



English 102 Topics—Fall 2016

This list is current as of 3/10/2016. If the description of a 102 section in the Timetable of Classes is not listed below, please contact the English Department at 865/974-5401 to get it.

Each instructor's section of English 102 is organized around a distinctive topic; please choose one that appeals to you and your interests. All English 102 sections teach archival, qualitative, and secondary source research and writing.

All English 102 sections require 2 textbooks, *Rhetoric of Inquiry*, 4th edition, and *The Writer's Harbrace Handbook*, 5th edition. Each section may have additional required texts; please check with the Bookstore to see whether additional texts are required for *your* section.

The day/time for each instructor's section is listed in the online Timetable of Classes.

Conner **Inquiry into Myths and Monsters**

Most of us grew up reading fairy tales about the Big Bad Wolf and hearing myths about the Loch Ness monster. The former are understood in our culture as being fantasy, but stories like the latter occupy an ambiguous space between fact and fiction. In "Inquiry into Myths and Monsters," we will investigate the transformation of cultural myths and monsters over time and in various genres. In our class readings, discussions, and individual research projects we will ask such central questions as how do myths, superstitions, and monsters function in our everyday lives? What is the relationship between myths, cultural anxieties, and individual fears? And, where do we draw the line between "rational" cultural beliefs, superstitions, and fantasy? Like all 102 sections, we will engage in archival, qualitative, and secondary source research to investigate the course topic.

Eichel **Inquiry into the Mythic**

In this class we will tackle classical myths, from Norse to Sumerian, and will explore the various forms those same myths have attained and how they have changed. We will also discuss the appropriation of the mythic genre by American culture, delving into the rich mythologies of comic books and Hollywood's (and thus the general public's) current infatuation with superhero movies. Possible stopping points include X-Men, Batman, Thor, the *Star Wars* franchise, *Mad Men*, and Harry Potter.

The main goal of English 102 is to emphasize research techniques and methodologies. These strategies will ideally transfer into whatever your individual field may be, since we you will learn how to evaluate, analyze, and synthesize a variety of texts and will conduct historical, qualitative, and secondary source research. Because of this, "Inquiry into the Mythic" serves as a unifying point around which we can develop these necessary skills.

Hewitson **Inquiry into History, Memory and Reality in Words and Pictures**

This course explores how ideas about reality are constructed and understood in different narrative forms. Fiction, memoir, film, documentary, photography and historical record are considered in order to investigate how such information is used as a vehicle for self-examination and rational understanding and, conversely, for manipulation and self-delusion. The capacity of these texts and images to communicate ideas and their facility to provide legitimate knowledge is also considered. Related issues to be addressed include how memory and anecdote are used as evidence; how the selection and omission of different kinds of evidence and information shape historical records; how narratives produced through these means create identities and contribute to ideas about the world in general; and how stories are deliberately manipulated in personal, legal and historical contexts. Students are encouraged to explore topics of specific interest and relevance to themselves within the broader

parameters of the course. Like all 102 sections, we will engage in archival, qualitative, and secondary source research to investigate the course topic.

Mackenzie Inquiry into Embodiments of Evil

The term "evil" has found new life in recent public discourse, but this term has a long history. Traditionally, in Western civilization, Satan has represented embodied evil. As represented in popular tradition (literary, oral tradition, film, music, material culture, etc.), he can be sinister, manipulative, seductive, noble, a trickster, or merely a comical being. Through our discussions of these images, we will uncover various traits that are considered evil and will examine the depictions of these traits in others—both individuals and groups—who have been labeled evil incarnate, using our research to uncover the history, meaning, and current relevance of such images. Like all sections of English 102, students will conduct archival, qualitative, and secondary source research to investigate the course topic.

Massey Inquiry into the Heroic

In this section of 102, students will conduct and present research related to the concept of the hero and how it has changed through time. We shall focus upon the epic hero in traditional literature as well as modern characterizations in popular culture. Through the study of epics such as the *Iliad* and *Beowulf*, folklore (including African American folktales), modern fantasy literature (*The Hobbit* and *Harry Potter*), and contemporary films (such as *Troy* and *Kingdom of Heaven*), we shall consider how images of the hero show continuity as well as transformation through different time periods, cultures, and media. We shall use qualitative, archival, and secondary source research to explore our topic through various essay assignments. Each student will also lead one class discussion and present research pertaining to the reading or film discussion for that day. A reading assignment of 20-30 pages or watching a film will be required before most class meetings.

McCleod Inquiry into Food and Culture

If we are what we eat, then what do the choices we make on a daily basis say about us? This writing and research course is an investigation of the complex relationship that humans have with food. We'll look at what, when, with whom, and how we eat and what these choices reveal about ourselves and our culture. Students will explore a food tradition in their family or hometown community and consider what that tradition says about the values that are passed along with it. Then we will choose a time period and investigate how a generation's food choices and patterns reflect the values, stereotypes, and assumptions of their time. Finally, students will examine how food and consumption relates to their specific fields of study. This course is a tasty way to learn the research skills necessary for a successful academic career! Like all sections of English 102, we will conduct historical, qualitative, and secondary source research to investigate the course topic.

Meredith Inquiry into Popular Culture

This section will investigate conceptions of popular culture and its role in our (and possibly others') culture, both historical and contemporary. Students will read a variety of popular culture mediums, including argumentative essays concerning the topic of popular culture itself. The course will draw from a variety of written texts as well as visual, musical, technological, and other non-written forms. Like all sections of 102, students will conduct archival, qualitative, and secondary source research.

Metz Inquiry into Fairy Tales and Popular Culture

Fairy tales are some of the world's oldest stories, passed down from generation to generation and endlessly revised and adapted to reflect particular cultures in different historical periods. Initially the tales were not meant for children at all and in many cases were actually violent or grotesque. In this class we will use fairy tales as a lens through which to do various kinds of research into cultural attitudes and practices that have changed over time. We will look at a wide variety of fairy tales, from the original versions to those popularized by Charles Perrault and the Brothers Grimm, as well as modern-day movies, short stories, and comic books. Like all 102 sections, we will engage in archival, qualitative, and secondary source research to investigate the course topic.

Robida Inquiry into Film and Popular Culture

"Inquiry into Film and Popular Culture" addresses the relationship of popular movies to popular American culture. We will be taking a look at several well-known movies, placing our emphasis on what they tell us about our own attitudes to a variety of

cultural, historical, and intellectual issues. Your coursework will include qualitative methods of inquiry, such as field research and data analysis, historical inquiry, and traditional secondary source research. We will be paying close attention to how movies are representative of popular culture in addition to producing our responses toward it.

Stromski Inquiry into College Towns

The relationship between the University of Tennessee (UTK) and the city of Knoxville is, to say the least, complicated. In this course we will start with the question of whether or not Knoxville is a “college town.” Through qualitative research, students will examine how the position UTK holds within the community is interpreted differently by different people; by using archival research students will examine how UTK’s relationship with Knoxville has changed over time; finally, by conducting secondary-source research, students will examine how UTK’s position within Knoxville is influenced by a number of larger cultural, economic and regional contexts.

Todd Inquiry into Dreams

Dreaming has long been common material for cultural production. Despite attempts to explain their nature psychologically, spiritually, or supernaturally, dreams remain mysterious and entice largely through their open-ended possibilities. "Inquiry into Dreams" will explore the use and representation of dreams in popular culture, in relation to people's real-world experiences of them and the different perspectives that have attempted to understand and explain those experiences. The course will move from historical research of first-hand, archival accounts into qualitative study of social trends in dreaming, and finally into secondary source research of cultural depictions of dreaming in art, literature, and film.

Turner, S. Inquiry into the Titanic and its Legacy

The Titanic began as an engineering puzzle, became a historical trauma, and by the end of its century had become both an archeological challenge and a case study in the modern Hollywood blockbuster. This course will examine both the ship and its legacy in all of these contexts. First students will study primary sources in the form of survivor accounts, photographs of salvaged artifacts, and fictionalized retellings. They will then research recent scholarship in a discipline of their choice to answer some question about the ship, the wreck, or people's enduring fascination with both. Finally, groups of three will design a qualitative study that investigates the relationship between stress and anxiety in everyday life and cultural narratives of disaster and loss.

Wallace Inquiry into Cool

What does it mean to be cool? Is cool just something you're born with? If not, who decides what's cool and what's not? Is "cool" the same thing as "popular," or are they completely different things? In this section of 102, we will practice our research and argumentative skills by examining a wide variety of supposedly cool people and things. We'll look at Apple's design team to ask whether a company can be cool; we'll read about popular stereotypes of "the cool girl"; we'll read the musician Questlove asking whether hip-hop is still cool. These discussions will enable you to investigate and write on your own, carrying out interviews and surveys, studying what people in the past thought cool was, as well as using the ideas of other scholars and writers to help develop your own views. P.S.: You do not need to be cool to take this class.

Wilkinson Inquiry into Ghosts and Hauntings

History may be written by the winners, but when it comes to capturing imagination and interest, it loses every time to its disreputable cousin: the ghost story. Populated by the embittered, confused and benign, these popular tales star those who have lost and cannot walk away from defeat. In this course, we will investigate the appeal of the haunted—from businesses that promise contact with the dead to horror films that touch upon our collective fears. In our explorations, we will engage in qualitative, archival, and secondary source research, looking at tales from Tennessee and elsewhere. By the end of the course, you will have a strong grasp on critical reading, research, and writing skills that will serve you well in your academic career and beyond.