**Course Description.** In this section of ENGL 3214, we will examine the development of the newest and most controversial of the many inter-related literary genres competing for cultural ascendance in England between the late-seventeenth and late-eighteenth century: the eponymous novel. Although it is now difficult for us to think of it as something that could ever have been new, during its formative years the novel provoked considerable anxiety among critics who identified the genre as an upstart which seemed not to have classical precedent and who associated it with gossip-mongering, criminality, pornography, and printed trash. This course will analyze why the early novel provoked such anxiety, how early novelists attempted self-consciously to legitimize prose fiction by theorizing it, and what caused this theory to be at frequent odds with the actual practice of writing and reading. What was new about the novel and how did writers exploit the genre’s novelty so as alternately to divert and instruct a mass market of readers who were invariably also pleasure-seekers? By placing novelistic texts by Behn, Defoe, Swift, Haywood, Richardson, Fielding, and Burney in their original cultural contexts, this course will introduce students not only to the emergent novel, but to the world that produced what has become the modern literary genre.