

TERM: Fall 2025

COURSE NUMBER & CATEGORY: ENGL 6998.01

COURSE TITLE: Reading the Ocean

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

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Miskolcze

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS:

The oceans have profoundly shaped human history and artistic expressions, serving as both a literal and metaphorical conduit for exploration, trade, and cultural exchange. From ancient seafaring civilizations like the Phoenicians and Polynesians to the Age of Exploration, the oceans have been central to cultures around the globe. In literature, the vast and mysterious nature of the sea has inspired countless works, symbolizing everything from the unknown and the sublime to freedom and escape. Yet studying representations of oceans has only recently been foregrounded by oceanic critics as crucial to our socially and ecologically connected histories and futures. If we are to heed the climate crisis, we need to understand and evaluate the stories we tell about the sea so that we can be agents for future change. This class delves into the emergent and multi-disciplinary fields of oceanic studies and blue humanities as we examine fiction and films by diverse authors who portray the ocean, its creatures, and humanity's relationship with the watery world of the sea.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students will learn about terms and concepts related to oceanic literature, reading methodologies, and eco-criticism.

- *Students will examine the ways that colonial and capitalist forces in pre-modern and modern eras fostered an estranged relationship between the human and the other-than-human
- *Students will practice engaging with differing hydrological perspectives in literature and film, comparing and contrasting the ways particular global regions read the oceanic.
- *Students will critically engage primary and secondary sources as they compose compare/contrast essays, annotated bibliographies, presentations and reading posts.
- *Students will learn how to compose public-facing scholarship with a final digital project.
- *Students will synthesize theories, contexts and criticism when leading discussions and composing written assignments

CLASS LEVEL RESTRICTION:

Graduate Only

RECOMMENDED/PREREQUISITES:

N/A

COURSE ATTRIBUTES:

- Critical Methodology
- Contemporary Critical Theory
- Major Writer / Genre / Literary Period
- Literature Elective
- Theory Elective
- Creative Writing Seminar
- Rhetoric / Composition Theory and Practice
- Linguistics OR Reading Theory