

# English 3327:

## Masterpieces of British Literature

### From the Beginnings through the 18th Century

Professor John McNamara  
Assistant Instructor: Dr. Mark Womack

Summer 2010

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#### Course Website:

<http://drmarkwomack.com/engl-3327/>

This site contains course information and materials, including the syllabus and study questions.

#### Blackboard Vista:

<http://www.uh.edu/blackboard/>

You will submit ALL your work for this course (Weekly Journals, Research Paper, and Final Exam) on-line through Blackboard Vista.

We recommend that you use a safe, reliable browser to access the course, such as Firefox, Chrome, Opera, or Safari. (Internet Explorer is not secure, not dependable, and does not comply with Web Standards.)

#### YouTube:

[http://www.youtube.com/view\\_play\\_list?p=C5340FF9B2093717](http://www.youtube.com/view_play_list?p=C5340FF9B2093717)

You can find all the lectures for the class on this YouTube play list.

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#### Format of the Course

While students were originally present with the professor in a studio classroom where classes were taped for later television broadcast, you will be taking this course in a form that is now known as “distance education.” Since you are viewing taped versions of these classes on YouTube, you will interact with the professor in different ways than the students in the “live” sessions. Thus, while you will be able to see and hear how those students responded to, or asked questions of, the professor, you will send in your own questions by e-mail to the assistant instructor or by leaving a telephone message at the number listed below. The assistant instructor for this course is Dr. Mark Womack.

Each class meeting of the original “live” version of the course consisted of three segments (A, B, and C) of 50 minutes each, with a break of about 10 minutes after the first and the second segments of each class. You should plan to view a total of 14 complete classes (of 3 segments each) following the syllabus given below. (Please note that Class 14, the Review for the Final Examination, consists of 2 segments, and the Study Questions presented there will also be on the course website listed above.)

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#### Contact Information

To contact the professor or assistant instructor for any reason, you may call and leave a message at any time. Or you may send a message by e-mail or regular mail. **For most communications, we prefer e-mail as the most reliable method.** (Do **not** rely on the email system within Blackboard to contact the instructors.)

Prof. McNamara: [John.McNamara1@mail.uh.edu](mailto:John.McNamara1@mail.uh.edu)

Dr. Womack: [mark@drmarkwomack.com](mailto:mark@drmarkwomack.com)

Telephone (Prof. McNamara's office): (713) 743-2973.

You may leave a message giving your call-back number (very slowly and clearly), and your call will be returned.

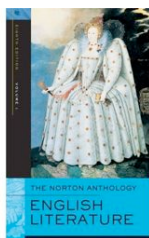
Regular mail address:

Prof. John McNamara or Dr. Mark Womack  
Department of English  
University of Houston  
Houston, TX 77204-3013

## Texts

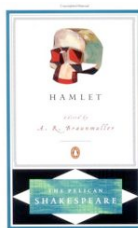
### Required

*The Norton Anthology  
of English Literature*  
Volume 1 (8th Edition)



*Hamlet*

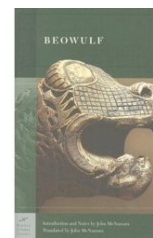
William Shakespeare



You may use **ANY** edition of *Hamlet* for the class.

### Recommended

*Beowulf*  
John McNamara  
(introduction & translator)



(Recommended, but not required.)  
This text includes Professor McNamara's introductory essay, containing essential information and interpretation of this classic work, as well as his own translation of the original Old English into modern English.

## Syllabus

Date	Lecture	Topics & Assignments
Week 1	1 (A,B,C)	Introduction. The Beginnings of English Society.
	2 (A,B,C)	Anglo-Saxon Culture. Bede's Story of Cædmon. <i>The Wanderer</i> and <i>Dream of the Rood</i> . Introduction to <i>Beowulf</i> . <b>You may use either the translation by Heaney or by Professor McNamara.</b>
	3 (A,B,C)	<i>Beowulf</i> (cont.). Transition to Later Medieval Culture. Introduction to Chaucer's <i>General Prologue to The Canterbury Tales</i> .

Date	Lecture	Topics & Assignments
Week 2	4 (A,B,C)	Chaucer, <i>General Prologue</i> (cont.). <i>The Miller's Tale</i> .
	5 (A,B,C)	Chaucer, <i>Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale</i> . Overview of Arthurian Romance.
	6 (A,B,C)	<i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i> . Introduction to Renaissance England.
Week 3	7 (A,B,C)	Sidney's <i>Astrophil and Stella</i> . Spenser's <i>Amoretti</i> and <i>Epithalamion</i> . Shakespeare, Sonnets (18, 29, 130, 138).
	8 (A,B,C)	Shakespeare, <i>Hamlet</i> : Discussion.
	<b>REQUIRED VIEWING OF HAMLET.</b> You are to view a film production of the play on your own (several versions will be discussed in class) and consider how that production meets the questions we raise in class discussions. There are several versions of <i>Hamlet</i> available in the Current Journals Room of the UH Main Library. They are also generally available for rental in local video stores or from Netflix.	
	9 (A,B,C)	Donne, "Song," "The Canonization," "The Flea," "Valediction Forbidding Mourning," <i>Holy Sonnets</i> . Biblical Translations into English.
June 22	Last day to drop a course or withdraw with a "W."	
Week 4	10 (A,B,C)	Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i> .
	11 (A,B,C)	The Age or Reason. Bacon, "Of Truth," "Of Superstition," "Abuses of Language," "The Idols." Dryden, <i>Mac Flecknoe</i> .
	12 (A,B,C)	Pope, <i>Rape of the Lock</i> and <i>Essay on Man</i> , Epistle 1.
June 25	<b>TERM PAPER DUE</b> (See instructions below for submitting your paper on Blackboard Vista.)	
Week 5	13 (A,B,C)	Swift, "A Modest Proposal" and <i>Gulliver's Travels</i> , Part 4. Gray, <i>Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard</i> and Goldsmith, <i>The Deserted Village</i> .
	14 (A,B)	Review for the Final Examination.
July 1	<b>FINAL DEADLINE FOR WEEKLY JOURNALS</b>	
July 2-3	<b>FINAL EXAMINATION</b> (See instructions below for taking your exam on Blackboard Vista.)	

## Blackboard Vista POSTINGS to fulfill the JOURNAL REQUIREMENT

**Journals have been replaced by participation on the Blackboard Vista Discussion Boards.**

You will hear some discussion of a journal requirement in the lectures, but that requirement applied only to an earlier version of this course.

Each week you will post your personal responses to one or more of the works covered that week on the Blackboard Vista Discussion Boards. These Blackboard Vista postings can be composed as entries for a journal of your own thoughts about the works and/or as responses to other students' responses to those works in the mode of a "chat

room” discussion. You should have a total of at least **five** substantial postings (one per week) by the end of the course.

You must submit all your journal entries by **July 1**. We strongly encourage you to keep up with your weekly journal entries. But because we want to accommodate the greater scheduling flexibility of a distance learning class, we have not set specific due dates for each weekly journal.

**Please Note:** While your posting will feature your personal response(s) to the work covered that week, your response should be thoughtful and make specific references to the text you are considering.

## Term Paper

This project is an exploration of canon formation—specifically, the ways in which some literary writers and works are considered “major” while others are marginalized as “minor” or even “unimportant.” You will no doubt have noticed that while there are several women writers included in our anthology, they are generally not accorded a major place in the so-called “canon” of English literature in this very prestigious collection.

Your task, then, will be to select a woman writer from the general time period of the course and write a paper that (1) presents a short account of the writer's career within the context of her time, (2) provides a detailed analysis of at least one of her works, and (3) argues for her inclusion in (or exclusion from) the canon of major English writers.

Length:

8-10 pages (double-spaced). Be sure to include **page numbers**.

Documentation:

**All sources must be documented.** While the MLA form is preferred, any reasonable and clear form for citing sources will be acceptable.

### **Due to be received by June 25.**

You must submit your paper electronically (see instructions below). You do not need to submit a hard copy version of your essay.

### **How to submit your Term Paper:**

- Find the **Term Paper-Summer 10** link on the main Blackboard Vista page (**NB:** You can only submit your paper through this Blackboard Vista link, NOT through the Turnitin web site.)
- Click the link for the assignment
- Click the “submit paper” icon
- Enter the Title of your paper
- Click “Browse”
- Navigate to the location of the file you want to upload (Microsoft Word preferred. Other acceptable file types: WordPerfect, PostScript, pdf, rtf, and plain text.)
- Click the “Submit” button
- View your paper in the window. Make sure the text matches the document you want to turn in (Click “No,” if the text does not match)
- Click the “Yes, Submit” button
- View the Turnitin digital receipt (Turnitin will assign an 8 digit paper ID for your paper)

After the instructor has posted grades:

- Click the link for the assignment
- Click the hyperlinked title of the paper under the Title column
- View your score at the top of the page

**N.B. Remember always to keep a copy of your paper.**

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## Final Examination

This examination will be comprehensive in that it will cover all the works on the syllabus and the material introduced in class lectures and discussions. In order to help you focus on the most important subjects for your review, you will be given a list of “Study Questions for the Final Examination” during the last class meeting. The examination will be based on these study questions, which are taken from subjects discussed in detail during the classes sessions. Note that the last two hours of class time will be devoted to a review of the course using these study questions as a guide.

**The final will be available on Blackboard Vista for two full days (July 2 and July 3).** You will have 3 hours to complete the exam. On the honor system, you may use your text books during the exam but no other materials.

Please use **paragraphs** in your answers, they help organize and clarify your arguments. Designate the beginning of a paragraph by inserting the following code: <p> (Between paragraphs, without spaces, insert the left angle bracket, the letter p and the right angle bracket.)

**NB:** After you finish each portion of the exam, YOU MUST PRESS THE **SUBMIT** BUTTON TO SEND THE EXAM; otherwise your answer will be lost.

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## Final Grade

<b>Term Paper</b>	45%
<b>Final Exam</b>	45%
<b>Weekly Journals</b>	10%

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## Withdrawal Policy

While all students are encouraged to complete the course, we recognize that occasionally a student may need to withdraw, especially for non-academic reasons. Please bear in mind that it is your responsibility to fill out and turn in the necessary forms in order to withdraw formally from the course.

According to university policy, if you wish to withdraw from the course you must do so by the “Last Day to Drop a Course” as printed in the official academic calendar. The academic calendar for the current semester can be found by following the links on the home page for UH.

Please note that if you do not withdraw by the “Last Day to Drop a Course,” then you must be given a grade for the course. If a student simply does not turn in assignments and does not warrant a grade of “I” (Incomplete) then current university policy is to assign that student a failing grade for the course.

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## Policy on Incomplete Grades

The grade of “I” (Incomplete) is a conditional and temporary grade given when students are passing a course or still have a reasonable chance of passing in the judgment of the instructor but, for non-academic reasons beyond their control, have not completed a relatively small part of all requirements. Students are responsible for informing the instructor immediately of the reasons for not submitting an assignment on time or not taking an examination. Students must contact the instructor to make arrangements to complete the course requirements.

An Incomplete is granted only if (a) the student has sufficient non-academic reason for not completing the coursework within the term allotted; (b) the student has already completed a substantial portion of the coursework; and (c) the student requests a grade of Incomplete before the date of the Final Examination. Students who do receive an Incomplete grade must complete all the course requirements by a deadline set by the instructor. If the student fails to submit the work on time, the grade will be changed to reflect the work completed in the course. Bear in mind that a grade of "I" automatically changes to "F" at the end of a calendar year if all course requirements are not fulfilled by that time.