

# UPPER-DIVISION CLASSES

SPRING 2021



## BARUCH COLLEGE - ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

### **Naked English**

English 3001

Prof. F. Cioffi

(M,T,W,TH) 11:00AM-1:30PM

Winter session

This course will focus on English grammar--the form, variety, and extraordinary possibilities of the English sentence, from the simple to the advanced. This course will examine how sentences are put together, how they work, and how they carry power to persuade an audience and effect change. The course will discuss issues of correctness, grammaticality, common usage, and formal writing, and will help students generate correct, sophisticated, audience-appropriate prose. As you probably have guessed, this will be an intensive course, one that requires you to do quite a lot of work in the three weeks we meet. Our only text will be *One Day in the Life of the English Language: A Microcosmic Usage Handbook*, which I wrote specifically for this course at Baruch and which came out from Princeton University Press in 2015. This should be readily available in the college bookstore or in any Barnes and Noble store. I think you can get the book delivered to you the same day you order it, if you live anywhere in NYC. (I will return to you the \$2 royalties I get from the sale of each book, provided you buy a new copy.) Also I may supplement the text with handouts of various kinds.

**Survey of English Literature I**

English 3010

Prof. S. Swarbrick

Tue/ Thu 5:50-7:05 PM

This course examines the major texts of the early English literary canon. We will read about monsters and mothers in *Beowulf*, errant knights in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, boisterous and bawdy pilgrims in *The Canterbury Tales*, and mystical possession and sexual devotion in *The Book of Margery Kempe*. Working across literary genres (epic, romance, and lyric), we will encounter talking trees in Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, melancholy lovers in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, as well as visions of utopia in Bacon's *New Atlantis*. From there we will turn our focus to the metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century. Through close readings of John Donne, George Herbert, Richard Crashaw, Aemilia Lanyer, Andrew Marvell, and others, we will endeavor to explore how early modern debates about gender, subjectivity, politics, and religion shaped early modern verse. Lastly, we will read selections of John Milton's monumentally important epic poem, *Paradise Lost*, as the capstone to our journey.

**Survey of English Literature II**

English 3015

Prof. M. McGlynn

Mon/Wed 12:50-2:05 PM

William Blake famously wrote that "the road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom." In making a survey of the last 300 years of British literature, this class will consider notions of excess and scarcity, both material and literary. We will pay particular attention to inequality and precarity, via attention to the representations of work and leisure and how wealth and deprivation are depicted. Our focus on form will center around textual minimalism and textual excess, questioning the interrelation of form and content. We will begin with Swift's view on Irish mass poverty, read Blake's short poems of the Chimney Sweep, consider the role of poverty in *Wuthering Heights*, and look at British privilege through the eyes of Oscar Wilde. Our examination of the 20th century will cover Joyce, Woolf, Ishiguro, Barker, and others who talk about how social class is constructed and maintained. Throughout the term, we will pay particular attention to constructions of urban and rural, of rich and poor, of artist and worker, with special focus on domestic workers, snobbery, and accents.

**Survey of American Literature I**

English 3020

Prof. R. Rodriguez

Mon/Wed 5:50-7:05 PM

What if we consider the idea of America's greatness (often symbolized by the image of the "city upon a hill") from the perspective of the citizens of the city underground: the colonized, scapegoats, outlaws, slaves, women, immigrants, the poor, etc.? How might such a shift in viewpoint impact our understanding of the nation's founding concepts and ideals: utopia, community, citizenship, equality, fellowship,

democracy, liberty, and other life pursuits?

In addition to the survey's focus on texts and genres, our course will tap American literature's utopian vein and engage in a critical and imaginative assessment of writers invested in thinking about workable alternatives to the status quo. Among the writers considered will be Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca, Michel de Montaigne, William Bradford, Thomas Morton, Anne Hutchinson, Salem's witch hunters and their victims, Mary Rowlandson, Phillis Wheatley, William Apess, Edgar Allan Poe, David Walker, Herman Melville, John Rollin Ridge ("Yellowbird"), Walt Whitman, and Harriet Jacobs.

**Survey of American Literature**

II English 3025

Prof. F. Cioffi

Tue/Thu 2:30-3:25 PM

In this course we will read examples of canonical American literature from 1865 to the present. We will look at works by well-known writers such as Henry James, Mark Twain, Willa Cather, and Kate Chopin, as well as at works by somewhat less-known or celebrated authors such as Constance Fenimore Woolson, Gertrude Bonnin, and Charles Chesnutt. The text will be *The Concise Heath Anthology of American Literature Volume II, 1865 to the Present*, Second Edition, Paul Lauter [editor], ISBN 10: [1285080009](#) / ISBN 13: [9781285080000](#). In part the course (and the text I've chosen) seeks to expand the traditional canon of American literature, emphasizing the wide diversity of voices that make up our national literature. There will be in-class writing required during every class session, as well as outside-of-class assignments.

**Ethnic Literature: Asian**

**American Literature**

English 3032

Prof. E. Chou

Mon/Wed 12:50 -2:05 PM

This course surveys the contribution of Asian-American writers to American literature, with a particular focus on writers of two distinct periods: the 2000s and, moving backwards, the period right around World War II. Readings will include memoirs, novels, and short stories by authors such as Toshio Mori, Jhumpa Lahiri, Ha Jin, Gish Jen, John Okada. We will watch films of two of the novels. Through close analyses of books and film, we will discuss issues such as ethnic identity, acculturation, response to racism, and the relations among the different Asian groups.

**Topics in Politics and Literature**

English 3201

Prof. J. DiSalvo

Tue/Thu 4:10-5:25 PM

The poet Shelley made the extravagant claim that poets are “the unacknowledged legislators of the world,” that is, that literature had a powerful influence on politics. This will be an interdisciplinary class using 20th-21st Century fiction, memoirs, poetry, drama, political lyrics and films to explore literature and social protest. Non-fiction essays will provide political analyses and historical contexts. Those will be used to illuminate the literature, but literary themes will also lead to political & sociological discussions. We will begin with the original myth of the American Dream and American exceptionalism as celebrated by writers like Walt Whitman. Then we will look at works dealing with: empire and war, immigration, race, gender, and economic inequality and struggles to create social justice, including the Civil Rights, anti-war, and labor movements. We will also look at visions of social transformation and dreams of an alternative society created by the literary imagination. Some of the following works may be included: Mark Twain, memoirs by Civil Rights activist, Ann Moody and Vietnam war vet, William Ehrhart; fiction which may include Upton Sinclair, Jack London, Luis Rodriguez, *Music of the Mill*, *Gladkov*, *Cement*, and Marge Piercy, *Woman at the Edge of Time*, Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony*, and selections from Ann Rand, some poets might be Pablo Neruda, Muriel Rukeyser, Carolyn Forché, Amiri Baraka, the Last Poets, Langston Hughes, Marge Piercy, Allen Ginsberg, Robert Bly and Spoken Word, as well as drama by Bertold Brecht, and films.

**The Craft of Poetry: Form and Revision**

English 3645

Prof. Safia Jama

Tue/Thu 5:50-7:05 PM

Although this is the second of two poetry courses offered here, you may enroll in it without having had the other. Here you will be learning about form in poetry -- from the line to the stanza and beyond. You will be writing in freer forms and in set forms such as sonnets, villanelles, haiku. You will be learning how major poets, from William Shakespeare to Elizabeth Bishop, and from Robert Frost to Gwendolyn Brooks, write in such a way as to convey their thoughts and loves and passions. If you love good books, if you enjoy reading Shakespeare or Chaucer or Dickinson, if you have ever been moved or disturbed or frightened by the sounds of the language, if you have wanted to write but can't get started, this course is all yours.

You will be practicing revision, which is at the heart of writing poetry. You will be sharing your poems with the class in a workshop, and soon you will be sharing your feelings in ways you never thought possible. You will be learning to use language in ways that will convey your wishes, fears, and dreams.

The course will be taught on Zoom and on e-mail.

Your instructor, Grace Schulman, Distinguished Professor at Baruch, is a poet whose latest book of poems is *The Marble Bed* and whose latest prose memoir is *Strange Paradise* (both Turtle Point Press books).

**Advanced Essay Writing: Style and Styles in Prose**

ENG 3680

Prof. C. Mead

Mon/Wed 10:45-12:00PM

In this intensive writing course we will study and produce nonfiction of various types, including narrative nonfiction, long form magazine writing, memoir, literary journalism, and experimental writing. The work in this course will consist of assigned readings and class discussions, workshopping of student writing, individual conferences with the professor, and extensive drafting and revision.

**Lyrics as Literature: Stephen Sondheim: Examining His Works**

English 3685

Prof. J. Entes

(M,T,W,TH)9:30AM-12:00 PM

Winter Session

Some say Stephen Sondheim's shows sound spectacular; the lyrics scintillate. His splendid songs soar. He has reached a supreme status by his eight Tonys, eight Grammys, and a Pulitzer Prize. We will study his success and style. Specifically, we will see his shows and read Stephen Sondheim: Finishing the Hat: Collected Lyrics (1954-1981).

## **The Structure and the History of English**

English 3750

Prof. G. Dalgish

Mon/Wed 12:50-2:05 PM

What is misleading about advertising like "Campbell soup has one-third less salt"? How about "This car is engineered like no other car in the world"? What are characteristics of female speech that distinguish it from those typical of men's speech? How do we form new words in English, and where do they come from? How does a word get in the dictionary?

Are the "p" sounds in the words "pot," "spot" and "sop" really the same? Why can we say "whiten," "blacken," "redden," but not "\*bluen?" Why does "New Yorker" (= a person from New York) sound correct, while "\*Denverer" (= a person from Denver) does not? How many verb tenses are there in English: 3, 12, more, fewer?

Which should we say: "between you and I" or "between you and me"? How about: "She dated the man whom you ditched," or "She dated the man who you ditched"? Is there a rule in English not to end a sentence with a preposition? Or is that a rule up with which we should not put? English spelling seems different from Spanish, French, Italian, Russian, Swahili, etc. For instance, in those languages, "a" is almost always pronounced the same way. Yet in English "a" is pronounced differently in each of these words: lame, pad, father, tall, many, above. Why are those languages so regular and English irregular?

English once borrowed thousands of words from French. Did English therefore become a Romance language? There are many different dialects in English, some describable in terms of geography, some in terms of social class, some in terms of gender. Which dialects are "better"? Why do we say "That shelf is five feet *tall*," and not "\*That shelf is five feet *short*"? Which linguistic features help to make poetry effective? What does it mean when a person says "I know English"?

### **Holocaust Literature**

ENG 3810

Prof. E. Dreifus

Tue/Thu 5:50-7:05 PM

The tension between history and literature is perhaps never more evident than in attempts to reconstruct the history of the Holocaust and the destruction of European Jewry that accompanied it. Though often considered unspeakable, unimaginable, and unrepresentable, the Holocaust has given rise to an ever-growing body of literature, a tiny fraction of which we will read and discuss in this course. Our aims will be to establish a context for reading Holocaust fiction and nonfiction; to analyze a range of Holocaust-related texts including memoirs and testimonies, novels and short stories, poetry, and film; to understand their contributions to our understandings of history and literature; and to consider some of the major arguments around Holocaust fictions.

### **Topics in Literature: African American Drama**

ENG 3950

Prof. E. Richardson

Tue/Thu 2:30-3:45PM

"African American Drama" is a survey course on plays written by African Americans from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the present. This course includes canonical figures from the African American literary tradition as well as emerging contemporary playwrights. We will cover historical and cultural context as well as key theories about the purpose of black theater associated with each play.

Questions in this course include the following: To what extent is African American drama intended to advance black life by appealing to social and civil rights? How does African American drama contend with anti-black cultural production and racism? What kind of community or shared experience can African American drama create? When is African American drama for white audiences or black audiences and how might we recognize such intentionality in the aesthetics of the play?

Although this course is designed to introduce students to black drama in general, one of the key organizing themes and will be **the black family**. Using the black family and its extending themes as a touchstone, this class aims to connect black playwrights and put them in conversation in order to consider what makes and shapes the black dramatic tradition. More specific questions we may consider in regards to the organizing theme of family include the following: How does the representation of the black family speak to historical and cultural context of black life? What are the terms of social success in the domestic black drama? What constitutes the black family? How is black love

performed? Mourning? Joy?"

**Topics in Literature: Special  
Topics: The New Weird**  
ENG 3950  
Prof. M. Eatough  
Mon/Wed 4:10-5:25 PM

In 2002, the science fiction writer M. John Harrison coined the term “New Weird” to describe a new type of emerging fiction—a novel mix-up of genres that was one part fantasy, one part horror, and one part philosophical investigation into modern life. Drawing inspiration from the cosmic horror of H. P. Lovecraft, the late modernism of Franz Kafka, and the speculative fictions of Jorge Luis Borges, New Weird writers suggest that the best way to understand our present is not through a realistic representation of the world as it is, but rather through fantastic tales that seek to capture the feelings of alienation and absurdity attending modern life. New Weird novels thus present us with post-apocalyptic worlds where mystical shamans can invade people’s dreams; alternative realities where criminals have been symbiotically bonded to animals; and fantasy worlds where humans and arcane races live together in polluted ghettos crafted out of ancient, dead beasts.

Over the course of the semester, we will trace the emergence of the New Weird from its origins in science fiction and fantasy to its eventual migration into mainstream literary fiction and independent film. In doing so, we will examine how New Weird writers have exploited the imaginative resources of fantasy to explore a number of different social, cultural, and political issues, including climate change, race relations, the changing nature of work in a post-industrial society, the fate of socialism after the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the legacies of the avant-garde. We will also consider the notably \*global\* geography of the New Weird. Why has the New Weird become popular in so many different countries, from the US and France to South Africa and the Dominican Republic? What makes this genre so amenable to translation, and why has it proven capable of

describing so many different cultures? Possible texts include Jeff Vandermeer, *Annihilation*; China Miéville, *Perdido Street Station*; Yoko Tawada, *Memoirs of a Polar Bear*; Lauren Beukes, *Zoo City*; Antoine Volodine, *Radiant Terminus*; Rita Indiana, *Tentacle*; Helen Oyeyemi, *White Is for Witching*; the films *The Lobster* and *Sorry to Bother You*; and short stories by H. P. Lovecraft, Franz Kafka, and Samanta Schweblin.

**Advanced Editing**

ENG 3960

Prof. Lisa Blankenship

Tuesday 6:05-9:05 PM

This course will provide both theory behind the practice of editing and hands-on practice with revising and editing pieces for digital, multimedia platforms. Through multiple stages of drafting, we will workshop pieces of non-fiction prose, incorporating images and other multimedia elements. Ideal practicum for majors interested in editing positions in non-profit or industry, or for non-majors who want a supportive environment to hone writing and editing skills essential for contemporary work settings.

**Language, Identity, and Social Media**

ENG 3960

Prof. B. Schreiber

Mon/Wed 2:30-3:45 PM

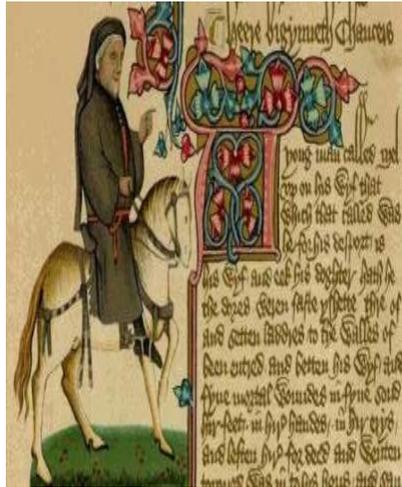
How do the language and images that we use online shape the way others see us – and the way we see ourselves? This special topics class will explore the role of language in online identity construction, considering personal social media use, corporate online identities, the emergence of online public spaces, and the use of different social media platforms around the world. In particular, the class will investigate how multilingual speakers select and use social media platforms, and how English as a lingua franca is connecting diverse communities. Students will learn tools and best practices for ethically collecting and analyzing social media data. For the final course project, each student will produce a case study examining how language is used to create community within a particular platform or genre.

**Chaucer: ON THE ROAD WITH THE CHIVALROUS, THE PIOUS AND THE 'NOT-SO-PIOUS'**

English 4120

Prof. C. Christoforatu

Mon/Wed 10:45-12:00 PM



Knights, merchants, rogues, and self-proclaimed saints share fascinating stories of their travels and travails in Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Written at the end of the fourteenth century, Chaucer's masterpiece contains a series of stories, ranging from the serious and pious to the unabashedly earthy and outrageously funny. The tales are told by a cast of memorable pilgrims, whose diversity spans the spectrum of late medieval society: a dashing knight and a manly monk, a drunken miller and a bookish young scholar, a dainty nun and a conniving pardoner, and a smart and domineering wife, who compete with one another, trading insults as well as tales.

In this class, we will explore the ways in which Chaucer experiments with late medieval literary genres—from chivalric romance and bawdy fabliau to from saints' lives and etiological myths—frustrating and playing upon the expectations of his audience. Against this diverse literary background, we will consider the dramatic context of the pilgrimage itself, asking questions about how the character of an individual pilgrim, or the interaction between pilgrims, further shapes our perceptions and expectations of the tales. The study of the pilgrims' quests (amorous, heroic and religious) will allow us to consider medieval individual's relationship to God, society and the foreign, and engage in comparative and interdisciplinary analysis. In piecing together Chaucer's portrait of late medieval society, we will discover how Chaucer illuminates and distorts social realities, rendering a colorful portrait of life that is strangely familiar to the modern reader.

To fully appreciate the influences that allowed medieval literary culture to evolve through exploration and adaptation, we will additionally have the opportunity to examine medieval manuscripts in digitized form and delve more meaningfully into the material culture of the late Middle Ages through a

possible visit to The Cloisters or the Metropolitan Museum of Art where various other artifacts such as relics, tapestries, mosaics, and ivories are on display.

**Shakespeare**

ENG 4140

Prof. L. Kolb

Tue/Thu 4:10-5:25 PM



In this course, students will read widely in Shakespeare's work, encountering his comedies (*The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Merchant of Venice*), histories (*Richard III*), tragedies (*Othello*, *King Lear*), and romances (*The Winter's Tale*). Over the course of the semester, students will become expert readers of Shakespeare: attentive to his plays' verse lines; to their diction, syntax, and innovative use of sound; and to the dramatist's virtuosic manipulation of figures of speech. Students will also develop a sense of Shakespeare's approach to political and social problems. Our thematic focus will be on Shakespeare's outsiders: those whose gender, race, or class status places them in a troubled relation to ordinary social life. We will explore the idea that Shakespeare is interested in systems that produce inequality—in the social, economic, marital, and political structures that disenfranchise some and empower others.

**Topics in Shakespeare: Infamy And Notoriety**

English 4145

Prof. A. Deutermann

Mon/Wed 2:30-3:45 PM

This course looks at Shakespeare's most notorious villains: the men and women who kill, who destroy, who make others go mad. These are often his most charismatic characters, the ones who are the most exciting to watch. We will talk about what makes these characters so electrifying and ask questions about the theatrical and ethical implications of their appeal. We will also use these figures to think about the cultural meaning of notoriety itself. What does it mean to root for (or against) the bad guy? What social functions does infamy serve, in Shakespeare's world and our own?

**Religion and Revolution In Renaissance English Literature: Renaissance Poetry**

English 4160

Prof. L. Silberman

Mon/Wed 2:30-3:45 PM

We will be reading a variety of poems of the English Renaissance, from the early experiments in the love sonnet by Wyatt and Surrey through John Milton's "Lycidas," the great pastoral elegy on the death of his classmate. We will read poems of wooing by such poets as John Donne, Andrew Marvell, and Katherine Phillips and poems about what it is like

to be in love by John Donne. We will read Renaissance satires, including some very funny parodies of Surrey's love poems by George Gascoigne. We will read religious lyrics by Donne and Herbert and translations of the Psalms by Sir Philip Sidney and Mary Sidney Herbert. We will also consider contrasting examples of genres particular to the Renaissance, such as the epyllion, a short, witty, erotic poem on a mythological subject, and the country house poem, which reflects on the grand houses of the rich and famous from the point of view of the not-so-rich and not-so-famous. Written work will consist of two critical essays, a midterm and a final.

**The Nineteenth-Century Novel**

English 4320

Prof. S. O'Toole

Tue/Thu 10:45-12:00 PM

This course will survey the novel as the dominant aesthetic form in nineteenth-century Britain, focusing on the development of realism in a selection of major novels by writers such as Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, the Brontës, and Oscar Wilde. We will examine intersections of the aesthetic and the social, particularly in the way nineteenth-century novels represented and affected aspects of modernity: the contradictory demands of "individuality," ideas of race and the consolidation of a capitalist Empire, class conflicts, the fracturing of gender roles, and polarizing definitions of sexuality. This class will proceed by short lecture, discussion, and student presentations in a blended synchronous and asynchronous format.

**Literature of Harlem  
Renaissance**

English 4545

Prof. S. Eversley

Tue/Thu 2:30-3:45 PM

The Harlem Renaissance, also associated with the "New Negro" era, was a cultural movement of Black artists and writers in the 1920 and 1930s. Harlem and its cultural creators enjoyed creative relationships and collaborations that extended across the United States and globally. The literature, art, and music associated with it transformed culture and politics by exploring themes such as migration and metropolitan life, primitivism and the avant-garde, diaspora and exile, passing and identity, sexuality, and the relation between modern art and folk tradition, jazz, and Black liberation. Some well-known artists, writers, and thinkers associated with the Harlem Renaissance are Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Jean Toomer, Claude McKay, Nella Larsen, Marita Bonner, Duke Ellington, Bessie Smith, and Marcus Garvey. Together, we will design a syllabus that inspires deep thinking and analysis; and for this capstone course, students will complete a class presentation that informs a final researched project.

**Mixed-Race Literature**

English 4560

Prof. R. Walker

Tue/Thu 4:10-5:25 PM

Literature written by and centering on people of mixed black and white descent have perennially been assimilated into the African American canon, much in the same way that biracial individuals have historically been classified as black in the U.S. Against this tendency, this course will examine some of the many fictions published by and about biracial people, taking seriously the particular racial perspective that they explore. We'll pay close attention to this literature's historical context, considering it in relation to such developments as Reconstruction, the Great Migration, the Harlem Renaissance, shifts in gender ideology, and court cases. Authors will include Charles Chesnutt, James Weldon Johnson, Nella Larsen, and others.

**Gothic Mysteries**

English 4740

Prof. C. Jordan

Mon/Wed 4:10-5:25 PM

Against a background of haunted castles, demonic predators, and victims who unconsciously collaborate in their own ruin, Gothic literature takes us on a journey into the dark recesses of the human psyche that fascinated Freud, and examines its insatiable appetite for danger and forbidden pleasure. Through psychoanalytical and feminist lens, we will explore Gothic stories by both men and women. We will see how Victorian medical attitudes towards the body forced the female writer of the Gothic novel to create erotically coded texts which psychologists are still unraveling today. If you like exotic settings, you will revel in Jean Rhys's Caribbean Gothic novel, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, about fatal passion, voodoo priestesses, sexual addiction, and mad Creole heiresses set in the lush islands of Jamaica and Dominica. You will love Bram Stoker's nineteenth century masterpiece of voluptuous terror, *Dracula*, which changed the way we view vampires forever. Stoker transformed the traditional emaciated vampire into a tantalizingly dangerous predator who provides his victims with a taste of ecstasy before luring them into the world of the damned. Readings will include Mary Shelley's masterpiece of monstrous creation, *Frankenstein*, Charlotte Bronte's multi-layered erotically coded novel, *Jane Eyre*, and Nikolai Gogol's stories of shape-changing goddesses set in the exquisite haunting landscape of Russia. The otherworldly beauty of these goddesses functions as an irresistible drug for the vulnerable men they lure into their glittering net.

**Writing With Data: Data and  
Writing Toward Social  
Change**

ENG 4950

Prof. D. Libertz

Mon/Wed 9:05-10:20

“Data is the new oil” has been a ubiquitous metaphor over the past 15 years, used to describe data as a resource for innovation in technology, greater access to knowledge, and an opportunity to accumulate wealth. Oil, though, has a mixed history as far as societal benefits go (e.g., imperialism, war, global warming). This course explores the full potential of the “oil” metaphor by asking critical questions of data in our contemporary moment, such as: What counts as “data”? By whom? Are data “neutral”? How do various disciplines and industries create knowledge and wealth through data? What is the range of possibilities to communicate with data? What are important epistemological and rhetorical considerations at all stages of the lifecycle of data (e.g., collection, cleaning, analysis, interpretation, communication)? What is the “status quo” of data and how does that exclude marginalized people like women, people of color, and LGBTQ folks? In our major project for the semester, we will attempt to compose ethically sound and justice-oriented stories and arguments driven by our critical orientation toward publicly available datasets (or, data we collect, if a project calls for it).