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ENG 2950-001: Transatlantic Literary History I

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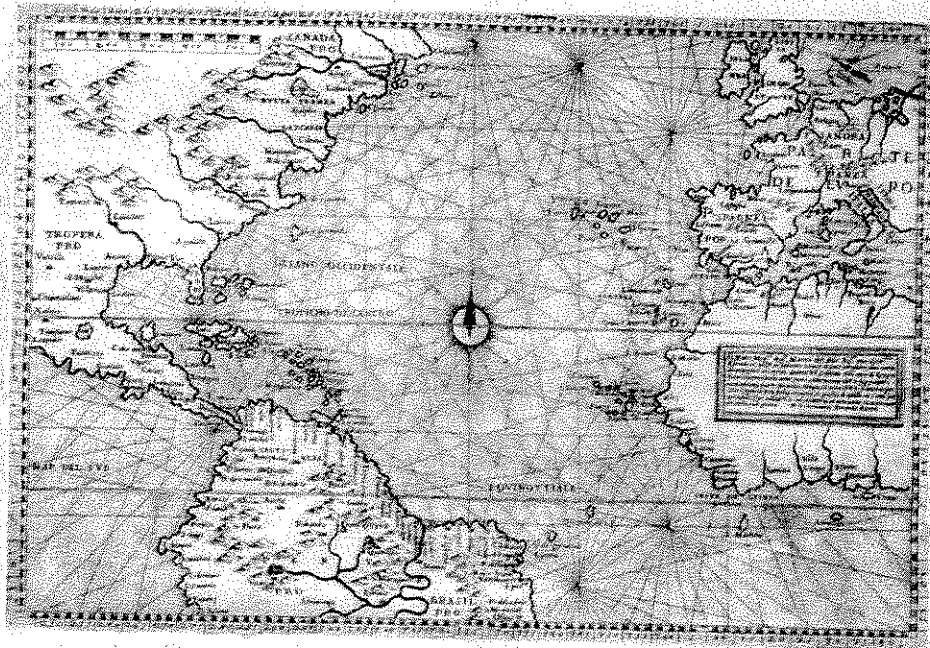
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IN.TRANS.MISSION.

Transatlantic Literary History: Culture, Literacies, and Technologies I

English 2950 (99290) / 3 credit hours
 Fall 2015 / MW 15:00 – 16:15 / Coleman 3150

Professor: C.C. Wharram
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 Office: 3010 Coleman, 1343 Doudna Fine Arts
 Office Hours: MW 16:15-17:15 in 3010 Coleman;
 F 14:00-16:00 in 1343 Doudna
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Map of the North Atlantic, ca. 1565, Venice

IN.TRANS.MISSION.

This course introduces students to the study of the ways that words move from place to place, in and through history.

It will offer an overview of transatlantic literary history from the Anglo-Saxon period to the beginning of the eighteenth century. By examining a number of key cultural movements and genres during this roughly 1000-year timespan, we will aim to familiarize students with the varying means by which literature is transmitted from person to person, from place to place, and from one historical moment to another.

The purpose of the course is to equip students with an historical foundation for contextualizing the literature they read: what it means to have a *canon* of literature; what it

means to *resist* that canon; what it means to have (or not to have) *cultural capital*. We will be reading canonical authors (e.g., Chaucer and Shakespeare) alongside more recent additions to the canon and texts that have never been considered “canonical.” We want to avoid the pitfalls of the typical (or, at least, it used to be “typical”) survey course that determines in advance that certain authors and works are important or “great,” while others are not.

In reading texts translated from predominantly oral cultures, we will consider the central problems of orality and literacy, and how these “texts” are transmitted to our own time. Our starting point, on both sides of the Atlantic, will be to consider the oral cultures that produced the earliest literatures we will examine in this class—the Anglo-Saxons of England, who spoke a now-extinct language called “Old English,” and the various First Nations cultures of North America, who spoke approximately 300 different languages, some of which are now extinct, and many of which are still spoken. In reading texts translated from these languages arising from predominately oral cultures, we will consider the central problems of the history of orality and literacy, and how these “texts” are transmitted to our own time.

From the EIU Course Catalog: ENG 2950. Transatlantic Literary History: Culture, Literacies, and Technologies I. An introduction to the key cultural movements and genres in Transatlantic literary history aimed at familiarizing students with the history of orality, literacy, and print technology in textual production from the Anglo-Saxon period to the beginning of the eighteenth century. Prerequisite: Grade of “C” or better in ENG 1002G. WI [writing intensive]

Texts

The Broadview Anthology of British Literature: Concise Edition, Volume A. Morrison, Toni. *A Mercy*.

Ong, Walter. *Orality and Literacy*.

Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest*. Eds. Graff and Phelan.

Other texts will be made available electronically, through D2L.

Requirements

Weekly Quizzes, taken via D2L	0%
Participation	20%
Explication Papers	30%
Final Writing Project	30%
Final Exam	20%



Weekly Quizzes and Final Exam

Every week, before our Monday class meeting, you will complete a brief quiz online through the D2L learning-management system. Most of the questions will be fact-based to determine how closely you have read materials and listened to class lectures and discussions. Most of the questions will be written to let you know the facts I think you should retain in order to learn well in this course and in the future (both as an English major and generally as an educated human being). You must complete the quiz before our Monday class. If you don't, the quiz will be unavailable to you. Your grade for the course will be in no way determined by your performance on these quizzes, except for the fact that if you do not take the quizzes, your Course Participation grade will suffer. Furthermore, the Final Exam will consist of questions from the weekly quizzes only. Therefore, your Final Exam will consist only of questions you have already seen.

The Final Exam will take place on **Thursday, December 17 at 14:45**; therefore, you should not plan to leave Charleston early for the winter holidays!

Participation

Your Course Participation grade will be determined through a demerit system. You will begin with 20 points, representing 20% of your final grade. **For every class you miss**, you will lose 0.5 percentage points (i.e., four absences equals 2 points equals 18/20; three absences equals 1.5 points equals 18.5/20). If you miss more than six classes, you will be missing more than 20% of the course meetings, and it is very unlikely (almost unheard of, at EIU) that you will pass the course. If you find yourself in a situation that is causing you to miss classes, please discuss the situation with me as soon as possible, and we will work on finding ways for you to remain in the course, if we can. **For every quiz you fail to take** before Monday's class, you will lose two points (i.e., two missed classes and two missed quizzes equals 15/20). Also, I will ask each of you to **prepare one or two questions** for our class discussions on Wednesdays based on our reading for that day and the Monday lecture. If you are absent or have no questions prepared, you will receive a one-point demerit. Please contact me if you have an intervening emergency. On occasions throughout the semester, I will ask that you make contributions to class discussions either during class or through D2L: demerit points will be taken for failure to complete these small tasks.

Explication Papers

During the semester, I will ask you to write three short "explication" papers, which simply involves your offering a close reading of a brief passage of text. These papers should be minimally 300-words in length, but have no upper limit (i.e., your paper may be 10-pages long, if you wish). More details are forthcoming.

Final Writing Project

As the semester progresses, I will meet with you individually so that together we may develop a topic for your final writing project. I will give you more specific instructions during the semester, but for now, you will want to know that the paper should be at least 5-pages in length and deal with a topic that allows you to address multiple historical periods and texts.

A General Overview:

Module I: The Distant Past, Pre-literate Culture, and The Medieval (4 wks)

Hashtags: #genre&poetics #identity&culture #media&tech

Module II: The Sonnet, A Genre in/through History (2.5 wks)

Hashtags: #genre&poetics #media&tech #law&justice

Module III: First Contact and The Early Modern (3 wks)

Hashtags: #genre&poetics #identity&culture #media&tech #science&environment

Bridge Module: Politics and Society, 1620-1720 (0.5 wk)

Module IV: The Slave Trade and The Novel (3 wks)

Hashtags: #genre&poetics #identity&culture #media&tech #law&justice

Module V: Culture Science, The Story of Inoculation (2 wks)

Hashtags: #science&environment #identity&culture #media&tech

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The primary aim of this course is to introduce you—through reading, writing, and discussion—to the study of literary history. In this course, I expect that you will:

- be introduced to some important writers and movements from the history of the Anglophone world on both sides of the Atlantic from the early medieval period to the beginning of the eighteenth century;
- gain an awareness of some of the major historical events and figures, social and political forces, and economic and scientific insights that were represented and fashioned by a selection of texts of these periods;
- communicate effectively in both oral and written transmissions;
- reflect upon your own considerations about “literature” and “history,” “media” and “culture” while considering the viewpoints and arguments of others;
- develop basic strategies used by literary scholars such as attentive reading practices, research into previous critical and theoretical analyses, and effective argument;
- economically incorporate and correctly document sources of ideas and information.

COURSE POLICIES

LATE POLICY

Essays are due at the beginning of class. Late essays will be marked a full grade lower for every day late. Essays turned in a week past the deadline will be given a “zero.” In-class writing assignments and quizzes must be turned in by the end of class, and cannot be “made up” at a later date. If you have reason to believe you will be incapable of completing an assignment on time, please speak to me as soon as possible.

EMAILING POLICY

I want to get to know you and your work this semester. Thus I ask that you stop by my office during office hours (or other scheduled times) so that we can talk. Don’t be afraid to talk to me after class about setting up a time to discuss the readings, the assignments, or anything else you’d like to talk about. However, DO NOT EMAIL ME TO ASK FOR AN “UPDATE” ON MISSED ASSIGNMENTS, OR TO EXPLAIN AN ABSENCE.

ESSAY FORMAT

Your paper should be paper-clipped. It must include page numbers. Format: 12-point Garamond font (or similar), double-spaced, with one-inch margins. Always submit your papers using correct MLA (Modern Language Association) format.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade on the assignment, if not for the course. I will follow the departmental policy on plagiarism:

“Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—‘The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s own original work’ (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including

immediate assignments, of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.”

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE POLICIES

Academic integrity

Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as de-fined in EIU's Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be re-ported to the Office of Student Standards.

Students with disabilities

If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Please stop by Ninth Street Hall, Room 2006, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

The Student Success Center

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (www.eiu.edu/~success) for assistance with time management, text taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302.