

ENGLISH LITERATURE (ENLT)

The courses listed on this page are exclusive to the LPS BAAS degree (<https://lpsonline.sas.upenn.edu/features/what-bachelor-applied-arts-and-sciences-degree/>) and LPS Online certificates (<https://lpsonline.sas.upenn.edu/academics/certificates/>).

ENLT 1000 Ways of Reading

1 Course Unit

ENLT 1200 Literature, Culture, and Society

Stories matter. They encourage imagination through visions of what could be, even as they challenge us to think critically about the historical realities that influence our daily experiences. Stories also connect us within a web of social and cultural relations that are often hidden in plain view. In this course, we'll explore what this means for each of us through reading, writing, and other forms of active engagement with a wide array of literary texts. Some texts will challenge us to question who we are, what we think, and which roles we play in the world. Others will invite us to reflect on how meaning-making operates across genre, space, and time. But all will offer us examples of why storytelling is a key component of what makes us human. This course is for everyone, including folks who might not traditionally gravitate toward studying literature. During our time together, we'll build foundations for close reading and critical analysis while engaging with physical and digital texts—from classical epics to future-focused media. We'll even play with emergent ideas about society and culture that propose concrete steps for making a better world. The goal is to practice deep work with diverse stories that reflect who we are and what we hope to become. Essential Questions: The course will revolve around five guiding questions, including: • How do literary texts reflect, challenge, and influence cultural norms, identities, and societal structures? • What roles do narratives play in shaping our perceptions of social hierarchies, politics, and power relations? • How can we craft compelling, thoughtful, responses to complex work? • How do we interpret notions of gender, race, and class through literature? • What can creative work teach us about our personal and professional lives? Course Block Contributions: • English Literature • Social Difference, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Concentration Contributions: • Creative Studies • Literature, Culture, and Tradition • Individualized Studies
1 Course Unit

ENLT 1400 History in Eight Books

This course provides a broad overview of the history of literature in English from the tenth century to the twentieth. Rather than aim for complete coverage of a thousand years of literary production, we will spend each week delving deeply into one text from a particular historical moment, reading eight works in total. We will familiarize ourselves with literary texts -- such as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Leaves of Grass*, and *Beloved* -- that range widely in form, genre, and thematic concern; we will examine how these texts negotiate their sociocultural contexts instead of merely reproducing them; and we will practice how to ask productive questions about literature. Assignments will include regular discussion posts, close reading exercises, a critical bibliography, and a final paper.
1 Course Unit

ENLT 2000 Topics in English Literature

Topics in English Literature. Topics offered will differ.
Fall or Spring
1 Course Unit

ENLT 3000 Radical Literature

In 2018, Dan Rather on the left and Nikki Haley on the right claimed that dissent is As American as apple pie. This course examines the roots of that statement and the repercussions of dissent on national identity and literary production. Class readings and discussions address dissenters who are known for their political positions, such as Thomas Paine and Frederick Douglass, and those who known for their dissent from literary norms, such as Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman. Explore questions of literary style, its connection to politics, and how dissenting politics call for rethinking literary norms while also connecting to time-honored literary values. Through discussions, papers, and a research project, you can discover what values Americans share around political and stylistic dissent that continue to resonate today.
1 Course Unit