

## English 301: Introduction to Early British Literature

Fall 2016

CRN 11887 / Mills Godwin 0128 / T/TR 1:30 - 2:45 PM

Aug 30 - Dec 09

---



**Instructor:** Megan Mize

**Office:** Student Success Center, 2022

**Office Hours:** TR 3:00 - 4:00 or by appointment

**Email:** [mmize@odu.edu](mailto:mmize@odu.edu)

---

**“Don’t let anyone talk you into a course where they make you read *Beowulf*.”**

—Woody Allen, *Annie Hall*

---

### Prerequisites

Passing score on the Writing Sample Placement Test, Literature Way of Knowing requirement, and 6-hour General Education composition requirement or permission of the instructor.

### Course Description and Objectives

Love, sex, religion, and power: these topics dominate the early British texts we’ll read throughout the semester, tracing the origin and development of English literature, from the Anglo-Saxon period through the eighteenth century. We will explore the rich early history of English literature through works by medieval, Renaissance, and eighteenth-century authors (both men and women) and explore how these literary texts were shaped by – and attempted to shape – the historical moments in which they were written. Our reading will be diverse: we will read and discuss a wide variety of literature, including poetry, prose and drama.

This class will challenge you to consider the importance of historical context in any literary analysis as we engage with a variety of forms including poems, dramas and fiction. In addition, we will also consider questions concerning who decides what works are deemed "great" and

worthy of canonization and the changing aesthetic criteria towards literature that evolved through this same period. This is a broad swathe of history; there is no way we can be exhaustive in such a short time. However, we can lay the groundwork for building our knowledge of early British literary history. Honestly, this is when the good stuff is being produced (other instructors may, no doubt, challenge that assertion; they're wrong, of course).

## Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

- Discuss the works of major British writers in the following contexts
  - Literary periods (Old English, Anglo-Norman/Medieval, Renaissance, Restoration, and Eighteenth Century)
  - Social movements
  - Intellectual movements
- Trace the development of themes and genres within their historical contexts;
- Analyze literary works for their aesthetic features and thematic patterns;
- Identify styles, themes, and works of major writers;
- Examine a variety of critical approaches to literature.

## Course Material

- [Broadview Anthology of British Lit: Vol. A Concise](#)
- Access to a computer and internet connection
- MyODU account (for ODU email, Blackboard, library databases, etc.)
- Google Drive - <http://drive.google.com> (ODU Student Account)
  - Tutorials for using Drive [available here](#).
  - Need personal help with Drive or Wordpress this semester? [Visit the ePortfolio Assistants for tech support](#).

**Electronic Devices:** This is a technology friendly classroom. You are encouraged to bring computers, tablets, and cell phones into my class and we will use them. However, you are also responsible for your own education and for the learning environment we share here. Electronics should be used to facilitate your own learning experience.

## Assignments and Grades:

You are required to submit three reflective writing assignments, one critical project (website), a midterm exam, and a final exam. Furthermore, you must also attend and participate in each class session through preparation, class discussion, completing in-class writing activities, and reading quizzes. Students are expected to carefully read and analyze all assigned work prior to class, and to actively participate in all class exercises and discussions. Please note participation in class is a significant portion of your semester grade.

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| ● Daily Grade (Reading Quizzes, HW, etc)             | 15 % |
| ● <a href="#">Reflective Writing Assignments</a> (2) | 20 % |
| ● Midterm Exam                                       | 20 % |

- Final Exam 20 %
- [Critical Reflection Project \(Template/ Template B\)](#) 25 %

*Creative/ Crafting Interpretative Project Option for Midterm and Exams:*

- For both your midterm and exam, you have the opportunity to replace **an essay** on the exam with a creative/craft project of your choice, in which you create an interpretation of an aspect of one of the texts we read (for instance, designing costumes, creating Gawain’s shield, creating a soundtrack, etc). You will bring the small project to class the day of the exam and then write a brief explanation of your project on the exam, explaining your choices in the project.

**Grading Scale**

A 100-93	B+ 89-88	B- 82-80	C 77-73	D+ 69-68	D- 62-60
A- 92-90	B 87-83	C+ 79-78	C- 72-70	D 67-63	F 59 – lower

**Attendance Policy**

It is your responsibility to come to every class prepared and to participate in class activities. You will need to sign in either before or after class, not while I am lecturing. Also, do not sign in for someone else, especially if that person is not actually present. Promptness is necessary for my class, as tardiness disrupts the class environment.

If you miss a class, you are still responsible for missed material. Absence on the date an assignment is due does not excuse you from turning in the assignment by class time. In accordance with English Department policies, if you miss **8 classes (25% of the course)** without valid excuses, you will automatically fail the course. An absence *may* be excused if you can present a doctor’s note, a jury summons, or other such documentation.

**Honor System & Plagiarism**

You are responsible for obtaining a copy of the Student Handbook and informing yourself about student conduct regulations. You may visit the Honor Council office in Webb Center, Room 2129 or at [http://www.odu.edu/AO/student\\_serv/hc/](http://www.odu.edu/AO/student_serv/hc/).

The ODU English Department will not tolerate plagiarism in any form. Plagiarism is the use of facts, opinions, and language of another as your own; it is the equivalent of intellectual robbery. The first time a student plagiarizes, he or she will receive a grade of zero on the plagiarized assignment plus any additional penalty the instructor deems appropriate. Any student who is found to have plagiarized a second time will fail the course in which the plagiarism occurred and will be reported to the English Department and the Honor Council. This action is non-negotiable.

**Statement on Educational Accessibility for Students with Disabilities**

“Old Dominion University is committed to ensuring equal access to all qualified students with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Office of Educational

Accessibility (OEA) is the campus office that works with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

If you experience a disability which will impact your ability to access any aspect of my class, please present me with an accommodation letter from OEA so that we can work together to ensure that appropriate accommodations are available to you. If you feel that you will experience barriers to your ability to learn and/or testing in my class but do not have an accommodation letter, please consider scheduling an appointment with OEA to determine if academic accommodations are necessary. The Office of Educational Accessibility is located at 1021 Student Success Center and their phone number is (757)683-4655. Additional information is available at the OEA website: <http://www.odu.edu/educationalaccessibility/>

### Late Work

You must notify me as soon as possible, as well as attach a documented reason for the assignment's tardiness. If you discuss the situation with me beforehand, I may make an exception. If you have not approached me in advance of the due date, it is unlikely that I will allow an extension.

### 15 Week Class Schedule

*The following reading schedule is tentative. I reserve the right to alter and adapt the schedule as necessary in order to best serve the needs of the class. I will announce such changes prior to the classes affected. It is your responsibility to be informed about such changes. There will be assignments not listed below. Also, please expect to participate in brief writing exercises during each class.*

In Class	Homework
<b>WEEK 1</b>	
<u>8/30</u> Course Introduction Personal Introductions Syllabus Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Study Syllabus</li><li>• Google Drive</li></ul>
<u>9/1</u> Syllabus Quiz Broad Historical Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read <a href="#">Bede</a> and "<a href="#">Cædmon's Hymn</a>" (36, 50); "<a href="#">The Dream of the Rood</a>"(58): <a href="#">Old English text/Modern English translation</a></li></ul>
<b>WEEK 2</b>	

<p><b>9/6</b>  <b>Old English History, Language and Poetry</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Era Introduction</li> <li>• Religious Poetry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read "<a href="#">The Wanderer</a>" (51-52); "<a href="#">The Battle of Maldon</a>"</li> </ul>
<p><b>9/8</b>  <b>Old English History, Language and Poetry</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heroic Poetry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read selections from <a href="#">Beowulf</a> (62) (<a href="#">Modern Translation</a>): ll. 1-498, 662-836, 1251-1650</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 3</b>	
<p><b>9/13</b>  <b>Old English History, Language and Poetry</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heroic Poetry Cont.</li> </ul> <p>Discuss <i>Beowulf</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read selections from <a href="#">Beowulf</a> (62) (<a href="#">Modern Translation</a>): 2200-2354, 2391-2424, 2510-end</li> </ul>
<p><b>9/15</b>  <b>Continue <i>Beowulf</i> Discussion</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin reading <a href="#">Sir Gawain and the Green Knight/ (Modern Translation)</a> (159)</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 4</b>	
<p><b>9/20</b>  <b>Anglo-Norman Period</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Era Introduction</li> <li>• <a href="#">Arthurian</a> Literature</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <a href="#">Sir Gawain and the Green Knight/ (Modern Translation)</a> (159)</li> </ul>
<p><b>9/22</b>  <b>Discuss <a href="#">Sir Gawain and the Green Knight/ (Modern Translation)</a> (159)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gawain Questions</li> <li>• Begin reading <a href="#">Canterbury Tales</a> (233): General Prologue (233)</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 5</b>	
<p><b>9/27</b>  <b>Continue <a href="#">Sir Gawain and the Green Knight/ (Modern Translation)</a> (159)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <a href="#">Canterbury Tales</a> (233): General Prologue (233)</li> </ul>
<p><b>9/29</b>  <b>Middle English Literature</b>  <b>Discuss <a href="#">Canterbury Tales</a> (233): General Prologue (233)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <a href="#">Canterbury Tales</a> Miller's Prologue and Miller's Tale (285)</li> </ul>

**WEEK 6****10/4**

Discuss [Canterbury Tales](#) Miller's Prologue and Miller's Tale (285)

- Read [The Somonyng of Everyman](#)

**10/6**

Discuss [The Somonyng of Everyman](#) / Midterm Review

- Study
- First Reflective Writing Assignment

**WEEK 7****10/11****Fall Break - No Class**

- First Reflective Writing Assignment Due (In your Google Drive Folder)

- Study

**10/13****Midterm**

- Begin reading Marlowe's [Dr. Faustus](#) (757) Act 1

**WEEK 8****10/18****The Sixteenth Century: Early Modern Drama**

- Era Introduction

- Read Marlowe's [Dr. Faustus](#) (757) Act 1

**10/ 20 The Sixteenth Century: Early Modern Drama**

Discuss *Dr. Faustus, Act 1*

- Read Marlowe's [Dr. Faustus](#) (757) Acts 2-3

**WEEK 9****10/25 CLASS ONLINE****The Sixteenth Century: Early Modern Drama**

Continue *Dr. Faustus* Discussion, Acts 2-3

- Read Marlowe's [Dr. Faustus](#) (757) Acts 4-5

**10/27 CLASS ONLINE****The Sixteenth Century: Early Modern Drama**

- Read Shakespeare [Rape of Lucrece](#)

Continue <i>Dr. Faustus</i> Discussion, Acts 4-5	
<b>WEEK 10</b>	
<b>11/1 The Sixteenth Century: Early Modern Poetry</b> <b>Discuss</b> Shakespeare <a href="#">Rape of Lucrece</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read Shakespeare <a href="#">Rape of Lucrece</a></li> </ul>
<b>11/3</b> <b>Continue Discussing Discuss</b> Shakespeare <a href="#">Rape of Lucrece</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <a href="#">Paradise Lost</a> (918) <a href="#">Book I</a></li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 11</b>	
<b>11/8 CLASS ONLINE</b> <b>The Seventeenth Century</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Era Introduction</li> <li><b>Discuss</b> Milton's <i>Paradise Lost</i> <a href="#">Book I</a></li> </ul>	
<b>11/10</b> <b>The Seventeenth Century</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Discuss</b> Milton's <i>Paradise Lost</i> <a href="#">Book I</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read <a href="#">Book II</a></li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 12</b>	
<b>11/15</b> <b>The Seventeenth Century</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Discuss</b> Milton's <i>Paradise Lost</i> <a href="#">Book II</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin reading Behn's <a href="#">The Rover</a></li> </ul>
<b>11/17 CLASS ONLINE</b> <b>17th Century Restoration Comedy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aphra Behn</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read Behn's <a href="#">The Rover</a> Act 1-2</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 13</b>	
<b>11/22</b> <b>17th Century Restoration Comedy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Discuss</b> Behn's <a href="#">The Rover</a> Act 1-2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read Behn's <a href="#">The Rover</a> Acts 3-5</li> </ul>
<b>11/24 Thanksgiving - No Class</b>	

**WEEK 14****11/29****17th Century Restoration Comedy**

- **Discuss** Behn's [The Rover](#) Acts 3-5

- Read Swift's "[A Modest Proposal](#)" (1368)

**12/1****The Eighteenth Century****Discuss** Swift's "[A Modest Proposal](#)" (1368)

- Second Reflective Assignment

**WEEK 15****12/6 LAB TIME FOR CRITICAL PROJECT - CLASS MEETS IN ED 131**

- Second Reflective Assignment Due (In your Google Drive Folder)

- Continue to work on Project

**12/8 Exam Review / Website Work**

- Study

**FINAL**

12/15 12:30- 3:30 pm

- **Final Exam**
- **Critical Reflection Project Due** at midnight (share link via Google Form)