

SUMMER 2009
English Undergraduate Course Descriptions
Course offerings, places, and time subject to change

300-001 Intro to Literary Studies M-F 09:10-10:10a.m.

312-001 Shakespeare M-F 9:10-10:10 a.m. Dr. Rhonda Robison

We will read, dissect, and “play” with a variety of Shakespeare’s plays, including one or more of the comedies, tragedies, tragicomedies/romances, and history plays. A focus on poetic language will facilitate a deeper understanding of Shakespeare’s works. Critical approaches to the plays will offer perspectives for interpretation. We will also explore Shakespeare in film. Assignments for this course are both formal and creative, and there will be a minimum of one performance project.

320-001 Modern Fiction M-R 12:45-2:00 p.m. Mr. Joshua Capps

Topic: First Books

We will focus on the “First Books” – either novels or short story collections – from seven different authors. From Richard Yates’s classic novel *Revolutionary Road* to a 2006 short story collection from Louisiana native Nic Pizzolatto, our readings will span the last fifty years or so, allowing us to examine both the craft and the thematic material that made these “First Books” work. (Or, for that matter, allowing us to examine how the craft and the thematic material might’ve limited the artistic success of these “First Books”.) First, in terms of craft, we will dissect each book on a “nuts-and-bolts” level in terms of structure, plot, characterization, tone, imagery, and so forth, coming to understand the literary choices that were made and whether or not they were successful. Next, in terms of thematic material, we will examine not only the prevalent themes of each book but how these themes can inform on larger issues, issues beyond the text. We will be reading 3 novels and 4 short story collections (novels: Richard Yates’s *Revolutionary Road*, Donald Hays’s *The Dixie Association*, and Marilyn Robinson’s *Housekeeping*; short story collections: Raymond Carver’s *Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?*, Jhumpa Lahiri’s *Interpreter of Maladies*, George Saunders *Civil War Land in Bad Decline*, and Nic Pizzolatto’s *Between Here and the Yellow Sea*. Assignments will include two small papers and reading quizzes.