Catalog Description:
Introduces students to the demands and pleasures of university-level investigation of literature. Students develop the tools necessary for advanced criticism, including close-reading skills, knowledge of generic conventions, mastery of critical terminology, and skill at a variety of modes of analysis, from the formal to the historical. Also emphasizes the writing process, with the production of four to five formal papers.

Course Objectives:
Students in the course will
- Become more adept readers and interpreters of texts
- Understand and utilize literary terms in their examination of texts
- Develop their critical thinking skills through seminar-based discussion, writing assignments, and presentations
- Hone their awareness of the interplay between form, genre, and meaning
- Produce clear, articulate literary essays that have gone through the full drafting and revision process
- Draw connections between texts from different cultures, eras, genres

Course Overview:
This course will run as a seminar, which means that without full student participation, the course will not succeed. While our primary focus in the course will be to examine how various literary forms work and on honing close-reading skills, we will also be considering the ways in which literary study can create a set of intellectual “tools” with which to tackle other disciplines and fields of thought. Our seminar discussions and readings, as well as student presentations, will also lead us to consider the interplay between text and context, to think about the various modes of analysis available to the astute reader, and to reflect on the myriad ways in which writers have wrestled with some of the abiding questions of human culture.

Course Requirements:
All these assignments will be explained in more detail in class. What follows here is just an overview.

Participation: This course will be run as a seminar, which means that your success in the class—and the success of the class as a whole—depends on your participation. Participation means: being in class on time; doing (and thinking about) the reading; engaging with the materials and ideas during class meetings; silencing (and putting away) all electronica; and bringing your ideas and questions to class.
Writing: There will be many different types of writing required for this course, including short response writings (graded on a 1-3 basis) and formal essays (graded A-F). **All writing unless otherwise specified should be typed, double-spaced, with one-inch margins. After the first page, the pages should be numbered; you should also staple/paper-clip the pages together.**

Presentations: Students will make a 15-20 minute presentation discussing a particular literary theory/methodology using the essays in *Glossary of Literary Terms.*

Attendance: You cannot do well in this class if you do not come to class. Please note that being late to class three times will be counted as one absence (six lates = two absences, etc). If you do miss a class, you are responsible for getting class notes and assignments from another student. If you plan to miss any classes for religious observance this semester, please let me know their dates by the end of the first week of the term. You will not in any way be penalized for such absences, but I may require you to submit any work due for these classes in advance.

Grading: Grading percentages are *approximately* as follows:

- Participation 20%
- Response writing: 20%
- Presentation: 20%
- Essays: 40%

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the written presentation of others' words, images, or ideas as if they were your own. I include within the definition of plagiarism passing in papers for this course that you’ve written for other courses. You will receive an F on any plagiarized assignment and will risk failure in the course and expulsion from the university. If you have any uncertainties about whether a particular instance constitutes plagiarism, *please ask me.* Learning how to cite the work of others is a legitimate part of our course, but deceptive concealment of sources is not.

Disabilities

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Office of Student Life to make the necessary arrangements.

Required Texts:

These texts are on order at the NYUAD Bookstore:

- Abrams and Harpham, *Glossary of Literary Terms*
- *Othello*
- *Doubt*
- *Sula*
- *The Handmaid’s Tale*
- *July’s People*
- *Tracks*
- Short stories and poetry, available online in the NYU Classes site
- Critical essays as needed, available in Classes site
Fall 2013 Preliminary Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Week One
Sept 1: Introductions & explanations
Sept 3: Spider poems (Classes site) & write a one-page response to one of the poems, in which you observe the poem without moving to analysis or interpretation.

Week Two: Sept 8 & 10
Sept 8: Excerpt from How to Read a Poem (Classes site; see details for instructions)
   Read both documents in the folder marked “Poetic Terms”
   Read all sonnets from “Various Sonnets” (Classes site) & make observations about each
Sept 10: Read excerpts from King, On Writing, and Lamott, Bird by Bird
   One page “anti-writing voices” (read Lamott first)

Week Three: Sept 15 & 17
Sept 15: Heaney sonnets, Shakespeare sonnets, “Leda and the Swan”
   Choose any two sonnets, make notes about your observations, and then craft a thesis statement that would be the foundation for an extended analysis
Sept 17: Bring in sonnet draft; in-class discussion

Week Four: Sept 22 & 24
Sept 22: Sonnet due plus a two-page reflection on the composition process
Sept 24: “blackberry poems” and a two-page reflection on one poem
   Discuss presentation assignment/literary theory

Week Five: Sept 29 & Oct 1
Sept 29: Essay #1 DRAFT DUE (3-4 pages) in-class discussion
Oct 1: Short story (see list of terms in “Short Story” folder on Classes site)
   Read: “The Lottery,” “Where are you going, where have you been,” and “Girl.” Please bring annotated texts to class, and write a two-page response to one story in which you discuss one set of related observations.
   Email Professor Williams w/two choices for presentation assignment

Week Six: Oct 5 & 9: Eid Holiday – No Class
Jane Tompkins Sensational Designs (NYU Classes) & two-page response
Short stories: Marquez, Kafka & one-page response to each

Week Seven Oct 8 & 10
ESSAY #1 DUE
Short story, Marquez (NYU Classes)
Two-page response: exemplary moment & analysis

Week Eight: EID HOLIDAY 13-17 Oct
Short story (NYU Classes)
Two-page response
Greenblatt, “Culture” (NYU Classes)
Week Nine: Oct 22 & 24
Drama
Terms
*Othello*
Two-page response
Oct 22: Thesis statement essay #2

Week Ten: Oct 29 & 31
*Othello*
Oct 31: Essay #2 Due

Week Eleven: Nov 5 & 7: NO CLASS: Al Hijra & Monday schedule

Week Twelve Nov 12 & 14
*Doubt*
Two-page response
Presentations: critical essays in Abrams

Week Thirteen Nov 19 & 21
Novel
Terms
*God of Small Things*
Presentations: critical essays in Abrams

Week Fourteen Nov 26 & 28
*God of Small Things*
Nov 28: Bibliographic essay assignment: analysis of critical essay (4-6 pages)

Week Fifteen: Dec 3 & 5
*God of Small Things*
Short novel TBA

Week Sixteen: Dec 10 & 12
Short novel TBA

*The final exam will be a take-home essay*