E2010 EN 3231 NEW ENGLAND SUPERNATURALISM (K. Ljungquist)
This course covers American literature of the supernatural from its origins to the contemporary tale of terror. Detailed attention will be given to the genre of New England Gothicism and its literary conventions. Readings will include tales by the master of horror Edgar Allan Poe and Shirley Jackson’s novel The Haunting of Hill House. The course will conclude with selections from the tales of Stephen King, including his notable works “Riding the Bullet” and “The Man in the Black Suit.” The course will be conducted in a seminar format, which will stress discussion and participation. Students will be asked to articulate their responses to required readings in a variety of formats: oral reports, discussion, writing exercises inside and outside of class, and formal essays.

E2010 EN 3233 WORCESTER BETWEEN THE COVERS: LOCAL WRITERS AND THEIR WORKS (K. Ljungquist)
How many writers from Worcester were recipients of the Pulitzer Prize? Did you know that in a brief six-year time span at the beginning of the twentieth century (1905-1911) three notable American poets were born in Worcester? Perhaps you knew that poet laureate Stanley Kunitz was born here, but did you also know that a significant American humorist—and certainly one of the funniest practitioners of the brief comic “casual” after Mark Twain—was born in Worcester? Worcester is celebrated for its diverse industrial base and its educational institutions, but many people overlook the significant contributions of its writers to American literary and cultural history. Those writers and that literary history—starting with Isaiah Thomas’s founding of the American Antiquarian Society (located near WPI) in the early 1800s—will be the focus of EN 3233. America’s foremost colonial printer, Thomas strove to put varied forms and genres—novels, plays, stories, children’s literature, ephemeral matter, and even sheet music—between the hard and soft covers of pamphlets, tracts, books, and editions. The twentieth-century figures S. N. Behrman, Robert Benchley, Elizabeth Bishop, Esther Forbes, Stanley Kunitz, and Charles Olson also sought out and experimented with multiple genres and original modes of expression. 2010 marks the centenary of Olson, born in Worcester in 1910. His work has been the focus of local programs in March 2010 at WPI, Clark University, and Worcester State as well as at symposia and conferences across the nation. Olson’s “The Post Office,” his nonfiction treatment of his father’s challenges and conflicts during his time as a working letter carrier, will be among specific works studied. Students will also read Behrman’s The Worcester Account, excerpts from Forbes’s historical novel Rainbow on the Road, and selections by Benchley, Kunitz, and Bishop. The range of genres studied—fiction, memoir, nonfiction narrative, and poetry—are diverse, and the tonalities—from Benchley’s humor to the stark revelations in Kunitz’s poetry—are also varied. Attention will be devoted to the local contexts of literary works as well as each writer’s contributions to the broader continuum of American literature. Written work will include two essays, a mid-term examination, and some form of closing exercise. A field trip to sites associated with the writers studied will be conducted at the end of the term. If enrolled in EN 3233, you will certainly learn the answers to the brief factual questions posed above, but you will also gain insight into the cultural context of the city (what Olson called a community or a “polis”) in which you are pursuing a degree from WPI. Before enrolling in an Inquiry Seminar, a 3000-level course like “Worcester Between the Covers” is strongly recommended.
For further information on Worcester writers, consult the link from the web pages of Gordon Library: www.wpi.edu/Academics/Library/Archives/WAuthors.

C2011 EN 2251  MORAL ISSUES IN THE MODERN WORLD  (J. Kim)
This course focuses on the problem of what it means to be an individual in the modern world. Emphasis will be placed on the way moral issues evolve within the complications of individual lives, both subjective and social, as depicted in fiction. Such authors as Dostoyevsky, Musil, Woolf, Kafka, Faulkner, and Waugh show characters struggling with redefining the question of moral responsibility in a radically changed world. We will examine specific questions raised by the novels themselves, such as love, conformity and religion. But we will also consider the larger question of a critical revision of the very concept of morality.