ENGL 3351: History of British Literature I

Professor Amy Tigner

Carlisle 622

Class Hours: T/Th 9:30-10:50 a.m. PH 102

Office Hours; T/Th 1:00-2:00 p.m. and by appointment

The communication

Of the dead is tongued with fire beyond the language of the living.

Here, the intersection of the timeless moment

Is England and nowhere. Never and always.

(T.S. Eliot, “Little Gidding”)

English 3351 is a course about history. Our primary goal is to become acquainted with British literary history: working in roughly chronological order, we will trace a fairly standard narrative that includes many of the major figures (Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton) and forms (romance, *fabliau,* tragedy, lyric, epic) of literature written in England from the Middle Ages to the end of the seventeenth century. A secondary concern is with what it means to read and write about literature historically. Many of the works on the syllabus are deliberately backward-looking, the assumption being that knowledge of the past (whether personal, religious, political, or mythic) is key to understanding the present and perhaps even shaping the future. As we examine different versions and uses of history in medieval and early modern literature, we will also explore how and why these works continue to figure in the present-day project of writing history—of what we seek in the past, how we seek it, and why.

**Required Texts:**

*The Broadview Anthology of British Literature*, Concise Edition, Vol. A, ed. Joseph Black et al. (Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview, 2007)

William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, ed. Kenneth Myrick, rev. ed., Signet Classics (New York: NAL, 1998)

John Milton, Paradise Lost, (New York: Penguin Classics, 2003)

This syllabus is subject to change.

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| Dates | Topic and Texts | Assignments Due |
| Tues. Jan 18 | Introduction to course and medieval literature |  |
| Thurs Jan 20 | Beowulf | Quiz |
| Tues Jan 25 | Beowulf |  |
| Thurs Jan 27 | **Debate 1: Beowulf** | Position paper |
| Tues Feb 1 | Sir Gawain and the Green Knight | Quiz |
| Thurs Feb 3 | Sir Gawain and the Green Knight |  |
| Tues Feb 8 | **Debate 2: Sir Gawain and the Green Knight** | Position paper |
| Thurs Feb 10 | Chaucer, The General Prologue | Quiz |
| Tues Feb 15 | The Miller’s Prologue and Tale | Quiz |
| Thus Feb 17 | The Wife of Bath, Prologue and Tale | Quiz |
| Tues Feb 22 | (no class: at home Midterm) | Turn in Midterm to Blackboard |
| Thurs Feb 24 | **Debate 3: Chaucer** | Position paper |
| Tues Mar 1 | Introduction to the Renaissance; *Utopia* | Quiz |
| Thurs Mar 3 | Thomas More, *Utopia* |  |
| Tues Mar 8 | **Debate 4:** *Utopia* | Position paper |
| Thurs Mar10 | Sonnets: Petrarch and English Sonnets |  |
| Tues Mar 15 (no class spring break) | No Class Spring Break |  |
| Thurs Mar 17 (no class spring break) | No Class Spring Break |  |
| Tues Mar 22 | Spenser’s *Faerie Queene* | Quiz |
| Thurs Mar 24 | Spenser’s *Faerie Queene* | Quiz |
| Tues Mar 29 | **Debate5 *Faerie Queene*** | Position paper |
| Thurs Mar 31 | Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice* | Quiz |
| Tues Apr 5 | Shakespeare’s  *Merchant of Venice* |  |
| Thurs Apr 7 | No Class | No Class |
| Tues Apr 12 | **Debate 6 *Merchant of Venice*** | Position paper |
| Thurs Apr 14 | Milton’s *Paradise Lost* | Quiz |
| Tues Apr 19 | Milton’s *Paradise Lost* | Quiz |
| Thurs Apr 21 | **Debate 7: *Paradise Lost*** | Position paper |
| Tues Apr 26 | Behn’s *Oroonoko* | Quiz  **Final paper due** |
| Thurs Apr28 | Behn’s *Oroonoko* |  |
| Tues May 3 | **Debate 8: *Oroonoko*** | Position paper |
| Thurs May 5 | Review for final |  |
|  | Final exam | Final exam |

Participation in 3-4 debates as a debater (this number may change, depending on class size) and participation in 3-4 debates as a judge (this number may change, depending on class size)--10%

2 position papers (700 words each); these papers will be due on class day that you are a debater--20%

Quizzes. I will automatically drop your lowest 2 quiz grades; you cannot make-up any quiz—10%

# Midterm Examination—20%

Long essay (1500 words)—20%

Final Examination—20%

**All major assignments (Final paper, the midterm, 3 position papers, and the final) must be completed and turned in to pass the class.**

**The Essay** The final paper will be on assigned topics, and the deadline on the syllabus are firm. For every day the paper is late, I will drop your grade by ½ letter grade.

**Position Papers**: For your position paper, you will need to write a 3-page (approx. 750 words) essay in which you argue one side or the other of the question presented for the debate. For every day the paper is late, I will drop your grade by ½ letter grade.

**Daily Reading/Lecture Quizzes**: All quizzes will be given at the beginning of class. You will have the first 10 minutes of class to complete the quiz. If you are late, you can only take the quiz if you arrive within the first 10 minutes of class and you will have to turn in your quiz at the cut-off time. You cannot take the quiz at any other time than when it is given in class. Remember that I will drop the lowest two quiz grades.

**The Midterm Examination:** The midterm will be a combination of short answer and essay questions*.*

**The Final Examination:** The final will also be a combination of short answer and essay questions.

# **Attendance:** Attendance in this class is mandatory. You can miss 2 classes without penalty, but you should save these days for when you are sick. If you have taken class time off and then are sick, this time will be counted against you. **For each class that you are absent (beyond two) your final grade will be lowered half a point.**

# Also, sleeping, texting, or emailing in class will not be tolerated. If you find that you need to do any of these things in class, you will be asked to leave. You are paying for your education, so you need to show up for it! For extreme cases of prolonged illness or family emergencies, you will need to speak to me so that we can work out an accommodation.

Class time is a precious commodity, so **please be punctual**. You may be marked absent if you are more than ten minutes late to class.

**Please do not sleep in class**. Being present both mentally and physically is necessary to learn in the class. If you are sleeping in class, you may be asked to leave, and you will be then counted absent.

**Please be prepared** to discuss the texts and subjects at hand. Make sure that you have read the material and thought about the texts.

# **Drop Policy:**

If for some reason you cannot continue attending class, be sure to drop the course by the census date, because faculty members can no longer purge students from the official roll.

**The Writing Center:**

The Writing Center, Room 411 in the Central Library, will assist you with any writing assignment while you are a student at UT-Arlington. You may schedule appointments online by following directions available at www.uta.edu/owl/appointments, by calling 817 272-2601, or by visiting the Writing Center. If you come to the Writing Center without an appointment, you will be helped on a first-come, first-served basis as tutors become available. Writing Center tutors are carefully chosen and trained, and they can assist you with any aspect of your writing, from understanding an assignment to revising an early draft to polishing a final draft. However, the Writing Center is not an editing service; tutors will not correct your grammar or rewrite your assignment for you, but they will help you learn to solve your grammatical and organizational problems. I encourage each of you to use the Writing Center.

# **Academic Dishonesty:**

Academic dishonesty—which includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarizing, taking an examination for another person—is perhaps the most serious offense to the ideals of the University and of higher education more generally. We will investigate all suspected cases and will refer all persons we believe to be involved in academic dishonesty to the proper University authorities for further investigation and, if necessary, discipline.

Do not pay anyone to write a paper for you or take un-credited writing from the Internet. Do the work!

# **Students with Disabilities:**

The University is committed to accommodating students with disabilities, and so are we. For general information, visit the Office for Students with Disabilities, located on the lower level of the University Center, or call 817-272-3364 (TDD 817-272-3323). If you require accommodation based on a disability for this class, we would like to meet with you in the privacy of my office sometime during the first two weeks of the semester to make sure that you are properly accommodated.