

“Literature in the Social Sphere”  
**English 251 British Literature I**  
**Section 23558 Autumn 2005 (3 credits)**

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Tuesday & Thursday 12.30 - 1.45  
IACC 102  
Office Hours: 2-3.00 PM TTh

and by appointment

[www.ndsu.edu/ndsu/maune](http://www.ndsu.edu/ndsu/maune) and <http://bb.ndsu.nodak.edu>

### Objectives

This course is designed to introduce you to a great historical range of literature and writers in English, beginning roughly in the Anglo-Saxon eleventh century with *Beowulf* and concluding in the late seventeenth century with John Milton’s *Paradise Lost*. This course is designed around the idea that the texts we will be reading are distant to us linguistically, historically, and culturally and to read them without taking these elements into account inevitably results in over simplification and a reductive conception of English (and our own) culture. Thus, rather than attempting to read a wide variety of texts, we will concentrate deeply on a relatively small selection of works. Lectures, discussions, and course work will begin with basic literary reading and interpretation skills and quickly move to working toward an understanding of the texts in terms of the cultures that produced them and in turn were produced by them.

By the end of the course, you should have a knowledge of the various currents of English culture over about six hundred years. You will also have practiced critical reading, discussion, and writing skills that will help prepare you for high-level English courses.

### Requirements and Methods

Because of the great range of writing covered by this course and the comparatively large number of students, the dominant mode of this course will be lecture/discussion. My lectures will be open in that I expect you to interrupt me with questions and comments. I also will pause regularly to address questions to you based on the day’s reading. We will engage in small group discussions as well. Thus, your preparation for class must include a readiness to talk about the texts and ideas we are studying. I will occasionally introduce texts not assigned for homework. The specific work you are expected to complete includes a mid-term and a final exam, a miscellany project, a group project, and ten quizzes. Details of these assignments can be found below.

<b>Grading</b>		<b>Scale</b> (Grade book available at Blackboard site)	
Midterm exam	100 points	A	100-90 %
10 Quizzes	100 points	B	89-80 %
Final exam	100 points	C	79-70 %
Timeline Project	100 points	D	69-60 %
Miscellany Project	100 points		
Total	500 points		

### **Texts**

*The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition, Volume 1

A dictionary (bring to every class)

Sticky notes

### **Students with Special Needs**

Any students with disabilities or other special needs that need special accommodations in this course are asked to share these concerns with me as soon as possible.

### **Academic Honesty**

I assume that all work you turn in for this course is yours, and any material that you have acquired from an outside source is documented properly. Failure to do so is considered plagiarism and will result in possible failure of the course. See NDSU University Senate Policy, Section 335: Code of Academic Responsibility and Conduct

<http://www.ndsu.nodak.edu/policy/335.htm>.

### **Late Papers**

Late papers will lose ten points per day until they are turned in. You are responsible for turning in all work assigned in this class. Failure to do so will result in failing this class.

### **Attendance and Participation**

Prompt and consistent attendance is an important part of this course. Not only are you responsible for material covered in class, you are responsible for actively participating in each class meeting. Coming late is disruptive to discussion and especially to group work. If something does happen you must contact me, via phone, answering machine or email within 24 hours. You are still responsible for what happened in a missed class.

Participation includes not only contributing to class discussion, it also covers prompt attendance, listening and responding constructively to your classmates, attending class prepared to discuss the readings, and bringing your books to every class meeting.

### **Paper Format**

Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are to be type-written, double-spaced, with one-inch margins, in twelve-point Times font. Your name, the date, the class, my name and the assignment are to be at the top of the first page. Do not forget to title your work. Any papers longer than one page must have page numbers and be stapled.

### **Quizzes**

These will be unannounced, handed out at the beginning of the class period and collected after fifteen minutes. If you miss a quiz, you may not make it up. The questions will be short answer and based on the homework and lecture material.

### **Mid-term and Final Exams**

These exams are designed to allow you to demonstrate your knowledge of the course subject matter and your ability to use the subject matter in a critical and analytical way. That is, I expect more than a simple repetition of course material. The take home essays in particular are opportunities for you to demonstrate your analytical abilities. The mid-term exam will cover the material up to and including week eight. It will have three parts, a take-home essay due on the day of the exam, short answer, identification of quotes and excerpts. Expect material that has appeared on quizzes, ideas introduced in class lectures and discussions, and pay particular attention to any terms written on the board. The final exam will cover material from week nine until the end of the course. It will also include a take home portion, a short answer, and identification and cover material in the same way as above.

### **Poetical Miscellany Project (75 out of 500 points)**

This project will allow you to interact with the course material in a productive and potentially creative manner. You will emulate, in a real sense, the practice of educated readers and writers in the early modern period by generating your own collection of literature that reflects your own personal ideas about what literature should be and should do.

We will spend some time talking about and examining poetical miscellanies in class. Briefly, a miscellany is a collection of poetry (and sometimes bits of prose) from a variety of different sources and poets. Miscellanies were very popular in Renaissance and Restoration England. For this project, you will collect thirty poems from the period we will be covering (ca. 800 to 1688). The poems may come from our textbook or somewhere else. You must preface your miscellany with a letter to the reader, which will explain your rationale (a theme or focus) for the poems you chose. You must also have a title page and title, and a table of contents. You are required to hand in a hard copy and a copy on disk for posting on-line. There must be some visual element as well. This may include decorative letters, borders, images, acrostic poems. You may add answer poems or your own poetry, but these will be counted in addition to the primary thirty.

How you present the poems is up to you. Keep in mind the printed and manuscript miscellanies we have examined in class and our discussions of their form and context. You may use attributions, and titles, or you may choose not to. You may give different titles to poems to suit your own purposes (as Tottel did.) For your paper copy, think about format. Do not feel restricted to a vertical, 8½ by 11 inch piece of paper. Explore the possibilities of your word processor and printer.

Your project is due on the last day of class (8 December) and I will return it to you on the final exam day.

### **Timeline Project**

This is a group project that will allow you to practice your collaborative and research abilities. The final product will be a timeline in webpage (html) form. You and your group are to choose one decade from 1066 CE to 1700 CE (except 1066-76, 1390-1400, 1540-50, 1550-60, 1600-10, 1690-1700) and collect as much material as you can about that time period. The focus will be on

England, but you will also want to include continental and global events that affected English culture.

Items to include: who ruled England at the time, wars, economic system, science, technology, exploration & discovery, colonization, music, literature, architecture, visual art, famous people, philosophical trends.

The webpage must include at least thirty items and references for those items. The reference might be a book, an article or a webpage. If it is a book or article, give the bibliographic information in MLA format. If it is a webpage, provide the title of the page and a link.

The webpage may be as simple as an MS WORD document saved as an HTML file, or you may construct it using a web-authoring application. Such software is installed on most cluster computers.

Examples of past timeline projects can be found here:  
<http://www.ndsu.nodak.edu/ndsu/maune/TimeLine/>

The webpage may be turned in on floppy disk, zip disk, or CDROM.

You will work in groups of three or four.

### **Group rules**

In order for evaluation and grading to be consistent and reflect work done by individuals, a number of procedures must be followed. Ethical group participation means that each member is responsible for the group's performance. Each member must contribute as well as encourage others to contribute.

During the first group meeting, the group must generate an agreement that describes the group's goal. The goal will be to earn a high score on the project, but in a way that values the opinions of all members. Group members must be committed to the group's goals, complete their individual tasks, avoid interpersonal conflict, encourage group participation, and keep the discussion focused. The group must compose a Code of Ethics that describes the goals and responsibilities of the group. This is to be no more than one page, it must list the group number, each member's name and contact information (whatever means is most reliable), the group's goal, and the responsibilities of members. Also include your decade of choice. Each group member and the instructor must receive a typed copy of this.

Each group must meet at least three times outside of class for each project.

On the day the group project is due, each group member must fill out and turn in a *Group Member Evaluation Form* for each member. Each member must also fill out and turn in a *Peer Rating of Group Members*. These forms are available for download from the course website. <http://www.ndsu.nodak.edu/ndsu/maune/English251Autumn2005Assignments.html> These forms must be turned in along with the project on the due date.

The project will be scored on conformity to directions above, completeness of references, use of proper title and citation format (see me if you are not certain), variety of sources, use of visual and textual material, evidence of thoughtful research and preparation and aesthetic appeal.

The group will earn a single score for the project. This score will be modified by the peer response forms in order to determine each student's score.

Group Code of Ethics due: Tuesday 1 November

Timeline project due: Tuesday 15 November

## Calendar

While I have not noted it, I expect you to read the relevant introductions and section heads for each assignment.

Week 1 23 - 25 August

Introductions

*Beowulf* 1-835

Week 2 30 August - 1 September

*Beowulf* 2631-3180

“The Wanderer”

Week 3 6-8 September

Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, General Prologue and the Miller’s Prologue and Tale

Week 4 13-15 September

Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, The Wife of Bath’s Prologue and Tale

Week 5 20-22 September

*The Second Shepherds’ Play*

Week 6 27-29 September

Sir Thomas Wyatt, “Whoso List to Hunt,” “My lute, awake!,” “Mine own John Poins;”  
Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, “The Soote Season,” “Love that Doth Reign,” “Wyatt  
Resteth Here”

Week 7 4 - 6 October

Read through *Songes and Sonettes* (downloadable from website) and complete  
questionnaire

Sir Philip Sidney, *Defense of Poesy*, *Astrophil and Stella* 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 108

Week 8 11-13 October

More Sidney

Edmund Spenser, *The Shepheardes Calender*

Week 9 18-20 October

Midterm Exam (Tuesday)

Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*

Week 10 25-27 October

Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*

Week 11 1 – 3 November

Ben Jonson, “To William Camden,” “On Lucy...,” “To Penshurst,”  
“Song: To Celia,” “To the Memory of My Beloved...”  
Read through *Passionate Pilgrime* and complete questionnaire.

Week 12 8-10 November

John Donne, “The Flea,” “Song,” “The Bait,” “The Canonization,” “Air and Angels,”

Week 13 15-17 November

John Donne, “A Valediction: Of Weeping,” “Love’s Alchemy,” “A Nocturnal upon St.  
Lucy’s...,” “A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning,” “Elegy 19,” “Holy Sonnet 14,”  
“Good Friday, 1613”  
Timeline project due (Tuesday 15 November)

Week 14 22 November (24 November, no class, Thanksgiving)

George Herbert, “The Altar,” “Easter Wings,” “The Windows,”  
“Affliction (1);” Andrew Marvell, “To His Coy Mistress”

Week 15 29 November – 1 December

Finish Herbert & Marvell; Thomas Coryate, travel writing. Text available on the  
Assignments page of the course website.

Week 16 6-8 December

John Milton, *Paradise Lost* Book 1 & Book 9  
Miscellany due (8 December)

15 December Thursday Final Exam (8.00 am – 10.00 am)

## Subject to Revision

### Grade Guidelines

These descriptions apply to the final grade in the class and the score on particular assignments.

A work is outstanding. It goes beyond the basic requirements of the assignment and the class. The work shows evidence of critical and original thinking. Ideas are clearly supported and explained.

B work is more than satisfactory. It shows understanding of the given task and an understanding of the rules for writing as set out in the syllabus. Thinking is clear, though not necessarily highly critical or highly original. Ideas are supported and explained, although not always clearly or consistently.

C work is satisfactory. It shows familiarity with though not a complete understanding of the given task and rules for writing as set out in the syllabus. Thought shows inconsistent critical engagement or originality. Ideas are too broad and not clearly supported with evidence. Writing tends to summarize or describe rather than analyze.

D work is below average. It shows an inconsistent understanding of the given task, text, and rules. Thought and writing are often disorganized and do not communicate an understanding of audience or genre. Paper seems to be written quickly with little attention to revision or proofreading.

F work is unsatisfactory. It shows little if any understanding of the given task, text, or rules. Thought and writing are disorganized and do not communicate an understanding of audience or genre.



### **Conventions for Writing and Talking about Literature**

- Use the present tense (rather than past) to discuss or to summarize.
- Use the past tense to describe historical events, give historical or biographical information, or to describe events that happened before the setting of the text.
- Support your ideas and points with specific examples from the text such as, quotations, line numbers, page numbers, or summaries or paraphrases
- Do not summarize if it does not support your idea
- Be clear about literary terms such as speaker, narrator, author, poem, short story, novel, play, narrative. Do not assume that a text is expressing the author's ideas unless the text explicitly indicates that this is the case. Do not use the word story to refer to anything except a short story.
- Italicize or underline titles of novels, films, magazines, newspapers, and plays. Titles of short stories, essays, articles, songs, and poems are put in quotation marks.
- The first time you mention an author, use his/her full name. From that point on, only use the last name. Never use the first name.

### **Reading and Annotating**

Before you start, make some notes in your journal about your general impression of the text, who is the author? What is the genre? What are my expectations of the text? Be sure to read the introduction.

As you read the text for the first time, note (underline/circle):

- unfamiliar words
- the first appearance of a character
- clues about the setting
- repeated literary elements (e.g. images, symbols, metaphors)
- pause occasionally to make observations/predictions/summaries in the margins

Once you have finished reading, write a few sentences about your initial impressions:

- Who seemed to be the most important character?
- Where and when was it set?
- What is the point of view?
- What seems to be the conflict?
- What is not clear about the text?
- What will you pay particular attention to when you read it again?

Read the text again. This time:

- look up unfamiliar words;
- keep a list of characters and their relationships to each other;
- identify the setting (this may require research);
- continue to note repeated elements as well as any other literary elements;
- revise (but don't erase) your marginal comments;

- when you have finished, cross check the comments you wrote the first time and correct or expand your initial impressions;
- note elements that do not seem to be identified in the text, missing information;
- write two or three sentences (or more) summarizing the text.

Write down at least three interpretive questions about the text. These are questions that require the person answering to draw on the text to prepare their answer. These may be questions to which you know the answer; questions to which you do not know the answer; or questions to which you are unsure of the answer and would like to know someone else's thoughts.

Poetry-specific reading questions (number the lines)

- Who is the speaker and what do I know about her/him?
- What is the occasion for the poem?
- Who is the audience for the poem?
- What is the form, rhyme scheme, meter, alliteration and other poetical features?

Drama-specific reading questions

- Who are the characters and what are their relationships to each other?
- To what extent do stage directions shape the play?
- How does the setting function as a literal visual space?
- What you imagine happens on stage?
- What does the visual element contribute to the play?