

English 399: Space and Place in Early Modern Literature
Spring 2015

CRN: 37245/Condon 260
MW 12:00-1:20
Office Hours: MW 10:00 am -12:00 pm

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Description:

This course brings setting to the forefront, as it takes an ecocritical perspective of early modern texts by authors such as Thomas More, Edmund Spenser, and William Shakespeare. We will examine how authors use text to create space, place, landscape, and environment within their works. This course will also consider the ways in which characters interact with their landscapes and settings and how examination of environment adds to our understanding of character. We will apply the methods of environmental studies, or “Ecocriticism,” to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature with two goals in mind: 1) as a way explore what these works reveal about early modern English attitudes towards environment, and 2) in order to investigate how the representations of nature in these early modern texts influence modern attitudes toward landscape and environment.

Learning Outcomes:

This course follows the department’s assessment procedure and is built around six desired learning outcomes. All work for this class, including discussions and assignments, are designed to help you learn to

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

Required Texts:

Cavendish, Margaret. *Blazing World*.
Spenser, Edmund. *The Faerie Queene, Book 2*.
Shakespeare, William. *As You Like It* and *King Lear*
Marvell, Andrew. *The Complete Poems*.
Milton, John. *Paradise Lost*
More, Thomas. *Utopia*.
Country-House Poem Packet (On BB)
Colonial Readings Packet (On BB)

Secondary Texts will be provided on Blackboard under Course Documents

Lawrence Buell, “The Emergence of Environmental Criticism.” *The Environmental Imagination*.
Simon Estok, “Theorizing in a Space of Ambivalent Openness: Ecocriticism and Ecophobia.”
Greg Garrard, “Beginnings: Pollution.” *Ecocriticism*.
Ken Hiltner, “Early Modern Ecocriticism.” *The Return of Theory in early modern English Studies*.
Lloyd Kermode, “Space and Place on the Early Modern Stage.”
T.V. Reed, “Environmental Justice Ecocriticism: Race, Class, Gender and Literary Ecologies.” *The Art of Protest*.

Grading:

Assignments:

Discussion/Participation	10%
Theory Questions/Annotations	10%
Close Reading	20%
Proposal & Annotated Bib.	20%
Final Paper	40%

Grading Scale:

The percentage ranges below will earn the following final grades. I will occasionally issue an A+ based on exceptional class performance in addition to a grade of over 98%. Grades that are on the verge (89.99, for instance) will only be rounded up for students who have a strong participation record.

93-100 (A), 90-92.99 (A-), 87-89.99 (B+), 83-86.99 (B), 80-82.99 (B-), 77-79.99 (C+), 73-76.99 (C), 70-72.99 (C-), 67-69.99 (D+), 63-66.99 (D), 60-62.99 (D-) lower (F)

Course Work:

Participation and Theory: This class emphasizes the communication of ideas both in writing and in discussion, so your active participation in this class is essential. Each week's readings consist of primary and secondary texts. The secondary texts will provide theoretical context for the primary works we read. I will divide all the secondary texts for the term between six groups in the first week. Each group will spend the first week reading, answering questions about, and creating an annotation of their assigned work that they will post on Blackboard. Throughout the term, we will read those same secondary texts as a class, with students using the annotation on Blackboard as a guide. If you have questions about the annotation or the findings, feel free to bring those questions to class.

Theory Questions, Close Reading Assignment, Proposal & Annotation Bibliography, and Final Paper Assignments: Directions for these assignments will be included in separate handouts. **Make sure you have the Theory Questions Packet prior to leaving class on the first day. Log on to Blackboard and go over the Close Reading Assignment as soon as you are able. I will address questions and concerns with this assignment on Monday, April 6.**

Format: Assignments should be typed, in 12-point font, be double-spaced, and have 1"-margins all around. You must cite in MLA format. Please proofread and revise your work. Extensive sloppiness and mechanical errors will result in a lower grade.

All assignments will be turned in as Word or ".PDF" documents via email and/or Blackboard. You must have access to your UO email account. If you do not have access to Microsoft Word and do not have the capabilities to save your document as a ".PDF," please see me in the first week of class. **You are responsible for turning work in on time. Please save time for email or posting errors.**

Late Work: All work is due on the date listed in the syllabus. Turning work in late will result in you losing one letter grade per day, including weekends and holidays. You may request an extension once this term if the paper is due more than 72 hours (3 days) later, and the earlier the better: extensions are not guaranteed. In case of a looming or unexpected disaster, consideration will be given if you keep me in the loop and communicate in advance.

Readings: All readings are due on the date listed, and are either in the required texts or available on Blackboard.

Policies:

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. There will be a sign-in sheet for every class meeting. It is your responsibility to sign in to confirm your attendance. **Failure to sign in on the approved sheet will result in an absence.** You are allowed two absences (excused or unexcused) this term. Additional absences will lower your final course grade by ½ a letter grade. Please notify me ahead of time if you must miss class or leave class early. Any absence after two full weeks of missed class may result in course failure. Any absence after three full weeks of missed class will result in course failure. **No further warnings will be given.** If you miss class, you are responsible for obtaining any work you missed. Consult your classmates for class notes and missed assignments. **If you show up to class more than ten minutes late, you will automatically be counted absent.**

Academic Dishonesty: All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. You may not turn in a paper you wrote for another class. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented. This includes ideas you get from your classmates and ideas you get from websites as well as books and other media. In cases where academic dishonesty has been clearly established, an award of an F for the final course is standard practice. Please consult the Code of Student Conduct and Community Standards website and familiarize yourself with these if you do not understand what constitutes cheating or plagiarism:

<http://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/StudentConductCode/tabid/248/Default.aspx>

If you are having trouble writing a paper or understanding what I am looking for, please do not hesitate to contact me. I do not expect you to already know what I am teaching you, but I do expect you to come to me if you are struggling or need clarification on assignment instructions. Extra help is always available; please make sure you take full advantage of the help offered.

A note on using online summaries, paraphrases, and other sources: Many of the texts we will read this term are well-known, and it is not hard to find commentary about them online. These summaries can be helpful if you are having difficulty understanding the material, but please be advised that all your writing and contributions for this class should reflect **your** inquiry into the texts. You have something valuable to contribute, and I am more interested in your interpretations of the text than I am in those that already exist online. Remember that online summaries and sources are other people's interpretations. They reflect the choices other people make about what to include and what to emphasize. The assignments in this course are geared toward helping you develop and practice the skills to make your own interpretations and arguments. You may use summaries as a *supplement* if you are struggling, but **I fully expect you personally read every text**. If you do quote from, get an idea from, or even read an online summary, that source must appear in a "Works Consulted" list on any subsequent assignment. Be aware, though, that these summaries are often not written for college-level courses. Your ideas will often be more complex and interesting than what you will find online.

Decorum: Please do not use cell phones during class time. Please refrain from chatting with your neighbors during class. Such behavior is distracting and disruptive to your classmates and to me.

If you are using a tablet or laptop for an electronic copy of the secondary text, you must clear it with me first. Please make sure you disable wireless access (just to keep all of us honest). **You must also post to Blackboard a copy of the notes and the PDF of the source (with annotations) at the end of each class.** Any unauthorized use of electronics during class time will result in an automatic absence for the day. If you are habitually using or looking at an electronic device in class, I reserve the right to dismiss you and to restructure the electronics policy for this course.

Email/Blackboard: You will need to access Blackboard, as all formal Assignment Sheets and course documents are posted under Course Documents. You will also need access to campus email. I will occasionally use it to send out announcements and to answer questions. I encourage you to email legitimate questions or concerns if you cannot otherwise contact me. However, expect about 24 hours in response time. I will not respond to emails sent on weekends or school holidays until the following business day. If an answer to your question can be found in the documents posted to Blackboard, I will not respond to your email.

Inclement Weather: I do not anticipate cancelling class due to weather. However, if conditions prove unsafe for travel and I need to cancel, I will notify you via campus email by 7:00am on the day of class. I will also post an alternate assignment on Blackboard, under that week's folder in Course Documents, to make sure we do not fall behind.

Accommodations: Appropriate accommodations will be provided for students with documented disabilities. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, you must meet with me by Friday of Week 1.

If you find yourself facing an emergency or crisis that you feel might affect your performance in this class, please let me know as soon as you are able. I am willing to make reasonable accommodations on assignments and attendance, but I can only do so with advanced (or as advanced as possible) notice. You do not have to disclose the nature of your crisis or trauma, but in order to provide assistance, I will need to know that you require extra support. To that end: if you experience trauma or a crisis and need counseling or administrative support, you may access the excellent services at the university's Counseling and Testing Center. Their contact information: (541) 346-3227, counseling.uoregon.edu

Course Schedule

Unless otherwise marked, all secondary sources are on Blackboard (BB).

Date	Reading		Assignments Due
Week 1			
M, 3/30	Syllabus		
W, 4/1	Assigned Essays	In-Class Activity: Group Annotation, Close Reading Practice	Homework: Individual Annotation
Week 2			
M, 4/6	<i>As You Like It</i> Acts 1-2	Theory: Kermode, "Space and Place on the Early Modern Stage."	Close Reading Practice
W, 4/8	<i>As You Like It</i> Acts 3-5		
Week 3			
M, 4/13	<i>King Lear</i> Acts 1-2	Theory: Estok, "Ecocriticism and Ecophobia"	
W, 4/15	<i>King Lear</i> Acts 3-5		
Week 4			
M, 4/20	<i>Utopia</i> Book 1	Theory: Gerard, "Beginnings: Pollution"	
W, 4/22	<i>Utopia</i> Book 2		Assignment 1 Due
Week 5			
M, 4/27	<i>The Faerie Queene</i> , Proem & C 1	Theory: Buell, from <i>The Environmental Imagination</i>	
W, 4/29	<i>The Faerie Queene</i> , C 12		
Week 6			
M, 5/4	<i>Blazing World</i>	Theory: Reed, from <i>The Art of Protest</i>	
W, 5/6	<i>Blazing World</i>		
Week 7			
M, 5/11	<i>Paradise Lost</i> , Books I, IV, & V	Theory: Hiltner, "Early Modern Ecocriticism"	
W, 5/13	<i>Paradise Lost</i> , Books VII & VIII		
F, 5/15		Email and Post assignment to BB by 5pm	Proposal and Ann. Bibliography
Week 8			
M, 5/18	<i>Paradise Lost</i> , Books IX, X, & XII	Theory: Hiltner, "Early Modern Ecocriticism"	
W, 5/20	Colonial Texts	Theory: Reed, from <i>The Art of Protest</i>	
Week 9			
M, 5/25	No Class		
W, 5/27	Marvell-Selected Poems		
Week 10			
M, 6/1	Marvell, "Upon Appleton House" Lanyer and Johnson (BB)		
W, 6/3	Wrap up and Final Thoughts		
Final			
June 8			Final Paper, by 5pm