more about English literature or about English culture and history. Studies the relationships between literary themes, forms, and conventions and the times in which they were produced. Explores (for instance) Renaissance lyrics and drama, Enlightenment satires in word image, the 19th-century novel, and modern and contemporary stories, poems and film.

*S. Tapscott***21L.019 Introduction to European and Latin American Fiction**

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Studies great works of European and Latin American fiction. Attention to a variety of forms including: the picaresque, epistolary, realist, naturalist, and magical realist fiction. Emphasizes ways in which the unique history of each country shaped the imaginative responses of its writers. Authors include Cervantes, Laclos, Goethe, Mann, Dostoevsky, Flaubert, Zola, Unamuno, Wolf, García Márquez, and Allende. Taught in English.

*M. Resnick***21L.021 Comedy**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Surveys a range of comic texts in different media, the cultures that produced them, and various theories of comedy. Authors and directors studied may include Aristophanes, Shakespeare, Moliere, Austen, Wilde and Chaplin.

*P. Donaldson***21L.024[J] Literature and Existentialism**

Same subject as 21G.061[J]

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Spring)

Acad Year 2026-2027: Not offered

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Studies major literary works associated with the 19th- and 20-century philosophical movement known as existentialism. Through close reading of these works, students explore how existentialist writers grappled with the question of death; the nature of free will; emotions like boredom, disgust, and radical doubt; and the fate of the individual in a modernity marked by war, illogic, and absurdity. Includes novels, short stories, and aphorisms by Sartre, Camus, Dostoevsky, Kafka, Hesse, Chopin, and Nietzsche; plays by Beckett and Stoppard; and films by Bergman, Tarkovsky, and others. Enrollment limited.

*E. Brinkema***21L.025 A History of the Book from Papyrus to Pixel**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Studies a broad range of texts and artifacts related to the history of writing and reading across cultures. Introduces students to the history and theory of media, to literary topics such as metafiction and narratology, and to the study of rare books and distinctive collections. Readings vary but may include literary works by authors such as Miguel Cervantes, Emily Dickinson, and Italo Calvino and theoretical writing by scholars including Marshall McLuhan and Roland Barthes. Regular sessions in MIT Libraries lead to capstone research projects on objects in MIT Archives and Special Collections. Students present on their readings and research in a variety of forms.

S. Frampton

21L.026[J] Film & Existentialism (New)

Same subject as 21G.051[J]

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Examines foundational films that explore and challenge the principal ideas regarding the human condition developed by existential philosophy. Through close reading of philosophical and film texts, students grapple with cinema's capacity to develop and question existential themes of freedom, authenticity, death, alienation, absurdity, and the creation of meaning. Includes films by Bergman, Tarkovsky, Fassbinder, Kurosawa, Pontecorvo, Resnais, Sembene, and others.

*C. Doyle, E. Brinkema***21L.027[J] Children and Culture (New)**

Same subject as CMS.425[J], WGS.258[J]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

See description under subject CMS.425[J]. Enrollment limited.

*M. Gubar***21L.032[J] Afrofuturism, Magical Realism, and Other Otherwise Worlds**

Same subject as WGS.130[J]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Examines Afrofuturism, magical realism, and other forms of the fantastic in literary texts, film, and other media. Through close reading and attention to historical, cultural, and sociopolitical context, students consider how these works reinterpret the past, diagnose modernity, and posit alternative futures. Particular attention given to the roles race, gender, class, and sexuality play within these radically imaginative worlds. Topics vary from term to term but might include work by Octavia Butler, Gabriel García Márquez, Samuel Delany, Toni Morrison, N.K. Jemisin, José María Arguedas, and Janelle Monáe. Limited to 18.

*J. Terrones***21L.040[J] Foundations of East Asian Literature and Culture: From Confucius to the Beats**

Same subject as 21G.041[J]

Subject meets with 21G.141, 21G.541

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Studies foundational works from East Asia (China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam) with a focus on their cultural context and contemporary relevance and asks how "Literature" looks different when conceived through some of the world's oldest literatures beyond the West. Explores philosophical texts, history writing, poetry, stories and diaries, tales, and novels. Hones skills of reading, writing, and speaking with a sense of cultural sensitivity, historical depth, and comparative contemplation. Students who have taken this topic under 21L.007 cannot also receive credit for 21L.040[J].

*W. Denecke***21L.050 Reading Nonfiction (New)**

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Concentrates on the close analysis of nonfiction writing. Emphasis varies from term to term, but the assigned readings may include memoirs, biographies, graphic memoirs, science writing, literary journalism, and other forms of creative nonfiction. Students consider the literary mode in its historical, artistic, and cultural contexts.

*B. Mangrum***Samplings****21L.310 Bestsellers**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

2-0-4 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Focuses on works that caught the popular imagination in the past or present. Emphasizes texts that are related by genre, theme or style. Books studied vary from term to term. May be repeated once for credit if content differs. Confirm start and end dates on Literature website. Enrollment limited.

W. Kelley

21L.315 Prizewinners and Laureates

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring; first half of term)

2-0-4 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Examines particular texts and authors as having special merit and significance. Considers modern authors and filmmakers who have received such accolades as a Nobel Prize, a Pulitzer Prize, or an Oscar, as well as older authors who have been named as poets laureate, or honored by traditions of commentary, interpretation, and translation. Specific topics vary from term to term. May be repeated once for credit if the specific works studied differ. Confirm start and end dates on Literature website. Enrollment limited.

*Staff***21L.320 Big Books**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Fall, Spring)

2-0-4 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Intensive study of a single major literary work or a very small set of related literary works. Emphasizes texts that encourage close analysis in a way that cannot easily be integrated into the regular literature curriculum. The Big Books taught in previous terms include *Moby-Dick*, *Canterbury Tales*, and the *Faerie Queene*. May be repeated once for credit if the works studied differ. Confirm start and end dates on Literature website. Enrollment limited.

*N. Jackson***21L.325 Small Wonders**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring; second half of term)

2-0-4 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Close examination of a coherent set of short texts and/or visual works. The selections may be the shorter works of one or more authors (poems, short stories or novellas), or short films and other visual media. Content varies from term to term. May be repeated once for credit if the works studied differ. Confirm start and end dates on Literature website.

*W. Kelley***21L.338 Reading in the Original**

Prereq: Permission of instructor

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

2-0-4 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Close examination of literary texts in their original languages. Language and texts studied vary from term to term. May be repeated once for credit if content differs. Confirm start and end dates on Literature website.

*S. Frampton***21L.340 Pleasures of Poetry**

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (IAP)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-3 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Strengthens writing and reading comprehension skills. Students attend all public sessions of the Pleasures of Poetry readings and discussions as well as several additional classes. The poems chosen by the various moderators range across the history of literature, from ancient Chinese lyrics to contemporary texts. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor. Confirm start and end dates on Literature website.

*Staff***21L.345 On the Screen**

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall)

2-0-4 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Examines works of film, television or other screen-based media, with emphasis on texts that are related by genre, time period, style, or director. Works studied vary from term to term. May be repeated for credit once with permission of instructor. Confirm start and end dates on Literature website.

S. Tapscott

21L.350 Science and Literature

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Fall)

2-0-4 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Examines intersections and channels of influence between the sciences and forms of imaginative literature. Addresses topics such as depictions of scientific experimentation in imaginative works, the history of scientific experimentation, and experimentation in literary works; the emergence of science fiction; and depictions of scientific practice in literature. May be repeated once for credit if content differs. Confirm start and end date on Literature website.

*N. Jackson, S. Raman***21L.355 Literature in the Digital Age**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring; second half of term)

2-0-4 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Examines how emerging computational methods and tools are transforming practices of reading and writing in the present. Topics may include the exploration of experimental literary forms and digital media practices (hypertext, Twitter fiction, etc.) or focus on the use of digital tools for analyzing literature (GIS mapping, data mining, etc.). May be repeated once for credit if content differs. Confirm start and end dates on Literature website.

*W. Kelley***Intermediate Subjects*****Genres and Themes*****21L.400 Medical Narratives: Compelling Accounts from Antiquity to Grey's Anatomy**

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-3-6 units. HASS-H

Explores fundamental questions about the experience of illness from the points of view of the patient, the physician, and the caretaker. # Examines the ways in which these narratives have changed across centuries and across cultures. # Asks about the physician's role in determining treatment; whether storytelling leads to more ethical life and death decisions; what special insights patient narratives provide; and what new awareness physicians derive from narrating illness. Materials include essays, fiction, poetry, memoir, blogs, film and television. # As a capstone project, students develop their own medical narratives that emerge in interaction with a mentor from the greater-Boston medical community.

*M. Resnick***21L.419 Books to Grow By (New)**

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Explores texts and visual adaptations from the perspective of what they teach us about living and growing up — no matter how old one is. Focuses on how sensibilities, values, and social and personal identities are consolidated by our reading choices and practices. The instructor's personal experience and perspective defines the arc that binds the selected texts together; consequently, theme and focus varies from term to term. Topics taught may include: the Bildungsroman, books for children, learning to think, and becoming other. May be repeated for credit with instructor's permission.

S. Raman

21L.420 Gateway to British Literature

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Examines the rich heritage of British literature across genre and historical period. Designed for students who want to know more about British literature, its cultural history, and global legacies. Studies the relationship between literary themes, forms, and conventions and the times in which they were produced. Topics may include Renaissance lyrics and drama; Enlightenment satires; the 19th-century novel; and modern and contemporary stories, poems, and film.

*S. Tapscott***21L.429[J] Narrative and Identity: Writing and Film by Contemporary Women of Color**

Same subject as WGS.142[J]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

See description under subject WGS.142[J].

*Staff***21L.430 Popular Culture and Narrative**

Subject meets with CMS.920

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Spring)

Acad Year 2026-2027: Not offered

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Examines relationships between popular culture and art, focusing on problems of evaluation and audience, and the uses of different media within a broader social context. Typically treats a range of narrative and dramatic works as well as films. Previously taught topics include Elements of Style; Gender, Sexuality and Popular Narrative. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Approved for credit in Women's and Gender Studies when content meets the requirements for subjects in that program. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor.

*W. Donaldson***21L.431 Shakespeare on Film and Media**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Examines the adaptation, performance and interpretation of Shakespearean plays on film and video. Focus varies from term to term, to include films such as the Olivier and Almerayda versions of *Hamlet* and Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo + Juliet*; "spin-offs" such as Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood* and *Shakespeare in Love*; or theatrical videos of English language and international productions.

*P. Donaldson***21L.432[J] Understanding Television**

Same subject as CMS.315[J]

Subject meets with CMS.915

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

A cultural approach to television's evolution as a technology and system of representation. Considers television as a system of storytelling and mythmaking, and as a cultural practice studied from anthropological, literary, and cinematic perspectives. Focuses on prime-time commercial broadcasting, the medium's technological and economic history, and theoretical perspectives. Considerable television viewing and readings in media theory and cultural interpretation are required. Previously taught topics include American Television: A Cultural History. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

*Staff***21L.433 Film Styles and Genres**

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Close study of one or more directors, genres, periods, artistic movements, or national cinemas which have been of major significance in the history of film. Previously taught topics include Hollywood and Hong Kong, and Movie Realists: Chaplin, Renoir, Neorealism, Truffaut. May be repeated for credit by permission of instructor.

A. Fleche

21L.434 Science Fiction and Fantasy

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Traces the history of science fiction as a generic tradition in literature, media, and popular culture. Considers formal ideological and cultural approaches to the analysis and interpretation of science fiction and fantasy texts. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if content differs.

*M. Gubar***21L.435 Literature and Film**

Subject meets with CMS.840

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-3-6 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Investigates relationships between the two media, including film adaptations as well as works linked by genre, topic, and style. Explores how artworks challenge and cross cultural, political, and aesthetic boundaries. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if content differs.

*A. Fleche***21L.436[J] Latin America and the Global Sixties: Counterculture and Revolution (New)**

Same subject as 21G.070[J], CMS.355[J]

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

See description under subject CMS.355[J]. Enrollment limited.

*P. Duong***21L.437[J] The Short Form: Literature and New Media Cultures in the Hispanic World (New)**

Same subject as 21G.736[J], CMS.358[J], WGS.210[J]

Prereq: One intermediate subject in Spanish or permission of instructor

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Spring)

Acad Year 2026-2027: Not offered

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

See description under subject CMS.358[J]. Limited to 18.

*P. Duong***21L.438[J] Intersectional Feminist Memoir**

Same subject as 21W.738[J], WGS.238[J]

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Fall, Spring)

Acad Year 2026-2027: Not offered

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

See description under subject WGS.238[J].

*K. Ragusa***21L.449 The Wilds of Literature**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

Immerses students in literature that represents the interaction between humans and nature as joyous, sublime, revelatory, and mutually sustaining. Without denying the damage humans have wreaked on the environment, explores the role that pleasure, resilience, wonder, and hope might play in helping us to envision new modes of engagement with one another in an ever-changing environment. Students are enjoined to follow the example of authors — such as Henry David Thoreau, Annie Dillard, and Lauret Savoy — by selecting and visiting a local natural site, and writing about the experience. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if content differs.

*M. Gubar, J. Bennett, S. Tapscott***21L.450 Global Environmental Literature**

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Introduces students to global environmental literature from the 20th and 21st centuries. Reflects on the effects of globalization and the ways in which ecological problems affect certain ethnic, national, and economic populations in radically unequal ways. Considers the nature and scope of these disparities, primarily through literature. Presents the humanities as an avenue for contemplating environmental harm. Topics vary by term but may include: climate change, toxicity, waste, environmental racism, food scarcity, migration, urban sustainability, or the petroleum economy.

B. Mangrum

21L.451 Literary Theory

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Examines how we read texts and the questions that we, as readers, ask of them. Introduces different critical approaches to literature by examining the relationship between readers and text, between different texts, and between text and context. Topics vary but usually include reader-response theory, structuralism and semiotics, post-structuralism and post-modernism, historicism, psychoanalysis, intertextuality, cultural criticism, and media theory.

*S. Raman***21L.452[J] Literature and Philosophy**

Same subject as 24.240[J]

Prereq: One philosophy subject

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

See description under subject 24.240[J]. Enrollment limited.

*M. Gubar, K. Setiya***21L.453[J] Political Utopias and Dystopias (New)**

Same subject as 17.517[J]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-S

See description under subject 17.517[J].

*C. Lawson, M. Fuller***Periods of World Literature****21L.455 Ancient Authors**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Spring)

Acad Year 2026-2027: Not offered

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Close examination of major works of classical Greek and Roman literature in translation. Topics may include epic, history, lyric poetry, or drama and the works of authors such as Thucydides, Homer, Virgil, and Cicero. Texts vary from term to term. May be repeated once for credit if content differs. Enrollment limited.

*S. Frampton***21L.456 The Bible: Old Testament**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Introduces students to the three divisions of the Old Testament: Pentateuch, Prophets, Writings. Particular attention to literary techniques, the historical periods that produced and are reflected in the various books, issues resulting from translation, and the difference between Old Testament and Hebrew Bible. Students cannot also receive credit for 21L.458.

*I. Lipkowitz***21L.457 The Bible: New Testament**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Introduces students to the genres that comprise the New Testament: gospels, history, letters, apocalypse. Particular attention to historical context, canonicity, translation, and the transformation of Hebrew Bible into Old Testament. Students cannot also receive credit for 21L.458.

*I. Lipkowitz***21L.458 The Bible**

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

An introduction to major books from both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. Particular attention given to literary techniques, issues resulting from translation from the original Hebrew and Greek, and the different historical periods that produced and are reflected in the Bible. Students cannot also receive credit for 21L.456 or 21L.457.

I. Lipkowitz

21L.460 Arthurian Literature

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Tracing the evolution of King Arthur (and principal knights), students consider what underlies the appeal of this figure whose consistent reappearance in western culture has performed the medieval prophecy that he would be *rex quondam et futurus*: the once and future king. Examines how Arthur's persona has been reinvented and rewritten throughout history, including portrayals as Christian hero and war-leader, ineffective king and pathetic cuckold, and as a tragic figure of noble but doomed intentions. Enrollment limited.

*A. Bahr***21L.471 Major Novels**

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Studies important examples of the literary form that, from the beginning of the 18th century to the present day, has become an indispensable instrument for representing modern life, in the hands of such writers as Cervantes, Defoe, Richardson, Sterne, Burney, Austen, Scott, Dickens, the Brontës, Eliot, Balzac, Stendhal, Flaubert, Hardy, Conrad, Woolf, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Proust, and others. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor.

*I. Lipkowitz***21L.474[J] Representing Girlhood (New)**

Same subject as CMS.422[J], WGS.230[J]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

See description under subject CMS.422[J]. Limited to 20.

*M. Gubar***21L.475 Enlightenment and Modernity**

Prereq: One subject in Literature

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Examines selected topics in 18th- and 19th-century English/ European literature and culture from the restoration of the English monarchy in 1660 to the end of Queen Victoria's reign in 1901. Topics vary by term; authors may include Jonathan Swift, Laurence Sterne, William Blake, William Wordsworth, Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Lewis Carroll, Oscar Wilde, and Arthur Conan Doyle, among others. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor.

*J. Buzard***21L.480[J] Identities and Intersections: Queer Literatures**

Same subject as WGS.245[J]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

See description under subject WGS.245[J].

*J. Terrones***21L.481[J] HIV/AIDS in American Culture**

Same subject as WGS.250[J]

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

See description under subject WGS.250[J].

*J. Terrones***21L.482[J] Topics in Queer Studies**

Same subject as WGS.260[J]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

See description under subject WGS.260[J].

*J. Terrones***21L.484[J] Rap Theory and Practice (New)**

Same subject as 21M.222[J], CMS.305[J]

Subject meets with CMS.805

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

See description under subject CMS.305[J]. Limited to 8.

W. Jaco

21L.485 Modern Fiction

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Tradition and innovation in representative fiction of the early modern period. Recurring themes include the role of the artist in the modern period; the representation of psychological and sexual experience; and the virtues (and defects) of the aggressively experimental character. Works by Conrad, Kipling, Babel, Kafka, James, Lawrence, Mann, Ford Madox Ford, Joyce, Woolf, Faulkner, and Nabokov. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if content differs.

*D. Thorburn***21L.486[J] Modern Drama**

Same subject as 21T.244[J], WGS.285[J]

Prereq: One subject in Literature

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

Explores major modern plays with special attention to performance, sociopolitical and aesthetic contexts, and the role of theater in the contemporary multimedial landscape. Includes analysis of class, gender, and race as modes of performance. Typically features Beckett and Brecht, as well as some of the following playwrights: Chekov, Churchill, Deaver Smith, Ibsen, Fornes, Friel, Kushner, O'Neill, Shaw, Stoppard, Soyinka, Williams, Wilson. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if content differs.

*D. Henderson***21L.487 Modern Poetry**

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Study of major poems and manifestos from the late 19th century through the early 21st century. Examines works written in English, with some attention to Modernist texts from other cultures and other languages as well. Poems by T. S. Eliot, W. C. Williams, Langston Hughes, Robert Frost, Pablo Neruda, Hilda Doolittle, Charles Baudelaire, Anna Akhmatova, Bertolt Brecht, Rabindranath Tagore, and others. Comprised primarily of discussions, short papers, and a final project. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if content differs.

*S. Tapscott***21L.488 Contemporary Literature**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Study of key themes and techniques in prose, poetry, and drama since the 1970s. Recent topics include postmodernism, globalization, new British and Irish writing, and literature and development. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if content differs.

*Staff***21L.489[J] Interactive Narrative**

Same subject as 21W.765[J], CMS.618[J]

Subject meets with CMS.845

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

See description under subject 21W.765[J].

*N. Montfort***21L.490[J] Introduction to the Classics of Russian Literature**

Same subject as 21G.077[J]

Subject meets with 21G.618

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

See description under subject 21G.077[J].

*M. Khotimsky***21L.491[J] Gateway to Korean Literature and Culture**

Same subject as 21G.066[J]

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Introduction to two millennia of Korean literature and culture. Discusses texts, artifacts, and films in their cultural context and from a comparative global perspective. Explores poetry; historiography, story-telling, drama and fiction; philosophical and religious texts and practices; and visual materials. Includes creative exercises to help students develop their own Korean wave and K-drama passions with a critically informed eye.

W. Denecke

21L.492[J] Three Kingdoms: From History to Fiction, Comic, Film, and Game

Same subject as 21G.042[J], 21H.352[J], CMS.359[J]

Subject meets with 21G.133

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Fall)

Acad Year 2026-2027: Not offered

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

See description under subject 21G.042[J].

E. Teng

21L.493[J] Gateway to Japanese Literature and Culture

Same subject as 21G.062[J]

Subject meets with 21G.562

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Surveys the nature, history, and distinctive features of Japanese literature and cultural history from the beginnings through the threshold of modernity. Examines various genres of poetry, historiography and mythological lore, prose tales and fiction, diaries, essays, Noh and puppet plays, short stories and novels; and helps students appreciate the texts' relevance in the historical and cultural context in which authors wrote them, in the broader context of literary traditions from around the world, and for the humanistic and aesthetic powers that make them poignant to us today. Showcases how authors increasingly enjoyed adapting, redoing, and satirizing earlier models, while constantly developing new expressive forms suited to the urgent needs of their time. Includes an eco-literature lab, a creative writing lab, and a history-writing lab for collaborative experimentation.

W. Denecke

21L.494[J] Classics of Chinese Literature in Translation

Same subject as 21G.044[J], WGS.235[J]

Subject meets with 21G.195

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

See description under subject 21G.044[J].

E. Teng, W. Denecke

American Literature**21L.006 American Literature**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Studies the national literature of the United States since the early 19th century. Considers a range of texts - including, novels, essays, films, and electronic media - and their efforts to define the notion of American identity. Readings usually include works by such authors as Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry David Thoreau, Frederick Douglass, Emily Dickinson, Flannery O'Connor, William Faulkner, Sherman Alexie, and Toni Morrison. Enrollment limited.

W. Kelley

21L.500[J] How We Got to Hamilton (New)

Same subject as 21T.247[J], CMS.427[J]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

See description under subject CMS.427[J]. Limited to 20.

M. Gubar

21L.501 The American Novel

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Works by major American novelists, beginning with the late 18th century and concluding with a contemporary novelist. Major emphasis on reading novels as literary texts, but attention paid to historical, intellectual, and political contexts as well. Syllabus varies from term to term, but many of the following writers are represented: Rowson, Hawthorne, Melville, Twain, Wharton, James, and Toni Morrison. Previously taught topics include The American Revolution and Makeovers (i.e. adaptations and reinterpretation of novels traditionally considered as American "Classics"). May be repeated for credit with instructor's permission so long as the content differs.

Staff

21L.504[J] Race and Identity in American Literature

Same subject as WGS.140[J]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Questions posed by the literature of the Americas about the relationship of race and gender to authorship, audience, culture, ethnicity, and aesthetics. Social conditions and literary histories that shape the politics of identity in American literature. Specific focus varies each term. Previously taught topics include Immigrant Stories, African American Literature, and Asian American Literature. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if the content differs.

S. Alexandre

21L.512 American Authors

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Spring)

Acad Year 2026-2027: Not offered

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Examines in detail the works of several American authors selected according to a theme, period, genre, or set of issues. Through close readings of poetry, novels, or plays, subject addresses such issues as literary influence, cultural diversity, and the writer's career. Previously taught topics include American Women Writers, American Autobiography, American Political Writing, and American Short Fiction. Approved for credit in Women's and Gender Studies when content meets the requirements for subjects in that program. May be repeated for credit with instructor's permission so long as the content differs.

J. Terrones

International Literatures**21L.007 World Literatures**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Introduces students to a coherent set of textual and visual materials drawn from different geographical regions, languages, artistic genres, and historical periods. The focus may vary but usually cuts across national boundaries. Includes non-English works read in translation and examines different kinds of writing, both fiction and nonfiction. Pays special attention to such issues as identity formation, cultural contact, exploration, and exile. Previously taught topics include contemporary writing from Africa and South Asia, the impact of the discovery of the New World, and Caribbean literature. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if content differs. Enrollment limited.

Staff

21L.020[J] Globalization: The Good, the Bad and the In-Between

Same subject as WGS.145[J]

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Examines the cultural paradoxes of contemporary globalization. Studies the cultural, artistic, social and political impact of globalization across international borders. Students analyze contending definitions of globalization and principal agents of change, and why some of them engender backlash; identify the agents, costs and benefits of global networks; and explore how world citizens preserve cultural specificity. Case studies on global health, human trafficking and labor migration illuminate the shaping influence of contemporary globalization on gender, race, ethnicity, and class. Develops cultural literacy through analysis of fiction and film. Enrollment limited.

M. Resnick

21L.522[J] International Women's Voices

Same subject as 21G.022[J], WGS.141[J]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Introduces students to a variety of fictional works by contemporary women writers. International perspective emphasizes the extent to which each author's work reflects her distinct cultural heritage and to what extent, if any, there is an identifiable female voice that transcends national boundaries. Uses a variety of interpretive perspectives, including sociohistorical, psychoanalytic, and feminist criticism, to examine texts. Authors include Mariama Ba, Isabel Allende, Anita Desai, Maxine Hong Kingston, Toni Morrison, Doris Lessing, Alifa Riyaat, Yang Jiang, Nawal Al-Saadawi, and Sawako Ariyoshi. Taught in English.

*M. Resnick***21L.580 Translations**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Students study theories of translation, compare examples of multiple renderings of the same work, and work on translation projects. Supplementary assignments focus on adaptation of works from one genre to another, and on transmission of information from one mode to another (visual to verbal changes, American Sign Language, etc.). Students write essays about relative theories of translation and about comparisons of variant versions, and also work on translation projects of their own in workshop-format. Includes texts such as the King James Bible, and writers such as Walter Benjamin, George Steiner, Wislawa Szymborska, Czeslaw Milosz, Pablo Neruda, Gabriela Mistral, Rainer Maria Rilke, William Gass, and Robert Pinsky. Limited to 18.

*S. Tapscott***21L.590[J] The Spanish Incubator**

Same subject as 21G.073[J]

Prereq: None

U (IAP)

3-3-3 units. HASS-E

Students travel to Spain to explore the country's influence on our understanding of contemporary culture, from its role as the crucible of the international avant-garde, to its genesis of political art and writing, to its Civil War that ignited the artistic passion of authors around the world, to the exuberant liberation after 40 years of dictatorship. Readings include Hemingway, Lorca, Orwell, Neruda, memoirs of Americans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, Spanish poetry of the war and repression that followed, and the films of Saura and Almodovar. Films, readings, field trips to museums, and cultural events enable students to understand the full context in which today's vibrant Spanish democracy emerged. Contact Literature about travel fee and possible funding opportunities. Enrollment limited. Application required; contact Literature Headquarters for details.

*M. Resnick***21L.591 Literary London**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (IAP)

3-3-3 units. HASS-E

Based in London, explores the specific locations, history and artistic institutions that have made London a world cultural hub, deepening students' knowledge gained on site through guided readings, theater performances, visits to homes associated with major authors, guest experts, and independent "author mapping" projects with reports back to the class. Sharpens students' understanding of the complexities of international exchange and identity formation in a global age. Contact Literature about travel fee and possible funding opportunities. Enrollment limited. Application required; contact Literature Headquarters for details.

*D. Henderson***21L.592[J] Race, Place, and Modernity in the Americas**

Same subject as 11.047[J], 21W.781[J], WGS.247[J]

Prereq: None

U (IAP)

3-3-3 units. HASS-E

See description under subject WGS.247[J]. Enrollment limited to 20. Application required.

J. Terrones

21L.600 Reading Masterpieces of Classical East Asian Literature and Philosophy (New)

Prereq: 21G.104, 21G.110, 21G.504, 21G.904, or permission of instructor

U (IAP)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Teaches the foundation of Classical Chinese, the cosmopolitan language of premodern East Asia (China, Korea, Japan, Vietnam), through readings of major works of philosophy, poetry, fiction, and historiography. Explores the oldest continuous literary tradition with works that have become touchstones of global political strategy and personal wisdom, such as the Confucian Analects, Daeodejing, or the Art of War, or the classical Chinese and Japanese poetry that drove American avant-garde movements like the Beats. Students acquire solid competency in Classical Chinese by reading classical masterpieces from East Asia in the original language and debating their legacy and relevance in today's world and their own lives.

W. Denecke

21L.601[*J*] Old English and Beowulf

Same subject as 24.916[*J*]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Intensive introduction to Old English (also called Anglo-Saxon), the ancestor of modern English that was spoken in England *ca.* 600-1100. In the first half of the term, students use short prose texts to study the basics of Old English grammar. They go on to read short poems, and conclude by tackling portions of the epic Beowulf in the last third of the term. Assessment based upon translation work, daily vocabulary quizzes, and three exams. Limited to 16.

A. Bahr

21L.607 Greek I

Prereq: None

U (Fall; first half of term)

3-0-3 units

Introduces rudiments of ancient Greek - the language of Plato, Sophocles, Thucydides, and Euclid, and the basis for that of the New Testament - to students with little or no prior knowledge of the subject. Aimed at laying a foundation to begin reading ancient and/or medieval texts. Greek I and Greek II (21L.608) may be combined (after completion of both) to count as a single HASS-H.

Staff

21L.608 Greek II

Prereq: 21L.607 or permission of instructor

U (Fall; second half of term)

3-0-3 units

Introductory Greek subject for students with some prior knowledge of basic grammar and vocabulary. Intended to refresh and enrich ability to read ancient and/or medieval literary and historical texts. May be taken independently of Greek I with permission of instructor. Greek I (21L.607) and Greek II may be combined (after completion of both) to count as a single HASS-H.

Staff

21L.609 Greek Readings

Prereq: 21L.608 or permission of instructor

U (Spring; first half of term)

2-0-4 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Introduction to reading ancient Greek literature in the original language. Provides a bridge between the study of Greek grammar and the reading of Greek authors. Improves knowledge of the language through careful examination of literary texts, both prose and poetry. Builds proficiency in reading Greek and develops appreciation for basic features of style and genre. Texts vary from term to term. May be repeated once for credit if content differs. 21L.609 and 21L.610, or two terms of 21L.609, may be combined by petition (after completion of both) to count as a single HASS-H.

S. Frampton

21L.610 Advanced Greek Readings

Prereq: 21L.609 or (placement exam and permission of instructor)

U (Spring; second half of term)

2-0-4 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Building on 21L.609, develops the ability to read and analyze ancient Greek literary texts, both prose and poetry. Focuses on increasing fluency in reading comprehension and recognition of stylistic, generic, and grammatical features. Texts vary from term to term. May be repeated once for credit if content differs. 21L.609 and 21L.610, or two terms of 21L.610, may be combined by petition (after completion of both) to count as a single HASS-H.

S. Frampton

21L.611 Latin I

Prereq: None

U (Spring; first half of term)

3-0-3 units

Introduces rudiments of Latin to students with little or no prior knowledge of the subject. Aimed at laying a foundation to begin reading ancient and/or medieval literary and historical texts. Latin I and Latin II (21L.611 and 21L.612) or two terms of 21L.612 may be combined by petition (after completion of both) to count as a single HASS-H.

*S. Frampton***21L.612 Latin II**

Prereq: 21L.611 or permission of instructor

U (Spring; second half of term)

3-0-3 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Introductory Latin subject for students with some prior knowledge of basic grammar and vocabulary. Intended to refresh and enrich ability to read ancient and/or medieval literary and historical texts. May be taken independently of Latin I with permission of instructor. Latin I and Latin II (21L.611 and 21L.612) or two terms of 21L.612 may be combined by petition (after completion of both) to count as a single HASS-H. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor.

*S. Frampton***21L.613 Latin Readings**

Prereq: 21L.611 or permission of instructor

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Fall; first half of term)

2-0-4 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Introduction to reading Latin literature in the original language. Provides a bridge between the study of Latin grammar and the reading of Latin authors. Improves knowledge of the language through careful examination of literary texts, focusing on prose and poetry in alternate years. Builds proficiency in reading Latin and develops appreciation for basic features of style and genre. Texts vary from term to term. May be repeated once for credit if content differs. 21L.613 and 21L.614, or two terms of 21L.613, may be combined by petition (after completion of both) to count as a single HASS-H.

*S. Frampton***21L.614 Advanced Latin Readings**

Prereq: 21L.613 or (placement exam and permission of instructor)

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Fall; second half of term)

2-0-4 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Develops the ability to read and analyze Latin literary texts, focusing on prose and poetry in alternate years. Increases fluency in reading comprehension and recognition of stylistic, generic, and grammatical features. Texts vary from term to term. May be repeated once for credit if content differs. 21L.613 and 21L.614, or two terms of 21L.614, may be combined by petition (after completion of both) to count as a single HASS-H.

*S. Frampton***21L.620[] Introduction to French Literature**

Same subject as 21G.320[]

Prereq: 21G.304 or permission of instructor

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Fall)

Acad Year 2026-2027: Not offered

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

See description under subject 21G.320[].

*B. Perreau***21L.622[] Understanding Contemporary French Politics (New)**

Same subject as 21G.053[]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-S; CI-H

Credit cannot also be received for 21G.353[], 21L.630[]

Examines the changes in contemporary French society through the study of political debates, reforms and institutions since 1958. Analyzes the deep influence of politics on cultural and social life, despite a decline in political participation. Revisits public controversies and political cleavages, from the Algerian war to postcolonial issues, from the birth of the European Union to the recent financial crisis, and from the moral "revolution" of the seventies to the recognition of new families. Course taught in English. Enrollment limited.

B. Perreau

21L.623[J] The Invention of French Theory: A History of Transatlantic Intellectual Life since 1945 (New)

Same subject as 21G.068[J]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-S

Credit cannot also be received for 21G.368[J], 21L.631[J]

Examines post-WWII French theory. Discusses how theorists such as Lacan, Cixous, Derrida, and Debord were perceived in France and the US. Explores transatlantic intellectual debates since 1989 and the "new" French theory. Topics include: communism, decolonization, neo-liberalism, gender and mass media. Taught in English.

B. Perreau

21L.624[J] Childhood and Youth in French and Francophone Cultures (21L.321)

Same subject as 21G.321[J]

Prereq: One intermediate subject in French

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Studies the transformation of childhood and youth since the 18th century in France, as well as the development of sentimentality within the family in a francophone context. Examines the personification of children, both as a source of inspiration for artistic creation and a political ideal aimed at protecting future generations. Considers various representations of childhood and youth in literature (e.g., Pagnol, Proust, Sarraute, Laye, Morgièvre), movies (e.g., Truffaut), and songs (e.g., Brel, Barbara). Taught in French.

B. Perreau

21L.625[J] French Literature and the Goncourt Prize (21L.323)

Same subject as 21G.323[J]

Prereq: One intermediate level subject or permission of instructor

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

A study of contemporary French literature and classics through the participation in the US Goncourt Prize jury. "Le Goncourt" is the most prestigious literary prize in France. Students study and rank books from the Goncourt shortlist. Prepares students to serve as representatives of MIT on a prize jury at Villa Albertine in New York and choose the winner along with students from Princeton, Duke, Yale, Harvard, Columbia, and the University of Virginia. Students write a press article to present their experience as a jury. Special attention is devoted to the improvement of French language skills, oral and written. Taught in French. Limited to 18 for pedagogical reasons.

B. Perreau

21L.626[J] New Culture of Gender: Queer France (21L.324)

Same subject as 21G.325[J], WGS.233[J]

Prereq: One intermediate subject in French

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Addresses the place of contemporary queer identities in French discourse. Discusses the new generation of queer authors and their principal concerns. Introduces students to the main classical references of queer subcultures, from Proust and Vivien to Hocquenghem and Wittig. Examines current debates on post-colonial and globalized queer identities through essays, songs, movies, and novels. Authors include Didier Eribon, Anne Garréta, Abdellah Taïa, Anne Scott, and Nina Bouraoui. Taught in French.

B. Perreau

21L.627[J] French Pop Music (New)

Same subject as 21G.342[J]

Prereq: 21G.304 or permission of instructor

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Studies the literary, political and social traditions of "la chanson française" from the early 20th century to the present. Discusses the influences of world music on both French and francophone songs. Students investigate individual musicians' careers, as well as generational phenomena, such as cabaret songs, yéyés, and French rap. Examines the impact of social media on the music industry in France, the role of television and cinema, and the influence of dance and living art. Taught in French. Limited to 18.

B. Perreau

21L.628[J] French Feminist Literature: Yesterday and Today (21L.621)

Same subject as 21G.344[J], WGS.321[J]

Prereq: One intermediate subject in French or permission of instructor

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Explores feminist literary voices in France throughout the ages. Discusses the theory that the power of feminist writing lies in its ability to translate dominant language into a language of one's own. Studies lifestyles, family norms, political representation, social movements, as well as the perception of the body. Investigates how feminist genealogies redefine the relationship between belonging and knowledge through a dialogue between several generations of women writers. Taught in French. Limited to 18.

B. Perreau

21L.629[J] Social and Literary Trends in Contemporary Short French Fiction (New)

Same subject as 21G.347[J]

Prereq: One intermediate subject in French or permission of instructor

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Examines short stories and short novels published in France during the past 20 years, with emphasis on texts related to the dominant social and cultural trends. Themes include the legacy of France's colonial experience, the re-examination of its wartime past, memory and the Holocaust, the specter of AIDS, changing gender relationships, new families, the quest for personal identity, and immigration narratives. Covers a wide variety of authors, including Christine Angot, Nina Bouraoui, Herve Guibert, and Patrick Modiano. Taught in French.

B. Perreau

21L.630[J] Understanding Contemporary French Politics (New)

Same subject as 21G.353[J]

Prereq: 21G.304 or permission of instructor

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-S

Credit cannot also be received for 21G.053[J], 21L.622[J]

Examines French politics since 1958. Analyzes how politics has deeply influenced cultural and social life in France, including daily interactions. Questions public controversies and history's political cleavages, from the Algerian war to postcolonial issues, from the birth of the European construction to the Covid crisis. To explore French institutions and understand the impact of political issues in contemporary France, students "run" for the French presidency by preparing historical notes, delivering speeches, participating in a first-round presidential debate, and submitting a final political statement. Taught in French. Limited to 25.

B. Perreau

21L.631[J] The Invention of French Theory: A History of Transatlantic Intellectual Life since 1945 (New)

Same subject as 21G.368[J]

Prereq: One intermediate subject in French

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-S

Credit cannot also be received for 21G.068[J], 21L.623[J]

Explores the maze of transatlantic intellectual debates of French theorists that emerged in writings after 1945, from the heyday of French existentialism to critical ecologies. Studies debates and controversies on communism, decolonization, neo-liberalism, gender, youth culture, police violence, and new media. Discusses who the new French theorists are today and their opinions about justice, representation, and identity. Taught in French. Limited to 18 for pedagogical reasons.

B. Perreau

21L.636[J] Introduction to Contemporary Hispanic Literature and Film

Same subject as 21G.716[J]

Prereq: One intermediate subject in Spanish or permission of instructor

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Focuses on literary and cinematic production in 20th- and 21st-century Spain and Latin America with a particular emphasis on how social, cultural, political, and technological changes led to aesthetic innovations. Topics include the literature of politics, the avant-garde and subsequent literary boom, the radical aesthetic of the post-Franco era, and post-modern film and art. Materials include short stories, novels, poetry, song, and film. Conducted in Spanish.

M. Resnick

21L.637[J] Power and Culture: Utopias and Dystopias in Spain and Latin America

Same subject as 21G.717[J]

Prereq: One intermediate subject in Spanish or permission of instructor

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Studies how new literary, artistic and musical forms have emerged in response to tensions and contradictions in Hispanic culture, from the eighth century to the present. Examines distinctively Hispanic artistic movements and modes from Al-Andalus' vibrant heterogeneity to the enforced homogeneity of the Spanish Inquisition; from a rich plurality of pre-Colombian civilizations to the imposed conversions by conquistadors; from the revolutionary zeal of Latin America's liberators to the crushing dictatorships that followed; from the promise of globalization to the struggle against US cultural imperialism. Taught in Spanish. Limited to 18.

M. Resnick

21L.638[J] Literature and Social Conflict: Perspectives on Spain

Same subject as 21G.738[J]

Prereq: One intermediate subject in Spanish or permission of instructor

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Considers how major literary texts illuminate principal issues in the evolution of modern Spanish society. Emphasizes the treatment of such major questions as the exile of liberals in 1820, the concept of progress, the place of religion, urbanization, rural conservatism and changing gender roles, and the Spanish Civil War. Authors include Perez Galdos, Pardo Bazan, Unamuno, Ortega y Gasset, Salinas, Lorca, La Pasionaria, and Falcon. Taught in Spanish.

M. Resnick

21L.639[J] Globalization and its Discontents: Spanish-speaking Nations

Same subject as 21G.739[J]

Prereq: One intermediate subject in Spanish or permission of instructor

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Studies new paradigms of cultural exchange that have shaped Latin America in the 20th and 21st centuries. Examines how globalization is rapidly changing the identity of peoples and cultures in Spanish-speaking nations. Spotlights debates about human rights. Materials studied include film, fiction, essay, architectural archives, music and art. Students complete a research project about a specific aspect of Hispanic culture that has been shaped by contemporary forces in the global economy. Taught in Spanish with required readings and writing in Spanish.

M. Resnick

Seminars**21L.640[J] The New Spain: 1977-Present**

Same subject as 21G.740[J]

Prereq: One intermediate subject in Spanish or permission of instructor

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Deals with the vast changes in Spanish social, political and cultural life that have taken place since the death of Franco. Topics include new freedom from censorship, the re-emergence of strong movements for regional autonomy (the Basque region and Catalonia), the new cinema including Almodovar and Saura, educational reforms instituted by the socialist government, and the fiction of Carme Riera and Terenci Moix. Special emphasis on the emergence of mass media as a vehicle for expression in Spain. Considers the changes wrought by Spain's acceptance into the European Community. Materials include magazines, newspapers, films, fiction, and Amando de Miguel's *Los Españoles*. Taught in Spanish.

M. Resnick

21L.701 Literary Methods

Prereq: Two subjects in Literature

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Introduces practice and theory of literary criticism. Seminar focuses on topics such as the history of critical methods and techniques, and the continuity of certain subjects in literary history. Instruction and practice in oral and written communication. Previously taught topics include Virginia Woolf's *Shakespeare*, *Theory and Use of Figurative Language*, and *Text, Context, Subtext, Pretext*. Approved for credit in the Women's and Gender Studies when content meets requirements for subjects in that program. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if content differs. Limited to 12.

W. Kelley

21L.702 Studies in Fiction

Prereq: Two subjects in Literature

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Intensive study of a range of texts by a single author or by a limited group of authors whose achievements are mutually illuminating. Some attention to narrative theory and biographical and cultural backgrounds. Instruction and practice in oral and written communication. Previously taught topics include Stowe, Twain, and the Transformation of 19th-century America, and Joyce and the Legacy of Modernism. Approved for credit in Women's and Gender Studies when content meets the requirements for subjects in that program. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if content differs. Limited to 12.

J. Buzard

21L.703[J] Studies in Drama

Same subject as 21L.246[J]

Prereq: Two subjects in Literature

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Intensive study of an important topic or period in drama. Close analysis of major plays, enriched by critical readings and attention to historical and theatrical contexts. Instruction and practice in oral and written communication through student presentations and research essays. Previously taught topics include: Renaissance Drama; Shakespeare with his Contemporaries; Oscar Wilde; and Stoppard and Company. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if content differs. Limited to 12.

S. Raman

21L.704 Studies in Poetry

Prereq: Two subjects in Literature

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Intensive study of a body of poetry, raising questions of form, authorship, poetic influence, social context, and literary tradition. Instruction and practice in oral and written communication. Previously taught topics include: Does poetry Matter?, Poetry and the Science of Mind; Songs, Sonnets and the Story of English; Virgil, Spenser, Milton; and The Image: Poetry, Photography, and Technologies of Vision. Approved for credit in Women's and Gender Studies when content meets the requirements for subjects in that program. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if content differs. Limited to 12.

N. Jackson

21L.705 Major Authors

Prereq: Two subjects in Literature

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Close study of a limited group of writers. Instruction and practice in oral and written communication. Previously taught topics include John Milton and his Age, Chaucer, Herman Melville, Toni Morrison, and Oscar Wilde and the '90s. Approved for credit in Women's and Gender Studies when content meets the requirements for subjects in that program. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if content differs. Limited to 12.

M. Fuller

21L.706 Studies in Film

Subject meets with CMS.830

Prereq: (21L.011 and one subject in Literature or Comparative Media Studies) or permission of instructor

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Intensive study of films from particular periods, genres, or directors, or films focusing on specific formal or theoretical problems. Instruction and practice in oral and written communication provided. Previous topics include The Contemporary Horror Film, Film Remixes, Film Narrative, Heroic Cinema, Color in Film and Hitchcock. Students taking graduate version complete different assignments. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if content differs. Limited to 12.

P. Donaldson, E. Brinkema

21L.707 Problems in Cultural Interpretation

Prereq: Two subjects in Literature or permission of instructor

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Studies the relation between imaginative texts and the culture surrounding them. Emphasizes ways in which imaginative works absorb, reflect, and conflict with reigning attitudes and world views. Instruction and practice in oral and written communication. Previously taught topics include Women Reading/Women Writing; Poetry, Passion, and the Self; and Race, Religion and Identity in Early Modern America. Approved for credit in Women's and Gender Studies when content meets the requirements for subjects in that program. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if content differs. Limited to 12.

I. Lipkowitz

21L.709 Studies in Literary History

Prereq: Two subjects in Literature or History

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Close examination of the literature of a particular historical period. Instruction and practice in oral and written communication. Syllabi vary. Previous topics include Britons Abroad in the 18th Century; Modernism: From Nietzsche to Fellini; and Make it New: Manifestos and the Invention of the Modern. #May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if content differs. Limited to 12.

W. Kelley

21L.715 Media in Cultural Context

Subject meets with CMS.871

Prereq: Two subjects in Literature or Comparative Media Studies or permission of instructor

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Seminar uses case studies to examine specific media or media configurations and the larger social, cultural, economic, political, or technological contexts within which they operate. Organized around recurring themes in media history, as well as specific genres, movements, media, or historical moments. Previously taught topics include Gendered Genres: Horror and Maternal Melodramas; Comics, Cartoons, and Graphic Storytelling; and Exploring Children's Culture. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Approved for credit in Women's and Gender Studies when content meets the requirements for subjects in that program. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if content differs. Limited to 12.

M. Marks

21L.720 Chaucer's Canterbury Tales

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Intensive study of Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, with particular attention to formal analysis and cultural context. Students work closely with the linguistic nuances of Chaucer's Middle English, and examine scholarly research in the fields of both literary and medieval studies. Limited to 12.

A. Bahr

Special Subjects, Research, and Thesis**21L.900 Independent Study**

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall, Spring)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Open to qualified students who wish to pursue an independent study with members of the Literature faculty. Normal maximum is 6 units, though exceptional 9-unit projects are occasionally approved. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor.

Staff

21L.901 Independent Study

Prereq: Permission of instructor

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

Units arranged [P/D/F]

Can be repeated for credit.

Open to qualified students who wish to pursue an independent study with members of the Literature faculty. Normal maximum is 6 units, though exceptional 9-unit projects are occasionally approved. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor.

Staff

21L.S60[J] Special Subject: Rap Theory and Practice

Same subject as CMS.S60[J]

Subject meets with CMS.S96

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

See description under subject CMS.S60[J]. Limited to 10.

W. Jaco

21L.S88 Special Subject in Literature

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Spring; second half of term)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Covers topics in Literature that are not provided in the regular subject offerings. Units vary depending on the number of class meetings, readings and assignments. May be repeated for credit if the subjects are different.

S. Frampton

21L.S89 Special Subject in Literature

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall)

Units arranged [P/D/F]

Can be repeated for credit.

Covers topics in Literature that are not provided in the regular subject offerings. Units vary depending on the number of class meetings, readings and assignments. May be repeated for credit if the subjects are different.

Staff

21L.S90 Special Subject in Literature

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall, Spring)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Covers topics in Literature that are not provided in the regular subject offerings. Units vary depending on the number of class meetings, readings and assignments. May be repeated for credit if the subjects are different.

Staff

21L.S91 Special Subject in Literature

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall, IAP, Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

Units arranged [P/D/F]

Can be repeated for credit.

Covers topics in Literature that are not provided in the regular subject offerings. Units vary depending on the number of class meetings, readings and assignments. May be repeated for credit if the subjects are different.

Staff

21L.S92 Special Subject in Literature

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall, IAP, Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

Units arranged [P/D/F]

Can be repeated for credit.

Covers topics in Literature that are not provided in the regular subject offerings. Units vary depending on the number of class meetings, readings and assignments. May be repeated for credit if the subjects are different.

Staff

21L.S93 Special Subject in Literature

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall, IAP, Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Covers topics in Literature that are not provided in the regular subject offerings. Units vary depending on the number of class meetings, readings and assignments. May be repeated for credit if the subjects are different.

Staff

21L.S94 Special Subject in Literature

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall, IAP, Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Covers topics in Literature that are not provided in the regular subject offerings. Units vary depending on the number of class meetings, readings and assignments. May be repeated for credit if the subjects are different.

Staff

21L.S95 Special Subject in Literature

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall, IAP, Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

Units arranged [P/D/F]

Can be repeated for credit.

Covers topics in Literature that are not provided in the regular subject offerings. Units vary depending on the number of class meetings, readings and assignments. May be repeated for credit if the subjects are different.

Staff

21L.S96 Special Subject in Film and Media

Prereq: Two subjects in Film and Media and permission of the director of Comparative Media Studies

U (Fall, IAP, Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Open to qualified students who wish to pursue special projects with film and media studies faculty. Individual or small group projects encouraged. Usually limited to 6 credits. May be repeated for credit with additional permission of the instructor.

Staff

21L.S97 Special Subject in Film and Media

Prereq: Two subjects in Film and Media and permission of director of Comparative Media Studies

U (Fall, IAP, Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

Units arranged [P/D/F]

Can be repeated for credit.

Open to qualified students who wish to pursue special projects with film and media studies faculty. Individual or small group projects encouraged. Usually limited to 6 credits. May be repeated for credit with additional permission of the instructor.

Staff

21L.THT Literature Pre-Thesis Tutorial

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

1-0-5 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Definition of and early-stage work on thesis project leading to 21L.THU. Taken during the first term of the student's two-term commitment to the thesis project. Student works closely with an individual faculty tutor. Required for students in Course 21L when the thesis is a degree requirement.

Staff

21L.THU Literature Thesis

Prereq: 21L.THT

U (Spring)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Completion of work on the senior major thesis under supervision of a faculty tutor. Includes oral presentation of thesis progress early in the term, assembling and revising the final text, and meeting at the close with a committee of faculty evaluators to discuss the successes and limitations of the project. Required for students in Course 21L when the thesis is a degree requirement.

S. Raman

21L.UR Undergraduate Research

Prereq: None

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

Units arranged [P/D/F]

Can be repeated for credit.

Individual participation in an ongoing research project. For students in the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program.

Consult with Section UROP Coordinator

21L.URG Undergraduate Research

Prereq: None

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Individual participation in an ongoing research project. For students in the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program.

Consult with Section UROP Coordinator