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## ENGLISH 3327

### MASTERPIECES OF BRITISH LITERATURE

### FROM ANGLO-SAXON THROUGH THE 18TH CENTURY

FALL 2020

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#### Class Format

Since this is a distance learning course, we will have no in-person classroom meetings. Instead, you can listen to the class lectures online at [slow-reading.com/archives](http://slow-reading.com/archives). One great advantage of this format is that you can listen to the lectures at your own pace; one potential disadvantage is that it is very easy to fall behind. (See suggested schedule below.)

If you have questions, you can email me: [drmarkwomack@gmail.com](mailto:drmarkwomack@gmail.com). (Don't rely on the Blackboard email system to contact me.) I will also hold online Class Discussions every Friday between 6pm and 7pm via Google Meet. The link for the Class Discussion is: [meet.google.com/oup-bqiq-vum](https://meet.google.com/oup-bqiq-vum)

Absorbing over 500 years of literary masterpieces is a genuine challenge. Attending the weekly Class Discussions will make it bit easier because you can ask questions and get clarifications about the texts we read. Regular participation in Class Discussion is a part of your grade for the class.

#### Course Description

This course will introduce you to major works of British literature from the Anglo-Saxon period through the 18th century. We will study these literary texts *as* literary texts — works of verbal art designed to delight readers and auditors — not primarily as historical documents. We will spend virtually all our time analyzing specific passages in great detail, thinking about how the text in front of us works on our minds and ears as we read it. This course will thus provide an opportunity to learn how to read literature closely and to write about it with precision and clarity.

Although not organized around any particular themes, the course will grapple with two critical questions: 1) “Why have these works persisted in our culture for so long?” and 2) “How do these writers manipulate the resources of language to shape our experience as readers?” As you will see, I believe these questions about canon formation and about literary form are inseparably related.

#### Required Texts

- *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* Volume 1 (10th Ed.)
- *Hamlet*, A. R. Braunmuller, ed. (Pelican Shakespeare)  
(You may use ANY well-annotated edition for the class.)

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DR. MARK WOMACK

[drmarkwomack@gmail.com](mailto:drmarkwomack@gmail.com)

Class Discussion: Google Meet  
Friday 6pm – 7pm

[meet.google.com/oup-bqiq-vum](https://meet.google.com/oup-bqiq-vum)

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#### Blackboard

You will submit all your work online through Blackboard:  
[uh.edu/blackboard/](http://uh.edu/blackboard/)

#### Website

You can find all course materials — including the syllabus, assignment sheets, handouts, and so forth — on the class website: [drmarkwomack.com/engl-3327/](http://drmarkwomack.com/engl-3327/)

#### NOTE ON TEXTS

You can probably find versions of all the texts we will read this semester online for free. But those free versions typically lack any footnotes or scholarly introductions. Such annotations are invaluable when studying complex works of literature, so please use the Norton Anthology, not Google, for these texts.

*The Norton Anthology  
of English Literature*  
Volume 1 (10th Edition)



*Hamlet*  
William Shakespeare



## Assignments

You will write ten short Stylistic Analyses of texts discussed in class and two Critical Essays. We will hold weekly Class Discussions on Google Meet. You will also take a comprehensive Final Exam. All the material for the final will come directly from readings and lectures. Failure to complete *any* assignment may result in a failing grade for the course. You will submit all your work (analyses, essay, and final exam) online through Blackboard. Assignments not submitted on time receive a zero. I never assign extra credit or make-up work. I discuss grades only in private, and only forty-eight hours (at least) after I have returned an assignment.

### Stylistic Analyses

Throughout the semester, you will write *ten* brief analyses (about 300 words each) of specific stylistic choices in the works covered in class. For each analysis, you should pick a few lines from one of the assigned texts, then focus on a particular linguistic detail in them (a surprising word choice, an arresting metaphor, a complex allusion, a striking use of rhythm), and offer your insights into what that specific stylistic nuance does for a reader.

Everything you say in your analysis should relate directly to the actual words of the text. Don't get sidetracked; stick with the words. Think about how the author has shaped and arranged the language. I am looking for fine-grained analysis, not mushy generalizations.

Post your Stylistic Analyses in the Journal component of Blackboard. *Please DO NOT submit your analyses as attached files.* The final deadline for all analyses is **December 4**. But I encourage you not to wait till the last minute to submit them.

### Critical Essay

You will find detailed assignment sheets for the Critical Essays on the main website

### Class Discussion

You must attend at least *five* of our weekly sessions to get full credit, at least *two* of those before Week 7 (**October 10**). You can find more details on the Class Discussions on the main website.

### Final Exam

The final will be an essay exam: you will answer four questions, writing short essay answers for each of them. For each question, you will have a choice of topics to write on.

**The final will be available on Blackboard all day on Saturday, December 12.** 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.

## Course Grade

|                    |     |
|--------------------|-----|
| Stylistic Analyses | 10% |
| Class Discussion   | 10% |
| Critical Essay 1   | 20% |
| Critical Essay 2   | 20% |
| Final Exam         | 40% |

## Numerical Values for Letter Grades

|    |        |
|----|--------|
| A+ | 100–97 |
| A  | 96–93  |
| A– | 92–90  |
| B+ | 89–87  |
| B  | 86–83  |
| B– | 82–80  |
| C+ | 79–77  |
| C  | 76–73  |
| C– | 72–70  |
| D  | 69–60  |
| F  | 59–0   |

\* Please note that I do not round up final averages. So, for example, an 86.9 counts as a B, not as a B+

## Submitting Essay

1. Find the submission link on the Blackboard page. (Use only the Blackboard links, *not* the TurnItIn web site.)
2. Click the View/Complete link for the assignment.
3. Enter your Name from the drop-down Author menu.
4. Enter a Title for your paper.
5. Click the "Browse" button.
6. Find the document file on your computer and click "Open."
7. Click the "Upload" button.
8. Review the file and click on the "Submit" button.

## SCHEDULE OF LECTURES, READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS

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### Week One

| Monday 8/24  | Wednesday 8/26                | Friday 8/28                      |
|--|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| First Day Lecture: a review of the syllabus, assignments, and schedule | <i>Beowulf</i> (lines 1–1650) | <i>Beowulf</i> (lines 1651–3182) |

### Week Two

| Monday 8/31  | Wednesday 9/2  | Friday 9/4   |
|--|--|--|
| <i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i> , Fitts 1 & 2 | <i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i> , Fitts 3 & 4 | <i>The Canterbury Tales</i> “General Prologue” (lines 1–446) |

### Week Three

| Monday 9/7 | Wednesday 9/9  | Friday 9/11                |
|------------|--|----------------------------|
| LABOR DAY  | <i>The Canterbury Tales</i> “General Prologue” (lines 447–860) | “Miller’s Prologue & Tale” |

### Week Four

| Monday 9/14                      | Wednesday 9/16               | Friday 9/18                     |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| “Wife of Bath’s Prologue & Tale” | “Pardoner’s Prologue & Tale” | Wyatt & Surrey, selected poems* |

### Week Five

| Monday 9/21                                | Wednesday 9/23                             | Friday 9/25                                  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Final Deadline for Critical Essay 1</b> | <i>Astrophil and Stella</i> , sonnets 1–56 | <i>Astrophil and Stella</i> , sonnets 61–108 |

### Week Six

| Monday 9/28  | Wednesday 9/30  | Friday 10/2   |
|--|---|---|
| <i>The Faerie Queen</i> 1.1<br>[The Redcrosse Knight vs Error] | <i>The Faerie Queen</i> 1.9.21–54<br>[The Redcrosse Knight & Despair] | <i>The Faerie Queene</i> 2.12<br>[The Bower of Bliss] |

## Week Seven

Monday 10/5

Wednesday 10/7

Friday 10/9

*The Faerie Queene* 3.6  
[The Garden of Adonis]

*The Faerie Queene* 3.12  
[The Masque of Cupid]

*Doctor Faustus*, Prologue–scene 6

## Week Eight

Monday 10/12

Wednesday 10/14

Friday 10/16

*Doctor Faustus*, Chorus 2–Epilogue

Shakespeare's Sonnets  
(1, 3, 12, 15, 18, 20, 29, 30, 33, 60, 71)

Shakespeare's Sonnets (73, 94, 116,  
127, 129, 130, 138, 144, 146, 147, 152)

## Week Nine

Monday 10/19

Wednesday 10/21

Friday 10/23

*Hamlet*, Act 1

*Hamlet*, Act 2

*Hamlet*, Act 3

## Week Ten

Monday 10/26

Wednesday 10/28

Friday 10/30

*Hamlet*, Act 4

*Hamlet*, Act 5

**Final Deadline for Essay 2**

## Week Eleven

Monday 11/2

Tuesday 11/3

Wednesday 11/4

Friday 11/6

John Donne, love poems\*

Last day to drop a course  
or withdraw with a "W."

John Donne, religious  
verse\*

*Paradise Lost*, book 1

## Week Twelve

Monday 11/9

Wednesday 11/11

Friday 11/13

*Paradise Lost*, book 2

*Paradise Lost*, book 3

*Paradise Lost*, book 4

## Week Thirteen

| Monday 11/16   | Wednesday 11/18               | Friday 11/20  |
|--|-------------------------------|---|
| <i>Paradise Lost</i> , book 5<br>& book 8: lines 250–653 | <i>Paradise Lost</i> , book 9 | <i>Paradise Lost</i> , book 10: lines 1–228,<br>414–584, 720–1104<br>& book 12: lines 466–649 |

## Week Fourteen

| Monday 11/23   | Wednesday 11/25      | Friday 11/27 |
|--|----------------------|--------------|
| <i>An Essay on Criticism</i> Part 2, lines<br>337–83 & <i>The Rape of the Lock</i> | THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY |              |

## Week Fifteen

| Monday 11/30                                     | Wednesday 12/2                                     | Friday 12/4   |
|--|--|---|
| <i>Gulliver's Travels</i> , Part 1<br>[Lilliput] | <i>Gulliver's Travels</i> , Part 4<br>[Houyhnhnms] | Final Exam Format<br><b>Final Deadline for Stylistic<br/>Analyses</b> |

## Final Exam

Saturday 12/12

The final will be available on Blackboard all day on **December 12**. You will have three hours to complete the exam. On the honor system, you may use your text books during the exam but no other materials.

## Selected Poems

### WYATT

"The long love that in my thought doth harbor," "Whoso list to hunt,"  
"Farewell, Love," "I find no peace," "My galley," "Divers doth use," "They  
flee from me," & "The Lover Showeth How He Is Forsaken of Such as  
He Sometime Enjoyed"

### SURREY

"The soote season," "Love, that doth reign and live within my thought,"  
"Alas! so all things now do hold their peace," "Th'Assyrian king, in peace  
with foul desire," & from *The Fourth Book of Virgil*

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DONNE

**Love Poems:** “The Flea,” “The Good-Morrow,” “The Canonization,” “A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning,” “The Relic,” & “Elegy 19, To His Mistress Going to Bed”

**Religious Verse:** *Holy Sonnets*, “Good Friday, 1613, Riding Westward,” & “A Hymn to God the Father”

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### Withdrawal Policy

I strongly encourage every student to complete the course, but I 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” on the official academic calendar.

If you have not withdrawn by then you will receive a grade for the course. Current university policy dictates that students who fail to submit their required work and do not qualify for an Incomplete will receive a failing grade for the course.

**Last Day to Drop a Course**  
November 3

### 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 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 the student has not fulfilled all course requirements by then.

**Final Exam Date**  
December 12

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Your instructor, Mark Womack, reserves the right to revise or amend the policies listed here with sufficient prior written notice.

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