



ENGL 2610

Division: Humanities

Department: English

Course: ENGL 2610

Title: Masterpieces of British Literature

Catalog Description:

This course surveys the outstanding compositions and the main currents of British literature from its beginnings through the Restoration and Eighteenth Century.

General Education Requirements: Humanities

Semesters Offered: Fall

Credit/Time Requirement: Credit: 3; Lecture: 3; Lab: 0

Clock/Hour Requirements: 0

Offered for Non-Credit: No

Justification:

A lower division survey of British literature is standard at most colleges and universities. This course will transfer as General Education, elective, or major credit. It fulfills General Education credit within the Humanities category (HU) and major requirements for English majors.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Students will know the major authors and works of British literature chronologically from the eighth through the eighteenth centuries.

Students will know major authors and their works with sufficient understanding to continue in major courses at Snow or four-year institutions.

Students will be able to discuss major themes of Medieval, Renaissance, and Neo-Classical British literature.

Students will believe that changes have occurred in British literature due to social changes, and that these changes impact our use of the English language.

Students will feel an appreciation for the influence of British literature on mainstream values of United States Culture.

Content:

A selection of major literary works of British Literature from the Medieval, Renaissance, and Neo-Classical

eras, including poetry, fiction, drama, essays and criticism, including:

- A. *Beowulf*; selections from Old English elegiac poetry.
- B. Formal conventions of Old English alliterative verse.
- C. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*; beginnings of end rhyme in English literature.
- D. Selections from Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*; iambic pentameter couplets.
- E. Selected poetry and drama of the Renaissance, focusing on Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, and John Donne.
- F. Blank verse, sonnets, other verse forms as literary vehicles.
- E. Selections from Milton's *Paradise Lost*.
- F. Prose selections from Pepys, Defoe, and Swift.
- G. Satire and the Heroic Couplet, with selections from Swift, Dryden, and Pope.

Other concepts include poetry, the four humours, the Great Chain of Being, microcosm/macrocosm, the Ptolemaic and Copernican pictures of the universe, and other poetic and philosophical topics that distinguish one era from the others.

General Education Outcomes:

- 1) Read effectively, constructively, and critically.

Students read and discuss the primary texts and are quizzed on their basic content. Discussion questions are designed to elicit constructive and critical responses (e.g., Why do you think Milton would choose blank verse for his *Paradise Lost* rather than developing a rhyme scheme?)

- 2) Write clearly, informatively, and persuasively.

Each student will write at least one journal page per reading and a formal essay that demonstrates literary analysis or the genesis of a project. Each essay will be returned with suggestions to improve the student's writing skills. Examinations will include at least two long essay questions, allowing the students to develop an idea.

- 5) Apply a cultural and historical awareness to a variety of phenomena.

Essays, examinations and class discussions always ask students to consider the readings in light of the evolution of the English language to meet the social challenges of the times. For example, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* can be read as an example of the influx of French ideas and vocabulary after the Norman Conquest.

- 9) Respond with informed sensitivity to an artistic work or experience.

An important goal of this course is to foster an appreciation for the evolution of British literature and the English language. Each student will respond to an evaluation question, "Which work did you like best, and why?"

3 examinations (2 mid-terms and a comprehensive final): 70%

Essay (5-7 pages) or original project (e.g., performance project, artwork, collection, or other format, which requires interpretation or analysis and relates the course material to another discipline): 15%

Daily reading cards, class participation, attendance: 10%

Journal: 5%

Representative Text and/or Supplies:

A current edition of an anthology of British Literature, such as Longman's.

Optimum Class Size: 25

Maximum Class Size: 40

Signatures:

I hereby submit this course syllabus:

Melanie Jenkins, MA, Associate Professor

I hereby find this course consistent with the goals and resources of the English Department:

Melanie Jenkins, MA, Associate Professor, Chair

I hereby find this course consistent with the goals and resources of the Humanities Division:

Sheryl James Bodrero, PhD, Associate Professor, Dean

I have discussed the need for library resources related to this class with the person submitting the syllabus:

Lynn Anderson, MLIS, Technical Services Librarian (Main Campus)

Michelle Olsen, MLS, Campus Librarian (Richfield Campus)