
ENGL3210 – 001/350: British Literature to 1750

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Office.	Patterson Hall 407	Session.	Jan. 17 – May 4, 2017

Course Description. This course will introduce students to the formative periods in the British literary tradition, beginning in the eighth century and running through to the middle of the eighteenth century. The course will survey the major authors and major works of the complex periods classified by literary historians as the Medieval, the Early Modern, and the Restoration and Eighteenth Century. We will examine the development of genres and themes over time, and analyze their relationship to broader developments in British culture. Topics of discussion might include the shift from oral to written to print, the persistence of pagan ideas in Christian culture, (neo)classicism, changing attitudes towards heroism, religious devotion and dissent, sexuality and the politics of gender, love and longing, temporality, power, wit and judgement, the uses and abuses of language, illusion, “nature” and aesthetic imitation, the forms and functions of satire, pride and affectation, novelty and the rise of the novel, urbanization and commercialization, the invention of “the self,” modernity, and the emergence of notions of “Britishness.” This section of ENGL3210 will pay particular attention to works that are self-conscious about their own status *as literature* and that dramatize the process of creation and nature of response.

Required Reading. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, Volume 1(A-C), 9th edition, ed. Stephen Greenblatt *et. al.* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2012 / 9780393913002); Henry Fielding, *Joseph Andrews* and *Shamela*, ed. Douglas Brooks-Davies, Martin C. Battestin, and Thomas Keymer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008 / 9780199536986).

Method of Instruction. Lectures, with a strong emphasis on classroom discussion.

Learning Outcomes. Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to:

- Identify and analyze major authors and works from the period between the eighth century and the middle of the eighteenth century.
- Explain characteristic genres and define poetic, dramatic, and narrative terms relevant to the literature of this period.
- Formally analyze poetic language, including the use of prosody, tropes and figures of speech, rhetoric, and other literary devices.
- Describe the social, political, cultural, material, bibliographical, and, in general, the broadly historical contexts of literary texts from this period.
- Orally discuss critical issues concerning Medieval, Early Modern, and Restoration and Eighteenth-Century literature, and write about them in a clear and coherent manner.
- Employ the conventions of Standard Written English and MLA or Chicago style.