Eng 111 Writing Seminar Descriptions – Spring 2010

Jazz and American Culture
Prof. Bruce Barnhart

Spring 2010 Section R	15509 ENG 111 R	TR 9:30-10:45
Spring 2010 Section U	15512 ENG 111 U	TR 12:00-1:15

What is American culture and how does it shape us or we it?
How much does our national culture contribute to our personal character? What role does culture play in the way we think about the world? These are the rather large questions we will attempt to answer in this seminar. We will work towards our answers by considering the relationship between music and society, particularly the relationship between jazz music and American society

The Greek philosopher Aristotle and the American composer Duke Ellington both saw an essential link between styles of musical performance and the character of a community. Our goal in this class will be to investigate these kinds of claims and to see what focused attention on the jazz tradition can tell us about American culture. We will listen to jazz recordings, write critical and creative responses to these recordings, and read critics who use the music to comment on American society. Throughout the semester, we will consider different definitions of culture, and we will use our discussions and writings to interrogate our assumptions about the nature of American culture.

Student writing assignments will include contributions to an ongoing online discussion, critical responses to specific recordings, position papers, and a longer paper that will allow students to work out their own thoughts on the relationship between jazz and American culture.

(No prior knowledge of music is expected or necessary for participation in this seminar.)

Human / Nature
Prof. Andrew Burkett

Spring 2010 Section O	15508 ENG 111 O	TR 9:30-10:45

The categories of “human,” “nature,” and “human nature” are, it is safe to say, extremely complex and interrelated. In this seminar, we will investigate various representations (literary, scientific, theoretical, religious, artistic) of the natural world, on the one hand, and on the “nature” of what it means to be a human being, on the other. While the natural world – the world “out there” – will be continuously set in contrast to the nature of humanity, we will also certainly be careful to explore in our readings and discussions the ways in which these ostensible opposites intersect and overlap. In effect, we will examine the ways that human nature and the natural world are always already deeply interconnected categories.
In this class you will grapple with these and other related issues both in class discussion and in your writing (and revising) of course papers. Students will submit four (4-5 page)

papers throughout the course of the term. Each of these four paper projects asks that you examine a particular critical, theoretical, or historical controversy regarding or in relation to at least one of the fictional texts at hand from course readings. These texts will provide the impetus for your production of a written response to each controversy. One of the controversies involves disagreements about the ways we define the relationship between humans and what may be called "non-humans" (e.g. "androids," "animals," or "monsters"). Another involves a controversy about the ways in which human beings interact with the natural world and how humans both shape and are shaped by nature. A third set of texts centers on disagreements about how human beings should properly relate to urban (or "non-natural") environments. And a final coupling of readings involves the margins or limits to which we may possibly expand the category of "human nature." Class discussions will focus on and rehearse the disagreements that have emerged in both academic and public discourses in an effort to help you to become supremely familiar with the issues and claims that you'll need to wrestle with as you draft and revise your arguments on these subjects. Drafts of course papers will go through a series of revisions. In addition, weekly short writings may be assigned and collected. Finally, class attendance and participation will be crucial to the determination of final grades for this course.

Our semester readings include the following major texts: Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968), William Wordsworth's *The Prelude* (1805), Le Corbusier's *Towards a New Architecture* (1923), Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) , Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* (2005), Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), Bruno Latour's *Politics of Nature* (2004), and William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (c. 1610).

Modern Violence: The Politics and Poetics of Force in the 20th Century
Prof. Max Brzezinski

Spring 2010 Section V	15513 ENG 111 V	TR 12:00-1:15
Spring 2010 Section W	15514 ENG 111 W	TR 1:30-2:45

Does violence make the world go round? In all walks of life, the 20th century was undeniably saturated with all varieties of it: war, revolution, crime, domestic violence, and imperial occupation. In the 20th century, aggression became explicit in the form and content of our novels, films and music. This class will explore violence's function in the politics, subjectivities and aesthetics of our historical moment. War will of course be a major topic, but we will also consider the way in which violence has permeated other areas of life: gender relations, public institutions, art and popular culture.

Readings will most likely include Marguerite Duras, Mohandas Gandhi, Franz Fanon, Chester Himes, Toni Morrison, Hannah Arendt, Virginia Woolf, J.M. Coetzee, and Evan Wright's *Generation Kill*. Films will potentially include *Men With Guns*, *Bring Me the Head of Alfred Garcia*, *A Clockwork Orange*, *The Lost Boys of Sudan*, *Army of Shadows* and *There Will Be Blood*.

New York and Los Angeles: Modern Urban Writing and Seeing
Prof. Julia Faisst

Spring 2010 Section X	15515 ENG 111 X	TR 1:30-2:45
Spring 2010 Section Y	15516 ENG 111 Y	TR 3:00-4:15

New York vs. Los Angeles: Broadway vs. dream factory, high culture vs. pop culture, urban labyrinth vs. nightmare landscape, street culture vs. car culture, detective novels vs. film noir, modernity vs. postmodernity. Focusing on one of the most compelling topics of twentieth and twenty-first century culture, the metropolis and urban life, we will use LA and NYC to investigate artists' fascination with the modern city. We will study a representative set of their literary, visual, and theoretical texts to equip you with the skills indispensable for effectively analyzing textual and visual materials, making informed and persuasive arguments, communicating with others, and, most importantly, being a convincing, compelling, and graceful writer. Actively examining the multifold voices of NYC and LA will help you particularly well to practice and hone your own voice in writing. You will complete writing assignments in numerous genres (analyses, essays, creative pieces), and we will workshop outlines, thesis statements, and paper drafts to tackle how the two cities differ in their representation of the urban experience, migration, race, class, and gender. Through close readings, enthusiastic discussions, and attentive writings, we will come to understand how they gave shape to artistic production in various ways (thematically, yet also structurally), and whether, given their diverse socio-cultural histories, we can speak of a distinct LA or NYC style.

Texts will likely include: Nathaniel West, *The Day of the Locust*, Chester Himes, *If He Hollers Let Him Go*, Thomas Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, Paul Auster, *City of Glass*, Joseph O'Neill, *Netherland*. We will pair these novels with examples from urban visual culture (photographs by Helen Levitt, Robert Frank, Ed Ruscha; fine art in the Benson Center and Reynolda House; films such as Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window*). We will also consider urban theory and philosophical texts by Jane Jacobs, Michel De Certeau, Mike Davis, and Umberto Eco.

Identity, Rhetoric, and Representation
Prof. Tim Galow

Spring 2010 Section G	15501 ENG 111 G	MWF 10:00-10:50
Spring 2010 Section H	15502 ENG 111 H	MWF 11:00-11:50

"Who are you?" This is a question we have all been asked in a variety of different forms many times over the course of our lives. And the answers we give can be as varied as the questions themselves. Whether it be filling out an application, meeting a new person, or playing name games on the first day of class, you are constantly asserting, confirming, hiding, ignoring, and changing various aspects of yourself. Over the course of the semester, we will examine both what people from different academic disciplines (scientific, psychological, sociological, philosophical, and literary) have to say about "you" and how these writers construct their arguments. These analyses will then provide the foundation upon which we can fashion arguments of our own.

Along the way, we will raise, if not necessarily answer, important questions about what exactly we mean when we claim to "be" someone. For instance, what is consciousness and how do we know? Does experience produce our accounts of it, or do those accounts produce experience? Does an event change when we change the way we tell it?
To help us explore issues of identity, rhetoric, and representation, we will read from a wide range of texts, including but not limited to, Sigmund Freud's *The Ego and the Id*, Gerald Edelman's *Neural Darwinism,* Richard Jenkins's *Social Identity*, Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality Volume 1,* Amy J. Devitt's *Writing Genres*, Paul John Eakin's *How Our Lives Become Stories: Making Selves*, and Joan Scott's "Experience."

The purpose of this class is threefold: 1) to improve the oral and written communication skills you already possess, 2) to introduce you to and familiarize you with the writing styles and research methods of various academic disciplines, and 3) to enhance your analytical and argumentative abilities. In accordance with these goals, the class will operate as a discussion section and a writing workshop, in which our attention will be divided between the work of published authors and the papers produced by your classmates.

Late American Natures
Prof. Jason Gladstone

Spring 2010 Section C	15497 ENG 111 C	MWF 9:00-9:50
Spring 2010 Section D	15498 ENG 111 D	MWF 10:00-10:50

After the end of World War II, three competing contentions about nature were generated by American culture: that nature was endangered, that nature had been eliminated, and that nature had never existed in the first place. In this seminar we will explore these three contemporary (American) versions of nature, and will do so by writing four critical essays of various lengths and formats about texts, artworks, and films concerned with such phenomena as: lunar exploration, the toxification of the environment, and the emergence of intelligent machines. Writings, artworks, and films will include: Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty*, J.G. Ballard's *Memories of the Space Age*, Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, Philip K. Dick's "Auto-Fac" and "Imposter," *The Matrix*, and *War of the Worlds.* Student's will be asked to make arguments about: competing philosophic conceptions of (the end of) nature; how recent filmic and literary representations of nature influence contemporary American conceptions of nature; and what sort of conceptions of humanity are implied by the different conceptions of (the end of) nature generated by post-1945 American culture.

A Material World: Culture and Clothing
Prof. Susan Harlan

Spring 2010 Section L	15505 ENG 111 L	MWF 12:00-12:50
Spring 2010 Section M	15506 ENG 111M	MWF 1:00-1:50

This course explores how clothing is represented in a range of texts and cultural materials. Clothing bears a complex relationship to the self. We all wear clothes. Sometimes we think about them; sometimes we don't. In this class, we will really think

about them. What does clothing signify? How does it communicate and disrupt meaning across different contexts? We have been told that "the apparel oft proclaims the man," (or so Polonius says in *Hamlet*) but received wisdom also dictates that one should not judge a book by its cover. We know what happened with the Emperor's new clothes, and we know to beware of a wolf in sheep's clothing. This discussion-based and writing-intensive course will explore the tensions that surround ties, suits, diamonds, and turtles (as accessories). We will examine how clothing operates in a series of literary and non-literary texts that cover a wide range of historical periods and genres, including epic, the novel, the short story, the essay, poetry, and drama. We will also analyze pop cultural representations of clothing in films such as *Tootsie* (dir. Sydney Pollack, 1982) and *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (dir. Howard Hawks, 1953), television shows such as *Mad Men* and *30 Rock*, newspaper articles, online content, music videos, photographs, and advertisements. What resonances can we identify between the handkerchief in *Othello* and Liz Lemon's glasses on *30 Rock*? Expect to explore the following questions, among others: What is the relationship between disguise and "true" character in Shakespearean comedy? How do we imbue objects such as grandmother's pearls or grandfather's watch with meaning, or "sentimental value," and how can we define this value? Do uniforms efface or secure individuality? And how does the wedding dress operate as a fetish object in America's contemporary wedding industry? By reflecting on the cultural significance of phenomena such as disguises, dress codes, makeovers, and iconic "looks," we will engage with questions of gender, sexuality, race, class, and nationalism. We might ask, for example, what we mean when we refer to "masculine" or "feminine" modes of dress. We might also inquire how power relations – between men and women, between adults and children, between master and servant, between colonizer and colonized – are revealed by dress. In this course, you will develop your ability to compose and revise writing projects. You will write in a variety of registers, including free writing, the personal narrative, the analytical essay, in-class presentations, and a research essay. I will encourage you to perform creative readings in which you establish meaningful connections between texts of different genres and time periods. We will emphasize workshopping and revision, and you will produce a polished, 20-page writing portfolio by the end of the semester.

Reading list:
Homer, *The Iliad* (excerpt)
William Shakespeare, *Othello* and *Twelfth Night*
Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*
Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (excerpt)
Tennessee Williams, *A Streetcar Named Desire*
Short stories of Katherine Mansfield, James Joyce, Edgar Allen Poe, and Jhumpa Lahiri
Poetry of John Donne, T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, and Charles Simic

Global Intersections: Travel, Tourism, and Home
Prof. Mary Alice Kirkpatrick
Spring 2010 Section Z 15517 ENG 111 Z TR 3:00-4:15

How does our understanding of a place change based on whether we're "just visiting" or local residents? In what ways can traveling shape our perceptions and definitions of home? When does tourism bolster and/or hinder economic development? This writing seminar explores the broader topic of global interactions through a specific locality: the Caribbean. Although the term globalization regularly gets invoked in popular media, political speeches, corporate mission statements, and academic discourse, its issues and challenges remain deeply thorny and complex. As Abril Trigo suggests, "Globalization is obviously lived and perceived differently according to the location of the individual. By location I mean, of course, the geographical location, but also the social status and the professional activity, the language or languages spoken, the ethnicity, the gender, and the age of the subject."[1]

Adopting an interdisciplinary approach, we will reflect critically on the interconnected questions of travel, tourism, and home. A selection of personal essays and travel writing, fiction and film, as well as related articles in the fields of economics and cultural geography will guide our conversations. Because good thinking likewise underscores good communication, this seminar emphasizes classroom discussion and employs student-oriented writing workshops. We will prioritize writing as a process of careful planning, production, criticism, and revision. In concentrating on the fundamentals of good writing, we will target analysis, research, argumentation, evidence, organization, and audience as well as the finer details of the English language. Over the course of the semester, students will draw upon class readings and discussions to write polished and engaging papers of various styles, including personal response, explication, and research.

Required Texts:
Eds. Stewart Brown and John Wickham, *The Oxford Book of Caribbean Short Stories*
Michelle Cliff, *No Telephone to Heaven*
Junot Díaz, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*
John T. Gage, *The Shape of Reason: Argumentative Writing in College*, 4th edition
Diana Hacker, *A Writer's Reference*, 6th edition
Jamaica Kincaid, *A Small Place*
Alice Steinbach, *Educating Alice: Adventures of a Curious Woman*
Selected Readings available on Blackboard.

[1] Quotation from: http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/TRI310A.html

Upon Reflection
Prof. Michael Klotz
Spring 2010 Section A 15495 ENG 111 A MWF 9:00-9:50

Under what circumstances is it prudent to follow a first impulse and respond immediately, and when is it advantageous to pause, reflect upon a situation, and decide on the best course of action? Is it always preferable to take more time to consider a problem? Whether acting on instinct or being guided by intuition we share a cultural confidence in our initial irrational sense. However, following an initial impression is often viewed as an error: this is the action of someone who is rash, hasty, or impetuous. In this course we will consider several literary texts that chronicle the struggle between impulse and studied reflection. These texts will include Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas*, Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, an excerpt from J.S. Mill's *Autobiography,* and Tom McCarthy's *Remainder*. During the course of the semester you will write four essays (as well as a sequence of drafts leading up to each paper) in which you make a focused analytical argument about the purpose, benefit, or type of reflection depicted in a literary text. You will be required to participate in individual and group exercises, to share your writing-in-progress with your classmates during in-class workshops, and to give a brief presentation.

The Anthropological Freud: Examining Our "Archaic Heritage"
Prof. Philip Kowalski
Spring 2010 Section P 14510 ENG 111P TR 9:30-10:45

In his last book, *An Outline of Psycho-Analysis* (1938), Sigmund Freud posited the idea of a biologically inherited unconscious that he referred to as the "archaic heritage which a child brings with him into the world, before any experience of his own, influenced by the experiences of his ancestors." This type of "organic memory" (as the philosopher Herbert Spencer identified it) thus implies that children are not blank slates upon which life will inscribe experience, but rather as infantile repositories of a racial heritage. This concept thus illuminates Freud's theories of both life-sustaining and life-destroying drives, as well as human's basic instincts. This later and more anthropological dimension to Freud will thus be the focus of this writing seminar. Beginning with an overview of the psychoanalytic Freud, we will then turn to a short introduction to cultural anthropology before studying Freud's later works, and we will conclude with the brilliant theorist of structuralism, Roland Barthes, who shows us how we can apply this anthropological approach to everyday life. You will be required to write at least five (5) essays (4-5 pp. each) and to participate actively, since at the beginning of each class a student will be chosen at random to lead the discussion. This requirement means that you must come to class well-prepared rather than simply having scanned the text. Attendance (or lack thereof) will also significantly influence your grade.

Required texts are as follows:
Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*
Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*
Freud, *Introductory Lectures to Psychoanalysis*

---, *Totem and Taboo*
---, *The Future of an Illusion*
---, *Civilization and Its Discontents*
---, *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood*
---, *Moses and Monotheism*
Graff and Birkenstein, *They Say/I Say: Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*

Motives for Writing
Prof. Tom McGohey
Spring 2010 Section I 15503 ENG 111 I MWF 11:00-11:50

What motivates someone to write? For most of you, that motive has probably been supplied by a teacher: "Write an 800 word paper on *The Great Gatsby*." The motives for most student-writing are pretty artificial: rhetorical matters such as audience (the teacher), the form (some version of '5 Paragraph Theme'), the purpose (show me what you learned about book X), and the topic (usually a required reading) are imposed by someone else. So who or what is motivating the reams of words written every day outside of school? Whether a newspaper editorial, a music blog, or proposal for the local school board, most writing is prompted by a need to say something to a specific audience for a particular purpose. Someone needs to know something or someone has said or done something that evokes (or provokes, in some controversial cases) a response. Such writing involves joining a larger conversation about a topic of compelling interest to a group of people. This writing-as-conversation is also known as "public discourse." The manner in which writers engage in public discourse is determined by a rhetorical situation, which always includes a purpose, an audience and an appropriate genre for fulfilling that purpose. I can not teach you how to write in every possible genre you might encounter in college and beyond – that would be impossible – but I can show you how to recognize and analyze the factors influencing a given rhetorical situation in order to help you make decisions about how to adjust your writing accordingly. We will start by reading and writing about the nature of writing itself – how our experiences with language and expression have shaped our attitudes about writing and our process of writing. Then we will study and write about the rhetorical strategies used by professional writers in a variety of genres and subjects. These professional writers will serve as models for the kind of work you will do throughout the rest of the semester. Although I will invite you to write for a variety of general purposes, you will be responsible for selecting and researching your own topics and making rhetorical decisions about how best to present that material for a public audience. In other words, you won't be writing just for me, but for a larger discourse community with shared interests as your own. My experience as a teacher and a writer has demonstrated that the only way to make progress is through lots of writing and rewriting, making messy draft after draft until you figure out what you really mean to say. Much of class time will be devoted to the hands-on business of honing your craft as a writer. By the end of the course, you will have produced a portfolio of a minimum of 20 pages of polished writing.

Object Lessons: Thinking and Writing about Material Culture
Prof. Patrick Moran

Spring 2010 Section K	14538 ENG 111 K	MWF 12:00-12:50
Spring 2010 Section N	15507 ENG 111 N	MWF 1:00-1:50

What is our relationship to the material world? What objects do we value as individuals and as a society? Why are most people repulsed by garbage, nostalgic about toys, and dependent upon cell phones? In this seminar, we will ask such questions as we trace a rich genealogy of writers, artists, and philosophers who were all deeply interested in "things." Ultimately, we will seek to discover what objects can tell us about our culture and cultures of the past. Because the study of material culture lends itself to an interdisciplinary approach, you necessarily will be introduced to a number of different academic registers and styles of writing. We will contemplate the significance of sculptures, photographs, forgeries, clutter, relics, kitsch, money, and puppets. We will consider how aspects of our identity (like race, gender, or nationality) come to be reflected, contested, or inverted through the representation of objects.

Some figures likely to be included in our shared inquiry will be James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Philip K. Dick, W. G. Sebald, A. R. Ammons, Walter Benjamin, Sigmund Freud, Orson Wells, and Marcel Duchamp. Our emphasis will be on writing as a process of discovery; students will be expected to draft and revise four papers (5-6 pages), complete in-class essays, offer productive feedback on the work of classmates, and participate in lively discussion. From time to time throughout the semester, you will be called upon to analyze present-day cultural objects as well as artifacts from Wake Forest's museums.

When Zombies Attack!
Prof. Rekha Rosha

Spring 2010 Section Q	14704 ENG 111 Q	TR 9:30-10:45

"When Zombies Attack!," is a composition course that approaches the zombie in literature and film as a deeply encoded-figure that indexes racial anxieties, competing economic systems, and the unintelligible that Western notions of rationalism must both disavow and preserve. Writing assignments include reflection and commentary entries on the *Blog of the Undead*, quizzes, short critical essays that contemplate links among course themes and concepts, and longer critical writing assignments that focus on applying cultural studies essays to the figure of the zombie. Reading the development of the zombie in its cultural-historical context we will attempt to understand why, after all these, years we still hold a special place for the walking dead.

You Are What You Eat
Prof. Jamin Rowan

Spring 2010 Section F	15500 ENG 111 F	MWF 10:00-10:50
Spring 2010 Section J	15504 ENG 111 J	MWF 11:00-11:50

Although we eat every day—multiple times per day—most of us do not spend much time thinking about what it means to eat. Recently, global food shortages, negative publicity about the environmental impacts of producing and circulating food, and a growing

awareness of the health problems tied to our Western diet have inspired writers to question the consequences of our seemingly insignificant meal-time decisions. This course is an invitation to learn more about and enter into this important conversation about food. We will explore the following kinds of questions through classroom conversations, oral presentations and multiple writing assignments: How are our identities shaped by the food we eat? What do our tastes reveal about us? What does our culture teach us to think about food? How does eating the food of a culture foreign to us inform our understanding of that culture? Where does our food come from and how is it produced? What are the biological, social, economic and environmental costs of our eating habits? What can we do to change the way that we, and those around us, eat?

During the semester, we will engage with several different approaches to writing about food—personal essay, ethnography, reportage, and cultural analysis, among others—through our own writing activities and by reading others who tackle the questions we will be examining. The seminar culminates with coordinated individual research projects that investigate the "Wake Forest Food Chain." We will draw upon the critical-thinking and writing skills we have acquired during the semester to better understand and describe the complex culture of eating at Wake Forest. Together, we will try to imagine and propose alternative eating practices for our university community.

Of course, eating is allowed in class.

Fakers, Phonies, and the Facts: Writing Truth about Liars

Prof. Ryan Shirey

Spring 2010 Section S	15510 ENG 111 S	TR 9:30-10:45
Spring 2010 Section T	15511 ENG 111 T	TR 12:00-1:15

"What we professional liars hope to serve is truth," the great film director Orson Welles remarks in his film essay *F for Fake*. "I'm afraid," he continues, "the pompous word for that is 'art.'" Is it really possible for lies to serve the truth? When it comes to art or fiction, of course, we typically know that what we're seeing or reading is not necessarily objectively true (even if something about the work can be described as "real" or "true"), but what happens when we pick up a celebrated memoir or a copy of *The New York Times*? Naturally, our expectations change. If, however, those expectations are defied or betrayed, we face an uncomfortable realization—as long as we place a value on truthfulness, there will be those who seek to take advantage of our credulity by duping us. In this seminar we will examine a history of scandals and subterfuge that stretches from the poetic hoaxers of the 18th century to the journalistic fraudsters of our own era. As we study cases of deception from a variety of disciplines and eras, we'll consider a number of important questions. Under what circumstances are the words "fact" and "truth" synonymous? Who decides what is authentic or real (and how)? What kinds of responsibilities do writers (and others engaged in public discourse) have towards their subjects and audiences? How do we determine what the standards and ethics for a field or topic are? And what can we do as academic writers to ensure that we're writing clearly, accurately, and persuasively according to those standards?

In addition to participating in online and class discussions, students will work on writing in a variety of essay forms both individually and collaboratively. We will focus on a number of writing tasks, including descriptive summary, visual and textual analysis, argumentative critique, and research-based synthesis, and our priorities for each writing exercise will be to explore not only how good writing expresses clear thought but also how a careful writing process refines and improves critical thinking skills.

Course texts may include: Orson Welles's film *F for Fake*; Paul Maliszewski's study *Fakers: Hoaxers, Con Artists, Counterfeiters, and Other Great Pretenders*; John Guare's play *Six Degrees of Separation*; Peter Ackroyd's novel *Chatterton*; and selections from the poets James Macpherson and Thomas Chatterton as well as "fabulist" journalists Stephen Glass, Jayson Blair, and Jay Forman.

The Arguments of America's Founding Documents
Prof. Maria A. Windell

Spring 2010 Section B	15496 ENG 111 B	MWF 9:00-9:50
Spring 2010 Section E	15499 ENG 111 E	MWF 10:00-10:50

The British colonies in America did not simply cohere for battle on July 4, 1776, and emerge as a united band of states. Instead, the nation was envisioned, formed, and further shaped through intense debates between men—and certain women—in colonial America. By dissecting the arguments found in myriad documents surrounding the declaration of US independence, the Revolutionary War, and the establishment of a national government, students will learn to identify the structural aspects of academic arguments—and then to create them. Examining the Declaration of Independence or the Federalist papers, for instance, can help us see various parts of argument at work. As students begin to develop close reading and critical thinking skills, reading a novel such as Hannah Webster Foster's *The Coquette* will reveal the different forms that "evidence" can take in academic writing (i.e. passages from the novel itself, information about its historical contexts, critical discussions about the novel). Students will build arguments surrounding several different types of texts, including pamphlets, official governmental documents, newspaper articles, novels—possibly even a movie looking back on the Revolution, such as A&E's *The Crossing* or Mel Gibson's *The Patriot*.

Reading List

- J. Hector St. John de Crèvecœur, *Letters from an American Farmer*
- Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*
- Hannah Webster Foster, *The Coquette*
- Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*
- *The Patriot* or another current interpretation of the nation's founding period
- Selections included in course pack, including, among other documents, The Declaration of Independence (Thomas Jefferson's and final versions), selections from the Federalist Papers, the preamble to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and letters by John and Abigail Adams.