

English 220: Major British Writers to 1785
Fall 2010
T-Th, 11:00-12:20
Hoover 100

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Course goals and objectives—from your professor:

The very ambitious purpose of this partially team-taught course (and of the two-semester sequence to which it belongs) is to introduce you to the major themes and writers in English literature from its beginnings (in the seventh century) until about 1700. In the second semester of the sequence, you will become acquainted with the entire second half of the story: British *and American* Literature from about 1700 to the present.

Obviously a course of this type has to be *extremely* selective in terms of the works covered. If you look at your Norton Anthology (the single text for this course, and one of the two texts required for English 221), you will see that we could have included a number of additional writers. As full as this syllabus is, we've had to leave out a wealth of wonderful material.

What you *will* get this semester, however, is a look at a millennium of terrific literature (mostly poetry, for historical reasons) *in sequence* and, insofar as time allows, *in context*.

Before we started offering and requiring this course, many of our students complained that they had read many wonderful texts (and had learned to read them well)--but that they still lacked that all-important and empowering sense of "what came after what" and "who inspired or influenced whom." This two-semester course is our attempt to address those questions--while giving you a sense of the major themes and movements in British and American literary history.

We realize that a six- or eight-semester course would be even better. And you may become frustrated at how little time we'll be able to spend on each writer (even the most important), and at how few of their works we'll actually be able to go over carefully in class.

No one, I assure you(!), will be more frustrated than your professors. We *love* this stuff! We'd like to give (as Andrew Marvell says on page 677) "an age at least to every part" of this course. But we, like Marvell, "hear time's wingèd chariot hurrying near"--and we want, in twenty-six very short weeks, to give you some sense of the "flow" of English and American literature, the big picture.

This is what we hope: we hope (1) that you'll enjoy the empowering sense of knowing what comes after what; and (2) that, at the same time, you'll get so excited about some of these writers that you'll go on to study them in more depth--an opportunity you'll find in all the department's 300-level courses. Like the Medieval material? Check out Wendy Furman-Adams' Literature of Medieval Europe or Sean Morris' British Literature, 700-1500--and/or sign on for a full semester of Chaucer or Dante. Like the Renaissance? Check out Dr. Furman-Adams' Literature of Renaissance England or Reading Renaissance Poetry--along with Dr. Morris' Shakespeare, Shakespeare in Love, or Shakespeare and his Contemporaries, or any course by our newest faculty member Jonathan Burton. Like Milton? We've *got* Milton. And we've also got a special course dedicated to English Literature 1640-1789, where you can *really* explore Dryden, Philips, and Pope; their predecessors (like Marvell) and their successors (whom you'll encounter in English 221). The same will be true for all the writers you'll meet, briefly and in context, next semester.

Then, once you've done some more study in depth (in courses that we hope you'll have chosen more deliberately because *this* course gave you an idea of what each was about) there will be a chance to go *deeper still*: by choosing a senior seminar in an area you've come to know well. (Mary Wroth, Aemilia Lanyer, and Katherine Philips, for instance, reappear alongside their male and female contemporaries in a seminar, rooted in feminist theory, called "Writing Renaissance Women." But the study-in-depth that course provides requires quite a lot of background--starting here and now.)

Another big plus of this course, we think, is that it will introduce you to us as a department. Every year at our big party for graduating seniors, we find that almost no student has taken a class with every one of us. We feel that this is our loss and yours too. So, although Wendy Furman-Adams is the convening and chief instructor in English 220 this semester (with Andrea Rehn taking over in the Spring 221), you'll also hear lectures by Sean Morris, Charles Adams, dAve pAddy, and Tony Barnstone. By the end of this year, you most likely will have seen each of us teach at least once--another way, perhaps, of guiding your choices in the future.

And from your preceptor:

Hello fellow English geeks! Welcome to English 220, also known as Major British Writers to 1785. For the purposes of this class, I will be your preceptor. "What exactly is a preceptor?", you may ask. A preceptor is an in-class teaching assistant. I will be in class with all of you every day, doing the readings and participating in our discussions. I will also hold outside office hours so that you can have double help, from both Dr. Furman-Adams and myself. I took this same class myself exactly two years ago, and remember well what it feels like to be in your shoes! This class is a lot of reading and a great deal of work, but so incredibly worthwhile. Between this class and its other half next semester in 221, you will get a quick introduction to basically all of English Literature!

Sounds a bit daunting, yes? That is what Dr. Furman-Adams and I are here to help you with. If at any time you find yourself a bit confused, or just want to know more about something we are doing, please don't hesitate to come and see us!

Just because I have taken this class before, however, does not mean that I am an expert. I am excited to have a chance to help you all, as I hope to teach in the future; and as any good teacher knows, you learn just as much from your students as they do from you. I enjoyed this class so much the first time around, and I am thrilled to be able to take it again and share the experience with all of you.

More than anything, this class should be viewed as fun! Where else are you going to get to cover centuries of amazing literary works and discuss them with other people who actually care!? The great thing about the English program at Whittier is that you will have the opportunity to study many of the periods and authors we cover in this class in more detail in an upper-level class. 220 and 221 will give you the big picture, will help you to see the whole forest, not just each separate tree.

220 and 221 are fast-paced (they have to be to get through that many years of literature!), challenging, and will be SO MUCH FUN, but only if you are willing to do the readings and keep up with the workload. I guarantee, if you do the work for this class, you will be rewarded. Do your readings and come to class ready to engage in thoughtful discussion, and the class will be wonderful. Fail to do so, and your experience will suffer.

I hope that I am able, in conjunction with Dr. Furman-Adams, to help guide you to greatness in this class and beyond. In addition to just this class, I am happy and humbled to tell you that I am this year's President of Sigma Tau Delta, our chapter of the National English Honor Society. I look forward to getting to know each of you as potential future members of this honored group. Again, please feel free to call/email/find me for help and guidance, share with me your brilliant new insights to these texts, and open your mind and heart to the excitement and knowledge this semester will bring!

Required Text:

M.H. Abrams, et. al., eds. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature: The Major Authors*, 8th Edition (New York: Norton, 2006).

Note: This book--in combination with an American Literature volume in the spring--will carry you through the entire year's sequence. **Buy one!** (You can now rent one, if you must, but this book is the standard anthology of literature in English, and every major should certainly own it. It's not cheap—but it's a great bargain if you consider how much there is inside and how often you'll want to return to all these texts.)

You will also be responsible for several fat sheaves of hand-outs--punched for storage in a loose-leaf binder.

Required Work:

(1) Prompt and regular attendance at all class sessions. If you must miss a class, you should get class notes from another student and include them in your notebook with proper

acknowledgment. (Roll will be taken, and final grades dropped one step--e.g. from a B to a C-- for each absence after the first two. Thus *six absences will be regarded as grounds for failure of the course.*)

This includes attendance at *at least one event* (ideally more than that!) in our annual *Whittier College Writers Festival* (September 28-30) and/or the reading by poet Kurt Brown on October 5. Extra credit will also be given to students who attend *and review* the Whittier College visits of other writers over the course of the semester. Although all the writers we will study in the first half of this course are by definition long dead, literature is a living art--and majors and minors (of all people) should take advantage of opportunities to meet some of our leading living writers, some of whom you *will* be encountering--soon, if not in English 221. Encounter them this semester as living, breathing people. (Details on the schedule below.)

(2) Reading assignments to be completed *before* the dates for which they are assigned (i.e. in time for class discussion--although this course will feature more lecture than some other courses).

(3) A reading and class journal in which you keep notes and generate questions on each day's readings, as well as take notes on each day's lecture and discussion. *This journal will be due at the end of the course*, and will include a response to a Festival writer of your choice, which will also be typed and handed in earlier. (See schedule below.)

(4) Three papers (ranging in length from about five pages to about ten), each on a period/theme covered during the course.

(5) A midterm exam--identification and essay.

(6) A comprehensive final exam--identification and essay.

Grading Factors:

1. Attendance, preparation, and notebook	20
2. Midterm exam	15
3. Papers	40
4. Final exam	<u>25</u>
	100%

Grading Options:

1. A - F
2. Credit/No Credit (non-majors only)

Note: *All work must be turned in*, and of a passing quality (even if it is turned in so late as to have fallen--theoretically--to an F), *in order to result in a passing grade in the course.*

Work will be regarded as "on time" if it is handed in at the beginning of class or appears in my mailbox by 5:00 on the day it is due. *Late work will be accepted*, but will be *marked down one third of a grade* (e.g. from a B to a B-) for each *school day* (not class day) after the due date. It is

much better, however, to turn in a paper a bit late than to miss a class or arrive late in order to complete it.

Extensions without penalty are occasionally considered--provided (1) that I am consulted *in advance* and (2) that the circumstances seem serious enough to warrant such an extension. (A documented illness or three papers due on the same day are examples of such circumstances.) No penalty-free extensions will be granted after the fact or even at the last minute (e.g. by e-mail the night before). The point is to anticipate difficulties and make plans in advance to address them. This includes seeking help on papers (which I strongly encourage!) near the beginning of each assignment period.

Manuscript Style:

Papers are to be typed double-space in a 12-point font (this syllabus is typed in 12-point Times), and printed on a laser-quality printer. They should be handed in on separate sheets of 8 1/2 X 11 paper, *stapled* in the upper left-hand corner. *Margins* should be one inch; *paragraphs* are to be indented one normal tab. Spaces should not be skipped between paragraphs. Any notes or bibliography must follow MLA Style, details of which are available in the library--as well as on its Web page. (The style is also described in most standard handbooks, such as the one you were required to purchase for your college writing seminar.)

Note: *Hard copies are required.* However, to help the department with its ongoing self-assessment, you must also submit *an electronic copy of your work through Turn-it-in.com.*

Always keep hard-copies of all your work. Documents can get lost--both from my desk and from your disk. Should this occur, you are expected to produce a copy *immediately*; otherwise, I will be forced to count the paper as late beginning with the day it was due. (See above for general policy on late papers.)

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism occurs whenever the true author of a piece of prose, of an idea, or of a line of thought is not the person who claims to be the author. Plagiarism can occur in varying degrees, and will be penalized--in this class as in all others at the College--in proportion to its severity. *Papers in which plagiarism is sufficiently serious will receive an F,* and student's name will be turned in to the Dean of Students. *A repeated act of plagiarism will result in an automatic F in the entire course, in addition to any action taken by the Office of Student Life (which can include suspension from the College).* A number of such serious sanctions have been imposed in recent years.

Please be aware that faculty have the tools to identify any work unfairly borrowed from the Web, as well as other sources.

If you are in doubt about the need for documentation of borrowed material, please feel free to consult me or any other professor on campus. Also be sure that you have mastered the material in the 2009-2011 *College Catalog*, 28-30. Ignorance of this material will not be regarded as an excuse.

Classroom Policies and Etiquette:

Preparation and Participation: Our class meetings are only as good as your preparation and your willingness to engage in mature, enthusiastic, and intelligent discussions about these challenging texts. You are expected to read all the materials for class, *to have your annotated text with you*, to have your own questions prepared, and to use class discussion as an opportunity to deepen your own understanding and that of others. While it is sometimes valuable to express personal insights and opinions, those insights and opinions, in order to be of genuine use, *must be grounded in a close and careful reading of the text at hand*. If you have not done the reading, and done so carefully, you will serve the community better with your silence than with your speech.

Punctuality and Maturity: It is also essential to arrive to class *on time* and *to remain in the classroom until the end of the session*. Nothing is less conducive to concentration than people wandering in and out of class to check text messages, grab a bite, use the restroom, etc. Adults are generally capable of sitting in one place for ninety minutes. If this is not possible for you (barring a sudden case of food poisoning or something else of that magnitude and rarity), please speak to me in advance.

Food and Drink: Feel free to bring water or another non-alcoholic beverage to class. Since we meet in the morning, it should not be necessary to bring food into the classroom. But if bringing food is the only way you can both have lunch and attend class, please sit near the back and keep chewing and paper crumpling as quiet as possible.

Electronic Devices: *The use of laptops, cell phones, and other electronic equipment will not be tolerated*. Leave these items at home or turn them off and stow them entirely out of sight in the classroom. With the help of Disability Services, exceptions can be negotiated for students who require technology for help with learning or other disabilities. But these negotiations need to take place in advance of any classroom use.

Office Hours and E-mail: Whittier faculty set aside a remarkable number of hours per week to meet with students in their offices--and most of us much prefer such face-to-face interaction. Such interaction is not only more in keeping with our Quaker values, but is more efficient as well. Mary Helen and I both offer office hours by appointment in addition to our scheduled hours, in order to make this interaction possible for students, and it is one of the "values added" of a Whittier education.

Nonetheless, a trend has developed lately toward e-mail as many students' preferred method of interaction with faculty, and sometimes work schedules, etc., make such interaction necessary. If you must use e-mail (preferably in addition to personal contact), *please consider your audience and treat your e-mails as the professional correspondence they actually are*. You can help your case immensely with an appropriate salutation (e.g. "Dear Professor Furman-Adams"). (Either "Dr." or "Professor" is appropriate: one indicates rank, the other degree.) In some cases, "Dear

Wendy" may be appropriate—and "Dear Mary Helen" certainly is. (Be aware, though, that some professors prefer *never* to be called by their first names.) But "Hey there!" is never the way to address a professor (and "Mrs." "Miss" both have problems that I'd be happy to explain). We will both do our best to respond promptly to your requests, questions, and concerns. But we cannot guarantee a response over the week-end or after the end of the regular school day (about 5:00 p.m.). And, with the volume of e-mail we receive each day, we cannot be expected to download and respond to drafts of a paper. *Drafts need to be brought in person during office hours.*

ADA Policy:

If you have any disabling condition that may require some special arrangements in order to meet course requirements, please begin by contacting the **Office of Disability Services**, located on the ground floor of the Library (extension 4825). I will be happy to provide any accommodations regarded by the Director as appropriate, but am not in a position to offer such accommodations independently. Short of actual accommodations, however, please feel welcome to talk with Mary Helen or me about anything we can do to help you succeed in the course.

Final Exams:

*The final examination for this course will be given only at the published time (Tuesday, December 14, 10:30-12:30), so plan your departure for the winter break accordingly. Plane tickets purchased by students not consulting the schedule (or not informing their families of the schedule) will not be accepted as an excuse for missing (or rescheduling) the exam. If you should find yourself scheduled for three final exams on a single day, you are (as the *Catalog* notes) entitled to request an adjustment.*

The Schedule (subject to change as necessary):

September

9 Introduction to the course: A sense of the period; Medieval allegory; Caedmon's Hymn (ca. 658-680). Diagnostic pretest on the period, 700-1785.

I. The English Middle Ages (to 1485): From Epic to Romance (and Fabliau).

A. Anglo-Saxon England (to 1066): The Old English Epic Hero.

14 Introduction, Norton 1-23. *Beowulf* (ca. 750), 26-97.

16 *Beowulf*.

21 *Beowulf*.

B. Middle English Literature (1350-1485): Knights and Nuns, Lovers and Churls.

23 Geoffrey Chaucer (1343-1400), *The Canterbury Tales* (1387-89)--General Prologue, 165-91.

Monday, September 27: Michael Hulse, English Poet (5:00-6:00 Craft Talk; 6:00-7:30 Dinner at Garrett House; 7:30 Reading/Performance).

28 *The Canterbury Tales*--Prologue and Miller's Prologue and Tale, 191-207.

Tuesday, September 28: Ron Carlson, Poet (5:00-6:00 Craft Talk; 6:00-7:30 Dinner at Garrett House; 7:30 Reading/Performance).

30 *The Canterbury Tales*--The Miller's Tale (continued).

Thursday, September 30: Brian Turner, Poet and Iraq War Veteran (5:00-6:00 Craft Talk; 7:30 Reading/Performance).

II. The Renaissance/ Early Modern Period in England (1485-1660):

A. The Sixteenth Century: Renaissance Humanism and the Petrarchan Love Sonnet.

October

5 The Sixteenth Century and the Rise of Modern English: Introduction, 319-47. The Birth of the Sonnet: Francesco Petrarch (1304-1375); Wyatt (1503-1542), and Surrey 1517-1547), 348-54. First paper due (Medieval Literature).

Tuesday, October 5: Kurt Brown, Poet (location and time TBA).

7 Sonnet Cycles in English: Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586), *Astrophil and Stella* (Sonnets 1, 31, 52, 71, and "Leave me O Love"), 449-55; and Edmund Spenser (1552-1599), *Amoretti* (Sonnets 1, 67, 75, 79), 434-437.

12 Elizabethan Epic-Romance as Christian Allegory: Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Introduction and Book I, Cantos 1-4, 365-397.

14 *Faerie Queene*, Book I, Cantos 5-12, 397-423.

19 Redefinitions of the Sonnet: Shakespeare (1564-1616), Sonnets 18, 20, 29, 30, 33, 55, 73, 94, 116, 129, 130, 138, 146, and 147, Norton 493-509; and Lady Mary Wroth (1587-1651?), Sonnets 1, 16, 40, 68, and 77, Norton 650-54.

21 The Uses and Abuses of Pastoral: Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593), 458-60; Sir Walter Raleigh (1552-1618), 447-49.

26 Midterm Exam (covering all material through Raleigh).

B. The Early Seventeenth Century (1603-1640): "Metaphysicals" and "Cavaliers."

28 Introduction to the Period, 575-599. Men and Women Poets in Dialogue (1): "Metaphysicals": John Donne (1572-1631), "The Good Morrow," "The Sun Rising," "A Valediction forbidding Mourning," "The Ecstasy," 599-614; Holy Sonnets 10 and 14, Norton 600-24; and Katherine Philips (1632-1664), "To My Dearest Lucasia," 672-75, plus additional selections.

November

2 Men and Women Poets in Dialogue (2): "Cavaliers": Ben Jonson (1572-1637), "On My First Daughter," "On My First Son," "To Penshurst," "Queen and Huntress," "Still to be Neat," Norton 638-48; Katherine Philips, "On the Death of My First and Dearest Child," 675 (plus additional selections); and Aemilia Lanyer (1569-1645), "The Description of Cooke-ham," 630; 633-38.

4 Later "Metaphysicals" and "The Tribe of Ben": George Herbert (1593-1633), "Easter Wings," "The Collar," and "Love," 659-65; Robert Herrick (1591-1674), 665-70; and Andrew Marvell (1621-1678), "To His Coy Mistress," 675-78. Second paper due (Earlier and later Renaissance).

C. The Later Seventeenth Century (1640-1660): Milton and the Revolutionary Epic.

9 John Milton (1608-1674), Introduction, 693-96; Sonnets, 721-23; Invocations to *Paradise Lost*, Book 3, ll. 1-55 (Norton 765-66) and Book 7, ll. 1-39 (801-802).

11 Milton, *Paradise Lost* (1)--Satan's Anti-epic: Books 1 and 2, Norton 723-65.

16 *Paradise Lost* (2)--God the Son's True Epic and the Pastoral of Eden: Books 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8, Norton 765-801; 802-811.

18 *Paradise Lost* (3)--The Fall and Expulsion from Eden: Books 9-12, Norton 811-52.

III. The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century (1660-1785): Lyrical, Satirical, Critical.

23 Introduction to the Period, 853-78. John Dryden (1631-1700), "On the Death of Mr. Oldham," "A Song for St. Cecilia's Day," Norton 879-80; 910-13; and Epic as Satire: "Mac Flecknoe," Norton 904-910.

25 Thanksgiving Break.

30 "Mac Flecknoe" and Alexander Pope (1688-1744), 1120-23; Miniature Epic: *The Rape of the Lock*, Norton 1136-55.

December

2 Lyric, Satiric, and Philosophical: Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), 1210-1212; "On the Death of Dr. Robert Levet," 1220-21; "The Vanity of Human Wishes," 1212-1220.

7 Johnson and the Philosophical Tale: *Rasselas*, Norton 1221-1284.

9 Last Day of Classes: Review of the Course. Third paper due (Milton and the Epic).

13 (Monday) Reading Day. Optional review session for final exam.

14 (Tuesday) Comprehensive final exam (10:30-12:30).

