

St Jerome's University
Dept of English
ENGL 200A: Survey of British Literature 1
Wednesday evenings, Autumn 2018

Contact Info:

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Course description (from the calendar):

An historical survey of major figures, types, and trends in British literature from the Middle Ages to the late 18th century.

Course overview and objectives:

This is a survey course. The main objective is to introduce students to major and varied examples of British literature through close reading of works in part or in whole. Another is to familiarize students with the names and contexts of many different writers, while a third is to give a sense of an unfolding historical and intellectual narrative. The course will also refer to a range of genres, forms, and styles. Interaction with the material will take a variety of forms, including two concentrated essays, one dealing with a work from the medieval period, and another from the early modern period or the Restoration and 18th century. There will also be a comprehensive exam designed to test recognition of authors, works, contexts, and recurring themes.

Required text:

David Damrosch and Kevin J.H. Dettmar, ed., *The Longman Anthology of British Literature*, Vol. 1, 4th ed. (New York: Longman, 2010) (pages given are to this edition); *or*
David Damrosch and Kevin J.H. Dettmar, ed., *The Longman Anthology of British Literature*, Vol. 1A–C, 4th ed. (New York: Longman, 2010).

Course requirements:

Essay 1	Friday 12 Oct. (by email)	25%
Essay 2	Monday 3 Dec. (by email)	25%
Final Exam	Exam period	25%
Poetry/drama recitation and close reading	Various dates (21 Nov. at the latest)	15%
Participation*		10%

**Your* regular participation in class discussion is both part of educational formation and crucial for the class to be a positive experience for everyone.

Late policy and return of work:

Papers are due at midnight. Late papers will be docked 2% per day; late papers will also not necessarily receive comments. All work will be returned by email.

Email correspondence:

By all means feel free to contact me regarding any aspect of the course.

Course Outline

- 12 Sept. **Introduction**
- 12 Sept. **The Middle Ages**
Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, 318
 From The General Prologue (lines 1–42, 363–80, 479–530, 671–860)
- 19 Sept. “The Dream of the Rood,” 148
 “The Wanderer,” 173
- 26 Sept. *Beowulf*, 32
- 3 Oct. *The Second Play of the Shepherds*, 502
 Sir Thomas Malory, “The Miracle of Galahad,” 281
- 12 Oct. **Essay #1 due (by email)**
- 17 Oct. **The Early Modern Period**
The English Sonnet 665–66
 Sir Thomas Wyatt, “Whoso List to Hunt,” 668
 Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, “Set Me Whereas the Sun...,” 671
 Sir Philip Sidney, from *Astrophel and Stella*, 680
 William Shakespeare, Sonnet 116, 1211
- Elizabeth I, 1073–74
 “The Golden Speech,” 1083
- 24 Oct. Christopher Marlowe, “The Tragical History of Dr Faustus,” 1110
- 31 Oct. William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, 1216
- 7 Nov. John Donne, “The Good Morrow,” 1588
 ———, “The Sun Rising,” 1591
 ———, “The Flea,” 1596
 ———, “A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning,” 1598
 ———, *Holy Sonnets*, 8-11
 George Herbert, “The Windows,” 1632
 ———, “Virtue,” 1633
 ———, “The Pulley,” 1637
- 14 Nov. John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Bk 1, 1727
- 21 Nov. **The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century**
Jonathan Swift, from *Gulliver’s Travels* Part 3, Chapter 5, 2371
Alexander Pope, “Alexander Pope to Jonathan Swift,” 2427
Margaret Cavendish, “The Description of a New Blazing World,” 2070
Aphra Behn, “The Disappointment,” 2126
Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, from *The Turkish Embassy Letters* [On Baths], 2544
- 28 Nov. Samuel Johnson, “Idler No. 97,” 2702
 ———, from *A Dictionary of the English Language* [On Method], 2704
 ———, from *The Plays of William Shakespeare* [General Nature], 2727
 ———, “To Hester Thrale,” 2745
James Boswell, from *London Journal* [a Scot in London], 2750
 ———, “First Meeting with Johnson,” 2757
 ———, from *The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D* [Method], 2761
- 28 Nov. **Conclusion**
- 3 Dec. **Essay #2 due (by email)**

The Essays:

The essays should be between 1000-1200 words in length. Please bear in mind that the essays are *short*. You will inevitably have more insights and evidence from your brainstorming and essay planning than you can possibly include. Selection of the most significant points and the best evidence to support your thesis will help you to write a better essay.

Possible topics will be suggested in class as the term progresses. In general, the advice from *The Norton Introduction to Literature* applies: "When an assignment allows you to create your own topic, you are much more likely to build a lively and engaging essay from a particular insight or question that captures your attention and makes you want to say something, solve a problem, or stake out a position. The best papers originate in an individual response to a text and focus on a genuine question about it."

In general, write an expository essay on the development of a theme or central claim in one literary work with reference to **one** of point of view, character, setting, or symbol, or **one or two** stylistic features/rhetorical devices. By "theme," do not be content with a general topic such as "death." The theme should already indicate the author's attitude towards death (e.g. reconciliation with finitude, the responsibility of making a contribution to the community before one dies, the meaninglessness of life). Such considerations may lead to a further definition of "death" (spiritual death, exile from the community, loss of memory...).

SUGGESTION: focus on authorial intention as a key component of your thesis. Attempt to make the author (by name, please!) the agent of the effects you describe. Build your confidence that the author knew what she or he was doing and translate that assurance into an analytical exposition of what he or she has achieved and how.

The Poetry/Drama Recitation and very close reading:

Commit a sonnet or a similar length of poetry or dramatic literature to memory. Recite it in class on the day we take up the work. If you want to stage a portion of a scene with others, figure out a way to divide the memorization work equally. This exercise will help you get "inside" the work. You will probably want to memorize a work or an excerpt from a work on which you intend to write an essay, but you don't have to. This assignment will provide an excellent opportunity for you to contribute to class discussion of the work in question, but you will not be responsible for presenting a seminar. You will, however, submit a one-page (max. 300 wd) *very close reading* of *specific* poetic effects achieved through sound or visual presentation that encourage a claim about, at best, a line or two of the poem or excerpt in question. You may not plagiarize this page in your subsequent essay, but you may draw on and extrapolate from it.

The Exam:

The exam will test your ability to identify the works and authors studied in the course. It may also test your acquisition and understanding of literary terms that you have encountered through the study of these works. Thirdly, it may also include a brief exercise in literary analysis. Finally, it may ask a large question inviting reflection in terms of different perspectives offered by the literary works studied in the course.

UW Policy Regarding Illness and Missed Tests:

The University of Waterloo Examination Regulations (www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/exams/ExamRegs.pdf) state that:

- A medical certificate presented in support of an official petition for relief from normal academic requirements must provide all of the information requested on the “University of Waterloo Verification of Illness” form or it will not be accepted. This form can be obtained from Health Services or at www.healthservices.uwaterloo.ca/Health_Services/verification.html.
- If a student has a test/examination deferred due to acceptable medical evidence, he/she normally will write the test/examination at a mutually convenient time, to be determined by the course instructor.
- The University acknowledges that, due to the pluralistic nature of the University community, some students may on religious grounds require alternative times to write tests and examinations.
- Elective arrangements (such as travel plans) are not considered acceptable grounds for granting an alternative examination time.

Official statements on other relevant University of Waterloo policies:

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/ for more information.]

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm>. When in doubt please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing academic offenses and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm>. For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm>.

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71, Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72, Student Appeals, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm>.

Note for students with disabilities: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.