

English 301/10486  
English Literature to 1800  
3 Credits  
TTh 3.30 - 4.45 pm  
Hamer Hall 147

M. G. Aune  
Office Hours: TTh 10.00 - 11.30 & W 3.00-6.00  
and by appointment  
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### **Prerequisite**

ENG -101 or HON -150 and ENG -102 or HON -250.

### **Catalog Description**

An examination of major works, figures, schools, and influences from the Anglo-Saxon period to the Restoration.

### **Description**

This course is an examination of major texts, ideas, and cultural changes from the Anglo-Saxon period (ca. 450 CE) to the Eighteenth Century (ca. 1800 CE). This is an enormous span of time and includes an enormous number of texts and events. We will try to acquire a general sense of English culture in this period, while dwelling more deeply on a number of specific aspects. We will also practice and refine our critical reading and writing skills.

In particular, we will return to questions of textuality, authorship, medium, gender, and religion. We will try to understand what constituted literature throughout this period and compare it to our own. We will look at how texts were and are created and transmitted. How did a hymn by an illiterate Anglo Saxon peasant end up in our textbook, almost 1300 years after it was recorded. And if he was illiterate, how did it get written down? What happens when the primary means of transmitting knowledge changes from handwriting to print? What happens when nearly half of Europe decides it no longer wishes to be Catholic? What happens when women's writing begins to be noticed? What is an author? I hope that you will introduce your own questions as well.

The format of the class will necessarily be lecture. But I hope to conduct within the lectures brief discussions on points of interest to us all. I expect you to have read, annotated, and contemplated the week's reading and be able to ask and answer questions about it. I encourage you to ask questions and not to sit passively as I talk.

### **English Department Objectives of the Course**

1. Objectives of the course include but are not limited to the following:

- a. To build a sense of appreciation for the wealth of British culture and thought during the earlier stages of English literary history.
- b. To understand the impact of English literature on the English-speaking world in general.
- c. To discover how to enjoy reading individual works of art from many periods. To sharpen ability to interpret works of literature.
- d. To strengthen awareness of literature as a reflection of the spirit of the age in which it is written.

### Text

*Norton Anthology of English Literature* vol. 1

A dictionary, bring to every class

Grading		Scale		University Interpretation
Exam 1	100 points	100-94%	A	Superior Achievement
Exam 2	100 points	90-93%	A-	
10 Quizzes	100 points	87-89%	B+	Above Average
Miscellany Project	100 points	84-86%	B	
3 Annotation Projects	150 points	80-83%	B-	
Total	550 points	77-79%	C+	Average
		74-76%	C	
All scores will be posted on the Blackboard gradebook.		70-73%	C-	
		60-69%	D	Below Average
		Below 60	F	Failure

### 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.

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.

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities reserve the right to self-identify; must register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) to receive services; will provide the appropriate notice from OSD for accommodations which specifically involve faculty.

Requests for approval for reasonable accommodations should be directed to OSD.

Approved accommodations will be recorded on the ODS Accommodation Approval notice and provided to the student. Students are expected to adhere to the ODS procedures for self-identifying, providing documentation and requesting accommodations in a timely manner. The OSD is located in Azorsky 105 and the telephone number is 724.938.5781.

### **Academic Honesty**

According to the University Bulletin, “[t]ruth and honesty are necessary prerequisites for all education, and students who attempt to improve their grades or class standing through any form of academic dishonesty may be penalized by disciplinary action ranging from a verbal reprimand to a failing grade in the course or dismissal from the University. If the situation appears to merit a severe penalty, the professor will refer the matter to the appropriate dean or to the Provost. The student may appeal the penalty as outlined above with the Academic Integrity Committee hearing appeals above the level of Dean.”

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, per University policy, may result in failure of the course or dismissal from the University.

### **Late Papers**

You are responsible for turning in all work assigned in this class on time. Late papers will lose ten points per day until they are turned in. Any paper not turned in will receive a score of zero.

### **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 on 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.

### **Attendance and Participation**

According to the University Catalogue, “[r]egular class attendance is a prerequisite to successful class performance.” Important parts of the work for this course will be done in small and large groups. This means that your consistent presence is important to the success of the class as a whole. If you are unable to attend class, you must contact me via phone or email within twenty-four hours. You are still responsible for any work done or due in class that day. Similarly, you are responsible for contacting your group members if you miss a class. If you are more than fifteen minutes late to a class meeting or if you leave early, you will be considered absent.

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 and writing material to every class meeting. If you attend class but are unprepared to discuss the homework, or do not have your books or writing material, you will be considered absent. If you accumulate three absences, you may lose one letter grade from your final grade. If you miss four or more classes, you will not pass the class.

This syllabus makes no distinctions between excused and unexcused absences. If you are a member of a sports team or other university organization and must miss a course because of that commitment, you must have your coach or advisor contact me in writing (not via phone or email) at least two weeks before the absence.

### **Cell Phones**

Please turn off cell phones before class begins. If you are expecting a very important phone call, turn your phone to silent mode and leave the room if it rings. If you use your phone during class, you will be asked to leave and marked absent for that day.

### **Examinations**

The examinations will only cover the material covered prior to it, that is, the final examination will not be cumulative. The exams will consist of a take-home portion given out the class before the exam. The take-home will ask you to answer one or two questions in depth and following the format requirements described above. The in-class portion will include short answer, quote identification, vocabulary, and usually an annotation exercise.

### **Quizzes**

There will be ten, brief, ten-item unannounced quizzes. They will consist of short answer and identification questions. They will cover the reading for that day and any terms and concepts discussed in previous classes or presented during lectures. The quizzes will be handed out at the beginning of class and collected after fifteen minutes. If you are absent on the day a quiz is given, you will receive a zero. Quizzes may not be made up.

### **Poetical Miscellany Project**

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 1750). 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 (4 December) and I will return it to you on the final exam day.

### **Annotation Projects**

This assignment is designed for you to practice your skills in reading and interpreting poetry. You will complete three annotations, one from each part of the course. A list of acceptable poems is below. Choose one and transcribe it. Begin by defining all the words with which you believe a general reader will not be familiar. This includes puns and words whose meanings have changed since Shakespeare's time. You will have to consult a regular dictionary as well as the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Then identify any allusions or references the poem makes. These may be to classical mythology, Biblical events and characters, or other elements of the poem's culture. The footnotes in your text will be helpful, but as we will discover, many references are often neglected. Third, identify key metaphors and similes. The format here is entirely up to you. You may, for example, use color coding, lines and arrows, or different type faces. Last, provide a two hundred word interpretation of the sonnet that draws on the annotations you have made. The interpretation should identify a tension within the poem and resolve it. If you use outside sources, including the internet, you must cite them in a works cited page. Be sure to provide line numbers and pay attention to punctuation.

Your annotation will be evaluated based on the clarity of format, its accessibility/useability by another, the comprehensiveness of the annotations, and the use of the annotations in your interpretation.

#### Part 1 (due 18 September)

Marie de France, "The Wolf and the Sow" (available on the Blackboard site)

Chaucer, "Complaint to His Purse" (318)

"Alison" (436)

#### Part 2 (due 30 October)

Wyatt, "I find no Peace" (596 )

Spenser, *Amoretti* Sonnet 34 (903)

Wroth, *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* Sonnet 16 (1457)

Herbert "The Bunch of Grapes" (1617)

#### Part 3 (due 25 November)

Milton, "Methought I saw my late espoused saint" (1826)

Thompson, "Ode: Rule, Britannia" (2840-41)

Marvell, "The Coronet" (1697)

## Calendar

Subject to change. \* Available on Blackboard site.

NB: I expect you to have the works listed after “Read:” to be read and annotated before class so that we may discuss them. I also assume that you will have read the relevant introductions, headnotes, timelines, and footnotes. The works listed after “Additional:” we will discuss generally in class. You are encouraged to read them, especially if you are an English major. “Topics:” list the lecture and discussion points for that week.

### Part 1 Medieval England, Old English and Middle English, Manuscript culture

#### **Week 1**

26-28 August Introductions, Topics: Old English and Anglo Saxon England, geography, nomenclature, AS Poetry, genre, *Beowulf*, AS Bible, prose, gender

Read: “Cædmon’s Hymn,” (24-26), Riddles (handout), “The Wife’s Lament,” (113-14), “The Dream of the Rood,” (27-29). Additional: “The Wanderer,” (111-13), *Beowulf*, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*

#### **Week 2**

2-4 September Topics: Middle English and Anglo-Norman England, Middle English *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Norman Conquest, Domesday Book, King Arthur, The Magna Charta, Black Death, Hundred Years War, romance, folk tale, allegory. Read: Marie de France, “The Wolf and the Lamb”\* “From *Ancrene Riwe*” (158-60), Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, General Prologue (218-38), Additional: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, John Gower, “The Lover’s Confession,” and William Langland, *The Vision of Piers Plowman*

#### **Week 3**

9-11 September Chaucer and Middle English Continued

#### **Week 4**

16-18 September Topics: Devotional writing, Langland, Medieval drama, gentillesse. Read: Incarnation & Crucifixion Lyrics (367-70) and Margery Kempe (395-97), *Everyman*. Additional: *Wakefield Second Shepherds’ Play* (407-35) Annotation Project 1 due (18 September).

#### **Week 5**

23 September Continued, watch film of *Everyman* (50 min.)

25 September Examination 1

### Part 2 Early Modern English, the Renaissance and Reformation, Print Culture

#### **Week 6**

30 September - 2 October Read: Sir Thomas Wyatt, “Whoso list to hunt” (595), Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, “Love, that doth ...” (608), Edmund Spenser, *The Shepherdes Calendar*: October (709-13), Sir Philip Sidney, “Loving in Truth...” (975), “Queen Virtue’s Court...” (977), William Shakespeare, Sonnet 130 (1074), Christopher Marlowe, “The Passionate Shepherd...” (1022), Sir Walter Raleigh, “The Nymph’s Reply...” (917).

Topics: Manuscript and print culture, sonnet tradition, circulation, publication, answer poem

**Week 7**

7-9 October Read: Christopher Marlowe, *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus* (1022-55)  
Topics: humanism, early modern English drama, Reformation

**Week 8**

14-16 October Read: John Donne, "The Flea," "Go and Catch...," "A Nocturnal on St. Lucy's Day...," "The Bait," Ben Jonson, "On Lucy, Countess of Bedford," (1403), "To Penshurst," Mary Wroth, *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, 1 (1457), Aemilia Lanyer, "The Description of Cookham," (1319-24). Topics: country house poem

**Week 9**

21-23 October Read: George Herbert, "The Altar," "Easter Wings," "The Windows," "Affliction (1);" Andrew Marvell, "To His Coy Mistress," (1703), Robert Herrick, "To the Virgins..." (1659), Thomas Carew, "To Saxham," (1671). Topics: *carpe diem* poem

**Week 10**

28-30 October Read: John Milton, *Paradise Lost* Book 1 (1831-50), Annotation Project 2 due

Part 3 The Restoration, the Enlightenment, Imperial England

**Week 11**

4 - 6 November Katherine Philips, "A Married State," Upon the Double Murder..." (1691), Margaret Cavendish, "The Poetess's Hasty Resolution," "The Hunting of the Hare" (1774-75)

**Week 12**

11 - 13 November John Dryden, "Epigram on Milton," "*From Annus Mirabilis*," (2085-86) "*From An Essay of Dramatic Poesy*," (2125-29), Alexander Pope, "An Essay on Criticism," (2497-2513) Aphra Behn, "The Disappointment" (2180-83), Earl of Rochester, "Upon Nothing" (2171-72)  
Additional: Dryden, "Alexander's Feast," Behn, *Oroonoko*

**Week 13**

18 November Jonathan Swift, "A Modest Proposal" (2462-68)  
Additional: *Gulliver's Travels*  
20 November No Class, Research Day

**Week 14**

25 November William Congreve, *The Way of the World* (2228-84), Annotation Project 3 due,  
Additional, John Gay, *The Beggar's Opera*  
27 November No Class, Thanksgiving Break

**Week 15**

2 - 4 December Thomas Gray, "Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College," "Ode on the Death of a Favorite Cat," "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" (2862-70)  
5 December Poetical Miscellany Project due  
10 December Wednesday, Final Exam, 10.00 - 11.50 am, regular room (**tentative**)