

Instructor: Prof. Schieberle  
Office: Wescoe 3136  
Office Hours: MW 12:15-1:45pm  
*And by appointment*

Phone: 4-2501  
Mailbox: Wescoe 3001  
E-mail: mschiebe@ku.edu

## English 312: Major British Writers to 1800

### Course Description

This course surveys British literature from its beginnings in Anglo-Saxon England through the 18th century. Our goal is to emphasize comprehensive and careful reading of selected works in order to achieve an understanding of the major authors of English literary tradition – in other words, to give you a sense of English literary history. As we progress throughout the course, we will examine how later writers choose to represent and reinvent earlier literary, intellectual, and social attitudes. We will also consider how authors are in conversation with one another – by drawing on earlier writers and texts, by representing similar themes and anxieties, or quite literally by responding to contemporaries. **Attendance, class participation, and reading of all assigned texts are required.**

### Required Texts/Materials

- 1) *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. 8<sup>th</sup> Ed. Volumes A, B, C. Stephen Greenblatt, ed.
- 2) Our Course Blackboard Site (Bb): Supplemental readings, study guides, worksheets, and assignments.

### Essential Resources

1) *The Oxford English Dictionary* (OED). An online dictionary that traces the development of English words and their changing definitions. <http://www.lib.ku.edu/infogateway/> This is the only dictionary you should consult.

**\*\*\*Note: the OED is useful for words, but not for concepts like genres or literary movements. If you must define “satire,” “humanism,” “allegory,” or the like, consult the NAEL appendices.**

2) *The Oxford Dictionary of Classical Mythology*. Watson Library-Reference (In Library Use Only) [BL715 .O845 2003](#) – Our authors make classical references, and just as you must research what words meant, you must know who Atreus, Tereus, or Leander were to understand authors’ meanings.

### Course Requirements

*Students must complete all major assignments and exams in order to pass the course.*

**2 Exams:** Mid-Term and Final.

**5 Crux-Busters** (relatively informal). See the Assignment sheet for instructions and grading standards. You must complete any 5 of the 8 crux-busters listed on the Course Calendar; if you are concerned about improving the quality of your work, you may submit *one* additional crux-buster and only the top 5 will count toward your grade. *These assignments must be submitted on the date they are due. No late work will be accepted.*

**1 Formal Essay.** This approximately 4-6 page paper builds on your crux-busting skills to develop an analytical argument about a text from a selected list. You may choose your text and topic of analysis. See the Assignment sheet for instructions; see Appendix A below for grading standards.

**Quizzes and HW.** There will be quizzes or short HW assignments to reward thoughtful reading and/or generate class discussion. HW must be typed, or points will be deducted, and submitted at the beginning of class. Quizzes and HW will be graded with a ✓+ (exceeds expectations; A-B range), ✓ (meets expectations; C range), ✓- (fails to meet expectations; D-F range), or 0 (no submission, or submission does not meet assignment). You receive credit for each HW/quiz completed. For more feedback, please feel free to consult with me in office hours.

**Participation.** Participation means engaging in discussion, not simply being present. There will be introductory mini-lectures to provide background on and ways into the texts we are reading, but student analysis in small group activities or large group discussion is where the real learning in the course will take place.

**Careful/thoughtful reading of the assigned texts.** Use of crib/Cliffs/Sparks notes (in lieu of reading and studying the primary texts) is strictly forbidden. They are unscholarly and frequently contain errors.

### Assignment Format

All papers, including HW, must be submitted in standard academic format—typed, double-spaced, with one-inch margins, carefully revised and edited, with MLA documentation (if necessary). Pages must be numbered and stapled. All written work should follow principles of standard, edited English – including correct grammar, syntax, mechanics, and proofreading. All formal essays, including exam essays, require academic prose in the thesis-and-support format, a methodical organization, and textual evidence analyzed in support of your central argument. You must submit a hard copy of all papers, unless otherwise directed, and you should always keep a copy for your records. Please do not slide a paper under my office door or e-mail the paper without permission.

### Grading

In this course we will use the +/- grading scale approved by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to describe intermediate levels of performance between a maximum of A and a minimum of F. Grades represented by plus or minus shall be calculated as .3 units above or below the corresponding letter grade. (For Essay Grading Criteria and Grading Scale, see Appendix A that follows.)

The course requirements are weighted as follows:

- |                               |     |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| • Crux-Busters:               | 25% |
| • Participation, HW, Quizzes: | 15% |
| • Midterm Exam:               | 20% |
| • Final Exam:                 | 20% |
| • Formal Essay:               | 20% |

### Late or Missing Work

Crux-Busters will only be accepted on the days they are due. I will accept other HW within a week of the due date. You may not make up missed in-class quizzes. Students who have not received an extension from me (e-mail is best) on the formal essay will lose half of a letter grade per calendar day.

### **Attendance**

I understand that you may need to miss class due to illness or emergency; you are allowed 4 absences, no questions asked. Students who miss more than 4 will have their semester grades lowered by a half a letter grade per absence. More than six absences will automatically result in failure in the course.

### **Disabilities**

Students with disabilities that may interfere with completing course work should contact me as soon as possible to discuss accommodations. You should also consult the Office of Disability Resources in 22 Strong Hall, at 785-864-2620 (v/tty), and <http://www.achievement.ku.edu/disability/>.

### **Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty**

Plagiarism is the act of stealing and passing off as your own someone else's ideas or words, or using information from another's work without crediting the source. Some specific examples of actions that constitute plagiarism and academic dishonesty include pasting together uncredited information or ideas from the Internet or published sources, submitting an entire paper written by someone else, submitting a paper written for another class (and thus not original work), and copying another student's work (even with the student's permission). To avoid unintentional plagiarism and to represent your work honestly, you must give credit to any and all sources, whether directly quoted (even a few words) or paraphrased. To avoid academic dishonesty, always do your own work.

There will be a **zero tolerance policy** for any type of plagiarism or academic dishonesty. All incidents will be penalized, reported, and kept on file in the English Department, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the University Provost's Office. Plagiarism or academic dishonesty on a paper or exam will automatically result in a failing grade—whether it was deliberate or not. It may also lead to failure in the course and even dismissal from the university.

### **Writing Help**

For help with your writing, I encourage you to contact the KU Writing Center. Their services are free, and you can talk about your writing with trained tutors or consult their reference materials. You may ask for feedback on your papers, advice on writing, or guidance on special writing tasks. Check the website at <http://www.writing.ku.edu/students/>, call (785) 864-2399, or e-mail [writing@ku.edu](mailto:writing@ku.edu).

### **Cell Phones**

Please turn off or silence your cell phones before class begins and stow them away. Disruptions (including fiddling with them or rummaging in bags to silence them) are distracting to me and to your classmates, so please be vigilant!

### **Laptop or Tablet Computers**

If you plan to take notes on a portable computer, you must sit in the front two rows of the room.

### **Enrollment and Drop Policy**

If you are having trouble succeeding in the course, it is especially important that you consult with me so that we can develop a plan of action that may enable you to complete the course. If you decide to drop this class, please refer to: <http://www.registrar.ku.edu/current/schedule.shtml>

- Until Apr. 16, you will be assigned a grade of W. You may not drop or withdraw after Apr. 16.

***Remaining enrolled indicates that you understand the course policies and agree to abide by them.***

## Course Calendar

Readings, Crux-Busters, and Homework (HW) assignments are due on the day they are listed. You are responsible for submitting assignments at the beginning of class. *The calendar is subject to adjustments as needed.*

(Bb) indicates that material is on Blackboard, either in Course Documents (for readings) or Assignments (for essay assignments and HW worksheets).

**\*\*\*Note:** You are expected to read the Norton's brief introduction to each time period, text, and author on the syllabus. Exam questions will be taken from these sections.\*\*\*

### Week 1

1/18 Course Introduction, discussion of assignments and expectations.  
How to use textbooks. Reading Activity.

### Week 2

1/23 "The Middle Ages to ca. 1485" (1-21, esp. 1-7 for today).  
*Beowulf*, p. 34-69

1/25 *Beowulf*, p. 69-100  
Discussion: Crux-Busters.

### Week 3

1/30 *Beowulf*, Conclusions  
**Crux-Buster Option #1 due: may be on any part of *Beowulf*.**

2/1 *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Parts I and II

### Week 4

2/6 *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Parts III and IV  
\*\*\*Medieval English, p. 15-19; Preview of Chaucer's Middle English

**Crux-Buster Option #2 due.**

2/8 Geoffrey Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales: General Prologue*, p. 216-38  
Read: Pilgrim Characters, Bb/Course Docs (Monks, Pardoners, Priests)

Pay attention to: Lines 1-42, Knight, Prioress, Monk, Clerk, Wife of Bath, Parson (priest), Miller, Pardoner, the establishment of the tale-telling contest, the Narrator's attitude toward story-telling.

You may want to use the Harvard Chaucer Page's interlinear translation to help you read: <http://www.courses.fas.harvard.edu/~chaucer/>. However, all class discussions, assignments, and tests will require you to refer to the Middle English.

Week 5

2/13

Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales: The Miller's Prologue and Tale*, p. 239-55  
**Crux-Buster Option #3 due.**

2/15

Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales: Nun's Priest's Prologue and Tale*, p. 298-312  
Read: Fables, Bb/Course Docs

Week 6

2/20

Thomas Malory, *Morte Darthur*, p. 439-55  
**Crux-Buster Option #4 due.**

2/22

**"The Sixteenth Century,"** p. 485-511.

Your sonnet readings are shorter because they require more intense focus. *READ THEM CLOSELY* or you will not succeed in this portion of the class. \*\*\*Note: Petrarch is an *Italian poet*, whose works we have in *prose translation*. For the original Italian poems, see BB/Course Documents/Petrarch's Poetry

Read first: "How to Read a Poem." (Bb)

Wyatt, "The long love that in my thought doth harbor" vs. Petrarch, "Rima 140," and  
"Whoso list to hunt," vs. Petrarch, "Rima 190," p. 594-95

Surrey, "The soote season," "Love, that doth reign and live within my thought," p. 608-9

HW: Respond to #1-5 on How to Read a Poem with *one poem of your choice*.

Week 7

2/27

Edmund Spenser, "Amoretti" 1, 34, 64, 67, 75, p. 902-6  
HW due: Amoretti Questions, Bb.

2/29

Sir Phillip Sidney, "Astrophil and Stella," 1, 2, 9, 74, 108, p. 975-992  
HW due: Sidney Assignment (Bb)

Week 8

3/5

Christopher Marlowe, *Faustus*, p. 1023-55  
Recommended reading: How to Read Drama, Bb/Course Docs

**Crux-Buster Option #5 due.**

3/7

Marlowe, *Faustus*, Conclusion  
Review for Midterm

Week 9

3/12

Mid-Term Exam

3/14 *To be announced*

Week 10                    **\*\*\*Spring Break\*\*\***

Week 11  
3/26                    **The Early Seventeenth Century:** p. 1235-1259

John Donne, "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning," p. 1275-6  
Andrew Marvell, "To His Coy Mistress," p. 1703-4

3/28                    John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*, Acts I & II, p. 1461-88.  
**Crux-Buster Option #6 due.**

Week 12  
4/2                    Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*, Acts III & IV, p. 1488-1518.  
**Crux-Buster Option #7 due.**

4/4                    Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*, Act V, p. 1518-55.

Concluding topic to consider: Is the Duchess the main character of the play, and, regardless of your answer, what is the play really *about*?

Week 13  
4/9                    John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, p.1831ff. AND the Verse (p.1831)  
Read: The Arguments, Bb

Book I: focus on lines 1-124 (theme of poem; Satan's first speech), 242-70 (Satan's speech)  
Book IV, lines 358-535 (Adam, Eve, Satan, p. 1895-98)

4/11                    Milton, *Paradise Lost*: Book IX, 494-1189 (Temptation of Eve, the Fall, Blame) p. 1984-98  
HW: Milton Group Work, Bb– Answer the questions assigned to your group.

Week 14  
4/16                    **The Restoration and Eighteenth Century (1660-1785):** p. 2057-2080.  
John Dryden, "Mac Flecknoe," p. 2111-17  
"A Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire," p. 2131-2  
Satire Key Terms: BB/Course Docs – print and bring to class (1 pg)

HW Informal Response: How, according to Dryden's "Discourse," does "good satire" work? Using Dryden's terms, evaluate whether "MacFlecknoe" is "good satire."

**\*\*\*Last Day to Drop\*\*\***

4/18 Jonathan Swift, "A Modest Proposal," p. 2462-68  
**Crux-Buster Option #8 due.**

Week 15

4/23 Alexander Pope, "Eloisa to Abelard," p. 2532-40

4/25 In-Class Workshop: Bring a draft of your final essay (at least have: passages, tentative arguments and textual analysis sketched out).

Week 16

4/30 Course Conclusion, Review for Final Exam

5/2 Final Essay Due.

**FINAL EXAM: THURSDAY, MAY 10, 10:30AM – 1PM.**

## Appendix A: Essay Grading

What am I looking for in a good essay? A well-written essay demonstrates a good grasp of the main ideas or issues of the work as a whole, an arguable thesis (AKA “argument”), a thorough discussion of the passages relevant to your specific argument, a perceptive literary analysis of those passages, and an articulate style.

### Grading Scale:

- F the essay fails to meet the requirements of the assignment (in length, quality, or design) and/or shows serious confusion about the writing skills necessary for a convincing essay
- D the essay shows confusion about basic ideas and serious writing and/or organizational problems but makes an effort at meeting the demands of the assignment
- C- the essay exhibits many of these qualities: it lacks specific detail or analysis of the language of the text, contains numerous mechanical errors, is weakly organized, relies on generalizations, and/or fails to demonstrate a basic knowledge of the work(s) under discussion (including sources)
- C the essay lacks specific detail or specific analysis of the language of the text, probably contains some mechanical errors, and may be weakly organized, but it shows a basic knowledge of the literary work(s), terms, and/or sources under discussion
- C+ the essay demonstrates a basic grasp of the pertinent ideas or issues discussed in class (or in published literary studies), but it lacks evidence of thoughtfulness or thoroughness; writing skills are adequate, but do little to make the writer’s case effectively
- B- the essay goes somewhat beyond basic points, but it may not have enough specific detail and/or may not be carefully organized; there are fewer mechanical errors or awkward modes of expression than in the C range, but there are still enough to inhibit effective communication
- B the essay covers most of the important points, draws upon useful detail or examples, and has a good, readable discussion, but it lacks original or striking insights
- B+ the essay exhibits all the positive aspects of the B essay, plus an indication of thoughtfulness or a touch (though undeveloped) of originality (i.e., it presses beyond my lectures or the introductory material in textbooks); has few mechanical errors
- A- the essay demonstrates all of the positive points above, but it also shows genuine and searching thoughtfulness about the work under discussion (i.e., it goes beyond the lectures or the textbook in a coherent fashion); it is free of mechanical errors, and the prose style has acquired a certain smoothness
- A the essay presents detailed, stimulating, original ideas which go beyond my lectures or the textbook in a highly developed fashion, and it is engagingly written

*A Good Tip: Students who earn a grade in the A range always come to class prepared to contribute to discussion on the readings of the day.*

Numerical Scale:		A	93.5% and above	A-	90.0 to 93.4
B+	87.5 to 89.9	B	83.5 to 87.4	B-	80.0 to 83.4
C+	77.5 to 79.9	C	73.5 to 77.4	C-	70.0 to 73.4
D+	67.5 to 69.9	D	63.5 to 67.4	D-	60.0 to 63.4
F	0.0 to 59.9				