

**English 211: Survey of English Literature 1800-Present (CRN 34647)**  
**Spring 2014**

**Professor H. Kaufman**

Email: hkaufman@uoregon.edu

Office: 365 PLC Hall

Office Hours: Weds 10:30-2:00 and by appointment

541-346-3932

**Class Meetings:**

117 Fenton

T/TH 10-11:20

**Course Description**

This course is a survey or overview of British literature from 1789 to the present. It is impossible to cover every piece of important literature from this long period, so we will instead read representative pieces from different generations of writers. Since people never write, read, or think in a vacuum, we will consider the ways in which historical, cultural, social, and political movements and events shaped and were shaped by literary culture. By the end of this course you will be able to identify different writing styles, historical concerns, and genre developments in British literary culture from the nineteenth century to the present.

**Learning Objectives and Outcomes**

1. To read literary and cultural texts with discernment and comprehension and with an understanding of their conventions
2. To draw on relevant cultural and/or historical information to situate texts within their cultural, political, and historical contexts
3. To perform critical, formal analyses of literary texts
4. To learn to write focused, analytical essays in clear, grammatical prose
5. To employ logic, creativity, and interpretive skills to produce original, persuasive arguments
6. To employ primary sources with proper acknowledgment and citation, as they contribute to a critical essay's thesis

**Required Texts (Available at the UO bookstore)**

Thomas Hardy, *Far From the Madding Crowd* (This edition: ISBN 978-0-14-143965-5)

Damrosch and Dettmar, Eds. *Masters of British Literature*, Volume B

Assorted materials posted on Blackboard

Dictionary (*Oxford English Dictionary*, found on the library website under "databases" is best)

## Course Expectations and Details

### Work & Assessment

- 10% Class participation — including quality and consistency of contributions to discussions, punctuality, preparedness for class, and quiz grades
- 50% Average of Response Essays
- 20% Mid-Term Exam
- 20% Final Take-Home Exam

### Reading

This class will have demanding (but wonderful!) reading assignments. We will move at a steady pace and I will expect everyone to keep up. You should **bring to each class the book/text we are reading for that day, paper, and a writing utensil** (notes may be taken on computers, but paper will be necessary for in-class writing assignments & quizzes). As you read each night's assignment you should take physical or mental notes, asking questions, or identifying important or confusing passages.

### Class Participation

Each person enrolled in this course is expected to help foster a community of respect. We will read controversial material and I expect that everyone will not always agree, or that your experiences may be much different from those you learn about in the course materials. It is crucial that everyone listen carefully and contribute to class discussion in a thoughtful and respectful manner.

### Writing

**1) Response Essays** should be **printed** and turned in at the beginning of class:

You will write a series of two-page essays in response to reading assignments. Specific topics are listed on the last page of this syllabus.

**2) Midterm Exam** will be an in-class essay:

You should bring to class two green books and a pen.

**3) Final Take-Home Exam** should be **uploaded to Blackboard** as a **single Word attachment**:

Exam will be comprised of two essays on texts & issues covered on the syllabus and in class.

### All written work should be formatted according to the following:

- \*Font should be 12pt. Times New Roman
- \*Essays should be double spaced
- \*One-inch margins on all four sides of each page of the essay
- \*In the top left-hand corner include name, date, and professor's name
- \*At the top center of page one include an original title focused on your essay's concern(s)
- \*Page numbers should appear on the center bottom of each page except on the first page (where page numbers are unnecessary)
- \*Book titles should appear in *italics*; titles of stories or poems should appear inside "quotation marks"
- \*For the first mention of an author use full name; for subsequent references use last name only
- \*Quotes should be introduced (as the narrator explains...) and followed by a page reference

**Please turn cell phones to vibrate before class begins, and silence any electronic equipment capable of interrupting class. The use of electronic social media during class time is prohibited.**

### **Quizzes**

Quizzes are unannounced and will focus on the reading due on the day of the quiz. If you are absent on the day of a quiz, you cannot make it up (since it will be “pop”). However, you may drop one quiz grade from your quiz grade average. If you’ve missed one quiz, you can count it as your “dropped” quiz. If you haven’t missed a quiz then the lowest quiz grade will be dropped. Quizzes take place at the start of class.

### **Attendance Policy**

**Class attendance is mandatory.** It is your responsibility to sign (your name only) the sign-in sheet at the beginning of each class. If you neglect to sign your name you’ll be listed as absent for that day. Signing names other than your own is prohibited.

Your regular attendance is vital to the goals of this course. You may miss **two** class meetings without penalty. *Your final grade will drop one-third of a letter grade for each subsequent absence unless you have contacted me and we have agreed on alternative arrangements.* All written work is due on time despite absences. You are responsible for material covered on days when you miss class. You do not need to contact me if you plan to be absent. Just be sure to get the notes from a classmate.

### **Plagiarism**

All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented. Please see me if you have any questions about your use of sources. Plagiarism will be handled according to the *Student Conduct Code*:

<http://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/StudentConductCode/tabid/69/Default.aspx>

### **Tutoring and Help**

Writing help is available through Academic Learning Services, located in 68 PLC, and available by phone at 346-3226. I am also very happy to help you with writing assignments. Please contact me by email or after class to set up a writing conference.

### **Course Website (blackboard.uoregon.edu)**

You will need to access this site to upload your writing assignments; receive feedback on your written work; and access reading materials, syllabi, and other various handouts.

### **Students with Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability and will need accommodation, let me know by week two of the term so that I can make appropriate arrangements. Please request that the UO Accessible Education Center (<http://aec.uoregon.edu/>) send me a letter indicating that you’ve consulted with them about your disability.

## Grading

**A range:** Demonstrates that you have read the material/text carefully, and have responded insightfully and persuasively with clearly written prose and a persuasive argument. Your writing addresses the specific expectations of the assignment, and is guided by a clear focus and logical progression from one idea to the next. Your essay is well organized, succinct, specific, well informed, free from grammatical errors, and does not rely on generalities or assumptions. A-range essays contain a persuasive argument.

**B range:** Essays in this range have a solid thesis but need more persuasive tactics to make the essay claims more convincing or clear to the reader. B-range essays not only include quotes or examples from the text but also engage in a careful analysis and close reading of those quotes. B-range essays are mostly grammatically and typographically clean; although they may contain a handful of small errors. They have been revised several times and make solid claims about the tensions raised by their subject matter.

**C range:** Essays in this category contain some interesting ideas that are in desperate need of focus, specificity, and analysis. If you include quotes without close analysis or interpretation your grade will fall into the C range. If you have a thesis that is unclear or unpersuasive your essay will fall into the C-range. If you have more than a small number of typographical or grammatical errors your essay will fall into the C-range.

**D range:** This mark indicates that your essay has serious problems with syntax, organization, and/or focus. Essays in this range have a kernel of a thesis but it is delivered in a way that lacks clarity. D-range essays contain ideas about topics you're planning to think about some day ("This novel was boring" or "I enjoyed this poem") with little follow-through or analysis.

**F:** Failure to complete the assignment.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Late work can be uploaded to Blackboard, but it will be counted as "late." Paper grades will be docked 5 points for each day late. Extensions and incompletes will be given only for documented emergencies. I do not accept written work submitted by email.

**Schedule:** Assignments are due on the dates listed below. Please read all biographies (head notes) of the authors included in your edition of *Masters of British Literature*.

### Week 1

T 4/1 Intro to Course and Discussion  
TH 4/3 "The Romantics and Their Contemporaries" (3-20—stop at "Consumers and Commodities"); Mary Wollstonecraft, from *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (144-162)

### Week 2

T 4/8 William Wordsworth, from "Preface" to *Lyrical Ballads* (196-208) and selection of poems (208-213)  
TH 4/10 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "This Lime-Tree Bower My Prison" (294-96) and "Frost at Midnight"

**Week 3**

T 4/15 “The Abolition of Slavery and the Slave Trade” (78-79); Olaudah Equiano (79-88); and Mary Prince (88-93); **Response Essay 1 (see last page of syllabus for details)**

TH 4/17 “The Victorian Age” (567-585—stop at “Age of Self-Scrutiny”); Charles Darwin, from *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* (702-709)

**Week 4**

T 4/22 Matthew Arnold, “Dover Beach” (863) and “The Scholar-Gypsy (868-874)

TH 4/24 Christina Rossetti, “Goblin Market” (894-907)

**Week 5**

T 4/29 Christina Rossetti, “Goblin Market” (894-907); **Response Essay 2 (see last page of syllabus for details)**

TH 5/1 Oscar Wilde, “Preface to The Picture of Dorian Gray” (960); “Impression du Matin” (958); “Response: Lord Alfred Douglas: Impression de Nuit” (958); “The Harlot’s House” (959-60); and “Symphony in Yellow” (960)

**Week 6**

T 5/6 **Mid-term In-Class essay; bring two green books to class and a pen**

TH 5/8 *Far from the Madding Crowd*, chapters I-VIII

**Week 7**

T 5/13 *Far from the Madding Crowd*, chapters IX- XXIII

TH 5/15 *Far from the Madding Crowd*, chapters XXIV-XXXII

**Week 8**

T 5/20 *Far from the Madding Crowd*, chapters XXXIII-XLIII; **Response Essay 3 (see last page of syllabus for details)**

TH 5/22 *Far from the Madding Crowd*, chapters XLIV-end

**Week 9**

T 5/27 “The Twentieth Century” (1019-1042); Siegfried Sassoon, “Glory of Women” (1166) and “Everyone Sang” (1168); Wilfred Owen, “Strange Meeting” (1169); and “Dulce Et Decorum Est” (1171)

TH 5/29 Virginia Woolf, “The Lady in the Looking Glass: A Reflection” (1288-1291)

**Week 10**

T 6/3 W. H. Auden, “Musee des Beaux Arts” (1396); Philip Larkin, “Church Going” (1408); and “Talking in Bed” (1410)

TH 6/5 Seamus Heaney, “The Toome Road” (1457) and “The Singer’s House” (1457); Derek Walcott, “A Far Cry From Africa” (1447); Eavan Boland, “Mise Éire” (1473). **Final exam will be handed on out this day.**

**Final take-home exams must be uploaded to Blackboard (as a single Word Attachment) no later than Monday, June 9 at noon.**

## Response Essays

**Response Essay 1:** Select a powerful passage from either Equiano or Prince to close read. Your essay should make an interpretive claim about how the writer you've selected makes his/her point in this passage. You'll consider two questions in this assignment:

- 1) What point(s) is the passage trying to persuade us of?
- 2) What is the significance of the way the passage makes its point (does it use a powerful image, symbol, tone, descriptive detail, sound, sensory details, character interiority/development, etc.)? How does the feature of the writing you've identified try to persuade readers? What makes it successful?

Your essay should have an introduction in which you introduce the text (full author and title of work) and then make an interpretive claim about what the text is trying to argue (question 1 above). Following the introduction you will close read the passage (question 2 above). Your close reading should stand as evidence of the interpretive claim you've set up in your introduction. Your reading of the text should prove/illustrate the logic and value of your claim. Finally, your essay should include a short conclusion. Essays should be two pages in length (no more, no less).

**Response Essay 2:** In "Goblin Market" the two main characters in the poem, Lizzie and Laura, reflect important features of both the natural world in which they live and cultural constructions of "natural" (naturalized) behavior. For this essay you'll write a character study of **either** Lizzie or Laura (not both). Does the character you've selected behave naturally? Why or why not? What do you hear Rossetti suggesting about nature in your analysis of your character?

You'll want to begin by finding passages in the poem that depict the subject of your study (either Lizzie or Laura). Next, you'll want to develop a claim about how you think Rossetti depicts this character in relation to nature. Your essay will point to at least one piece of evidence in the poem to support your claim. As with Response Essay 1, you should begin by introducing your subject (author and title of the poem) followed by an introduction in which you state your thesis. The body of your essay should help to prove the logic and value of your thesis. Essays should be two pages in length (no more, no less).

**Response Essay 3:** What makes Hardy's *Far From the Madding Crowd* Victorian? Write an essay in which you focus on features of style, topic, form, or issue that distinguish this novel as an example of Victorian writing. You may use both the novel and the introductory essay from your anthology, "The Victorian Age" in your discussion. Essays should begin with an introduction that includes the subject of the work (title and author) as well as an interpretive claim in which you pinpoint the feature on which you'll focus in your essay. The body of your essay should prove the value and logic of your claim by point to examples from the text. Essays should be two pages in length (no more, no less).