Fall 8-15-2009

ENG 4950-002: Literary History and Bibliography

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English 4950: Literary History and Bibliography
TR 3:30 – 4:45 am; CH 3609
Fall 2009
Professor Richard Sylvia
Office: Coleman 3775
Office Hours: MTWR 9:30 – 10:30 am; 2:00 – 3:00 pm; and by appt.
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Course Design, Goals and Objectives: Typically this course is a fast paced overview of the major developments in English literature, from its beginnings to the twentieth century. The goal is to increase your knowledge of the breadth of literary history, as well as deepen your understanding of how literary history functions in English studies today. Class time is generally devoted to lecture, discussion of background issues, discussion of selected literary works, and to brief student reports on developments in English literature and exams.

This semester, however, I would like to accomplish the same goals by using reading groups throughout the semester. In other words, you will be responsible for choosing most of the works you read and for discussion of them. For several years I have heard many of you speak at our annual English Studies Conference about the value of reading groups in the classroom, and I believe this method is a good match for this course. (I would like to thank Ms. Kelsey Leake for sharing with me her knowledge of reading group practice.)

The course is divided into seven literary period units. The first two classes of each unit will include assigned reading for the whole class and background lecture, in which I will use this common text to introduce you to the literary period under discussion. During the second class, four groups of four students will have an opportunity to select a work from the Norton Anthology. Each group will then read the work it chooses in preparation for the third class meeting of the unit. (You will be responsible for only the work chosen by your group.) The third class will be devoted to group work during which you will work together to prepare answers to four study questions I will distribute. The fourth class of the unit will be a panel discussion of the texts selected and the questions prepared by each group.

Each panel will be comprised of one member from each group – that is, all those working on question one, for instance, for the four texts selected will comprise one panel, all those working on question two another panel, etc. Sometimes we will get through all four questions, but sometimes we may not, depending on the length of our discussions. Each member of each group will also turn in a brief written response to one of the four questions assigned for each text. Everyone will get to present several times during the semester.

Clearly success with this method depends on your willingness to attend class regularly and to participate constructively as both a presenter and respondent, so I have devoted 20% of the final grade to participation. See below.

Other things to keep in mind:
I will distribute a detailed description of what I expect each group to prepare for each of our panel discussions and for the written responses.

The make-up of groups will change from one unit to the next.

This is a writing-intensive course. You may submit a paper from this class as part of your EWP. For more information, visit the assessment website: www.eiu.edu/~assess

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

English Department Statement 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) - has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office."


**Course Requirements and Grading:**
- two exams – 40% (20% each)
- panel discussion presentations and reports – 40%
- participation in class discussions, which includes attendance at group workshops and panel discussions – 20%

You must complete all of the requirements above to pass the course.

**Tentative Schedule**

**Old English Period (500 - 1066)**

Aug 25: course introduction

Aug 27: period lecture; *Beowulf*

Sept 1: *Beowulf*; group work (selection of text)

Sept 3: group work

Sept 8: panel discussion

**Middle English Period (1066 - 1485)**


Sept 15: “The General Prologue”; group work (selection of text)
Sept. 17: group work

Sept 22: panel discussion

*The Renaissance in England (1485 - 1660)*

Sept 24: period lecture; Marlowe, *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus*

Sept 29: *Faustus*; group work (selection of text)

Oct 1: group work

Oct 6: panel discussion

Oct 8: EXAM

*The Restoration and Eighteenth Century (1660-1780)*

Oct 13: period lecture; Pope, *The Rape of the Lock*

Oct 15: *The Rape of the Lock*; group work (selection of text)

Oct 20: group work

Oct 22: panel discussion

*The Romantic Period (1780 - 1830)*

Oct 27: period lecture; Wordsworth, "Tintern Abbey"

Oct 29: Shelley, "England in 1819"; "Ode to the West Wind"; group work (selection of text)

Nov 3: group work

Nov 5: panel discussion

*The Victorian Period (1830 - 1901)*

Nov. 10: period lecture; Darwin, "On the Origin of Species"

Nov 12: Tennyson, *In Memoriam, A.H.H. 54-59*; group work (selection of text)

Nov 17: group work

Nov 19: panel discussion
Nov 24, 26: Thanksgiving

*Modern English Literature (1901 - 1950)*

Dec 1: period lecture; Hardy, “Hap,” “Neutral Tones,” “The Impercipient,” “The Darkling Thrush,” “During Wind and Rain,” “Channel Firing”


Dec 8: group work

Dec 10: panel discussion

**FINAL EXAM:** Tuesday, December 15, 2:45 – 4:45 pm