

**EIU English Studies Camp
Session Offerings for 2017**

S1 – Shakespeare in His Time and Ours

We will explore two or three plays in depth, in Shakespeare's time and in our own. We will engage with Shakespeare's world, literary contexts, and language. We will also examine how Shakespeare's works are being continually made new in our culture and others'. We will study performance via film and student enactments of key scenes. Students who wish will perform (or help craft the performances) of their scenes for the camp's closing celebration.

S2 - A Novel Idea: How to Get Started, Keep Writing, & Learn about the Book-Publishing Biz

Intended for aspiring novelists, this session will help students tackle large-scale writing projects. From lessons on writing, revising, and marketing strategies to honest discussion about the publishing industry and trends in fiction writing, this course will arm writers with information about how a novel actually reaches readers in this current era.

S3 - Monsters Inc.

Monsters have always been with us. From cave paintings and folklore to our own high-tech renditions of monsters, humans and monsters have had a long, dysfunctional relationship. So where do they come from? Besides giving us nightmares and the creepy crawlies, do monsters serve some kind of role in culture? In this session, we will try to answer these questions (and others) by looking at how various academic fields have studied monsters—fields such as English, psychology, history, sociology, and even cognitive studies. (You might be surprised at what they have found.) During our week of study, we will also of course survey a menagerie of monsters—from classic, supernatural monsters (such as vampires, werewolves, and changelings) to monsters of cloning and biomedicine, to monsters of technology or monsters from a different world.

S4 - Reading and Writing Historical Fiction

In this course we will explore the genre of historical fiction, its history, and some of the theories that try to explain its popularity. We will also read about and practice the kind of research and thinking that writers of historical fiction do. Students will be asked to read one historical novel in advance, and we will also read excerpts from several others. Students will produce their own short historical fictions (either short stories or fragments that might be part of longer works).

S5 - Cyberpunk Fiction and Film

Cyberpunk is a subgenre of science fiction mostly from the 1980s which speculated about how new technologies, particularly computer technologies, would be integrated into our lives. Some examples depict the ways that new technologies encroach on the human body, while others imagine different ways that virtual realities might link in with our minds. While some of the stories and films seem dated or even quaint by today's standards, they still raise fascinating questions about what it means to be human and where machines end and we begin. We'll read stories by writers like William Gibson, Phillip K. Dick, James L. Tiptree, Jr., Maureen McHugh and Ursula LeGuin and watch films such as *Blade Runner*, *The Matrix*, and *eXitenZ*.

S6 - Spoken Word: Writing and Performing Poetry

Poetry is about sound and rhythm, and about creating a picture with words that makes an audience enter the world or moment an author is describing in order to feel as they do. Images in a poem make a listener/reader see, hear, touch. In this class students will read and listen to poems written and performed by published poets in order to gain an idea of the kinds of poems being performed today. As we talk about

these poems, students will think about which poems speak to them, and why, as they strive to develop a stronger sense of voice in their own work. Students will workshop their poetry with classmates and perform at least one piece at a public performance.

S7 – Hands-On Reading Experiences: Exploring Pre-Print Bookmaking

An experience for true book lovers, this session examines how books were made before the age of printing, a period when each book was a unique piece. We will investigate the physical aspects of medieval books, handwriting in the 14th century, page design, page decoration, debatable problems in texts, even mistakes and bloopers. Now that medieval manuscripts are available in digital versions, we can experience them almost as closely as seeing them in a museum. The session will offer lots of hands-on work in analyzing hand-made books and even creating a manuscript leaf as bookmakers did in the days before Chaucer. Part detective work, part field trip into books hundreds of years old, this session will show you how professionals study these books and what they still do not know about them.

S8 - Writing Comedy

Comedy is an art, not a science. What one person finds funny, another might find boring, perplexing, or offensive. We will examine the nature of comedy as represented by writers as varied as Shakespeare, Mark Twain, Dorothy Parker, and David Sedaris. We will also watch clips from *Parks and Recreation* and *Key and Peele*. Students will have the opportunity to write short comedic essays or monologues.

S9 – Gender and Sexual Diversity in Literature

In this session, we will explore work by and about people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, asexual, queer, etc. We will pair contemporary fiction, essays, and poetry with excerpts from older works like Anne Lister's *I Know My Own Heart* and Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*. For the showcase project, students will create posters showcasing literatures related to a particular theme, identity, or issue.

S10 – Words Are Everything: The Power of Craft in Poetry and Fiction

Mark Twain once said that the difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug. To put it simply, word choice is everything. In this course, we will explore the ways in which word choice, description, pace, and voice, add perceptible depth to both fiction and poetry. Students will read exemplary works by a wide array of authors and have the opportunity to get their creative pieces work-shopped by peers. By the end of this session, students will write and revise a short creative piece in a genre of their choice to present at the end of the course.