Course Description
This is a survey of prominent works of English literature (mainly poems, with a few excursions into novels, short stories, and critical essays) from the end of the eighteenth century to the present day. In this course, we will consider topics such as shifts in the hierarchy of genres, debates over whether art is meant to imitate or re-imagine the world, the place of religious faith in a rapidly changing society, women’s complex role as both the passive subjects and the active creators of literature, and formal developments in prose and poetry that continue to be important for writers today. Tracing significant currents of thought through literary history, we’ll also think about periodization. What distinguishes the Romantic era from the Victorian era from the Modern era? To what extent are these useful distinctions? As we become familiar with the literary past, we will build a sophisticated critical vocabulary and hone our skills as attentive readers. Above all, we’ll focus on the ways in which the nuances of language and form inevitably shape the meaning of a text: how do stanzaic patterns, rhymes and rhythms, and the use of metaphor determine the emotional impact a poem has on us? How might narrative structure, word choice, and the presence or absence of a first-person narrator influence our understanding of a novel or a short story? We will develop techniques both for finding complexity in texts that seem simple or transparent and for getting to the heart of texts that appear impenetrable or obscure.

Required Texts
Please purchase *The Norton Anthology of English Literature, the Major Authors* (Volume 2, Ninth Edition) and the Norton edition of Jane Austen’s *Persuasion*. You’ll find them at the UO Duck Shop Bookstore. These readings will be supplemented with handouts and/or online resources as necessary.

Course Requirements, Policies, and Grading
In English 211, you will write two formal, thesis-driven essays (due on February 7 and March 14), compose short weekly responses, and take a final exam (March 19). In lieu of a midterm exam, every student will be required to recite a memorized poem of his or her choosing in class on February 24. More details about these assignments will be forthcoming. Please note that an Incomplete will be granted only when there has been a genuine emergency beyond a student’s control. Before turning in the second paper, you will visit my office hours for a consultation (more on this later in the term).

Here is the grading breakdown:
- Paper 1: 15%
- Paper 2: 25%
- Weekly Responses: 10%
- Recitation: 10%
- Final: 25%
- Attendance & Participation: 15%

Not all the assigned material will be discussed in class. As a rule, please avoid writing papers about topics we’ve covered extensively in our meetings. I can, however, make exceptions if you speak to me in advance.

Once a week, please email me a brief response to the readings, due by 10 pm on Sunday, Tuesday, or Thursday (you will be assigned to one of these days). Tell me what you would like to discuss and why; you
might mention a few passages that puzzle or fascinate you, or reflect on a theme that connects several texts. These responses – though they are required – will not be given individual grades, are not meant to be burdensome, and should not exceed a couple of paragraphs in length. I will read selected responses aloud in class, asking their authors to comment and expand on them.

Please check your UO email frequently, particularly if you are absent, because I will be sending you important messages and documents! Please also keep your graded first paper on hand to consult as you compose your second paper; reviewing your work is one of the best ways to become a better writer.

All materials should be submitted promptly. Last-second extensions will not be granted, and late papers will be graded down – or, if significantly late, not accepted. If you miss class the day an assignment is due, please place that assignment in my English Department mailbox by 5 pm the same day.

I hope that you look forward to – and enjoy – class. We will be reading and discussing some of the most amazing literature in the English language – what better way to spend an afternoon? On the slim chance that you disagree, though, remember that attendance is both important and required. Exceptions may be made in the case of unforeseen and dire emergency; however, you are expected to make this class your priority over all other engagements, unless you have a truly compelling reason not to do so. If you know that you must be late or absent, speak to me in advance. You are responsible for all work assigned and all material covered during absences. If class is ever canceled due to inclement weather, I will notify you by email as far in advance as possible.

Come to class in spirit as well as in body! Bring all the course materials; bring enthusiasm and engagement. (You’ll find that said enthusiasm will be easier to muster if you have done the reading carefully, and you’ll find that speaking up regularly will help you understand the material better.) I expect every person to participate meaningfully in class. Ask thoughtful questions or share exciting insights, direct our attention to an important passage, respond to the perceptions of your peers. It is important for every member of the course to have a voice. If for any reason you feel uncomfortable talking in class, please let me know. Being absent, arriving late, or not contributing to our discussions will lower your attendance/participation grade. Active and respectful participation is inconsistent with texting, facebooking, napping, and side conversations.

And if at any point you feel that you are struggling with the material or would like extra feedback, please contact me! I am happy to talk about your papers at any stage of the writing process; as a matter of fact, I am happy to talk about any questions or concerns at any time. Find me after class, come to my office hours, send me an email, or make an appointment to see me. I especially encourage you to meet with me about paper ideas and theses before you start to write. You should also know that the Writing Lab, located in 72 PLC, can provide extra help.

Plagiarism involves using someone else’s words or ideas without properly citing your source; this applies to direct quotations or paraphrases of any source material, printed or digital. Do not attempt to pass others’ work off as your own; doing so is unethical. Students who are unsure how and when to cite should consult with me or with a librarian. Consequences of plagiarism may range from failing the assignment, to failing the class, to being reported to the university for disciplinary action. See also the UO Student Conduct Code.

If you anticipate needing accommodations for accessible education in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me soon. Please also request that the Accessible Education Center (http://aec.uoregon.edu; [541] 346-1155) send a letter outlining your needs.

Course Schedule (subject to change)
All page numbers refer to The Norton Anthology; texts marked with an asterisk are in the supplementary handouts. All assignments will be announced and explained in advance, both in person and via email.
Week 1

January 6
Introduction

January 8
Alexander Pope, from “An Essay on Man”*

January 10
Guest lecture on nineteenth-century novels by Professor Heidi Kaufman

Week 2

January 13

January 15

January 17

Week 3

January 20
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – NO CLASS

January 22
**John Keats**, “Bright star, would I were stedfast as thou art” (487), “La Belle Dame sans Merci” (488), “Ode to a Nightingale” (492), “Ode on a Grecian Urn” (494), “To Autumn” (515)

January 24
**Jane Austen**, *Persuasion* (chapters 1-8)

Week 4

January 27
*Persuasion* (chapters 9-16)

January 29
*Persuasion* (chapters 17-24)

January 31
**Alfred, Lord Tennyson**, “Mariana” (616), “The Lady of Shalott” (618), “Ulysses” (624), “Break, Break, Break” (627), from *In Memoriam*: 7 (639), 48 (652), 54 (653), 119 (676)
Week 5

February 3

February 5

February 7

- February 7: Paper 1 due in class (3-4 pages)

Week 6

February 10

February 12

February 14

Week 7

February 17
**Robert Louis Stevenson**, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (832)

February 19
**Oscar Wilde**, Preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (885)

February 21
**James Joyce**, “Araby” (1223), “The Dead” (1227)

Week 8

February 24
Poetry recitations
February 26
D. H. Lawrence, “Why the Novel Matters” (1291)
Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (1109) (read the first third – to p. 1145)

February 28
*Mrs. Dalloway* (read to p. 1181)

Week 9

March 3
*Mrs. Dalloway* (read to the end)

March 5

March 7

Week 10

March 10
Florence Smith (aka Stevie Smith), “Alone in the Woods”,* Pretty,”* “Thoughts About the Person from Porlock”*

March 12
Derek Walcott, “A Far Cry from Africa” (1446), “The Season of Phantasmal Peace” (1449)
Margaret Atwood, “Spelling”*

March 14
Brief paper presentations and final exam review

- **March 14:** Paper 2 due in class (4-6 pages)
- **March 19:** Final exam (3:15-5:15 pm, in our usual classroom)

**Important UO Dates**
January 13: Last day to drop classes without a “W”
January 15: Last day to add classes
January 20: MLK holiday
February 23: Last day to withdraw from classes
March 14: Last day of classes
March 22: Graduation
March 22-30: Spring break