This course will be an experiment in long-form writing. Each participant in the seminar will write a short (25,000 word) book-length manuscript modeled on Bloomsbury’s *Object Lessons* series: [http://objectsobjectsobjects.com/](http://objectsobjectsobjects.com/)

Pick an ordinary object that will help you develop your dissertation project. The focus in the seminar will be on the writing and work-shopping it. But we’ll read too, in new materialisms, subjects-and-objects, object oriented studies, thing theory, nonrepresentational theory, and discard studies.

Some concerns of the class are: What is an anthropological object, and how does it come into focus or existence? What does an object *do*, and how can we write it? Can we approach the thing itself through writing? What happens when something fails, is destroyed, or has not yet come to be? Is caught up in circulation? What of encounters, whether human/nonhuman or “dynamic assemblages” of forms of matter?

Each week everyone will pick one of the *Object Lessons* books to peruse over the week, then switch to another the following week. The topics of these books include Remote Control, Phone Booth, Golf Ball, Drone, Drivers License, Hotel, Refrigerator, Silence, Glass, Waste, Shipping Container, Book Shelf, Hood, Bread, Cigarette Lighter, Dust, Hair, Tree… You may also write a 1500 word essay for publication in The Atlantic online. Go to the *Object Lessons* website to pitch your idea.

A 2,000 word piece of writing is due each week (which means you will need to write 300-400 words/day). Most weeks will consist of workshopping your writing – be prepared to read 500 words from what you have written. We will have 3 sessions devoted to discussing the architecture of your longer work. These weeks are devoted to editing and reading each others’ work. We have organized the readings around a set of interrelated thematics through which you can articulate your object. Use the readings as a prompt for your writing for the week – whether launching off a passage that sparks your interest or adopting the project of the author.

**Books:**
Diana Coole and Samantha Frost, *New Materialisms*
Catherine Malabou, *Ontology of the Accident: An Essay on Destructive Plasticity*
Maggie Nelson, *Bluets* (on canvas)

The articles are all on canvas.

**Week 1. What is an object.**
Your topic, and the architecture of your work
Week 2. **Composition / Emergence**  
Isabelle Stengers. Diderot’s Egg.


Week 3.  

Michelle Murphy. Introduction. In *Sick Building Syndrome and the Problem of Uncertainty*.

Week 4. **Architecture workshop**  
Isabelle Stengers. History from the Middle: Between Macro and Mesopolitics. *Inflexions*.

Week 5.  
Maggie Nelson, *Bluets* (on canvas)

Week 6. **Vibrant matter / Weird realism**  
Diana Coole. *New Materialisms* (Section 1: The Force of Materiality)

Week 7.  


Week 8. **Plasticity**  
Catherine Malabou, *Ontology of the Accident: An Essay on Destructive Plasticity*


Week 9. **Architecture workshop**  
Manuel deLanda. Emergence, Causality and Realism. In *Speculative Realism*.

Week 10. **Atmosphere and immaterial/ity (air, energy, affect, clouds)**  

Tim Choy and Jerry Zee. Condition–Suspension. *Cultural Anthropology*. 
Week 11.


Week 12.


Week 13. **Entanglements, assemblages, encounters (human/nonhuman)**

Diana Coole. *New Materialisms* (Sections 2 & 3, selections TBD)

Sarah Whatmore. Materialist Returns: practicing cultural geography in and for a more-than-human world. 2006 *Cultural Geographies*, 13

Week 14.

Anna Tsing. Unruly Edges: Mushrooms as Companion Species 2012. *Environmental Humanities*, 1 141-154