

ENG 381: SURVEY OF BRITISH LITERATURE I

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May 15-June 23

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides a survey of British literature from the Middle Ages to the end of the Eighteenth Century. During the semester you'll discover the artistic, historical, and philosophical issues that preoccupied ten centuries' worth of British writers; you'll also sample the delights (and challenges) of styles, genres, and characters that continue to influence writers even today. You'll see that the course covers a considerable range, not only of time periods, but also of formal qualities: we will read selections from epic poetry, sonnets, drama, and essays/prose. Each genre is characterized by particular literary techniques and you'll learn to recognize these as you become more familiar with them over the next few months. By the end of the course, you should have developed a fuller understanding of this rich and complex period, and be able to articulate that understanding in coherent written form.

As well as introducing you to literary techniques, this course will also familiarize you with the historical context of Britain in which these texts were produced. No literature exists in isolation, in its own world divorced from reality; it is produced by an author who has a lived experience in the world around him or her. To that end, we'll be examining some of the historical and social contexts in which these works were produced. You'll see that the texts we read don't simply inform you about British literature, they also inform you about Britain, its people and its history. Themes we will explore throughout the semester include heroes and monsters, love, sex, and gender, and the satire and social commentary.

This is an upper-division literature class and, as such, assumes a developing level of proficiency in critical reading, thinking, and writing. As with most survey courses, the amount of reading can be quite intense, and it will be important to stay well on top of it. Non-majors who have enrolled this course to fulfill a general-education elective are forewarned that "Survey of British Literature I" does not mean "the easy stuff"; if anything, because of the historical distance between the periods covered in this course and our own, many students find this the most challenging of the surveys.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- recognize the works and characteristics of the major literary texts of the period (c. 600-1800)
- understand the conventions of a variety of early English literary genres
- analyze specific texts closely in relation to relevant historical contexts
- articulate that analysis in coherent written form with appropriate documentation
- synthesize the themes of the various literary periods of this era

REQUIRED TEXTS

Joseph Black et al., eds. *The Broadview Anthology of British Literature*. Concise Edition A. 2nd ed. Petersborough, Ont.: Broadview, 2011. ISBN: 9781554810482 [Note: this text is also available in a slightly cheaper electronic PDF version; visit the Broadview Press [website](http://www.broadviewpress.ca) for details]
William Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing*. Ed. Jonathon Bate and Eric Rasmussen. New York: Modern Library, 2009. ISBN: 9780812969177 (also available as Kindle edition)
Additional readings on Blackboard

ABOUT ONLINE COURSES

Students do not often realize the special challenges of online courses, and many students struggle and drop out. You must be self-motivated, disciplined, and good at time management to do well in online classes; this is especially true of summer classes, when we will do the same amount of work in five weeks as we would in a full fourteen-week semester. You should expect to spend at least fifteen hours per week on this course. This is comparable to taking a full-semester 3-hour face-to-face class and then allowing the usual study and reading time of 6 hours.

You must also be willing to ask for help when you need it. If this is your first online course, ask yourself “Am I self-disciplined enough to do the work and keep up, even though I won’t see the prof or attend class?” To test the match between your personality and the reality of online courses, check out:

- [“Is Distance Learning for me?”](#)
- [WKU’s Orientation for Online Learners](#)

If you have not used Blackboard much, or if this is your first online class, you are strongly urged to complete Blackboard’s Student User Training. These online modules will improve or refresh your skills. To sign up, log in to Blackboard. Click “IT Training” on the red banner (top right corner), then look for IT: Blackboard Student User Training. You will gain instant access upon signing up.

Finally, you must have reliable computer access on a daily basis for this class. As our communication will take place via Blackboard, which uses your WKU email address, you must check your WKU email regularly.

COURSEWORK AND GRADING

Quizzes (15%) Each week there will be a quiz consisting of a combination of multiple-choice and short-answer questions that will be drawn from the reading as well as from the study guides. Quizzes will cover all of that week’s material and must be completed by 11:59PM on Sundays. The first day of the course we will also have a Course Overview quiz due by 11:59PM Monday 5/15; this quiz is ungraded, but you must answer 100% of the questions correctly in order to access all other assignments.

Weekly Discussion Boards (15%) Every week each student will make a discussion board post engaging with that week’s readings. In these posts students may choose to respond to one of the reading prompts or questions in the study guides, or to explore ideas or questions of their own. Posts should be a minimum of 250 words each and must be posted to Blackboard no later than 11:59 PM on Fridays. Students will also comment on at least three of their classmates’ discussion posts. These comments should push the conversation further in some way: by making connections with other texts, by expanding on a point made by the poster and adding textual evidence, by respectfully disagreeing with the poster and backing up that disagreement with textual evidence, by answering a question raised by the poster, etc. Avoid saying that you merely “agree” or “disagree” with others. Simply repeating others’ points will earn you a zero. Comments should be a minimum of 100 words each and must be completed by 11:59 PM on Sundays.

General guidelines for discussion boards:

- Read other postings before writing yours and avoid posting responses that simply repeat what someone else has already said. That way you can contribute to the discussion and build upon others’ ideas.
- Give a thoughtful, thorough, and original response showing your intellectual engagement with the text(s).

- Be specific and detailed, using evidence from the text(s) to support your response. This means referring to specific passages or lines as evidence for your discussion.
- Avoid summarizing. It's fine to provide a bit of context for your response if need, but bear in mind that we've all read the same stuff.
- Show engagement with the ideas expressed by others' postings (encouraged for all postings, required for comments).
- Give your posting an informative or creative title; in other words, avoid titles like "Posting #4." This will help everyone in the class follow discussions and find relevant postings.
- Be respectful in all online postings. You are free to disagree with other students and with me – just be sure to do so in a way that seeks to persuade.
- Postings should be written with reasonable care (avoid typos, texting shorthand, etc.).
- Make your own post early in the week if you can, and post comments throughout the week rather than waiting until the last minute. This will lower your stress level!
- Do not rely on other interpretive material such as online study guides. Your thoughts must be your own!

Article Commentaries and Discussion (10%) Once during the term each student will read a scholarly article chosen from a selection provided on Blackboard and write a 300- to 500-word summary and response, including questions for discussion. Article commentaries will be posted to Blackboard for the class to read and discuss. Students are also required to respond to at least three discussion questions during each of the three modules.

Papers (35% total) You will write two papers for formal evaluation during the course of the semester. For the first paper, you may choose one of four options: 1) a creative response to one of our course readings, accompanied by an analysis of your creative choices; 2) a small professional writing project related to one of our course readings, accompanied by an analysis of your rhetorical choices; 3) an analysis of a cultural text related to one of our course readings; or 4) a critical response to a scholarly article related to our course readings. The second paper will be a 4- to 6-page thesis-driven analysis comparing a literary element or theme in two of our course texts. A list of possible topics will be provided, but you are encouraged to propose your own topic provided you clear it with me beforehand. I am happy to meet with you by appointment, either face-to-face, by phone, or electronically, to discuss your ideas or to review a draft of your paper. Essays will be evaluated primarily on the quality of your ideas and the thoroughness of your critical argument (including appropriate citations from the text). Spelling and grammatical errors, however, will negatively affect your grade. Papers should be formatted with 1-inch margins all around; please use Times New Roman 12-point font ONLY, and follow MLA guidelines for documentation. Papers will be submitted through Blackboard's SafeAssign feature.

Final Exam (25%) The final exam will consist of multiple choice, short-answer, and passage identification questions. Students will have two hours in which to complete the exam, and must take the exam no later than June 23. The exam will be proctored and completed online at the conclusion of the course, but you will need to register for the exam in advance. For more information, see "Policies" below and see our Blackboard course site.

COURSE POLICIES

Academic Integrity Plagiarism/academic dishonesty occurs when a student knowingly or unknowingly submits another person's published or unpublished (print or web) writing as his/her own, has another person dictate what should be written, or has another person write an assignment and submits that work as his/her own. Plagiarism or academic dishonesty on any single assignment, including quizzes, exams, essays, and discussion board postings, will result in a penalty of zero on the assignment for the first occurrence. The penalty for more than one occurrence will be a zero for the course. Any incident of plagiarism will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs. Ignorance is not an excuse; it is your responsibility to know how to use sources properly. Please see the end of this

syllabus for a more detailed description of the English department's policy on academic dishonesty. Continuing in this course constitutes your acknowledgement and understanding of this policy.

Accommodation In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services in Downing University Center, A-200. The phone number is 270-745-5004. Please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

Blackboard We will be using Blackboard daily for this course. Do not remain in this course if you do not have daily access to a late-model computer with Microsoft Word-compatible software and a high-speed Internet connection. Out of consideration to your fellow students, be sure to protect access to our course website. In the event that you use a public terminal (in the library, for example), you need to completely close the browser software when you are finished. This will prevent another person from accessing the course using your identification, doing mischief in your name, and violating the privacy of other students.

Communication and Getting Help To succeed in this course, you will likely need to be in touch with me several times during the term, and you might need to seek assistance from other students or from the Writing Center. To that end, I suggest you make use of the following: (1) Meet with me face-to-face or by phone by appointment. (2) Post questions to the "Ask Dr. Langdon" forum on Blackboard and regularly check that forum for answers to your questions. This is the preferred way to get your questions about the course answered, as there are likely other students seeking answers to the same questions, and I will refer such questions to the forum. (3) Utilize the Writing Center, which is open for both face-to-face and online appointments. (4) Email me directly for private matters that should not be shared with the entire class, such as questions about grades or feedback on a paper. I will respond to emails within 24 hours. When you e-mail me, appropriate etiquette for professional e-mails is expected. Use correct grammar (including punctuation and capitalization) and a tone that is to-the-point, but respectful. Don't take offense if I respond to a poorly written e-mail with a request for you to revise it and send it again. [The Purdue Online Writing Lab](#) provides useful guidelines for composing professional e-mails.

Deadlines All assignments are due by 11:59PM on the date specified in the schedule. Late papers (the only type of assignment I accept after the due date) will lose 10 percentage points for each 24-hour period after the due date. Late papers will receive a grade but no comments. Any paper more than 72 hours late will receive a zero.

Registering for the Final Exam The final exam will be proctored and taken online from a computer at the proctored testing site in your locality. You can also take the exam at the [Distance Learning Testing Center](#) on the WKU Bowling Green campus. If you plan to take the exam outside Bowling Green, it is also your responsibility to arrange for a location and proctor approved by Distance Learning. It is your responsibility to register for the exam and you must do so early in the term (no later than Week Two). I will not be able to offer extensions and I will not grant incompletes to take the exam after June 23.

Submitting Papers Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx), OpenDocument (.odt), or Rich Text Format (.rtf) are the only acceptable formats for document submission in this course. Give each assignment the correct file name, as indicated in the assignment instructions. This is because I download all submissions for each assignment in batches, and unless you name your file correctly it may get lost. Your essays must be uploaded into the appropriate folder in the "Writing Assignments" section on Blackboard; DO NOT simply paste your assignment into the submission field unless specifically instructed to do so. Assignments submitted incorrectly will not be accepted. When submitting assignments, students must click the "Submit" button to finish uploading the file, not the "Save" button at the bottom of the submission screen. Clicking "Save" will allow the document to be retrieved by the student, but the instructor will NOT receive the document. Assignments that are late because students clicked the

wrong button will not receive credit. **A word about “corrupted files”:** these are not accepted, nor are they given extensions to correct, so once you submit your paper, go back and check the paper you submitted via My Grades to make sure it is still able to be opened; email me a working copy BEFORE the due date if the one on Blackboard somehow got corrupted.

Technical Support If you have problems with the functionality of Blackboard, please contact me, then check with IT (see below). If it’s an issue of course content or access to content, I can likely fix it. Technical problems must be solved by IT. Resources for technical support:

- The IT Help Desk, staffed during normal university business hours, as well as extended evening and weekend hours. Assistance may be requested either through an [Online Help Request](#), [live chat](#), or by calling 270-745-7000.
- The [Blackboard Student User Workshop](#) takes students through the basics of using Blackboard. Access to the workshop is granted immediately upon registration.

Withdrawals Withdrawing from classes is your responsibility. I cannot remove you from the class. If you do not officially withdraw from class through the registrar's office, I will turn in an F for your grade. The last day to withdraw from class is Friday, June 2.

QUESTIONS?

You are responsible for all information in this syllabus and all policies it refers to. Take a moment now to think about questions you have about the syllabus and the course, especially about course expectations, required work, grading, and policies. Post those questions on the “Ask Dr. Langdon” forum on Blackboard, and I’ll answer for the benefit of the whole class. If you have questions regarding your personal situation, e-mail me so I may respond privately.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

MODULE ONE—HEROES AND MONSTERS

Week One

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| M 5/15 | Complete all activities on the “Start Here” page of our Blackboard course site, including Course Overview Quiz and ungraded introductory post
View lecture on Old English language and literature
Read study guide
Read excerpts from Tacitus, <i>Germania</i> , and “The Battle of Maldon” (on Blackboard) |
| T 5/16 | Read study guide
View lecture on <i>Beowulf</i>
Read <i>Beowulf</i> (lines 1-661, <i>BABL</i> pp. 62-73) |
| W 5/17 | Read study guide
Read <i>Beowulf</i> (lines 662-1886, <i>BABL</i> pp. 73-89) |
| R 5/18 | Read study guide
Read <i>Beowulf</i> (lines 1887-end, <i>BABL</i> pp. 89-106) |
| F 5/19 | Read study guide
Read “The Dream of the Rood” (<i>BABL</i> pp. 58-61), “Judith” (on Blackboard), and Marie de France, “Bisclavret” (on Blackboard)
Complete Quiz #1
Discussion Board Post #1 due by 11:59PM
Discussion Board comments due by 11:59 PM Sunday 5/21 |

Week Two

- M 5/22 Read study guide
Read *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Parts I and II (BABL pp. 159-89)
- T 5/23 Read study guide
Read *Sir Gawain*, Parts III- IV (BABL pp. 189-224)
- W 5/24 Read study guide
Read Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Books 1 & 2 (BABL pp. 897-99, 918-46)
- R 5/25 Read study guide
Read Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Arguments to remaining books; Books 4, 9 & 10 in full (BABL pp. 946, 951-94)
- F 5/26 Article discussion
Complete Quiz #2
Discussion Board Post #2 due by 11:59PM
Discussion Board comments due by 11:59 PM Sunday 5/28
Discussion question responses due by 11:59 PM Sunday 5/28

MODULE TWO—LOVE, SEX, AND GENDER

Week Three

- M 5/29 Paper #1 due
- T 5/30 Read study guide
Read Chaucer, "The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale" (on Blackboard)
- W 5/31 Read study guide
Read Chaucer, "The Clerk's Tale" (on Blackboard)
- R 6/1 Read "The Elizabethan Sonnet and Lyric" (BABL pp. 546-54)
Read study guide
Read Sidney, from *Astrophil and Stella*, sonnets 1, 2, 7, 9, 20, 22, 34, 41, 52, and 71 (BABL pp. 656-62; sonnet 9 on Blackboard)
- F 6/2 Read study guide
Read Shakespeare, sonnets 1, 20, 29, 55, 127, 130, 138, 144 (BABL pp. 791-807)
Complete Quiz #3
Discussion Board Post #3 due by 11:59PM
Discussion Board comments due by 11:59 PM Sunday 6/4
Last day to withdraw from the course

Week Four

- M 6/5 Read study guide
Read Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing*, Acts 1 and 2
- T 6/6 Read study guide
Read Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing*, Acts 3-5

- W 6/7 Read study guide
 Read Marlowe, "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love" (BABL pp. 756); Raleigh, "The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd" (BABL pp. 726); Marvell, "To His Coy Mistress" (BABL pp. 878-79-58 and 883-84)
- R 6/8 Read study guide
 Read Donne, "Woman's Constancy," "The Flea," "The Bait," "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning," "The Ecstasy," Holy Sonnets 1, 2, 5, 10, 14, and 17 (BABL pp. 824-25, 827, 831-35, and 846-48; sonnet 17 on Blackboard)
- F 6/9 Article discussion
 Complete Quiz #4
 Discussion Board Post #4 due by 11:59PM
 Discussion Board comments due by 11:59 PM Sunday 6/4
 Discussion question responses due by 11:59 PM Sunday 6/4

MODULE THREE—SATIRE AND SOCIAL COMMENTARY

Week Five

- M 6/12 View lecture on *The Canterbury Tales*
 Read "Medieval Estates and Orders—Making and Breaking the Rules: An Overview" (on Blackboard)
 Read study guide
 Read Geoffrey Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, "General Prologue" (on Blackboard)
- T 6/13 Read study guide
 Read *Wakefield Second Shepherd's Play* (BABL, pp. 402-18)
- W 6/14 Read study guide
 Dryden, "Mac Fleknoe" (BABL pp. 1039-41 and 1056-60); Behn "The Disappointment" (BABL pp. 1103-06)
- R 6/15 Read study guide
 Read Behn, *Oroonoko* (BABL pp. 1106-42)
- F 6/16 Read study guide
 Read Pope, *The Rape of the Lock* (BABL pp. 1378-80 and 1386-99)
 Complete Quiz #5
 Discussion Board Post #5 due by 11:59PM
 Discussion Board comments due by 11:59 PM Sunday 6/18

Week Six

- M 6/19 Paper #2 due
- T 6/20 Read study guide
 Read Swift, "Modest Proposal" (BABL pp. 1254-56 and 1368-77) and "The Lady's Dressing Room" (BABL pp. 1260-62); Montague, "The Reasons that Induced Dr. S. to Write a Poem Called The Lady's Dressing Room" (BABL pp. 1423-24 and 1426-27)
- W 6/21 Read study guide
 Read Haywood, *Fantomina: or, Love in a Maze* (BABL pp. 1430-50)

- R 6/22 Article discussion
Discussion question responses due by 11:59 PM Sunday 6/25
- F 6/23 Final Exam

Department of English Policy and Frequently Asked Questions on Plagiarism

What does it mean to plagiarize?

According to *Webster's International Dictionary*, the definition of plagiarism is "to steal or purloin and pass off as one's own the ideas, words, or artistic production of another; to use without credit the ideas, expressions, or productions of another."

Basically, plagiarism comes in three forms: "fraud," "patchwriting," and "insufficient or undocumented paraphrasing." In brief, each paper that you turn in and every sentence in it must be written completely by you, or you must give proper credit to the other writers for their ideas and words. In addition, most teachers consider handing in papers that were written for other classes to be a form of plagiarism. New papers should be written for each assignment unless your teacher indicates otherwise. Remember that writing teachers are experienced at picking out papers that contain plagiarism. Do not be tempted to download papers from the web or to "recycle" papers from other students.

Why shouldn't I plagiarize?

Most people consider plagiarism to be ethically and morally equivalent to lying, cheating, and stealing. When you plagiarize, you have stolen another's work. Further, you shortchange your own education and compromise your ethics. Additionally, you risk damaging your grade for the assignment or the course, and you risk damaging your GPA and your academic or professional career.

Plagiarism is a very serious academic offense. In a way, the very foundation of the American educational system rests on the issue of trust, and this trust depends on an honest exchange between students and their teachers. Just as students need to trust that teachers are honest about grading, teaching, and advising, teachers need to trust that students will be honest when taking tests and writing papers. Plagiarism, or any type of cheating, seriously undermines this foundation. This sort of dishonesty indicates that there may be serious questions about the offending student's ethics, and the stigma of this unethical behavior may follow the student for years—decreasing the student's chances of success in academic and professional work.

What can happen to me if I plagiarize?

Students who commit any act of academic dishonesty may receive from the instructor a failing grade in that portion of the course work in which the act is detected or a failing grade in the course without possibility of withdrawal. The faculty member may also present the case to the Office of the Dean of Student Life for disciplinary sanctions. A student who believes a faculty member has dealt unfairly with him/her in a course involving academic dishonesty may seek relief through the Student Complaint Procedure. Your teacher may be understanding and tolerant of "accidental" plagiarism; however, you should check with your teacher if you have any doubts about whether you are committing plagiarism in a paper.

What is "fraud"?

Turning in a paper that was written or partially written by anyone else is "fraud." In this case, "anyone else" includes everyone but you. You may not turn in a paper that was written or partially written by your parent, your boyfriend or girlfriend, your spouse, your sibling, a friend, a stranger, another student, a professional or amateur author, or anyone else.

What is “patchwriting”?

“Patchwriting” is taking several other texts that were written by others, piecing together these ideas or words into a single paper, and turning in that paper as your own work.

What is “insufficient or undocumented paraphrasing”?

“Insufficient paraphrasing” occurs when not enough of the original language and sentence structure of the source is changed for a paraphrase. To paraphrase correctly, major words and basic sentence structure should be changed from the original. “Undocumented paraphrasing” is taking sections of another’s words or ideas and changing them into your own words without giving the writer proper credit. A paper should not be made up of a series of paraphrases. Use paraphrasing to support your own ideas and not to construct your paper.

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