PROPOSAL TO LIST A COURSE, OR TO RENEW THE LISTING OF A COURSE, IN THE GENERAL EDUCATION HUMANITIES AREA AT LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

X Renewal          New Listing

Course designation, number, and title: (e.g.: PHIL/1000/Introduction to Philosophy)

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Semester credits: 3  Contact hours per week: Lecture: 3  Laboratory:

Department (or other unit) offering the course and proposing its inclusion: English

College or School: Humanities and Social Sciences

Please attach the requested information. Submit a single electronic copy (pdf file) bearing unit and college/school signatures to gened@lsu.edu.

Chair of the proposing unit, affirming approval by its faculty or appropriate faculty committee:

Signature: 
Typed or printed name: Richard C. Moreland
Date: 1-30-12

Dean of College or School, affirming support of the proposal:

Signature: 
Typed or printed name: Gaines M. Foster
Date: 2-15-12

Chair, Faculty Senate Committee on General Education, affirming approval by the Committee:

Signature: ____________________________
Typed or printed name: ____________________________
Date: ____________________________

Office of Academic Affairs:

Signature: ____________________________
Typed or printed name: ____________________________
Date: ____________________________
1. Syllabus

ENGL 2300: Interpreting Discourse

1a. 2300 Interpreting Discourse (3) Study of and writing about discourse forms (fiction, popular and critical texts, technical and legal documents), using linguistic, rhetorical, and cultural analysis.

Course Description:
The course is designed to interpret discourse (literature, ads, film and video, essays, documents) commonly used in society. We study not simply the informational component of discourse, but the material and sociocultural aspects of language that are part of the complex meanings of texts. How to go about sophisticated interpretation--reading, representing, and the discussions that arise through contact with any discourse situation--forms the heart of the class.

The course also engages heavily in the production and analysis of a primary form of rhetoric in our current culture: visual rhetoric. This component will enable us to combine long-standing approaches to textual analysis (rhetoric) with new ones (contemporary representation and cultural theory) in dynamic ways. The ultimate goal is simple: to learn how to think creatively, in particular about language, literacy, and discourse (via analysis, production, and interpretation), and also in general.

Your daily work, papers, and media work will provide a physical record of your work. You will be working in small groups, as well as individually. Generally, you should attempt to develop your thinking and discussion so as to build upon and supplement each particular project. In working this way you are in a continual process of producing the ideas that you can eventually develop into more formal submissions. You must also be prepared to learn visual media techniques. THIS WILL REQUIRE TRAINING IN A SEPARATE LAB (Classes on Jan. 27-29 will be set aside for this purpose, and you will have subsequent access to the lab as well.)

1b. Texts and equipment (Required):
Faigley, Lester et al. Picturing Texts. NY: W.W. Norton
2 mini-DV tapes/2 DVD-R disks
(On-line/Moodle readings are also required in class; articles/visual texts that develop discussion may be added during the semester.)

1c. Learning Objectives for a General Education Course in the Humanities:
LSU graduates will demonstrate an understanding of historical, cultural, and philosophical complexity that supports sophisticated discourse.
The English Department elaborates this objective as follows:
A. To read a variety of texts—comprehending and interpreting both literal and figurative meaning, and paraphrasing passages accurately;
B. To identify larger themes, structures, literary devices, and rhetorical patterns in texts;
C. To place and interpret texts within a discursive tradition and within broader cultural and historical contexts;
D. To demonstrate the ability to write clear, specific, and effective prose.
Course Goals: This is a General Education course and, as such, it aims for students to develop:
• an effective command of written and spoken English;
• an informed appreciation of the role of discourse in defining an individual and a people’s sense of history and identity;
• an appreciation of the methods of critical inquiry;
• an ability to deal with moral and ethical issues;
• an understanding of other cultures and other times

1.d. Assignments and Grading:

Assignment projects: Projects will be evaluated on the basis of their ability to address the overall strategies noted in the course description: to study an aspect of discourse using a particular method. As in all of the work for the course, focus and depth are key. They will vary from written analyses to video production. The video will be judged in terms of its fit with the class reading more than the overall production quality of the work. If the rough draft was submitted on time, you may revise projects 1 and 2. Revisions must be substantive and not merely error correction. I cannot guarantee that grades will go up or not go down. All revisions are due one week from the day they are returned.

PROJECT ONE: Written analysis of some aspect of male detective or femme fatale figure in light of readings
PROJECT TWO: CD ‘case insert’ in light of readings
PROJECT THREE: Video Project designed by group
ORAL PITCH: In-class presentation of plans for Project Three
FINAL: Written analysis of a video project other than your own

DAILY WORK, IN-CLASS WORK, DISCUSSION---You will be working in assigned small groups throughout the semester. My assessment of your in-class work will be a combination of my records for your individual daily work (a combination of video and analytic activity) and your general contribution to class and small group discussion.

Rough Drafts, Cuts, Designs: 15 pts.
Full Projects (20 each): 60 pts.
In-class work: 5 pts.
Oral Pitch of Projects: 10 pts
Final: 10 pts

59 and below=F
60-69 = D
70-79=C
80-89=B
90-100=A
1e. Outline of Course Topics:

1/13  Introductions: Syllabus, Course Goals, Course Requirements

     JSTOR, MLA Tutorials

1/20  Rzepka, “Detective Fiction,” Moodle
     Nickerson, “Afterword,” Moodle
     *Final Date for Dropping Courses w/o a “W”*

1/22  Dietrich, “Falling” from Blue Angel; Minnelli, “Mein Herr” from Cabaret; youtube; etc.
     Speir, from Raymond Chandler
     Roth, “Texture of Femininity,” from *Foul and Fair Play*
     *Final Date for Adding Courses*

1/27  Equipment orientation, Studio 151, Coates
     Maltese Falcon or *Double Indemnity* viewing (Carter Music Room)

1/29  Equipment orientation, Studio 151, Coates
     Maltese Falcon or *Double Indemnity* viewing (Carter Music Room)

2/3   Maltese Falcon or *Double Indemnity*
     Kaplan, Moodle
     Naremore, JSTOR
     Sturken, from *Practices of Looking*

2/5   Bronfen, JSTOR (not required)
     PROJECT 1 ROUGH DRAFT DUE/IN-CLASS EVALUATIONS

2/10  PROJECT 1 DUE
     *Picturing Texts*, Chpt. 1, "Picturing Texts"

2/12  *Picturing Texts*, Chpt. 2, "Looking Closer"
     Vega CD insert

     Vega CD insert

2/19  *Picturing Texts*, Chpt. 4, "Representing Others"
     Pre-Production planning, Group

Feb 23-25  *Mardi Gras*

2/26  Production Work, Group report

3/3   Post Production Work, Group report

3/5   ROUGH DESIGN DUE/IN-CLASS EVALUATIONS

3/10  PROJECT 2 DUE

3/12  *Picturing Texts*, Chpt. 5, "Constructing Realities"
Project 3 Pre-Planning

3/17  Picturing Texts, Chpt. 6, "Picturing Argument"
      Suggested Reading/Viewing, Group (1-3) choice
3/19  Picturing Texts, Chpt. 7, "Designing Texts"
      Suggested Reading/Viewing, Group (4-6) choice

3/24  In-Class Oral “Pitches” of Projects
3/26  In-Class Oral “Pitches” of Projects

3/31  Production, Project 3
      In-class report
4/2   Post-Production, Project 3
      In-class report

April 6-12 Spring Break Period

4/14  Post-Production, Project 3
      In-class report
4/16  Final Date for Dropping Courses
      PROJECT 3 ROUGH CUT DUE/IN-CLASS EVALUATIONS

5/21  3RD PROJECT DUE
5/23  In-class viewing and discussion (2 Projects)
5/28  In-class viewing and discussion (2 Projects)
5/30  In-class viewing and discussion (2 Projects)

5/2   Classes End

5/5   Final Due: 5pm (scheduled)
2. Why ENGL 2300 belongs in the General Education Program (Humanities):

ENGL 2300 introduces students to the linguistic, rhetorical and cultural analysis of various modes of discourse, including fiction, popular culture, and non-literary documents, such as technical and legal documents. It covers a wide variety of modes of discourse and representation that extends beyond traditional literary texts to cover a broad range of cultural expression and representation. This is an introductory course intended to acquaint students with a variety of works and teach them to interpret both literal and figurative meanings of a text, identify larger themes, and place texts within discursive traditions and within broader historical and cultural contexts. It is broader in its historical and cultural coverage than non-general education literature courses taught within the department, which tend to focus on narrower topics and on contemporary works. In contrast, ENGL 2300 and other general education courses put greater emphasis on giving students an understanding of their own and other cultural, national, and international traditions. In doing so, ENGL 2300 encourages students to reflect on fundamental philosophical questions pertaining to language, communication and representation that human beings in diverse cultures have posed throughout the ages. Finally, it introduces them to the disciplines of literary and rhetorical studies.

Interpreting Discourse teaches students how to understand the conventions of various discursive forms commonly used in society and engages them in critical questions important to the humanities disciplines, including generic and stylistic analysis, cultural and religious traditions, and social and historical contexts. Because discourse—the analysis of spoken, written, and visual texts—is fundamental to self-understanding, insofar as our self-identity is founded upon our capacity to communicate through symbolic systems, a course on the interpretation of modes of discourse is essential to the humanities curriculum. Because writing is an essential part of this course (the English Department mandates a minimum of 4,000 words per student each semester), ENGL 2300 works with students on how to develop their ideas and express themselves clearly and cogently. By selecting works from a range of fields, genres and modalities (e.g. visual as well as textual), it asks students to reflect on what it means to be human, which means reflecting on ethical, philosophical, and historical questions.

3. General Education Competency addressed by ENGL 2300

An LSU graduate will demonstrate an understanding of historical, cultural, and philosophical complexity which supports sophisticated discourse.

The Department of English has identified the following skills as essential in achieving this learning outcome:

A. To read a variety of texts—comprehending and interpreting both literal and figurative meaning, and paraphrasing passages accurately.
B. To identify larger themes, structures, literary devices, and rhetorical patterns in texts, with some understanding of larger contexts.
C. To demonstrate the ability to write clear, specific, and effective prose.

3a. Describe some of the major pedagogies through which the course will address the general education competency.

The English department’s faculty employ a wide range of pedagogical approaches within its general education courses. The department benefits from class sizes maximized at 40 students, providing opportunity for a variety of classroom exercises designed to engage the student with the material at hand. In addition to presenting students with new material and new ideas within each distinct general education English course, the unifying focus in English department general education classes is to improve students' writing/communication skills. Given the relatively small class sizes of English general education courses, all teachers must require 4000-7000 words of written exercises and are expected to provide significant personal comments and advice to each student. The intent is to have English general education courses serve as an extension of the student’s ENGL 1001 (or equivalent) experience. When taken in the student’s freshman or sophomore year, English general education courses provide an excellent bridge between freshman-level English 1001 (English Composition) and the advanced-level English 2000 (English Composition, with a prerequisite of a minimum of 39 hours).

Writing effectively about texts and other representational works is a major goal of ENGL 2300, along with developing a familiarity with the relevant critical and analytical tools. To achieve these goals requires developing student skills in interpreting texts and identifying larger themes, structures, etc. This can be achieved in a variety of ways. Lecture is one option, though class size permits a variety of alternative and/or complementary strategies. Most instructors recognize that class meetings are more effective in achieving course goals when class discussion is encouraged. Numerous strategies to encourage discussion are available and are frequently used by the faculty. Discussion can be more effectively undertaken by requiring out-of-class written exercises, due each class meeting and used as catalysts for classroom discussion. Requiring individual or group presentations throughout the course further enhances student engagement with the material. Classroom games, competitions, and group projects are often used and serve similar purposes. Service Learning and Communication Intensive options further encourage student engagement. Generally speaking, the English Department welcomes instructional variety and innovation in teaching ENGL 2300, while it strives to ensure that such innovation results in developing strong writers of English prose, able to evaluate texts and identify larger contexts for their objects of study, even as they broaden their intellectual horizons with the content specific to each general education English course.

ENGL 2300 is taught as independent sections, each with its own instructor, of which one or two are offered each semester. It is not a literature course, but a course on interpreting language in a variety of contexts, whether critical, literary, or accompanied by visual images.
3b. Describe how the department will provide direct evidence for the extent to which students are achieving the general education learning competency associated with the course.

Each general education English course will include a written exercise to assess whether students have attained the goals the English department has set for English general education courses. The exercise will take place in class toward the end of the semester and should take 30-40 minutes. The student will be asked to read and write about a passage provided by the teacher. Depending on the forms of discourse that were the focus of study during the course, the passage will be an appropriately self-contained extract from a critical essay, a piece of literature, or a transcript of a speech or conversation. Students will be asked:

1. To explain the passage’s literal as well as figurative meanings;
2. To identify its larger themes, structures, literary or critical devices, and rhetorical patterns;
3. To discuss its historical and cultural contexts.

This assessment exercise should be included in the grade for the course (generally as part of the final examination) so that students will take the exercise seriously.

The English department will use this exercise to measure whether or not students in these courses have mastered the analytical reading and interpreting skills the department has identified as general education objectives of the course.

The English Department offers over fourteen Humanities general education courses (50-60 total sections each term), each offering students exposure to different material, but all striving for the same learning outcomes. Although these courses pursue the same learning outcomes, each course will be assessed separately. Results for each course will be generated so that the measured outcomes of each course can be judged individually but can also be evaluated against other courses on the English Department list of Humanities general education courses.

With 30 students per section, and only one or two sections, the English Department evaluates all completed assessment responses for ENGL 2300. The assessment evaluation is as follows. The instructor consults the rubrics for English Gen Ed courses (Humanities), and examines a sample of “anchor responses” posted on the English Department Community Moodle site for general education instructors, and works through a couple of them to normalize criteria for evaluating the collected essays. The instructor then evaluates all responses as meeting expectations, exceeding expectations, or not meeting expectations for mastery of the objectives, as stated below.

A: reading comprehension (interpreting literal and figurative meaning):
   Objective exceeded: Moves swiftly and effectively from the literal to figurative.
   Objective met: Includes figurative analysis with some skill.
Objective not met: Misapplies figurative analysis or fails to include it at all.

B: produce a valid interpretation of what they have read, using one or more of the following modes of interpretation: formal, generic, thematic, historical, cultural.
   Objective exceeded: Mode of interpretation is central and sophisticated.
   Objective met: Effective mode of interpretation included.
   Objective not met: Mode of interpretation is inadequate or nonexistent.

C: write clearly and effectively:
   Objective exceeded: Structural and rhetorical techniques mastered.
   Objective met: Well organized, grammatically competent.
   Objective not met. Lacking in structure and competent grammar.

The Director of Undergraduate Studies will compute the percentages for each of these three levels and will interpret these results in a report of the findings to the faculty. The full report will summarize the department’s overall results in all general education courses as well as the results within each course offering. The ENGL 2300 instructor’s evaluations will be reported, along with results from other English Gen Ed courses, to the faculty before the beginning of the next regular semester. Every August, the week before classes begin, a departmental meeting will be held to discuss assessment results.

Rubric for assessing learning goals

At the completion of General Education English courses, students will be able to

(1) Accurately read complex poetry and/or prose.
   ___Exceeds expectations     ___Meets expectations     ___Fails to meet expectations

(2) Produce a valid interpretation of what they have read, using one or more of the following modes of interpretation: formal, generic, thematic, historical, cultural.
   ___Exceeds expectations     ___Meets expectations     ___Fails to meet expectations

(3) Write clearly and effectively
   ___Exceeds expectations     ___Meets expectations     ___Fails to meet expectations
Excerpt from the Department of English Undergraduate Handbook:

GUIDELINES FOR GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES

Goals and Objectives:

General Education English courses should follow the "Goals and Objectives for the English Curriculum," subsections titled "Objectives forIntroductory Literature Courses."

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GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM

Objectives for Introductory Literature Courses

Introductory literature courses must serve the needs of prospective English majors and minors, liberal arts majors, and students majoring in more scientific or technical fields. Each course will delimit its own subject matter, which students will be expected to learn. Yet fundamental objectives in reading, writing, and critical analysis are common to all these offerings.

Since reading is a major focus of these courses, students will practice a variety of interrelated reading and interpretive skills. More specifically, upon completion of their requirements in introductory literature courses, students should be able

- to paraphrase passages accurately,
- to read closely in order to explicate the literal and figurative meaning of passages,
- to identify larger themes, structures, and patterns in a literary work as a whole,
- to begin to relate a literary work to relevant discursive contexts, such as generic conventions and literary traditions, and
- to begin to understand the larger cultural contexts of a literary work, both diachronic and synchronic.

These courses should further develop students' writing in coordination with the objectives of the rhetoric/composition program. Students should write frequently to communicate their critical and interpretive insights about literary texts. Their writing should move beyond merely retelling a story, into analysis, interpretation, and argumentation.

Students should also think about the process of reading itself. They should be able to identify and use effectively terms basic to literary interpretation, and to be aware that a variety of methodologies may be used to analyze texts.

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Reading:

2024 Critical Strategies: Readings will vary according to the balance between breadth and depth sought in the course, but the amounts will not be disproportional to those in Fiction, Drama, or Poetry. The selections should be drawn from a wide range of historical periods, cultures, and/or genres. (also 2824 HNRS: Critical Analysis of Literature and Discourse)

2025 Fiction: Ten to fifteen short stories from a standard anthology or its equivalent plus three or four novels, varied, from different historical periods and cultures. A supplementary text may also be chosen.
2027 Poetry: Sixty to one hundred poems from a standard anthology or its equivalent, varied, from different historical periods and cultures. A supplementary text may also be chosen.

2029 Drama: Twelve to sixteen plays from a standard anthology or its equivalent, varied, from different historical periods and cultures. A supplementary text may also be chosen.

2123 Studies in Literary Traditions and Themes: Readings will be drawn from several of the genres of, or in genres different from, Fiction, Poetry, and Drama, and will focus on a significant tradition or theme. Readings will vary according to the balance between breadth and depth sought in the course, but the amounts of reading will not be disproportional to those in Fiction, Drama, or Poetry. The selections should be drawn from a wide range of historical periods, cultures, and/or genres. (Also 2823 HNRS: Studies in Literary Traditions and Themes)

2300 Interpreting Discourse: Readings will vary according to the balance between breadth and depth sought in the course, but the amounts will not be disproportional to those in Fiction, Drama, or Poetry. The selections should be drawn from a wide range of historical periods, cultures, and/or genres.

2593 Images of Women: An Introduction: Readings will vary according to the balance between breadth and depth sought in the course, but the amounts will not be disproportional to those in Fiction, Drama, or Poetry. The selections should be drawn from a wide range of historical periods, cultures, and/or genres.

2673 Literature and Ethnicity: Readings will vary according to the balance between breadth and depth sought in the course, but the amounts will not be disproportional to those in Fiction, Drama, or Poetry. The selections should be drawn from a wide range of historical periods, cultures, and/or genres.

2674 Introduction to African-American Literature: Readings will vary according to the balance between breadth and depth sought in the course, but the amounts will not be disproportional to those in Fiction, Drama, or Poetry. The selections should be drawn from a wide range of historical periods, cultures, and/or genres.

2148 Shakespeare: Eight to twelve plays including comedy, tragedy, history and/or romance. A standard anthology or individual texts may be chosen.

2220 Major British Authors
2270 Major American Authors
2201 Introduction to World Literary Traditions
2202 Introduction to Modern World Literature

Readings will vary according to the balance between breadth and depth sought in the course, but the amounts will not be disproportional to those in Fiction, Drama, or Poetry. The selections should be drawn from a wide range of historical periods and genres.

Writing in 2000-level courses:

Students should write frequently in a variety of assignments (graded and ungraded), with guidance in the process of revision, for a total of 4000 to 7000 words. Most writing at this level should focus on students' first-hand experience with texts. Writing assignments appropriate to this level include, but are not limited to, journal notebooks, paraphrase or summary exercises, five-minute in-class writings or other write-to-learn activities, imitations, collaborative reports, speculative instruments like dialogues among characters of different plays or novels, formal essays that present and defend theses about a work.