

English 3210: British Literature to 1750

Literature and the Political Imagination

Fall 2019, TR 2:40 – 4:05



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office: Patterson 426
office hours: W 1:30 - 3:30, R 4:30 – 6

Description: How is the political imagination expressed in literature? How does literature variously uphold or threaten social codes and political realities? Focusing on British literature from its written origins through the Restoration, we will explore how British writers use their imaginations to enforce or subvert dominant aspects of sociality, from gender roles to religious conventions. Throughout this upper-level course, you will spend significant time closely reading, analyzing, and thinking about the texts assigned. We will pay particular attention to the political, cultural, and intellectual contexts in which our texts were produced, as well as the perseverance and transformation of literary forms, conventions, and themes. You should come prepared with ideas and ready to discuss and investigate the texts with the class.

Texts: *Norton Anthology of English Literature*, Vol. 1 (10th edition)

Requirements:

Attendance/ Quizzes and Participation:	10%
Five Response Papers	10%
Exam 1	25%
Exam 2:	25%
Final Essay:	30%

Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Identify and analyze major English authors, genres, and works from the period of Old English through 1750.
2. Accurately map out the development of literary trends and influences in early English literature.
3. Formally analyze poetic language, including the use of prosody, figurative language, rhetoric and a variety of literary devices.
4. Demonstrate a general understanding of the social, political, and cultural history of medieval and early modern England.

5. Write cogently about individual authors, works, and literary forms in medieval and early modern England.

Conduct and Policies

- While in class, you are expected to pay attention; you are not allowed to engage in private conversation, texting, or other behaviors that disrupt class activities. Turn off your phones and other electronic equipment before class.
- Student conduct should accord with university expectations, as outlined by the Office of Judicial and Ethical Programs (<http://saweb.memphis.edu/judicialaffairs/>). Disciplinary procedures will also be governed by the Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities.
- Bring the relevant text to *every* meeting of class.

Grading

- You must submit all assigned work in a timely fashion to pass this class.
- Attendance is required in this class.
- More than FOUR unexcused absences (or TWO full weeks of class) may result in failure of the course. By virtue of maintaining your enrollment in this course, you acknowledge this rule.
- More than two unexcused absences may lower your final grade.
- Repeated tardiness or early departure will be recorded as absences (generally two tardies or early departures will be equivalent to one absence).
- If your absence is excused (sickness, family emergency, university function), please hand in any pertinent evidence (e.g., doctor's notes). I will record the absence as excused and, if necessary, arrange for you to reschedule examinations.
- Pop quizzes may be assigned at any time; performance on these quizzes will count toward your class participation grade.
- Plagiarism on any assignment may result in a failing grade for the course and may result in Summary Discipline. (See Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities at <http://saweb.memphis.edu/judicialaffairs/>).
- Instances in which a student's work reflects genuine confusion over when to cite and proper citation format may be addressed by allowing the student to rewrite the essay or assignment; the final grade for that particular assignment may also be reduced. Any questions you have about what you need to cite should be directed to the professor before you hand in the assignment.
- You will be required to submit your essays to turnitin.com "for an evaluation of the originality of your ideas and proper use and attribution of sources. As part of this process, you may be required to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your written work, or be given other instructions to follow. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process and that the assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Any assignment not submitted according to the procedures given by the instructor may be penalized or may not be accepted at all." (Office of Legal Counsel, October 17, 2005)
- Your grade will be assessed according to a +/- scale. So, for example:

A+ = 97-100	B+ = 87-89	
A = 93-96	B = 83-86	
A- = 90-92	B- = 80-82	and so forth

At the University of Memphis, an A- earns 3.84 out of 4 possible points; all other +/-s indicate a .33 distance from the nearest integer (i.e., a B+ = 3.33, and a B- = 2.67).

Response Papers

- You must hand in FIVE response papers over the course of the semester. At least two, but no more than three must be submitted before the midterm.
- You will hand in response papers at the beginning of class. No response papers will be accepted at the end of class.
- You should type and print out your response papers.
- The intention of the response paper is for you to get down some thoughts on paper about the reading, so that you will be prepared to participate in class.
- Your response papers should be about the reading for the day that you are handing the paper in, not for reading that we have already discussed in class. Response papers submitted for the wrong date/reading will be returned without a grade.
- As their name suggests, response papers should record your honest and hopefully well-thought out response to the readings. You may discuss what was interesting, pleasing, or confusing in the reading. You may pose questions, but your response papers should not simply be a list of questions.
- Your response papers will not be graded for format, grammar, or academic style. I encourage you to share your thoughts in whatever style suits you best. However, I do suggest quoting from the text in every response paper (as a way to get you thinking).
- Response papers should be between minimally 2 full pages and no more than five pages in length.
- Response papers will be graded on a pass/fail basis.

Accommodation/ Disability Statement:

Students who have a disability or condition that may impair their ability to complete assignments or otherwise satisfy course criteria are encouraged to meet with the Student Disabilities Services Center to identify, discuss, and document any feasible instructional modification or accommodations.

Note:

This syllabus is subject to change.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

- I. ***Medieval Literature.*** All readings in this section can be found in Norton Volume A.

Week 1

T 8/27 Introduction to Course

R 8/29 "Introduction," Vol. A (p 3-10)
Judith (p 110-118)

Week 2

T 9/3 *Beowulf* lines 1-835 (starting p 37)
Familiarize yourself with the book's resources, particularly its **timeline** (there are timelines for within the introductory materials for each time period), the **map** inside the front cover, and the **appendices** on "literary terminology," "geographic nomenclature," "British money," "the royal lines of England and Great Britain)," and "religions in England."

R 9/5 "The Middle Ages (to ca. 1485)" (p 11-29)
Beowulf (lines 836-end)

Week 3

T 9/10 "The Myth of Arthur's Return" (p 136-137)

Thomas of England, “Le Roman de Tristan” [“The Deaths of Tristan and Ysolt”] (p 138-143)

Marie de France, “Lanval” (p 171-185) and “Bisclavret” (496-503)

R 9/12 *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (p 201-255)

Week 4

T 9/17 Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales: General Prologue* (p 256-281)

R 9/19 Chaucer, “The Miller’s Prologue and Tale” (p 282-298)

Week 5

T 9/24 Chaucer, “The Wife of Bath’s Prologue and Tale” (p 300-328) and “Close of *The Canterbury Tales*” (p 358)

R 9/26 Chaucer, “Parliament of Birds” (p 504-523)

Week 6

T 10/1 “Middle English Lyrics” (531-534)

Thomas Malory, *Morte Darthur* (534-554)

II. ***The Sixteenth Century.*** All readings in the section can be found in Volume B.

R 10/3 The Sixteenth Century, “Introduction” (3-34)
Thomas More, *Utopia* Book I (41-69)

Week 7

T 10/8 *Utopia* Book II (69-117); Exam review

R 10/10 **Exam 1**

Week 8

T 10/15 **Fall Break**

R 10/17 Thomas Wyatt, selected poems (p 118-124)
Philip Sidney, “Astrophil & Stella” #1, 7, 9, 15, 39, 41, 45, 49, 63, 71, 81, 108 (starting p 586)
Philip Sidney, from *The Countess of Pembroke’s Arcadia* (p 541-546)

Week 9

T 10/22 Edmund Spenser, from *The Faerie Queene*, Book 3 (418-456)
Elizabeth I, “Speech to the Troops at Tilbury” (234-235)

R 10/24 William Shakespeare, *Sonnets* #1, 12, 15, 19, 20, 30, 55, 71, 73, 87, 116, 127, 129, 130, 135, 138, 144, 152 (starting p 718) and “The Phoenix and Turtle” (PDF provided)

Week 10

T 10/29 “Introduction,” The Early Seventeenth Century (p 891-920)
Shakespeare, *Othello* Acts 1-2 (starting p 803)

R 10/31 *Othello* Acts 3-5

Week 11

- T 11/5 John Donne, selected poems (920-941) and “Holy Sonnets” #1, 7, 10, 14 (starting p 960)
Amelia Lanyer, *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* (p 980-986)
- R 11/7 Ben Jonson, *Epigrams* (p 1089-1096)
Mary Wroth, from *The Countess of Montgomery’s Urania* (p 1110-1116)
George Herbert, “Easter Wings” (p 1259-1260)
Andrew Marvell, “The Garden” (p 1354-1356)
Francis Bacon, from *The New Atlantis* (p 1231-1235)

Week 12

- T 11/12 John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Introduction; Books 1 and 2 (starting p 1493)
- R 11/14 *Paradise Lost*, Books 3 and 4

III. ***The Restoration to 1750.*** All readings in the section can be found in Volume C.

Week 13

- T 11/19 “Introduction,” The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century (p 3-34)
John Locke, from “An Essay Concerning Human Understanding” (p 105-106)
Jonathan Swift, “A Modest Proposal” (p 454-460)
Margaret Cavendish, from *The Blazing World* (1441-1447)
- R 11/21 Olaudah Equiano, from *The Interesting Narrative of ...* (p 980-991)
Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko; or, The Royal Slave* (p 139-187)
Exam Review

Week 14

- T 11/26 **Exam 2; Final Essay proposal due**
- R 11/28 **Thanksgiving Break**

Week 15

- T 12/3 Concluding Observations and Evaluations

Final Essay Due in Ecourseware: December 10, 1-3 p.m. / Tuesday (Designated Exam Slot)