

Experimental

According to College Legislation, the student-faculty Committee on Educational Research and Development has the authority to recommend experimental courses and programs to Academic Council. Faculty members and students are invited to submit their ideas to the Committee. In 2008-09 the following experimental courses will be offered:

EDUC 314 Learning and Teaching Mathematics: Content, Cognition, and Pedagogy
Speiser (Education), Taylor (Quantitative Reasoning), Polito (Quantitative Reasoning), Haskell (Education)

An examination of how adults and elementary-school students learn basic mathematics content, specifically: number and operations, functions and algebra, geometry and measurement, and statistics and probability. We will simultaneously study our own cognition as we learn mathematical concepts and principles, children's cognition as they learn mathematics, and how mathematics can be taught to children in classroom settings. Taught by a team of Wellesley College faculty with backgrounds in mathematics, quantitative reasoning, and education, and a school mathematics specialist and teacher, fieldwork is required.

Prerequisite: One course in Education and one course in Quantitative Reasoning
Distribution: Epistemology and Cognition
Semester: Fall Unit: 1.0

ENG 150/PHIL 150 First Year Colloquium in Literature and the History of Ideas

A team-taught interdisciplinary seminar for first-year students that brings the perspectives of such disciplines as philosophy, psychology, and history to bear on the traditional study of literature.

Rodensky (English) and deWarren (Philosophy)

Topic A for 2008-09: George Eliot and the Philosophical Novel. This course examines the ways in which philosophy finds expression in literature and literature finds significance in philosophy. The focus of this examination will be the work of the great Victorian novelist George Eliot and the major philosophical ideas and texts that influenced her, including the work of Spinoza, Feuerbach and J. S. Mill (among others). We will discuss these philosophical texts separately and in detail, and consider how Eliot refashioned them in the context of two of her novels, *The Mill on the Floss* and *Middlemarch*. As part of our interdisciplinary interest, we will reflect on the basic categories of the "literary" and the "philosophical," asking what it means to read novels "as philosophy" and to read philosophy "as literature." *Students may register for either ENG 150 or PHIL 150 and credit will be granted accordingly.*

Prerequisite: Open only to first-year students.
Distribution: Language and Literature or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy
Semester: Fall Unit: 1.0

ENG 150 First Year Colloquium in Literature and the History of Ideas

A team-taught interdisciplinary seminar for first-year students that brings the perspectives of such disciplines as philosophy, psychology, and history to bear on the traditional study of literature.

Ko and Lynch

Topic B for 2008-09: Estranged Bedfellows of Literary History: Chaucer and Shakespeare. This team-taught course will complicate the model of literary history that locates Chaucer and Shakespeare firmly on different sides of a bright historical line between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Even in comparison to other Renaissance writers, Shakespeare was deeply interested in medieval topics, as can easily be seen in tragedies such as *Macbeth* and *King Lear*. Chaucer, on the opposite side of the medieval/modern divide, was uncannily modern and cosmopolitan, not only reformist-minded in religious matters but also fascinated by philosophical paradox and interested in representing new modes of subjectivity in his poetry. Likely readings include the Merchant's Tale and Franklin's Tale from the *Canterbury Tales* and selections from Chaucer's romantic poem *Troilus and Criseyde*, sometimes called the first novel in the English language, alongside Shakespeare's much darker *Troilus and Cressida* and *Romeo and Juliet*, concluding with Shakespeare's magnificent late romance *The Tempest*.

Prerequisite: None. Open only to first-year students.

Distribution: Language and Literature

Semester: Spring Unit: 1.0

EXP 123 The Art of Reading: An Introduction to Literary Theory

Parussa (Italian Studies)

What is literary theory? What's its use? Where does it come from? These are just some of the questions that will be addressed in this course dedicated to the exploration of the most important theories for the interpretation of literary texts. Students will read essays on various methods of textual reading and will apply them to the interpretation of major texts of world literature. Each week we will combine the presentation of a different method of textual interpretation with the discussion of a classic world literature. This course will show how theories have represented a challenge to the traditional literary canon; and it will also provide students with intellectual tools that will enable them to interpret other texts they will encounter in their future.

Prerequisite: None. Open to first-year students only.

Distribution: Language and Literature

Semester: Fall Unit: 1.0