

FIRST-YEAR WRITING

417 Barnard Hall
212-854-2116

Department Manager: Julissa Acosta
Department Assistant: Miriam Kumaradoss-Hohausen

Mission

First-Year Writing (FYW) courses invite students into the vibrant scholarly life of the college. Working in small, discussion-based seminar classes over the course of one semester, we read challenging literary texts and critical scholarship, helping students to develop fundamental skills in analysis and academic writing that allow them to take their place in vitally important scholarly conversations. Students may choose from a variety of special topics that focus on a particular literary tradition, theme, or phenomenon (see course descriptions for details).

Student Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this one-semester course should be able to:

- closely analyze evidence to develop persuasive claims
- develop claims into sophisticated, consequential ideas
- communicate ideas clearly through well-organized, lucid writing
- develop skills in critical reading and academic writing that transfer to courses across the curriculum
- conduct interdisciplinary research to ground literary works in different contexts (historical, theoretical, etc.)
- document sources and incorporate scholarship into original analytical arguments
- avoid plagiarism and other academic violations of Barnard's Honor Code
- gain confidence in speaking as well as writing skills in a small seminar setting

2024-25 Faculty

Director

Wendy Schor-Haim (Senior Lecturer in English)

Associate Director

Cecelia Lie-Spahn (Lecturer in English; Director, First-Year Writing Workshop; Associate Director, First-Year Writing Workshop Program)

Senior Lecturers

Benjamin Breyer
Alexandra Watson (Associate Director, Writing Program)

Lecturers

Meredith Benjamin
Vrinda Condillac (Interim Co-Director, First-Year Seminar Program)
Andrew Lynn
Penelope Meyers Usher
Duygu Oya Ula

Term Assistant Professor

Nathan Gorelick (Term Assistant Professor in English)

Term Lecturers

Quincy Jones
Francesca Ochoa

Michael Shelichach
Elizabeth Weybright

Post-Doctoral Fellow

Andrew Ragni

Adjunct Associates

Sam Davis
Matt Rossi

Adjunct Lecturers

Emily Austin
Sarah Schwartz

Every Barnard first-year student is required to take a First-Year Writing course during their first or second semester at Barnard.

Transfer students who did not pass a satisfactory course at their previous institution are not required to take First-Year Writing, but must take ENGL BC3103 THE ART OF THE ESSAY or ENGL BC3104 THE ART OF THE ESSAY or a 3-point literature course (not a creative writing course) from the Barnard English department offerings.

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First-Year Writing: Critical Conversations

First-Year Writing (FYW) courses invite students into the vibrant scholarly life of the college. Working in small, discussion-based seminar classes over the course of one semester, we read challenging literary texts and critical scholarship, helping students to develop fundamental skills in analysis and academic writing that allow them to take their place in vitally important scholarly conversations. Students may choose from a variety of special topics that focus on a particular literary tradition, theme, or phenomenon (see course descriptions for details).

A "critical conversation" is a conversation about ideas. It is sophisticated and thoughtful rather than one-sided and simplistic; it's not about finding one right answer but rather about closely analyzing all of the evidence at hand and discovering something meaningful. By communicating what you discover clearly and cogently, you add to the broader scholarly conversation. When engaged in a critical conversation with other scholars, you consider their ideas in ways that help you develop your own thinking, rather than merely agreeing or disagreeing with what others have to say. The critical reading, discussion, and academic writing skills we focus on in First-Year Writing provide a foundation that crosses disciplinary boundaries and will help you in all of your courses.

FYWB BC1106 Seeing, Surveilling, and Performing. 3.00 points.

In this course, we will study the way culture influences how we make sense of what we see. We will examine how power is exercised by making people feel as though they are always being seen, how this surveillance polices the way gender, race, class, and sexuality are expressed, and how people perform their identities to reinforce or push back against this policing. Literary texts will include *Passing* by Nella Larsen, "The Husband Stitch" by Carmen Maria Machado, *Fantomina* by Eliza Haywood, and the films *Paris is Burning* and *Portrait of a Lady on Fire*. Secondary texts will include John Berger, Talia Bettcher, Judith Butler, W.E.B. Dubois, Frantz Fanon, Michel Foucault, Jack Halberstam, bell hooks, Audre Lorde, and Laura Mulvey

FYWB BC1109 Wild Tongues. 3.00 points.

In this course, we'll examine storytelling and language through the lens of gender. How are constructions of gender used to police what kinds of stories are told, who can tell them, and who is believed? What forms and strategies of narration are available and to whom? Our focus on tongues—both linguistic and anatomical—allows us to ask questions about the forms that language takes and the relationship of narrations and language to the body. How have women engaged and re-deployed existing myths and narratives? How is the self both constructed and policed through narratives of gender, race, class, sexuality, family? In our analyses, we'll work to challenge fixed or binary understandings of gender and power by asking how these writers engage and challenge the various ways in which the category of "women" is constructed within culture. Readings are subject to change but may include *The Hymn to Demeter*, selections from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, selected poems by Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, Yvette Christiansë's *Castaway*, and/or selections from Cherrie Moraga's *Loving in the War Years* and Theresa Hak Kyung Cha's *Dictee* and critical conversation texts by authors including Gloria Anzaldúa, Sara Ahmed, and Audre Lorde

FYWB BC1113 BODIES AND DESIRES. 3.00 points.

In this First-Year Writing course, we'll examine a series of questions centered on bodies and desires. How is the body both constructed and policed through narratives of gender, race, class, and sexuality? How are bodies and desire mediated through and represented in language? We'll consider how bodies become not just sites of objectification or of power but also of pleasure. We'll think about the politics of respectability, in questioning who can be a subject, rather than object, of desire. In our analyses, we'll work to challenge fixed or binary understandings of gender and power. Readings are subject to change but may include: Nella Larsen's *Passing*, Eliza Haywood's *Fantomina*, short stories by Luisa Valenzuela, Carmen Maria Machado and/or ir'ene lara Silva, poems by Sally Wen Mao and Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz and conversation texts by Audre Lorde, Patricia Hill Collins, bell hooks, Sara Ahmed, John Berger, and/or Judith Butler

Spring 2025: FYWB BC1113

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYWB 1113	001/00200	T Th 10:10am - 11:25am 318 Milbank Hall	Meredith Benjamin	3.00	15/15
FYWB 1113	002/00813	T Th 1:10pm - 2:25pm 101a Barnard Hall	Meredith Benjamin	3.00	15/15

FYWB BC1114 WOMEN OF COLOR IN SPECULATIVE LITERATURE. 3.00 points.

"The Future is Female" except in science fiction, where it still looks pretty white and male. What happens when women of color take on such tropes as space exploration, cybernetics, superpowers, and the end of the world? How can women of color change the way we not only think of the future, but think of the present as well? In this class we'll look at how speculative literature looks at the intersections of race, gender, class, sexuality, technology, and environmental concerns. Readings will include work from such authors as Octavia Butler, Franny Choi, Sam Chanse, G Willow Wilson, and Tananarive Due with potential critical readings from Lisa Yaszek, Charlotte E Howell, and bell hooks

Spring 2025: FYWB BC1114

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYWB 1114	001/00201	T Th 2:40pm - 3:55pm 403 Barnard Hall	Quincy Jones	3.00	15/15
FYWB 1114	002/00202	M W 4:10pm - 5:25pm 227 Milbank Hall	Quincy Jones	3.00	15/15

FYWB BC1115 MODERNITY. 3.00 points.

"All that is solid melts into air." So wrote Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in 1848, registering the astonishing pace with which daily life was being transformed around them. For them, and for many of their contemporaries, the central feature of the modern world was its ceaseless change. Under the pressure of political, scientific, and economic revolutions, traditional ways of living and thinking might disappear almost overnight, to be replaced not by a new order but instead with an unending experience of instability and dislocation. This course reads a set of writers who both respond to and participate in that process of constant transformation – in what we have learned to call modernity. Should culture try to protect timeless values from the shock effects of modernization? Or should it find, in change, an opportunity for new forms of life and new styles of expression? If – as Marx and Engels did – we imagine modernity as a distinctively European event, how might writers outside of Europe make use of and respond to a modernity that excludes them? Is modernity something that happened, and is over – or are we today still swept up in it? Readings may include: literature from Milton, Wordsworth, Shelley, Douglass, Woolf, Kincaid; philosophy and criticism from Montaigne, Kant, Marx, Weber, Du Bois, Kracauer, Chakrabarty

FYWB BC1121 LIVES IN TRANSLATION. 3.00 points.

This class focuses on the theme of translation and what happens when texts and people cross national, cultural, linguistic, racial or gendered borders. Through our classroom discussions and essays, we will explore the following questions: Why or how do texts lend themselves to or resist translation? How do encounters with dominant discourses necessitate acts of self-translation or resistance to translation, especially for people of color, immigrants or queer communities? How do narratives (both fictional and personal) change when translated across cultures and time to fit with local discourses? What is the role of the translator in these acts of remaking? Drawing on postcolonial and translation theory, we will consider how writers have pushed back against dominant narratives through texts that cross and complicate linguistic, cultural and national borders. Readings are subject to change but will likely include a selection from following: literary texts by James Baldwin, Sappho, Marjane Satrapi, Ocean Vuong, Fatimah Asghar, Irena Klepfisz, as well as various English translations of the 1001 Nights; and scholarly texts by Gloria Anzaldúa, Edward Said, bell hooks, Friedrich Schleiermacher and Jorge Luis Borges. Course costs will not exceed \$20; access to books can also be made available to students who need them

FYWB BC1123 WRITING AND THE ENVIRONMENT. 3.00 points.

Beginning with the Popol Vuh, the Mayan myth of creation, which records the first contact with the Spanish conquistadors about 1555, we will explore the history of American nature writing up to the present, with particular attention to problems of environmental justice. Description and interpretation of nature has shaped artistic representation from the very beginning of human history, and we will read both texts and images from the Americas in relation to selected European texts: from Crèvecoeur's "Letters from an American Farmer" (1765) to excerpts from Wordsworth's "Prelude" in England (1798), which in turn influenced Emerson's essay "Nature" (1836) and Thoreau's writing in *Walden* and "Civil Disobedience" (1851). We will also consider both texts and contexts from John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939); Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962); John McPhee's *Encounters with the Archdruid* (1971); and international reports and organizations including the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and COP28. Engaging with activist organizations, we will both write and analyze the impact of contemporary environmental journalism such as Bill McKibben's *The End of Nature*, Liz Kolbert's *The Sixth Extinction*, and Alexis Pauline Gumbs, *Undrowned: Black Feminist Lessons from Marine Mammals*

FYWB BC1124 HAUNTED AMERICAS. 3.00 points.

In this course, we will encounter ghosts and hauntings in literature from the Americas, primarily from Latin American and Caribbean writers. These ghosts expose something hidden in the past and pull dark secrets into the light. We will think about haunting not just as a supernatural experience, but as a mechanism that reveals layers of history and unearths long buried injustices. A few of the characters we will meet are: A Cuban exile living in Miami who is haunted by the life he left behind; a teenager in Argentina who explores her queer identity and confronts the ghosts of the state violence; a General accused of genocide who defends his innocence, though the ghosts in his home say otherwise. The ghosts in these stories force the characters to reckon with, or fall prey to, legacies of colonialism, war, and migration. Readings include literary works by Mariana Enriquez, Edwidge Danticat, Carlos Fuentes, Jean Rhys, Ana Menéndez, and others

Spring 2025: FYWB BC1124

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYWB 1124	001/00887	T Th 1:10pm - 2:25pm 227 Milbank Hall	Francesca Austin Ochoa	3.00	15/15
FYWB 1124	002/00888	T Th 5:40pm - 6:55pm 407 Barnard Hall	Francesca Austin Ochoa	3.00	15/15

FYWB BC1126 READING THE FUTURE. 3.00 points.

How do we think about the future? Why do we develop the hopes and fears that we do? How do present conditions and discourses inform, influence, or limit our senses of personal and political possibility? In this section of First-Year Writing, we will explore conceptions of the future in 19th through 21st-century literary fiction. We will begin by close reading 20th-century short stories that evoke hopes and fears for the future on individual, social, and global scales. We will then turn to H.G. Wells' classic novella *The Time Machine* and place its portrayal of the future in the context of late Victorian science and socioeconomics. Finally, we will consider how contemporary literature reflects and responds to the accelerating climate crisis, and explore fiction's role in helping us apprehend the potential for radical environmental disruption

Spring 2025: FYWB BC1126

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYWB 1126	001/00204	M W 6:10pm - 7:25pm 404 Barnard Hall	Michael Shelichach	3.00	15/15

FYWB BC1128 FASHION AND FABRIC. 3.00 points.

Clothing is a part of everyone's daily life, and what one wears is often considered to be an expression of individuality. Yet, while a wardrobe may involve deeply personal choices, the textiles available to us and the styles we gravitate toward can also reflect our historical moment. Like other art forms, fashion is political, and its materials—textiles—have historically been at the heart of global trade. In this course, we will ask: what can literature show us about cultural and political histories of fashion trends and the textile industry? Just as importantly, how can understanding historical context for the textiles, needlecrafts, and garments that appear in the pages of a story offer insights into character, setting, and theme? As a class, we will consider some of the ways fashion and the global circulation of textile goods have been bound up in relationships between nations and empires as well as relationships between individuals, society, and the environment. Readings are subject to change but may include fiction by Virginia Woolf, Ntozake Shange, Elizabeth Gaskell, Oscar Wilde, Jane Austen, and Elizabeth Inchbald. Other readings will draw upon fashion theory and scholarship on textile history by scholars such as Lisa Lowe, Hilary Davidson, Monica Miller, Suchitra Choudhury, Amber Butchart, and others. We will also consider costuming as a part of worldbuilding and character development in film and television examples such as *Bridgerton*, and we will put our discussions of historical text(ile)s into conversation with recent work in fashion activism

Spring 2025: FYWB BC1128

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYWB 1128	001/00205	T Th 11:40am - 12:55pm 404 Barnard Hall	Elizabeth Weybright	3.00	15/15
FYWB 1128	002/00206	T Th 1:10pm - 2:25pm 405 Barnard Hall	Elizabeth Weybright	3.00	14/15

FYWB BC1129 SPECULATING THE PAST. 3.00 points.

Recent works as diverse as *The New York Times's Overlooked Project* and Netflix's *Bridgerton* raise questions about what records we keep, how we narrate history, and the factors that determine what stories we can tell. In this class, we will probe these questions by reading literary works that turn to a speculative mode to make sense of history, past and present. As we enter the critical conversation about the historical record, we will explore how authority and value are assigned to different texts and accounts. In so doing, we will also develop our ability to read texts' and documents' own theorizations of truth and fact. Readings may include work by Virginia Woolf, Marlene NourbeSe Philip, Carmen Maria Machado, Adrienne Rich, and N.K. Jemisin alongside critical texts by Saidiya Hartman, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, and others. Course costs will not exceed \$15

Spring 2025: FYWB BC1129

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYWB 1129	001/00208	M W 4:10pm - 5:25pm 404 Barnard Hall	Sarah Schwartz	3.00	13/15

FYWB BC1130 TALKING BACK. 3.00 points.

Inspired by bell hooks's assertion that "moving from silence to speech is for the oppressed...a gesture of defiance that heals," we read and write with attention to the power dynamics of speech and silence, of talking and talking back. Our literary and critical texts demand attention to the ways in which power shapes narrative, and narrative shapes power. We will think especially about how the oppressed, the colonized, the exploited, speak to and against erasure; and also how the marginalized create community by talking and talking back. The readings include literary works by Nella Larsen, Jamaica Kincaid, Toni Morrison, and Layli Long Soldier; and critical works by Frantz Fanon, Judith Butler, bell hooks, and others. The only book length work you will need is Toni Morrison's *Jazz* (around \$15 new)

FYWB BC1132 ATTENTION!. 3.00 points.

Attention is the foundation of investigation, action, and intention. It means concentration and deliberation. It can also mean distraction and confusion. Quietly reading a difficult work of literature, puzzling over a math problem, revising a paper for class, or cooking an elaborate meal are forms of attention. So is endlessly scrolling through social media, binge-watching a television series, or strolling aimlessly through the city. Where and how we use our attention is the foundation, the bedrock, of nearly everything we think and do. It is therefore unsurprising that gathering and directing our attention is also an enormous, lucrative industry. In this course we will study the science and philosophy of attention alongside the history of the "attention economy" and evolving techniques and technologies of attention harvesting. We will explore these subjects while reflecting upon and writing about our own habits of paying attention. By paying attention to attention, we will nurture a brighter awareness of the many interests vying for our time, mental engagement, money, our very lives, and of our abilities to scrutinize, critically examine, or resist our entrapment within the modern attention industry

FYWB BC1135 CONTESTED TRUTHS: MEMORY, AUTHORITY AND HISTORY. 3.00 points.

This class examines the ways that a historical event can be remembered and described differently by direct participants, and how personal biases, such as race, gender and class, affect the process of recollection and narration. Some of the texts that we will read and discuss include Sara Collins' *The Confessions of Fannie Langton*, Ian McEwan's *Atonement*, and Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse Five*, among others. Our analysis of these texts will be augmented by theoretical works drawn from psychology, literary studies and trauma studies

Spring 2025: FYWB BC1135

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYWB 1135	001/00559	M W 8:40am - 9:55am 214 Milbank Hall	Benjamin Breyer	3.00	15/15

FYWB BC1136 TO UPEND A WORLD: ABOLITIONIST POETICS. 3.00 points.

In our class we will discuss abolition as a name for a set of imaginings that call for complete and total eradication of systems ("Worlds") that perpetuate collective harms. We will think about how capitalism, colonialism, and white supremacy limit our imaginations, and how we can think in ways that remake our world. Students will read essays by Ruth Wilson Gilmore, Pheng Cheah, Denise F. DaSilva, Edouard Glissant, and Christina Sharpe, and will trouble received readings of significant literary texts through abolitionist lenses to discern a range of liberatory strategies in the poetry, literary nonfiction, and fiction of writers including Audre Lorde, W.E.B. DuBois, James Baldwin, Lucille Clifton, M Nourbese Philip, Robin Coste Lewis, Etheridge Knight, Randall Horton, dg nanouk okpik, and Jackie Wang. As a class, students will discuss and consider these writers', as well as their own, interventions in the context of literature's world-making power. (*Readings subject to change)

Spring 2025: FYWB BC1136

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYWB 1136	001/00209	T Th 11:40am - 12:55pm 912 Milstein Center	Joey De Jesus	3.00	11/15

FYWB BC1137 THE TEENAGE STRANGE. 3.00 points.

Teenagers inhabit a strange land: in exile from childhood, still immigrating to adulthood. How have different writers mapped the liminal territory of the teenage experience? In this class, we will step away from the rich tradition of realistic Coming-of-Age narratives and explore how genre frameworks—including speculative, horror, fairy tale, gothic, and quest traditions—have been used to illuminate the Teenage Strange. How have writers used the strangeness of genre to render this slice of time? How does genre capture the teenage intersection between public and private inquiry—between larger questions about the world, and more private questions about the self? How does genre construct questions about fear, desire, rage, shame, power, culture, and love? How does it deconstruct reality so it can be seen, investigated, and felt? Readings may include work by Octavia Butler, A.S. King, Angela Carter, Carmen Maria Machado, Shirley Jackson, Joan He, Francesca Lia Block, Kelly Link, Viktor Shklovsky, Ursula K. LeGuin, Akwaeke Emezi, and others

Spring 2025: FYWB BC1137

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYWB 1137	001/00210	T Th 11:40am - 12:55pm 306 Milbank Hall	Emily Austin	3.00	15/15

FYWB BC1138 LETTERS. 3.00 points.

Dear student: I write to you, who now read these words. Or, perhaps, I don't: perhaps I never had you in mind at all; perhaps you are just someone passing by, who has taken these words as though meant for yourself. This course examines how writers have made use of the privacy of letters in their public writing. What happens when we address our written words to a particular other? How, on the other hand, do we read words meant for someone else? What intimacies does the letter form make possible, or violate? And what might the special case of the letter have to tell us about writing in general? Objects in the course may include: fiction by Goethe, DeWitt, Diderot, Poe, West; epistolary poems by Ovid, Dickinson, Rankine, Shockley; paintings of letter-reading by Vermeer and Greuze; letter-memoirs by Baldwin and Vuong; criticism and theory by Althusser, Barthes, Benveniste, Fried, Howe, Jackson, Reed

Spring 2025: FYWB BC1138

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYWB 1138	001/00211	T Th 10:10am - 11:25am 113 Milstein Center	Andrew Lynn	3.00	15/15

FYWB BC1139 COLONIALISM, IMPERIALISM, AND SEXUALITY. 3.00 points.

This course considers the abundance of European literature and travel writing that detail the encounter between the colonizer and colonized. These narratives deploy stereotypes to characterize non-European geographies and people as excessively sensual and cast outside the progressive flow of time, waiting to be discovered by the white traveler. Edward Said termed this projected fantasy of sexual decadence “Orientalism,” or the cultural/historical reduction of “the East” into a stockpile of recognizable tropes. This reduction serves an ideological goal: to portray the North/West as the intellectual/cultural elite, and the South/East as the mere object of the former’s cataloguing fetish. This First-Year Writing course interrogates canonical texts of nineteenth- and twentieth-century European literature and travel writing by formulating questions about the erotic dimension of empires, with Said’s critical intervention as our guide. How is sexuality configured in colonial writing? What do these configurations tell us about the ideological map superimposed over the colony and the metropole? How do these constructions of sexuality continue to proliferate in our contemporary moment, and for what political ends?

FYWB BC1140 FEMINIST FAIRYTALES. 3.00 points.

In this class we will read and discuss feminist fairy tales: adaptations of classic tales and newly-imagined stories which—rather than promising a simple and tidy “happily ever after”—privilege female agency and offer up critiques of patriarchal structures. In dialog with texts that center women and other intersecting identities, we will talk about colorism, sexuality, desire, misogyny, motherhood, and more. Analyzing how these texts unmask and challenge various forms of oppression, we will explore how and why the magical and often didactic nature of the fairy tale genre lends itself to thinking critically about our current world and to envisioning more equitable futures. Readings include literary texts by Ovid, Julia Alvarez, Olga Broumas, Charles Perrault, Luisa Valenzuela, Nalo Hopkinson, Jeanette Winterson, Amal El-Mohtar, and Kelly Link. In dialog with these literary texts, we will also engage with various theoretical texts and perspectives; with film (Georges Méliès and Disney’s *Frozen*); with artwork; and with music (Taylor Swift)

Spring 2025: FYWB BC1140

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYWB 1140	001/00212	M W 10:10am - 11:25am 404 Barnard Hall	Penelope Usher	3.00	15/15
FYWB 1140	002/00213	M W 11:40am - 12:55pm 404 Barnard Hall	Penelope Usher	3.00	15/15

First-Year Writing Workshop

First-Year Writing (FYW) Workshop is a four-credit course designed for students who feel they would benefit from extra preparation for the critical reading and writing that you will do at Barnard. FYW and FYW Workshop are equally rigorous – both courses have the same critical reading and writing goals, and both courses satisfy your First-Year Writing requirement. FYW Workshop, however, meets 3 days per week instead of 2; it is worth 4 credits instead of 3; and the class sizes are smaller. NOTE: FYW Workshop is only offered in the Fall (not in the Spring).

[Read about students' experiences in FYW Workshop here.](#)

FYWB BC1500 (WORKSHOP) READING THE BODY. 4.00 points.

In this course, we’ll think of the body as a text we can read—one that both represents and creates intersections between the body, science, and identity. We’ll read literary texts that reveal how scientific authority gets mapped onto the body and embedded in ideas of race, gender, class, sexuality, family, and nation; we’ll also analyze how writers in turn investigate and play with these scientific scripts. How do literary depictions of the body both represent and resist scientific authority? What do they teach us about the “factness” and fluidity of identity and belonging? Readings are subject to change, but will likely include literature by Ovid, Octavia Butler, Amy Bonnaffons, Isabel Allende, and Nella Larsen, as well as select texts from feminist science studies, critical race studies, and queer theory

FYWB BC1506 (WORKSHOP) HAUNTED AMERICAS. 4.00 points.

In this course, we will encounter ghosts and hauntings in the fiction of Latin American and Caribbean writers. A Cuban exile is haunted by the life he left behind; a teenager in Argentina explores her queer identity and confronts the ghosts of state violence; a young woman courts colonial power and becomes a ghost herself. We will look to theories of hauntology to investigate the ways in which the characters in these stories reckon with, or fall prey to, legacies of colonialism, war, and migration. Readings may include literary works by Mariana Enriquez, Edwidge Danticat, Daniel Alarcón, Jean Rhys, and Ana Menéndez

FYWB BC1507 (WORKSHOP) FEMINIST FAIRYTALES. 4.00 points.

In this class we will read and discuss feminist fairy tales: adaptations of classic tales and newly-imagined stories which—rather than promising a simple and tidy “happily ever after”—privilege female agency and offer up critiques of patriarchal structures. In dialog with texts that center women and other intersecting identities, we will talk about colorism, colonialism, sexuality, desire, misogyny, motherhood, and more. Analyzing how these texts unmask and challenge various forms of oppression, we will explore how and why the magical and often didactic nature of the fairy tale genre lends itself to thinking critically about our current world and to envisioning more equitable futures. Readings, subject to change, include texts by Nalo Hopkinson, Carmen Maria Machado, Luisa Valenzuela, Suniti Namjoshi, Helen Oyeyemi, and Kelly Link