

Bergen Community College
School of English
Department of Composition and Literature
Course Syllabus

LIT-205: English Literature to 1800

Instructor:
Office
Phone:
E-mail:
Office Hours:

Course Description

This course is a study of British literature from Anglo-Saxon times to the late eighteenth century. Students read works such as Beowulf and such authors as Chaucer, Kempe, Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Pope, and Swift.

General Education Course. Lecture (3.00).
Prerequisite: WRT-101.

Student Learning Objectives:

As a result of meeting the requirements of this course, you will be able to:

1. Identify selections of literature written by authors from the British Isles from the tenth century to about 1800 C.E.; and recognize the major genres of the period and the literary techniques that writers use in constructing their texts.
2. Describe the issues facing society when the works were written.
3. Compare various literary genres, trends, and stylistic methods employed by these writers.
4. Define the intellectual, cultural, and artistic background shaping the production of these works.
5. Explain the themes and artistic significance of these works and their relevance to readers today.
6. Use a variety of methods to critically and analytically read and respond to works of literature produced during this time period; and produce a properly formatted essay that demonstrates competency in both research and evaluation of sources.

Course Requirements:

1. A midterm essay examination
2. A short oral presentation on the subject of your research paper.
3. A research paper of 7-10 pages, complete with internal documentation and a Works Cited page presented in correct MLA form, on a topic selected by you in consultation with me.
4. Periodic critical responses—2-3 page text analyses.
5. Quizzes, as needed.
6. Active participation in all course activities.

Sample Required Text(s):

M.H.Abrams, gen. ed., et al. *The Norton Anthology of World Masterpieces*, Vol. I. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 2000.

Evaluation

You will write two brief critical responses (3-4 pages) for two of the major texts under study; and your responses will be due upon completion of the unit—the class immediately following. There will also be a midterm essay exam, intermittent quizzes, and a term paper.

Response papers: 30%

Participation and Quizzes: 20%

Midterm Exam: 25%

Term Paper: 25%

Written assignments must be formatted according to MLA standards. You will find citation guides on our library's website. Please note that you will also be expected to produce a documented term paper with secondary sources; and you may find appropriate—relevant—resources in our library. You are encouraged to schedule an appointment with one of our reference librarians if you did not attend an instructional seminar in your writing class.

BCC's Writing Center is located in L125, and you are encouraged to work with our faculty and professional writing tutors. Please note that the center is indeed a tutoring center—you are not to drop off your paper for proofreading as this is not a function of the center.

Attendance Policy

Your presence is vital to our classroom community, so regular attendance is required. You will be permitted *two absences* after which your grade will be negatively affected. You are expected to come to class every morning prepared to discuss assigned texts and to produce written responses both in class and at home.

A note on plagiarism: please give credit where credit is due! Honesty is expected of you. It is expected that the work you hand in will always be your own, and that you will never copy sentences, phrases, paragraphs, or whole essays from any other person's work, for that is plagiarism. If you are ever unclear about how to cite another person or author's ideas, come see me or consult the staff in the writing center.

A note on deadlines: no late papers will be accepted, and you are not permitted to submit papers electronically—via email.

Sample Course Schedule/Reading List: (Class schedule subject to change depending upon class progress.)

1. *Beowulf*, in modern English
2. Introduction to Geoffrey Chaucer: "The General Prologue," "The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale," "The Miller's Tale," "The Pardoner's Prologue and Tale," Chaucer's Retraction.
3. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Romance and Courtly Love.
4. "Everyman," introduction to mediaeval drama and the morality play.
5. Popular ballads of the Mediaeval Period: "Lord Rendall," "Barbara Allan," "The Three Ravens," "Bonny George Campbell," "Sir Patrick Spens," "The Bonny Earl of Moray," and others.

6. Sir Thomas Mallory, *Morte d'Artur*, all books
7. Introduction to the 16th Century
8. Sit (Saint) thomas More, *Utopia*.
9. 16th century Poetry: Sir Thomas Wyatt, Henry Howard, Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry*.
10. Edmund Spenser, Book I, *The Faerie Queene*, "Amoretti," "Epithalamion."
11. Christopher Marlowe, "Dr. Faustus."
12. Selected Shakespearean Sonnets, "*Henry IV*, Part I." introduction to dramaturgy and the history play.
13. The 17th Century: Metaphysical Poetry, selections from Jon Donne, George Herbert, Richard Crashaw, and Henry Vaughan.
- ** Review and preparation for mid-term examination
14. The Cavalier Tradition: selections from Ben Jonson, Robert Herrick, Andrew Marvel, Sir John Suckling and Richard Lovelace.
15. John Milton: Intro., "Samson Agonistes," poems: *Paradise Lost*, Book I only.
16. The Restoration and the 18th Century: Intro., John Dryden, "An Essay of Dramatic Poesy," "A Song for St. Cecilia's Day," Alexander Pope, "As Essay on Criticism," Parts I and II, "As Essay on Man," "The Rape of the Lock."
17. 18th Century Satire: Jonathan Swift, introduction and *Gulliver's Travels*, Parts I and IV, "A Modest Proposal."
18. Samuel Johnson, introduction and "The History of Rasselas," *Rambler*, No. 4 (on Fiction), *Lives of the Poets*: "Pope" and "Milton."
19. Oliver Goldsmith, from *Letters from a Citizen of the World*..