ENGLISH

The English Department seeks to help its students find beauty and meaning in the written word, be confident in sharing their thoughts, and express their ideas clearly in writing and in speech. Our goals are rooted in the belief that strong language skills ready us for the essential human pursuits of seeking self-knowledge and participating in the world.

The English curriculum emphasizes careful reading, vigorous writing, creative thinking, attentive listening, and articulate speaking. Because the development of these skills is a process, we teach the same skills with increasing sophistication in each of the four upper school years. By reading a diverse selection of literature, students become aware of the relationships among the reader, the writer, and the text. Students write frequently, and through the drafting process and the individual attention of their teachers, learn both to develop their ideas and to write with greater power. In all English classes, teachers encourage and value the participation of every student. The curriculum also prepares students to take standardized tests such as the SAT and the AP Literature and Composition Exam.

English is coordinated with Gilman in the eleventh grade; in the twelfth grade, students choose from a wide array of semester electives at Bryn Mawr, Gilman, and Roland Park.

English is not tracked at Bryn Mawr in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades. Recommended students may enroll in a year-long, honors-level seminar called AP English in the twelfth grade.

English Grade 9

Year 1 credit

Ninth grade English emphasizes creative, independent thought in a student-centered learning environment. Whether students are engaged in a thoughtful discussion of a passage or acting out lines from a play, they will be developing critical thinking and close reading skills. They will be introduced to literature from a variety of authors, cultures, and time periods, all focusing on coming of age narratives that respond to students' own lives and help to inspire a love for reading. Students will also develop and sharpen their writing skills, enabling them to formulate analytical arguments supported by evidence and precise analysis of text.

English Grade 10

Year 1 credit

In the tenth grade English program, students analyze literature by close reading of novels, poetry, and drama; they develop a heightened sensitivity to the nuances of texts and develop thesis statements that move beyond character and plot and, instead, advance analytical arguments. In preparation for increasingly sophisticated study, students develop strategies for timed writing and acquire a contextual vocabulary from the literature they read.

English Grade 11 (Bryn Mawr, Gilman)

Year 1 credit

Students begin the year studying tragedy, including Shakespeare’s Hamlet or another Shakespearean tragedy. For the rest of the year, the course focuses exclusively on American literature (texts from past years have included Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, My Antonia, The Great Gatsby, and Beloved) in conjunction with juniors’ study of American history. Beyond writing frequent analytical essays at home and timed essays in class, students also work on a series of personal essays in anticipation of writing similar pieces for college applications. Students are expected to read more independently and to take increased responsibility for initiating, directing, and maintaining class discussions of the literature using the Harkness model.

In the spring semester, teachers discuss the AP exam with students; a brief workshop offers specific strategies for preparing to take the exam.
**TWELFTH GRADE ENGLISH ELECTIVES**

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<th>AP English Elective</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<td>(offered at Bryn Mawr)</td>
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<td>While it is called AP English, this class does not merely prepare students for the AP exam; rather, it is designed to function as an Honors seminar. (Many students enrolled in the course will already have taken the AP Literature exam in eleventh grade; only those students who have not will be required to sit for the exam in May.) AP English is a fast-paced, reading and writing intensive, year-long course for Bryn Mawr students who are ready to participate actively and independently in thinking and writing about literature at the highest level. In the first semester and the first part of the second semester, study focuses on Modern literature. Texts in past years have included <em>Mrs. Dalloway</em>, <em>Go Down Moses</em>, <em>Heart of Darkness</em>, <em>Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man</em>, <em>The Metamorphosis</em>, <em>Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead</em>, and <em>In the Skin of a Lion</em>. Juxtaposed with many works is pertinent literary criticism for the class to analyze and debate. Students may also be asked to purchase tickets to relevant productions at Baltimore area theaters; the plays they see as a class are part of the curriculum. The English Department notifies students of their eligibility for the class in the third quarter of their junior year, and students may then opt to enroll. Nominations are based on a student’s performance in tenth and eleventh grade; criteria for nomination include but are not limited to a capacity for thinking independently, a strong interest in literature, an ability to write well analytically, and a willingness to participate actively in discussion. Students will receive equal consideration whether they are enrolled in eleventh grade English at Gilman or at Bryn Mawr. Final enrollment must be approved by the department chair. This is a year-long course and may not be dropped at the end of the first semester.</td>
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<th>20th Century African-American Literature</th>
<th>Semester I</th>
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<td>This course offers a study of African-American culture, as it relates to living in the multi-racial United States, through literature produced by 20th century African-American writers. In addition to dynamic discourse, students enhance their personal library on this topic. Works from Wright, Baldwin, Hansberry, Fuller, Wilson, Hughes, and others are selected.</td>
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<th>African American Women Writers</th>
<th>Semester II</th>
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<td>Since the early writings of women in bondage, African-American women writers have explored what it means to be black, female, and American. It is at the intersection of these three identities that African-American female writers have found their voices and questioned the meaning of feminism, “The American Dream”, cultural identity, self-pride, and self-acceptance, from a multi-faceted perspective. As the landscape of cultural identity in America has changed, so has the writing of these women. In this course, we will explore how the writings of African-American women have evolved over time as well as tackle the themes that run throughout the span of this literature, questioning not only what it means to be both black and female from a historical perspective, but within our modern American society as well. A tentative list of works includes Dorothy West’s <em>The Living is Easy</em>, Alice Walker’s <em>The Color Purple</em>, Octavia Butler’s <em>Kindred</em>, Gloria Naylor’s <em>Linden Hills</em>, and April Sinclair’s <em>Coffee Will Make You Black</em> as well as poetry from Gwendolyn Brooks, Rita Dove, Phillis Wheatley, Maya Angelou, Lucille Clifton, and Nikki Giovanni.</td>
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<th>American Indian Studies</th>
<th>Semester II</th>
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<td>The Trail of Tears is just a page in a textbook for most high school American history students, but this course will focus on the human experience of American Indians through the lens of contemporary American Indian literature. We will discuss the realities and repercussions of the historical and systematic oppression of indigenous peoples as well as the socio-economic consequences in contemporary indigenous cultures through the novels, stories, and poetry of writers like Leslie Marmon Silko and Sherman Alexie. Text may include <em>Fools Crow</em> by James Welch, <em>Ceremony</em> by Leslie Marmon Silko, <em>Tracks</em> by Louise Erdrich, <em>Tanto and the Lone Ranger Fistfight in Heaven</em> by Sherman Alexie, and the poetry of Joy Harjo and N. Scott Momaday. (This course may be taken either for English or history credit.)</td>
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American Literature of the 60s
(Semester I)
A Revolution in the Air: American Literature of the Sixties -- Rising from the reverberations of Allen Ginsberg’s great *Howl*, the sixties were a decade of revolution, protest, polarization, liberation, experimentation, and promise. The fear of nuclear annihilation and the paranoia of the Cold War permeated the American psyche. The civil rights movement gave voice to disenfranchised African Americans and fueled the movement for women’s liberation. The conflict in Vietnam, raging violently in the East, was broadcast nightly on American television. The New Left protested for a new form of politics while the counterculture encouraged the youth of America to expand their consciousness. In all, the sixties were a wide-spread convergence of the political, the personal, the philosophical, and the artistic. Through the study of such writers as Ginsberg, Kerouac, Atwood, Mailer, Vonnegut, Plath, Friedan, Pynchon, King, X, Thompson, Baraka, Sexton, Kesey, Wolfe, and others, students will analyze how literature and other forms of art from the sixties reflect that turbulent and often romanticized decade.

China and Modern East Asia
(Semester I)
After the cataclysms of revolution and war in the twentieth century, the East Asian region in general, and China in particular, has reemerged as one of crucial importance in the modern world. The purpose of this course is to examine the evolution of East Asian history and culture, so we can develop an understanding of how the region evolved to the one we see today. The course will focus primarily on China and Japan since the nineteenth century, with occasional forays into the Koreas and Southeast Asia. As this course may be taken for history or English credit, there will be extensive discussion of fiction, including the novels *To Live* by Yu Hua and *Kokoro* by Natsume Soseki, and several short stories by East Asian authors. (This course may be taken for English or history credit.)

Classical Drama
(Semester I)
The Classical Drama course will provide a survey of ancient Greek drama and the society that produced it. The course will examine a representative sample of the major plays of the tragedians Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, as well as the comic playwright Aristophanes. In addition, modern adaptations of certain tragedies will be read. Among the topics considered will be: the tragic and comic festivals, the origin and nature of Greek theater, ancient theatrical production techniques, myth and tragedy, and the legacy of Greek tragedy in the modern world through film adaptations. Plays to be read include the *Oresteia*, *Bacchae*, *Antigone*, and *Frogs*. Time permitting, the comedy *Menaechmi* by the Roman playwright Plautus will also be read. Film adaptations of nine of the plays will be viewed. These include *Mourning Becomes Electra* by Eugene O’Neill, the *Antigone* by Jean Anouilh, and *A Funny Thing Happened On the Way to the Forum* (with music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and a book by Burt Shevelove and Larry Gelbart.).

Classical Mythology
(Semester II)
Focusing on the literary tradition of Greek and Roman mythology through extensive readings of the translations of Roman and Greek mythological sources, the course features both comparative and interpretive approaches, as well as evidence from art and archaeology. Lectures include insightful discussions of classical myths in their historical and cultural settings, as well as their survival in literature, art, music, and film.

Coming of Age Literature
(Semester I)
The liminal space between childhood and adulthood is imbued with equal parts mystery, confusion, revelation, and transformation. In this course, we will read a variety of voices, from a range of cultures and backgrounds, as authors inhabit the space of the bildungsroman, or coming-of-age story. We will analyze, discuss, and write about the moral and psychological changes faced by characters in their search for identity, truth, and meaning. The course will culminate in a modern bildungsroman project, in which students will tell the stories of their own journeys into adulthood. Texts will include Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go*, Tobias Wolf’s *Old School*, Jonathan Safran Foer’s *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*, Sandra Cisneros’ *The House on Mango Street*, Jeanette Walls’ *The Glass Castle*, as well as selected poems and short stories. We will also view and analyze films like Richard Linklater’s *Boyhood* and Sofia Coppola’s *The Virgin Suicides*. 
C.S. Lewis and Friends  
Semester II  
½ credit  
(offered at Gilman)  
The Fiction of C.S Lewis meets Contemporary Literature: In this course, we will read closely and with care selected works by C.S Lewis, such as *The Magician's Nephew* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* from his Narnia series. In addition, we will also read one story from his Space Trilogy. Finally, we will read a contemporary novel and try to see how themes of different origins can meet in a fruitful way. The best way to understand these kinds of connections can be summed up by the phrase “Celestial X-Pollination at Work.”

The Competitive Spirit in Literature  
Semester II  
½ credit  
(offer at Gilman)  
Competition has long been held as a sacred virtue in America. We are often told that the spirit of competition is what makes America great. We are encouraged to compete in all areas of life: economics, academics, athletics, politics, and war. But is competition always the best thing for healthy individuals, families, communities, and our nation? And, for that matter, what exactly is competition? Are there different types, and are some types better than others? We will explore all of these questions in this class through the study of texts from authors such as Homer, Plutarch, Victor Frankl, Ernest Hemingway, Ayn Rand, and Pat Conroy. We will also examine movies, pop-culture, current events, and our own personal experiences.

Creative Writing  
Semester I  
½ credit  
(offered at Bryn Mawr)  
This is an art class offering practice in writing short fiction and poetry. Students will refine their manuscripts in community through ongoing peer review with the goal of discovering a clear voice and fresh material. Participants must be committed to writing every day and to developing each piece from first to final draft. Each class member will produce a final portfolio of completed works in lieu of a final exam. Text: Lamott, *Bird by Bird*

Creative Writing  
Semester I and II  
½ credit  
(offer at Gilman)  
Taught by the Gilman Writing Fellow, this course is an intensive workshop in creative writing. Because each new Fellow designs the curriculum according to his or her interests and talents, the course content is variable; it includes elements in both fiction and poetry, and may cover playwriting. Students should expect to write daily, read the works of accomplished writers, and participate in critiques of one another's writing in workshop format. Only students who enjoy reading and writing and who are willing to work hard to improve their writing should consider taking this course.

Dante  
Semester I  
½ credit  
(offer at Gilman)  
In this course, we will read closely and with care *The Divine Comedy* by Dante Alighieri. In addition, we will accept the challenge of also letting "Dante read us." Other complementary authors include C.S Lewis, Sam Keen, Dorothy L. Sayers, Barbara Reynolds and Harry Chapin.

Dreams and Disasters  
Semester 1  
½ credit  
(offer at Roland Park)  
In 21st century England, violent gangs rage in the streets while the justice ministry uses new technologies to "reprogram" repeat offenders. A handsome young man dreams of ageless beauty, and his wish is granted with surprising results. An illegal immigrant reaches for the American dream and a better life for his family. Through three novels and a collection of interconnected short stories, this course examines the thin line between a shining idea and a brilliant disaster. Texts include Anthony Burgess’ *A Clockwork Orange*, Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, TC Boyle’s *The Tortilla Curtain* and Junot Diaz’s *Drown*. 
Existentialism and Literature  
(Semester II)  
½ credit  
(offer at Gilman)

What is the meaning of life? Or, does life have any meaning at all? Through the study of existential philosophy and modern and postmodern literature, students will consider the meanings and problems of existence. Students will read the philosophical writings of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Sartre, Beauvoir and will seek to better understand the basic existential concepts of good, evil, death, despair, being, and nothingness. Moreover, students will apply such theory and philosophy to the reading of influential modern and postmodern literature: Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, Camus, Beckett, Kafka, and McCarthy. And, through the study and contemplation of such ideals, students will be encouraged to consider the vital joy inherent in such deep meditation on existence, that the struggle to understand one’s place in the world is, in and of itself, enough to fill the heart and mind.

Exploring Adult Themes in Children’s Literature  
(Semester 1)  
½ credit  
(offer at Roland Park)

Since the last half of the 18th century, children’s literature has offered adult writers a forum to explore the imaginative world of childhood. It has also provided a way to nurture, educate and entertain both young and old alike for many generations. In this course, we will consider themes that shape our notions of justice, good and evil, and right and wrong. By reading several selections from well-known authors, we will explore the historical development of children’s stories and consider the cultural context and parallelism of tales from around the world. Students will write several critical essays in response to the readings and will also have an opportunity to write their own fairy tale or children’s story. Readings may include selected tales from The Norton Anthology of Children’s Literature, Charlotte’s Web (White), The Hobbit (Tolkien), A Wrinkle in Time (L’Engle), Alice in Wonderland (Lewis), among others.

Feminist Gothic Literature  
(Semester II)  
½ credit  
(offer at Roland Park)

Some critics define Gothic literature based on the time period in which it was written; others view it through the lens of specific plot elements, images, and literary tropes. With the growth of feminist theory in the latter half of the twentieth century, scholars noticed, and wrote extensively about, the fact that many of the most gripping and terrifying works of Gothic literature and art were created by women. What do haunted houses and things that go bump in the night have in common with the experience of being female, particularly in the pre-ERA era? How do these so-called “haunted” spaces connect to the psychological space of the feminine mind? Through reading and viewing a variety of fiction, poetry, psychological theory, and horror films, we will examine how female writers use Gothic elements both to entertain and to wrestle with what it means to be a woman. Literary selections include The Yellow Wallpaper, Jane Eyre, Frankenstein, The Haunting of Hill House, as well as the writings of Dickinson, Woolf, O’Connor, Oates, Freud, and Jung, among others.

Hamlet  
(Semester I)  
½ credit  
(offer at Gilman)

This course will give students the opportunity to do a semester long study of Shakespeare’s greatest tragedy, perhaps the greatest play ever written. First, we will analyze how Hamlet fits into the Elizabethan world of ideas and then into Shakespeare’s developing career as a working playwright. We will do a line by line close reading of the play, and students will do exercises involving verse scansion, paraphrase, spot passage identification and memorization of key speeches. We will familiarize ourselves with the sources of Hamlet and consider how Shakespeare revised them in forging a new aesthetic for his brand new playhouse, the Globe. We will write essays about Shakespeare’s purpose informed by an overview of the most famous critical interpretations of the play. (Coleridge, Carlyle, Schlegel, Hazlitt, Bradley, and Jones). We will study the performance history of the play and observe how interpretations of the role have been influenced by the history of ideas. Finally, we will put scenes from the play on their feet and perform them for friends and family.
The Holocaust Studies

**Semester I**

This course guides students’ investigation of the events surrounding the Nazi destruction of European Jewry during World War II. As students study the evolution of the ‘Final Solution,’ they consider the history of anti-Semitism in Europe, the role of anti-Semitism in the nature of the Nazi regime, and the contingencies which shaped Nazi anti-Jewish policies. At the heart of this analysis is a close study of the key events which transformed persecution into genocide during World War II. The Holocaust Museum is an important resource during this process. During the final section of the course, students explore the difficulties of finding meaning in the memory of the Holocaust by encountering memoir, fiction, essays and films with Holocaust themes. (This course may be taken either for English or history credit.)

**Journalism: Analysis and Practice**

**Semester I**

This one-semester elective will introduce students to journalism from both an analytical and a practical perspective. The field of journalism has undergone a substantial shift over the last 20 years, but good journalism is really about good storytelling, which never goes out of style. This class will introduce students to a range of styles, skills and methods for telling compelling stories, giving aspiring journalists a toolkit for future work. Our discussions will be informed by a broad range of examples from outlets like “The New York Times,” “The Atlantic,” “The Economist,” “Rolling Stone,” “Scientific American,” The Poynter Institute and others. Students will have the chance to work in several different media as we learn how to find a story, gather information, interview sources, and organize the information for different audiences. Students will also have the opportunity to serve as editors for their classmates’ work.

**Literature of Identity**

**Semester I**

The purpose of this course is twofold. The first purpose is to explore the history and literature of racial passing during the Jim Crow Era of segregation in America in the early twentieth century. During that time, unknown numbers of African American individuals “passed” for white in order to escape the social and legal oppression of the realities of segregation. We will study novels and stories from that era as both literary and cultural texts to explore these narratives of loss and the ways they continue to impact what it means to be a person of color in America. From these stories, we will also explore our second purpose: to consider the ways that identity – as it functions individually and collectively – might function both to reveal our true selves and also, at times, to conceal those selves. Students will also be invited to explore their own identities through a variety of lenses. Texts may include *Passing* by Nella Larsen, *Covering* by Kenji Yoshino, *The Brief Wonderous Life of Oscar Wao* by Junot Diaz, and selected short stories from writers like Jhumpa Lahiri, Annie Proulx, and Junot Diaz.

**Literature of the American South**

**Semester I**

Exploring the texts of several southern writers including Frederick Douglass, Anne Moody, William Faulkner, Eudora Welty, Flannery O’Connor, Wendell Berry, Tennessee Williams, and Josephine Humphreys, we will study several genres, from poetry and prose to drama and non-fiction. As we closely read and analyze the literature of the south, we will engage and discuss these questions: “What does it mean to be a southerner?”, “How has literature of the south developed?”, and “To what extent does a region define characters, literature, and humans?”

**Literature of the American West**

**Semester II**

What do you picture when you think about “heading west” towards the plains and the Rocky Mountains? What ideas, values, and lifestyles do you associate with “Big Sky Country”? This course examines different symbols in western literature and film—deserts, cattle, horses, guns—and explores how these images continue to shape American culture today. The literary selections and films also focus on the connections between national identity and physical space: how did writers and film directors perceive the “open” frontier? How has the closing of the frontier led to the emergence of new traditions in the American West? Since the course explores the notion of a sense of place, during the last two weeks the class meets outside of school to execute a student-designed environmental service learning project. Students work with nonprofit organizations such as Baltimore Parks and People and RPCS’s Sustainability Coordinator to design this final group project. Literary selections include works by Cormac McCarthy, Norman Maclean, and Native American writers such as Louise Erdrich and Sherman Alexie.
Literature of the Middle East

Semester II  ½ credit

(offer at Roland Park)

What is the Middle East? A complex and conflicted region of the world, it is a place often deeply misunderstood by Americans and Europeans even as we become increasingly dependent on and frustrated by our relations with countries like Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, and more. Together, we will use literature and current events to better understand not only the clashes of today, but their roots in a part of the world characterized by incredible cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity. Readings in poetry, fiction, memoir, and graphic novels as well as film viewings will help us explore topics such as community, identity, gender norms, tradition and will include authors like Orhan Parmuk, Khaled Hosseini, Rumi, Heather Raffo, Edward Said, and Yehuda Amichai, among many others.

Narrative Technique in Drama and Film

Semester II  ½ credit

(offer at Gilman)

This course is designed for students interested in writing, and in theater and film studies. The focus in this class will be on analyzing storytelling techniques in plays and films, learning and becoming fluent with the vocabulary of playscripts and screenplays, exploring the dramatist’s and the screenplay writer’s craft, and studying plays and films from a writer’s point of view. The works studied will include both classic and contemporary plays and both classic films from the Golden Age of Hollywood and from modern cinema. In our study, we will take into account the contributions made to the storytelling of a particular play or film by other collaborative artists such as the director, designers, and actors, and evaluate those contributions in terms of an overall understanding and appreciation of the work as a whole. The class will be discussion based.

Non-fiction Writing and Rhetoric

Semester II  ½ credit

(offer at Roland Park)

The ability to write powerfully opens many doors and helps the educated achieve their dreams. From politicians and professors to entrepreneurs and engineers, those who excel professionally often distinguish themselves through writing. This workshop-based course, rooted in the wisdom of William Zinsser, teaches students to write about their world with “clarity, brevity, simplicity, and humanity.” Students produce several pieces including a short biography, a critical review, a travel piece, a lyric essay, and a formal argument. Instruction places a strong emphasis on revision, and the course uses portfolio method of evaluation that encourages risk-taking and rewards effort.

Pictures Worth a Thousand Words: Graphic Novels as Literature of Identity

Semester II  ½ credit

(offer at Bryn Mawr)

This course will focus on the genre of graphic novels. We will examine how visual images affect and influence our reading and understanding of texts and how we tell stories. Questions we may consider include: How do we read a visual text? What do we gain through a visual novel? Is anything lost from the traditional novel? Why have graphic novels become so popular? Why are they called graphic novels and not comics? Is there anything about the graphic novel that lends itself to the exploration of minority identities? We will read a wide range of texts examining various identities, such as race, religion, gender, and sexuality. We will begin our study by examining the genre of graphic novels through Scott McCloud's Understanding Comics. Primary texts may include: Fun Home, American Born Chinese, Maus, Ghost World, and Persepolis. Final projects may include a paper on a graphic novel not read in the class or the creation of a graphic novella using software such as Comic Life.
Picturing Poverty in History, Film and Literature  
(semester II)  
½ credit  
(Offered at Gilman)  
We will study the ways that poverty has been depicted in various media from the nineteenth century through to the present. We will learn how to determine the various political perspectives suggested in the works of novelists, photographers, social scientists, historians, and film-makers. Readings will include sections from Dickens’ *Oliver Twist* and *Hard Times*, Stephen Crane’s *Maggie*, Nicholas Lemann’s *The Promised Land*, Richard Wright’s *Native Son*, Elliott Liebow’s *Talley’s Corner*, August Wilson’s *Jitney*, and David Simon’s novel for television *The Wire*.

Post-Apocalyptic Literature: About The End of Things  
(semester II)  
½ credit  
(Offered at Bryn Mawr)  
Combining Christian eschatology (or the study of ‘end things’ -- the final events of history, or the ultimate destiny of humanity) with various Ages of Anxiety, we will trace the development of post-apocalyptic literature from the late 1900’s through the early 21st century. Beginning with texts that may include Mary Shelley’s *The Last Man*, published in 1896, we may then consider the post-World War II fear of a nuclear holocaust by reading John Hersey’s *Hiroshima*, an account of a genuine apocalypse in Japan, and follow the development of imagined ecological and viral catastrophes. Central to the study will be considering each texts both within general historical context and through the lens of contemporary cultural anxieties: possible topics and texts include the violence in Cormac McCarthy’s *The Road*, the survival guide in *Alas, Babylon*, the literary zombie story in Colson Whitehead’s *Zone One*, and the kinder, gentler dystopia found in *Earth Abides* and *Station Eleven*, along with films and shorter readings.

Postmodern Literature  
(semester II)  
½ credit  
(Offered at Gilman)  
In this course, students will undertake an investigation into the concepts, techniques, and characteristics of Postmodernism through a study of fiction, poetry, memoir, and essay. We will also devote attention to the interdisciplinary application of these ideas in architecture, art, philosophy, film, and music. Topics will include irony, pastiche, consumerism, and the interplay of high and low culture.

Reading and Writing Fiction  
(semester I)  
½ credit  
(Offered at Gilman)  
The Reading/Writing Fiction elective focuses primarily on contemporary short stories and how they are constructed. The students learn to read with the writer's eye. Students also write their own fiction. Class sessions involve analyzing the style of stories from *The Scribner Anthology of Contemporary Short Fiction*, both in a journal and in discussion, doing writing exercises, and responding to student writing in a workshop format. Homework involves plentiful reading, both in the anthology and in a writing text, doing writing exercises, writing fiction, and responding in writing to student stories. The final evaluation is a portfolio of student writing. This is obvious, but perhaps worth saying: the course is designed for students who like to read and write fiction!

Reading and Writing Poetry  
(semester II)  
½ credit  
(Offered at Roland Park)  
According to William Butler Yeats, “Out of the quarrel with others we make rhetoric; out of the quarrel with ourselves we make poetry.” Because of its raw and personal nature, poetry is one of the most intimidating, yet fulfilling, art forms. In this course, we will delve deeply into the reading, analysis, and writing of a variety of forms, including ekphrastic, formal, narrative, and free verse poetry. In this course, students will engage in daily writing exercises to practice various fundamental techniques and to generate ideas for longer pieces of writing. Additionally, students will learn the process of formal workshopping as a means for discussing, gaining feedback upon, and publically sharing their work in a safe and respectful setting. Throughout the semester, we will read poems by contemporary poets including, among others, Elizabeth Bishop, Phillip Larkin, Adrienne Rich, Mary Oliver, Louise Gluck, Seamus Heaney, and Billy Collins. This course will culminate in the creation of a sizeable portfolio of completed poems.
Reading and Writing Short Fiction  Semester I  ½ credit  
(offerd at Roland Park)

F. Scott Fitzgerald famously said, “The reason one writes isn’t the fact he wants to say something. He writes because he has something to say.” Writing fiction is an opportunity both to express your own beliefs and to create people and places and experiences far removed from your own reality. In this course, students will engage in daily writing exercises to practice various fundamental techniques and to generate ideas for longer pieces of writing. Additionally, students will learn the process of formal workshopping as a means for discussing, gaining feedback upon, and publically sharing their work in a safe and respectful setting. For inspiration throughout the semester, we will read both classic and contemporary short stories, as well as selections from Stephen King’s brilliant book on craft, *On Writing*. The course will culminate in the creation of a portfolio of short stories.

Recreating Nature: What I Never Noticed Before  Semester II  ½ credit  
(offerd at Bryn Mawr)

Using naturalist Aldo Leopold’s classic volume, *A Sand County Almanac* as both inspiration and example, students will create an illuminated journal combining focused nature writing and drawing. A daily practice of Zazen meditation and observation techniques will allow students to heighten awareness and re-train their perceptions of nature so they can better record them. Short selections from the writings of Charles Darwin, John Muir, Dorothy and William Wordsworth, Annie Dillard, Barry Lopez, Walt Whitman, Rachel Carson, W. S. Merwin and others will supplement the Leopold readings. In addition to our travels on the Bryn Mawr campus, we will take short, early morning field trips.

Rites of Passage  Semester II  ½ credit  
(offerd at Gilman)

Young men and women becoming adults and learning about the world and their place in it are examined in a variety of short works of fiction. Through consideration of moments of growth and passage in a diversity of lives, students explore the common experiences, themes, and moral dilemmas that many young people encounter. Works from Hemingway, Ford, Murray, Chopin, and Gibbons.

Science Fiction as Literature: *Man, Monsters and Machines*  Semester I  ½ credit  
(offerd at Roland Park)

Through the study of science fiction, students will explore the interchanges between science and literature in the modern age. How do writers envision the impact of genetic engineering or new mass media on contemporary culture? What happens to the role of the human in a society dominated by systems and machines? The course explores trends in contemporary science fiction as a means of understanding how technological change defines and redefines modern life. Students will use the readings to explore open-ended questions and become acquainted with the different sub-genres that fall under the label “science fiction.” Reading selections include: *The Secret History of Science Fiction*, an anthology of short stories, *On So Full a Sea* by Change-Rae Lee, *Girl in Landscape* by Jonathan Lethem, and Jennifer Egan’s *A Visit from the Good Squad*.

Staging Shakespeare  Semester I  ½ credit  
(offerd at Bryn Mawr)

Why were plays banned from the city limits in Shakespeare’s day? Why did the Puritans close the theatres in England for nearly twenty years? Because the theatre was viewed as a hotbed of sin, as a place where different classes of people mixed with each other, and where the plays themselves challenged society’s beliefs about race, religion, gender, and the power of leaders. In short, the theatre was a place of rebellion. Seeing these plays performed excited audiences in ways that simply reading them cannot accomplish. In this class, we will study Shakespeare’s comedies with an eye toward performance. Although we will engage in some standard analysis, we will primarily discuss how acting, costumes, blocking, props, and scenery can change our understanding of characters and scenes. Shakespeare’s complex metaphors and syntax are easier to comprehend when we imagine performances, see them, and even do some in-class performing ourselves. As we read, we will discuss how the plays are still relevant to us today, by contemplating questions, such as: How do we stereotype and judge people based on their religion? How and why do we seek to control outsiders? What assumptions do we make about people based on their gender? How do gender stereotypes affect relationships of power? How and why do we disguise our identities? Plays we may read include: *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Tempest*, and *Twelfth Night*. 
Urban Literature and History Semester I ½ credit
(offered at Gilman)
This course investigates the evolution of American attitudes and policies toward urban poverty in the 20th century by studying the work of novelists, social scientists, historians and journalists. (This course may be taken for either English or history credit.)

The Vietnam War: Hearts and Minds Semester II ½ credit
(offer at Bryn Mawr)
The Vietnam War left a large imprint on the American psyche and made us re-examine ourselves as a nation. For the Vietnamese, it was a small blip in their centuries of struggles against foreign invaders. This course will deal with the experience of the Vietnam War from different viewpoints. We will study some history to get a perspective of the war and then study the personal experiences from a US soldiers', an anti-war protesters', a US government decision makers' and a Vietnamese woman's perspective to name a few. We will use personal memoirs, guest speakers, films, art, etc. to provide a rich and comprehensive approach. Vietnam’s impact on the American psyche and its culture will also be explored through music, photos, pictures, poetry and other mediums. (This course may be taken for either English or history credit.)

Villains and Antiheroes Semester I ½ credit
(offer at Gilman)
Since Genesis’s Adam and Homer’s Odysseus, flawed protagonists have identified the weaknesses, vulnerabilities, and mistakes common in the human experience. Through the study of such characters, readers gain self-awareness and may guard themselves against such natural tendencies. But what happens when a reader identifies with a villain and finds him or herself rooting for the success of a diabolical scheme? We will address these questions through the study of such texts as Othello, A Confederacy of Dunces, Citrus County, and A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.

World War I Semester I ½ credit
(offer at Gilman)
This course will examine the Great War through the prisms of literature and history. We will delve into the political, social, and cultural ramifications of American life during this period. Students will be expected to study and understand the personalities that shaped the events and ultimate outcome of this epic struggle as well as the actions and reactions of the American people. By the end of the course we will have examined: the use of propaganda by the American government; the depiction of the war in popular culture. (film, posters, theatre, pamphlets, poetry, literature); questioned the origins and nature of the war and its effects on American society; worked with primary and secondary materials to develop their own interpretations; researched and interpreted one aspect of the era of World War I in depth, reflected in an oral (and possibly artistic) presentation and a paper. (This course may be taken either for English or history credit.)

Writers of Revolt Semester I ½ credit
(offer at Gilman)
How writers respond to the conditions of their time will be the focus of this course. Readings will be drawn from British and American fiction and will include works by Melville, Chopin, Ellison, Steinbeck, Kesey, Orwell, and Waugh. In part, we will explore the role of the rebel and anti-hero in literature.