

## MILTON

PROF. BOVILSKY

**Course Description**

Students in ENG 442/542 read and discuss Milton's poetry and some of his prose. Students will become acquainted with Milton's political and literary careers and the issues to which he devotes particular concern. Students leave the course having read extensively from the works of a major and influential writer and will be able to generate their own arguments about interpreting the ethical, political, religious, and other content in Milton's work. There will be weekly readings, in addition to which students will be asked to perform one close reading exercise and 2 essays (see "assignments" below).

**Learning Outcomes**

ENG 442 will (1) familiarize students with the major poetic works of John Milton and, in the process, (2) show how such familiarity with the span of a career of a single author can enrich understanding of the texts we read. The course will (3) acquaint students with criticism and scholarly debate and (4) advance students' work on their own critical writing, including argumentation, the creation of original critical claims, and technical components.

**The course meets Mondays and Wednesdays from 12-1:20 pm in 185 Lillis Hall.**

**Contact information for Prof. Bovilsky:**

Office: PLC 246

Email: [bovilsky@uoregon.edu](mailto:bovilsky@uoregon.edu)

Office hours: M 2-3, W 2-3, and Th 11:15-12:15 or by appointment

**Required Text**

Oxford Authors *John Milton*, ed. Orgel and Goldberg (available in the Duckstore)

All additional readings will be available on e-reserves or in handouts.

**M Mar 30**    **Introduction**

**W April 1**    **Early lyrics**  
 "At a Solemn Music"; "On Shakespeare"; Sonnets 2-5; "Canzone"; "Lycidas"  
**Guest teacher: Professor Ben Saunders**

**M April 6**    "A Masque...Presented at Ludlow Castle" [Comus]

- Prose**
- W April 8** *Areopagitica*
- Epic!**
- M April 13** *Paradise Lost*, Book 1; Stanley Fish, *Surprised By Sin* 1.i-ii
- T April 14** \*Close reading exercise due, 3 pm\*
- W April 15** *PL*, Book 2; William Empson, *Milton's God*, Chapter 1, 2, 7 (selections)
- M April 20** *PL*, Book 3; Sonnet 16: "When I consider how my light is spent"; Jonathan Goldberg, "Dating Milton"
- W April 22** *PL*, Book 4; *Surprised By Sin* 5.ii-iii
- M April 27** *PL*, Book 5; *Milton's God*, Chapter 4
- W April 29** *PL*, Book 6
- M May 4** *PL*, Book 7; Andrew Mattison, *Milton's Uncertain Eden* 2
- W May 6** *PL*, Book 8; *Surprised By Sin* 6
- Th May 7** \*Paper due, 3 pm\*
- M May 11** *PL*, Book 9; Neil Forsyth, "Satan Tempter"
- W May 13** *PL*, Book 10; Sonnet 19: "Methought I saw my late espoused saint"
- M May 18** *PL*, Book 11
- W May 20** *PL*, Book 12
- M May 25** **Memorial Day: no class**
- Late verse**
- W May 27** *Paradise Regained*, Books 1-2; Regina Schwartz, "Milton's Cosmic Body"
- M June 1** *PR*, Books 3-4
- W June 3** *Samson Agonistes*; John Guillory, "Dalila's House: *Samson Agonistes* and the Sexual Division of Labor"
- F June 5** \*Final paper due, 3 pm\*

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Participation in discussion is strongly encouraged.**

### Attendance

Attendance is mandatory; more than three unexcused absences will result in your final grade being lowered as follows. Four unexcused absences will lower your grade two-thirds of a full letter grade (A- becomes B); five will lower your grade one full letter grade (A- becomes B-). Six or more unexcused absences will mean a failing grade.

### Assignments

One close reading exercise (2-3 pp); two papers (4-6 pp; 5-7 pp).

Assignments must be typed in 12-point font, be double spaced, and have reasonable margins (1 inch is generally standard; greater than 1.25 inch will not be accepted). You may work from MLA or Chicago format: just be consistent.

Please proofread and revise your written work. Extensive sloppiness and mechanical errors will result in a lower grade.

Late assignments **lose one letter grade per day, including weekends and holidays.** You may request an extension 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. Stay in touch.

**No incompletes will be granted except in case of documented emergency.**

## GRADES

A final grade of **C or better** in the course is required for English major credit. Final grades are based on papers and exams.

Final grades are assessed according to the following base rubric (\*\*but see below\*\*):

- 8% Critical Summary** (your choice: due the day we complete the reading)
- 15% Close Reading assignment (2-3 pp, due Tuesday, April 14)**
- 35% Paper 1 (4-6 pp, due Thursday, May 7)**
- 42% Final Paper (5-7 pp, due Friday, June 5)**

\*\*I may choose to alter the above proportions to respond to your individual situation. For instance, I may skew percentages to reward improvement over the course of the term. You can also raise your grade through class participation – contributing usefully to class discussion and to dialogue with your peers, asking questions, paying attention.\*\*

## **PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING**

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course or at this university. 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. This includes ideas you get from your classmates (discussion and kicking ideas around is encouraged, so long as you document where discussion with a peer impacted your argument) and ideas you get from websites as well as books and other media. See the library website (under “guides”) for citation practices. You are not allowed to cut and paste from internet sites into your paper.

**N.B.** Most internet content on Milton aimed at students is not written at the college level. Taking from this work, even in the case that you are not caught, often results in a lower grade.

**Academic dishonesty will result in an automatic failing grade for this course.** Definitions of cheating and plagiarism are available in the “Student Conduct Code” section of the Student Life website (<http://studentlife.uoregon.edu>); please familiarize yourself with these if you are not clear on what constitutes cheating or plagiarism. You are also welcome to contact me if you have any questions about these definitions. I am very happy to talk to you about this!

If you are having trouble writing a paper or understanding what I am looking for, please contact me. I do not expect that you already know how to do what I am teaching you. Extra help is always available. There’s nothing wrong with getting something wrong – sometimes it takes mistakes to learn, and this is not something to panic about. However, if you take ideas from elsewhere and pass them off as your own, you learn nothing – so the next paper will therefore be no easier – and risk extreme academic penalties.

## **ACCOMMODATIONS**

All appropriate accommodations will be provided for students with documented disabilities. If you have a documented disability and require accommodation, you must meet with or contact me by Friday, April 10. I assume that you will also meet with the Accessible Education Center, which will help provide needed accommodations.