

English 260, Survey of British Literature 1 Fall Semester 2006



Instructor: Daniel de Roulet, Ph.D.
Office & Hours: Scott, second floor (in English Department)
Tuesdays/Thursdays 9:00-11:00 a.m. & by appointment
Email: dderoulet@vanguard.edu
Class meets: Tuesdays/Thursdays from 1:35 to 2:50 p.m. in Heath 103
Required texts: *The Norton Anthology of English Literature, volume 1, 7th edition*
Hamlet (packaged with the Norton)
The Pilgrim's Progress (Bunyan, Oxford edition)
Songs of Innocence and Experience (Blake, Oxford edition)

DESCRIPTION:

The class, a quickly-paced survey, seeks to familiarize literature majors and other students with the development of British drama, prose, and poetry from 500 A.D. to 1800 A.D.

We will build a historical and cultural context for understanding literature by examining literary texts, history, literary criticism and biography. Rather than accept at face value the opinions of our textbook editors, we will form our own views based on well-trained instinct and evidence.

COURSE FORMAT:

The course will commence promptly at 1:35 and end at 2:50 pm in Heath 103 on every Tuesday and Thursday of the fall term, except as noted in the course schedule. Class sessions typically consist of a combination of lecture, presentations, reflective writing and discussion.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATIONAL TARGETS AND GOALS:

Vanguard University has established Educational Targets and Goals (ETGs) for its academic programs. These are listed below; in parentheses next to each ETG is the area of the course where these university goals are most evident.

<i>Intellectual Engagement:</i>	All texts, journals, discussions and group projects
<i>Spiritual Formation:</i>	Sections 2, 3 and 7 (course readings and discussions)
<i>Professional Excellence:</i>	Quality and timeliness of essay and group project
<i>Aesthetic Expression:</i>	Sections 5 and 6 (course readings and discussions)
<i>Responsible Stewardship:</i>	Working with and supporting other students in class
<i>Socio-cultural Responsiveness:</i>	Studying the concepts of hero, ruler, and the tension of religion and society in the modern world

LEARNING OUTCOMES (WHAT YOU SHOULD BE DOING IN THE COURSE):

1. Demonstrate competency in close readings of literary texts (essay, examinations).
2. Articulate an understanding of a text both through discussion and writing (discussions, essay).
3. Show an understanding of British literary history during the period of study (exams).
4. Be able to explain developments in literary genres during the period studied (exams).
5. Show engagement with texts that speak to you particularly (journals).
6. Show engagement of your faith, your intellect, and the course material (journals, final exam).
7. Articulate an understanding of disciplinary issues (group project).

ASSIGNMENTS (HOW THESE LEARNING OUTCOMES ARE PRACTICED AND MEASURED):

- Midterm and Final Exam: 45% (20%, 25% respectively)
- Reading Journals & Quizzes: 20%
- Essay: 15%
- Group Project/Presentation: 10%
- Attendance and Participation: 10%

PREREQUISITES AND RELATIONSHIP TO CURRICULUM:

No other courses must be taken prior to enrollment; the course is required in the English major and is foundational for further study of literature.

Resources

Norton On-Line

With the purchase of your Norton Anthology of English Literature, you have access to an excellent website for reference information on the texts we're studying and on England's literary history. The site, www.norton.com/literature, is accessed through a password on the inside cover of your book.

Writing Center

The Writing Center (on the second floor of Scott) provides help for the paper writing process; appointments are necessary.

Notes on the Course

Expectations of you: Everyone enrolled in our course should attend without fail (see statement on attendance at the back of this syllabus), do the reading in time for class and complete all of the assignments on time, and participate. Class discussion is just that: discussion. This means listening and speaking with respect to others. I'll call on anyone not expressing civility to the other participants and, if the problem is not resolved, I'll ask them to leave the course.

Who I am: I received a Ph.D. in English literature (emphasis on 18th-century British literature and Christianity) at the University of California, Irvine, in 1992. After spending 12 years at North Park University in Chicago and a year at Biola University in La Mirada, I joined Vanguard in the fall of 2005 as Assistant Provost and Professor of English. I'm currently writing two books: a novel (in progress), and a book about Christian Literature with Brazos (Baker) Press (which was finished this summer and, hopefully, will be out in May 2007). I'm working on an article and longer project on King Arthur. I also publish essays from time to time. I'm married to a family practice physician (in her third year of residency), and we have three boys, and a cat (Thor, Cat of Thunder). We attend Saddleback Community Church in Lake Forest.

Questions, problems, discussions: My office is on the second floor of Scott in the English complex. Leave me a note or send me an email if I'm out.

Statement on Plagiarism: The following is excerpted from the Vanguard *Student Handbook*, and is applied rigorously in this course:

Academic dishonesty, either cheating or plagiarism (presenting as one's own, the words or opinions of others), is regarded as a serious violation of both the academic and moral standards of VUSC. Dishonesty in a minor class assignment or test can result in loss of credit for the assignment, test, or even the entire course. Dishonesty in a major assignment or examination can result in immediate loss of credit for the course and referral to the Vice President for Student Affairs....

A student commits plagiarism if submitted as his/her work:

- Part or all of an assignment copied from another person's assignment, notes or computer file
- Part or all of an assignment copied or paraphrased from a book, magazine, pamphlet or website
- A sequence of ideas transferred from another source which the student has not digested, integrated and reorganized, and to which he/she fails to give proper acknowledgement

Statement on Attendance: Discussing literature works better in communities, so I pay attention to attendance and class participation. Attendance is non-negotiable; the first two unexcused misses are worth two points each, and each miss after that equals a loss of five points. The university policy for attendance in lower-division classes is that students who miss more than one fifth of the scheduled class meetings in a course receive an "F" as a course grade. In our class, that means that anyone who misses 6 or more class meetings fails the course.

Statement on Late Work: Students must complete and submit all examinations and written assignments on-time; late work is penalized. If you know that you will miss an examination date, it is your responsibility to schedule your exam for an earlier date.

Topics of Study

1. Introduction

Before taking on the study of literature, an introductory section on British geography and history is offered in order to orient the student. Topics include Roman England, Britain in the "dark ages," and a few characteristics of early literary works.

2. Origins of the British Hero

The study of the hero is a crucial element in understanding British literature. This section of the course looks at elements of heroic behavior in one of the earliest narratives in English (*Beowulf*) and at J.R.R. Tolkien's response to the modern criticism of the heroic ideal ("The Monster and the Critics"). Of great interest is how the archetypal hero, Arthur, develops in Britain. We look at the growing claims of his Scottish origins, his characteristics as hero, and the changing of those characteristics and origins in the works of English writers, namely in the courtly context of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and Mallory's *Morte D'Arthur*.

3. Early Prose and Narrative Poetry

This section of the course looks at the effects of changing social and religious contexts as portrayed in the major prose works and narrative poetry of 14th, 15th and 16th centuries: Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, Langland's *Piers Plowman*, the prose of Margery Kempe and Julian of Norwich, and *The Bible* in English.

4. Kings and Queens

Whereas significant subject matter in early literature in English was dominated by the definition of a hero, the idea of the good king or queen claims some of that ground as time progresses. We will look at the problems of rule in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and in prose by and about four influential queens: Mary I, Lady Jane Grey, Mary Queen of Scots, and Elizabeth I.

5. Poetic Form and Subject

This section looks at the codification of poetic forms from the 15th to the 18th centuries in England, and the evolution of what was considered appropriate subject matter for poetry during that period. Thus, we will look at the development of the sonnet (Spenser, Sidney, Shakespeare and Donne), poetry of meditation (Middle English incarnation and crucifixion lyrics, Donne, and Herbert), and pastoral poetry (Spenser, Andrew Marvell, Anne Finch, James Thomson, and Thomas Gray).

6. Beginnings of the Novel

In preparation for what is to come in the next course, we will look at how the novel gets its start in Great Britain...by looking at a number of narratives that are arguably not novels, but contain embryonic aspects of the form. Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Behn's *Oroonko*, Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, and Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*,

7. Religion and Society in the Modern World

The final section of the course examines key moments of tension between (1) religion and society and (2) the spiritual life and the self. Sir Philip Sidney's *The Defense of Poetry* was written in the late 16th century as a reply to the Puritans' distrust of literature. Dryden's *Mac Fleknoe* argues against non-conformists. Milton's *Paradise Lost*, (*The Royal Slave*), Cowper's lyrics, and Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* all add to this conversation.

Schedule of Class Meetings

(“→” indicates graded assignment due for all class members)

- | | |
|---------|---|
| 8-31 | (1) Introduction: Information about the course; background on Britain; excerpts from three texts (handouts): Bede's <i>Ecclesiastical History of England</i> , “Caedmon's Hymn,” and “The Dream of the Rood” |
| 9-5 | (2) Hero: The backdrop of the British hero; Excerpt from Geoffrey of Monmouth's <i>The Kings of Britain</i> |
| 9-7 | <i>Beowulf</i> , (NA, 29-61) |
| 9-12 | <i>Beowulf</i> , (NA, 80-100); Tolkien, “The Monsters and the Critics” |
| 9-14 | Arthur, King of Scotland (and his English revisionists) (NA, 118-127, 438-455) |
| 9-19 | <i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i> , (NA, 160-202) |
| 9-21 → | <i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i> , (NA, 202-213); <u>journals due</u> |
| 9-26 | (3) Early Prose and Narrative Poetry: Chaucer, “The Nun's Priest's Tale” (NA, 299-301) and Langland's <i>Pier's Plowman</i> (NA, 331-343) |
| 9-28 | Julian of Norwich and Margery Kempe (NA, 371-397) |
| 10-3 | The English Bible (NA, 618-635) |
| 10-5 | (4) Kings and Queens: History of the English throne; <i>Hamlet</i> , Acts 1 & 2 |
| 10-10 | <i>Hamlet</i> , Acts 3 - 5 |
| 10-12 → | Women in power (NA, 663-703); <u>journals due</u> |
| 10-17 → | <u>midterm examination</u> ; essay/creative project assigned |
| 10-19 | (5) Poetic Form and Subject: sonnet (Spenser and Sidney) |
| 10-24 | Sonnet (Shakespeare and Donne) |
| 10-26 | Meditative verse (Middle English lyrics, Donne) |
| 10-31 | Meditative verse (Herbert) and Pastoral poetry (Spenser, Marvell) |
| 11-2 → | Pastoral poetry (Finch, Thomson, Gray); <u>group reports & journals due</u> |

- 11-7 **(6) Beginnings of the Novel:** Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress* (excerpt)
11-9 Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (excerpt); Johnson, *Rambler* #4 (On Fiction)
11-14 → Behn, *Oroonko*; Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (Book 1) essay due
11-16 Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (Books 3 & 4); Milton, *Paradise Lost*
- 11-21 **(7) Religion and Society in the Modern World:** introduction; Sidney's "Defense..."
11-23 ***Thanksgiving Holiday***
11-28 Dryden, *MacFlecknoe*, *Absalom and Achitophel*; Milton's *Paradise Lost*
11-30 → Cowper and 18th-century religious lyric; journals due
12-5 Blake, *Songs of Innocence & Experience*
- 12-7 review for final examination
12-12 → Final Examination, 1:00 – 3:00 pm