

English 201: Survey of British Literature

Spring 2010
T-TH 11-12:15
BHA 10
Cedar Crest College

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Texts

Greenblatt, Stephen, ed. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, Major Authors, Eighth Edition, Vols. A and B. (Norton, 2006)
Shakespeare, William. *King Lear*. (Penguin, 2000)

Course Description

ENG 201: Survey of British Literature is a three-credit course; it is taught in a combination of lecture and discussion formats. Satisfaction of the WRI-1 requirement is NOT a prerequisite for this class.

In ENG 201, we will read and discuss examples of British literature spanning a 1500-year period, from about 600 to the present. While we will focus our attention on significant texts and will consider the structural and stylistic devices of each text, we will do so in the larger context of a discussion of the thematic concerns of the writers and their relevance to us today, as well as the specific historical events and cultural influences to which these writers responded.

Course Objectives

As with all English courses offered by the department, ENG 201 seeks to help students acquire the ability to read and analyze critically works of literature, to acquire a general knowledge of the history of literature in English, and to expand their knowledge and appreciation of their own and other cultures and historical moments. As with other English courses, ENG 201 also seeks to develop students' oral and written communication skills.

ENG 201 achieves these programmatic goals by providing students with instruction and experience in reading and explicating historical literary texts; by modeling for students the many ways that scholars talk about literature and encouraging students to use these tools of literary analysis; by broadening students' perspectives through the provision of a cultural context for the literature; by allowing students a discussion forum through which they can discover the relevance of "old" texts to the crucial issues and questions of life today; and by giving students practice in creating oral and written discourse about literature.

Course Outcomes

Upon successful completion of ENG 201, students will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of a range of representative works of British literature, including the content of these works, their historical and social contexts, and some possibilities for interpretation of these works. In addition, students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of basic literary terms and competence in reading, discussing, and writing about works of literature.

Assessment of Course Outcomes

The success of ENG 201 in achieving its outcomes will be assessed, in part, by the ability of students to complete course assignments successfully. Students will demonstrate their knowledge of literary terminology and the content and cultural contexts of the assigned literature itself through quizzes and exams. They will demonstrate their ability to apply this knowledge in order to explore interpretive possibilities through their participation in class discussions and in their required analytic paper.

Course Requirements

The requirements for this course are as follows:

--Unannounced reading quizzes throughout the semester.

--**A READER RESPONSE JOURNAL** (one-half to one page each day, excluding weekends and holidays) is required for this course. You are free to write whatever you wish, providing it has to do with the assigned texts. **DATE EACH ENTRY.** Although no grade is assigned to the journal itself, failure to turn one in will result in the loss of at least one letter grade. Journals are to be handed in whenever an in-class exam is being written

--Attendance and participation are expected. UNEXCUSED ABSENCES exceeding the limit established by the professor (3) will result in the loss of at least one letter grade. Excuses may be sent to me by e-mail. An excessive number of excused absences may prove harmful to your grade

--Three in-class essay exams, as scheduled.

-- One 1200-word research paper that requires integration of primary and secondary sources with the students' own ideas. Papers focus on topics requiring critical thinking and problem-solving, such as an analysis or comparison of significant themes, symbolic or figurative patterns, characters, or settings, and their relationship to historical or cultural contexts

PROCEDURE: We will be doing a close reading of the texts, using a variety of analytical tools, which I won't list here. (If I did, I wouldn't have anything to lecture

about.) At times you will be asked to write, respond to peers' writing, and participate in small and full class discussion. The amount of time spent in full class discussion will depend on your willingness to initiate it and participate in it. I know how to lecture, but I'm a lousy ventriloquist.

STUDENTS WHO HAVE SPECIFIC PHYSICAL, PSYCHIATRIC OR LEARNING DISABILITIES AND REQUIRE ACCOMMODATIONS should let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs can be appropriately met.

Grading criteria:

- A Student has demonstrated a high level of proficiency in meeting the appropriate outcomes.
- B Student has demonstrated above average proficiency in meeting the appropriate outcomes.
- C Student has demonstrated average proficiency in meeting the appropriate outcomes,
- D Student has demonstrated below average but acceptable proficiency in meeting the appropriate outcomes.
- F Student has not demonstrated acceptable proficiency in meeting the appropriate outcomes.

PLAGIARISM is a capital offense and will be reported to the appropriate office. The penalty for violations of the academic integrity policy may range from an F on the plagiarized paper to an F for the course, depending on the gravity of the offense.

ALL WORK HANDED IN, with the exception of the journal, is to be typed, double-spaced, with sufficient margins to allow for the professor's comments. Please do not use covers or title pages on your essays.

ALL GRADED ASSIGNMENTS are to be **REVISED** and returned to the professor within two class periods. Please indicate corrections with color, bold, etc. Any errors on corrected work will be marked for additional correction until the problem is mastered. Failure to comply will result in the loss of at least one letter grade.

Revision does not change the grade.

Text messaging or non-emergency phone use is forbidden. If you are employed as emergency personnel, or are involved in an emergency situation, please let me know immediately.

Course Schedule

All of the readings, with the exception of *King Lear*, are in the *Norton Anthology*. You should have read and be prepared to discuss all reading selections by the date for which they're assigned. Please bring the appropriate text along to class with you. In addition to the works listed, read the introduction for each writer/text assigned. Unannounced reading quizzes may include significant information from these introductions as well as "plot" questions about the works themselves. Due to time constraints, we will not be reading several important authors and we will naturally not be able to discuss all of the works assigned in equal depth; examinations will, however, cover all of the assigned reading, including the introductions to the literary periods themselves. Before each exam, I will attempt to give you a list of dates, terms, and other significant information from the introductions that you should know.

***Please reserve the final exam time scheduled for this class; we will use it, if necessary, as a make-up day, should a class be cancelled as a result of inclement weather.

- 1/19 Introduction to the course; introduction to the Middle Ages
- 1/21-26 *Beowulf* (26-96)
- 1/28-2/2 Chaucer, from *The Canterbury Tales*, excerpts from *The General Prologue* (170-189), *The Miller's Prologue and Tale* (191-206), *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale* (207-234)
- 2/4 **In-class exam (due 2/11)**
- 2/9-16 Marlowe, *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus* (460-492)
- 2/18-25 Shakespeare, *King Lear*
- 3/2 Donne, "The Flea," "The Canonization," "Holy Sonnet 10" (603 ff.)
Herbert (659-664), Herrick (665-669) and Marvell (675-685) are recommended.
- (Spring break)
- 3/4-16 Milton, *Paradise Lost* (723-65, 811-35)
- 3/18 **In-class exam (due 3/25)**
- 3/23 Pope, *The Rape of the Lock* (1136-54); Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (1069-1113)
- 3/25 Johnson, *Rasselas*.

- 3/30 Wordsworth, "I wandered lonely as a cloud," (1537) Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (1495-1506); D. Wordsworth, (1596-1600)
- 4/1 Coleridge, "The Eolian Harp," "Kubla Khan" (1632)
- 4/8 Byron, *Don Juan* (1690-1730)
- 4/13 Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, (1456-83)
- 4/15 Tennyson, "The Lady of Shalott" (1953-57); Browning, "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister" (2056), "My Last Duchess" (2058); Arnold, "Dover Beach" (2105)
- 4/20 Yeats, "The Second Coming" (2402), "Sailing to Byzantium" (2406)
- 4/22 Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (2435-93)
- 4/27 Joyce, "Araby" (2503-07); Eliot, "The Love Song of J Alfred Prufrock" (2610-13)
- 4/29 Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (2221-63)
- 5/4 **In-class exam (due finals week)**
Independent research essay due finals week

This syllabus is, of course, tentative and subject to modification as the semester progresses.