

TERM: Spring 2026

COURSE NUMBER & CATEGORY: ENGL 6602: Seminar in a Genre

COURSE TITLE: Seriously Funny: Satire from Swift to South Park

SECTION TIMES/DAYS: W 4:30-7:00 pm

INSTRUCTOR: Alexandra Neel

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS:

This seminar will first examine the golden age of satire, exploring Jonathan Swift's masterwork *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) and his send up of the emergent discourse of political economy in his "Modest Proposal" (1729)." After covering twentieth-century satire in works such as *Animal Farm* (1945) and *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1965), we'll turn to contemporary satire where we're witnessing a renaissance of the mode in films such as *Get Out* (2017) and the political satire of *South Park*. The etymology of satire is "full dish" and, in adopting that spirit, we'll be looking at how authors dish out critiques of our society through satirical means: humor, exaggeration, irony, dark wit, outrage, and laughter. How does laughter invite an audience in? How does it allow us to say unspeakable things? Students will learn about the history and theory of the satiric model.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students will acquire the technical and critical vocabulary necessary to discuss and distinguish satire, parody, burlesque, pastiche, etc.

In their written work on these texts, students will hone their critical and analytical skills.

In writing a final research paper, students will learn how to locate, evaluate, and incorporate scholarly materials into their own critical writing.

CLASS LEVEL RESTRICTION:

Graduate Only

RECOMMENDED/PREREQUISITES:

N/A

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