ENGLISH 200A (04)

SURVEY OF BRITISH LITERATURE I

PAS 1241

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

English 200A is an introductory survey of British literature from the Middle Ages to the late eighteenth century. Although it is a required course for English majors, it is also suitable for non-majors or students majoring in other disciplines.

The course will focus on representative authors from the various literary periods: the Middle Ages (c. 1000-1485); the Early Modern Period, which includes the sixteenth century (1485-1603) and the early seventeenth century (1603-1660); and the Restoration and eighteenth century, or long eighteenth century (1660-1798).

For students wishing to continue their study of English literature, English 200B continues the survey through the Romantic period (1798-1832), the Victorian period (1832-1901), the Modernist period (1901-1945), and the Post-modernist period (1945-the present).

OBJECTIVES:

English 200A has six related objectives:
1) To give you practice and training in reading and interpreting individual pieces of literature with greater insight, and in making comparisons among them.
2) To make you aware of the historical context of the works.
3) To make you aware of the different artistic forms of the literature.
4) To give you practice in the critical analysis of individual works and comparative analysis of several works.
5) To help you write more effectively.
6) To give you some enjoyment reading (I hope!).

These objectives will be achieved by your own reading and studying of the primary texts, by reading the secondary historical and critical material included in the texts, by participating in online discussions, and by writing one essay and one examination.
TEXTS:

The following texts are required:

The following text is recommended:
Canadian Edition* (Addison-Wesley). [This text has very useful sections on
punctuation, grammar, and sentence errors, as well as suggestions for writing essays
and a summary of the MLA style. *Please note that all royalties derived from the sale
of this text will be donated to the Department of English Scholarship Fund.*]
*Or the First Canadian Edition.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF READINGS:

(Note: Page references are to the Longman Anthology. Asterisks indicate titles for
online discussion, which will be picked up in class the following week.)

**Volume 1A: The Middle Ages:**

**Week 1: Sept. 15: Introduction. Anglo-Saxon Lyrics.**
"Caedmon's Hymn" (24-25)
Some Riddles (handout; see also 155-58)
"The Wanderer" (handout; see also 151-53).

**Week 2: Sept 22: Selections from Beowulf:**
Heorot Is Attacked (33-35, lines 58-164)
The Fight with Grendel (45-48, lines 578-746)
Attack of Grendel's Mother (56-58, lines 1104-1224)
Beowulf Fights Grendel's Mother (58-63, lines 1225-1456)
*The Dragon Wakes (73-76, lines 1940-2075)
* Beowulf Attacks the Dragon (79-84, lines 2216-2433)

**Week 3: Sept. 29: Beowulf, "The Dragon"; Chaucer, Selections from The Canterbury
Tales:**

[Beowulf, The Dragon Wakes, Beowulf Attacks the Dragon]
"Canterbury Tales: General Prologue" (lines 625-716): Description of the
Summoner and the Pardoner (316-18)
"The Pardoner's Prologue" (384-88)
""The Pardoner's Tale" (388-99)
Week 4: Oct. 6: "The Pardoner's Tale"; Sir Gawain and the Green Knight:

["The Pardoner's Tale"]
Sir Gawain Part 1 (194-205)
Sir Gawain Part 2 (205-218)
*Sir Gawain Part 3 (218-237)

Volume 1B: The Early Modern Period:

Week 5: Oct. 13: Sir Gawain and the Green Knight; Doctor Faustus:

[Sir Gawain, Parts 3 and 4]
Doctor Faustus (Acts 1-2, pp. 1143-1161)
*Doctor Faustus (Acts 3-5, pp. 1161-1191)

Week 6: Oct. 20: Dr. Faustus; Othello:

[Doctor Faustus (Acts 3-5)]
Othello (Acts 1-2)
*Othello (Acts 3-5)

Week 7: Oct. 27: Othello; A Selection of Love Poems:

[Othello (Acts 3-5)]
"Alison" (Volume 1A, 552)
Sidney, Sonnet 9 (1044)
Spenser, Sonnet 75 (757)
Shakespeare, *Sonnet 18 (1226); *Sonnet 130 (1236)
Herrick, "To the Virgins" (1678); "Upon Julia's Clothes" (1680); "Corinna Going A-Maying" (1677-68)
Donne, *"The Flea" (1655); *Elegy 19 (1661)
Marvell, *"To His Coy Mistress" (1730-31).

Week 8: Nov. 3: A Selection of Love Poems; The English Bible; A Selection of Religious Poems:

[Shakespeare, Sonnet 18 & Sonnet 130; Donne, "The Flea" & "Elegy 19"; Marvell, "To His Coy Mistress"]
The English Bible (handout; see also 1756-58)
Donne, Holy Sonnet 10 (1666)
Marvell, "Bermudas" (1727-28)
*Herbert, "Love III" (1697-98)
*Vaughan, "The Retreat" (1719-20)
**Week 9: Nov 10: Religious Poems, A Selection from Paradise Lost**
[Herbert, "Love III"; Vaughan, "The Retreat"]
*Paradise Lost* Book 1, lines 1-49 (pp. 1837-38)
*Paradise Lost* Book 2, lines 629-897 (pp. 1870-76)
*Paradise Lost* Book 3, lines 56-134 (pp. 1882-83)
*Paradise Lost* Book 4, lines 393-535 (pp. 1902-05)
*Paradise Lost* Book 5, lines 1-94 (pp. 1912-14)
*Paradise Lost* Book 9, lines 494-794 (pp. 1944-45)

**Week 10: Nov. 17: Paradise Lost:**
[Selections from Books 3, 4, 5, 9]

**Volume 1C: The Restoration and Eighteenth Century:**

**Week 11: Nov. 24: The Beggar's Opera:**
The Beggar's Opera (2588-2632, plus viewing)

**Week 12: Dec. 3: A Miscellany of 18th-Century Readings:**
Defoe, Selection from Jonathan Wild (2635-38)
Fielding, Selection from Jonathan Wild (2639-42)
The London Gazette: The Fire of London (2389-90)
Samuel Pepys, The Diary: The Fire of London (2096-2100)
The Craftsman: Vampires in Britain (2393-96)
Advertisements from the Spectator (2417)
Hogarth, A Rake's Progress (2648-55)
Samuel Johnson, A Dictionary of the English Language: Some Entries (2767-74)

**GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS:**

1. Online discussion will account for 15% of the final grade (see below).

2. One short essay of approximately four double-spaced typewritten pages (1000 words) will account for 15% of the final grade. This essay is based on the online discussion (see below).

3. One longer essay of six to eight double-spaced, typewritten pages (1500-2000 words) will account for 35% of the final grade.

4. One three-hour final exam will account for the remaining 35% of the final grade.
Regular attendance is expected. Class participation will affect the final grade positively (up to 5%). There may be some deduction of marks if your attendance is noticeably irregular.

(Note also: One number grade (1%) may be subtracted for each day a paper is late, unless and extension has been granted in advance. No paper will be accepted after the other students' papers have been returned to them.)

**ONLINE TASKS:**

There will be two main online tasks: (1) online group discussion (worth 15% of the final grade), and (2) one short essay based in part on the online discussion (worth 15% of the final grade).

Everyone will have computer access. By the second week of class, students will be divided into groups of four to discuss texts not covered in class (i.e., those marked with an asterisk in the Schedule). Your online discussion will be the basis for the first part of the class discussion the following week.

Even-numbered groups will discuss the texts from the even-numbered weeks. Odd-numbered groups will discuss the texts from the odd-numbered weeks. Note that you will not necessarily be required to do all the texts for your particular week; I may divide them among the groups.

Each member of the group will serve as discussion leader for one week. I will assign leadership roles, although you may make switches within the group. Generally, I won't direct your discussion to any particular topic. I'm mainly interested in your responses and points that you think are significant; I'd also like to see you use some of our preliminary discussion in class. Please do not use secondary sources.

The deadline for completing your group discussion is noon on the following Tuesday. This gives me the chance to look over your ideas in preparation for Wednesday's class. Discussion boards will be open for viewing by all the class, so that the deadline gives other students a chance to look as well.

In addition to instigating discussion for the week, the leader will prepare a short essay (approximately four double-spaced pages) on the text, using some of the online discussion as well as ideas from class. This essay may be formal or informal. If formal, it should establish and develop a clear thesis; if informal, it may be more of a personal response to the text and/or an evaluation of the discussion. Whether formal or informal, sources should be documented and cited correctly. I may ask some of you to correct these essays and put them online. (Note that informal essays may be longer than formal essays.)
Note also that I will post announcements online, as well as links to websites that I think are worthwhile.

LONGER ESSAY TOPICS AND DUE DATES:

General Notes on Preparing Essays:

1. You will need to find a suitable way of selecting and organizing the material of your essay and of focussing your ideas in a clear direction. Give special attention to your introductory paragraph, which should identify the main topic or set of issues which your paper will address, identify the direction of your essay, and interest your reader.

2. Provide evidence for generalizations that you make. Try to strike a strong balance between general argument and specific illustration. Use quotations to support your ideas, but don't overquote.

3. Before you submit your paper, proofread it carefully, checking for errors in typing, spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Consider your readers: Will they have any trouble following your ideas?

4. I prefer that you base your ideas on your own careful and thoughtful reading of the texts. Feel free to use ideas from class discussions, but please do not consult any secondary sources unless you see me first.

5. Give your essay a descriptive title that includes the title of the work(s) that you will be considering. Also include your name and course number on the first page. A separate title page is not necessary. All page references to the works go in parentheses at the end of your sentence but before the period. A Works Cited list is required, even if you have only quoted from the primary text. I will give you some information on how to use MLA style to cite works in anthologies and editions of plays. Little, Brown Handbook has a good summary of MLA style.

6. I mark essays holistically, taking into consideration content, organization, and style and correctness.

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Your longer essay should be approximately six to eight double-spaced, typewritten pages (1500-2000 words). It will be due on Wednesday, November 23, 2004, but if you plan to use *Paradise Lost*, I'll give you until the last day of classes, December 3, 2004.

You may select one of the following topics, or you may propose a topic of your own. If you use your own topic, you must get my approval before November 10, 2004.

1. Almost 900 years separate *Beowulf* (c. 800) and *Paradise Lost* (1667). Using these two epic poems as a basis for your ideas, discuss how you think that literature has changed over time and whether you think that it has improved. *If you wish*, you may use other works from the course to support your arguments.

2. *The Rhetoric of Temptation*. Compare Satan's temptation of Eve (*PL 9*: 417-784) with either Lady Bercilak's seduction of Sir Gawain or Iago's temptation of Othello. In your answer you might consider some of the following questions: What is the motivation of the tempter and the mindset of the victim in each case? What sort of arguments or strategies does the tempter use in each case? Which strategies, if any, are effective, and why? How does the relationship between tempter and victim change in the course of their encounter? Make comparisons between the two works that you select. (Issues of *ethos, pathos* and *logos* may be helpful.)

3. **EITHER** (a) Argue that Dr. Faustus and Adam and Eve *could* have avoided their respective downfalls.

**OR** (b) Argue that they *could not* have avoided their respective downfalls (in other words, that they could legitimately have blamed the devil--or God.)

4. "The practical joker despises his victims, but at the same time he envies them because their desires, however childish and mistaken, are real to them, whereas he has no desire which he can call his own. His goal, to make game of others, makes his existence absolutely dependent on theirs; when he is alone he is a nullity... [T]he practical joker is certainly driven, like a gambler, to his activity, but the drive is negative, the fear of... being nobody. In any practical joker to whom playing such jokes is a passion, there is always an element of malice, a projection of his self-hatred onto others." (W. H. Auden)

To what extent does this quotation help you to understand the motives of the Pardoner, Iago, and Satan, as well as their relationships with any other characters with whom they interact? Are Auden's ideas adequate, or are there other considerations? Make comparisons, and try to account for the general interest in characters of this type.
5. Discuss the presentation of God in *Beowulf*, *Dr. Faustus*, and *Paradise Lost*. (You may also use "Caedmon's Hymn" and/or Donne's sonnet "Batter My Heart.") Do you think that these works show a change or development in attitudes towards God? If you wish, relate this change or development to what you perceive to be modern attitudes towards God, but don't make modern attitudes the focus of your essay.

6. Discuss the nature of sin and evil as it is presented in at least three of the following works: *Beowulf*, *The Pardoner's Tale*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Dr. Faustus*, *Paradise Lost*. (You may also use Donne's sonnet "Batter My Heart.") Do you think that these works show a change or development in attitudes toward sin and evil? If you wish, relate this change or development to modern attitudes towards sin and evil (especially post 9/11), but don't make modern attitudes the focus of your essay.

The Faculty of Arts requires that we notify you of the following:

"Note on avoidance of academic offenses: All students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes an academic offense, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for their academic actions. When the commission of an offense is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline) which is supplied in the Undergraduate Calendar (p. 1:11). If you need help in learning how to avoid offenses such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission, or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the disciplinary policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean."
Information for Students Using UW-ACE
(University of Waterloo ANGEL Course Environment)

ANGEL is a web-based course management system that enables instructors to manage course materials (posting of lecture notes etc.), interact with their students (drop boxes for student submissions, on-line quizzes, discussion boards, course e-mail etc.), and provide feedback (grades, assignment comments etc.). The degree to which UW-ACE is utilized in a particular course is left to the discretion of the instructor and therefore, you may find a large variance in how UW-ACE is being used from one course to another.

Logging Into UW-ACE

Since UW-ACE is a web-based system, you will need a browser. The list below provides the minimum requirements:

- Windows OS: Internet Explorer 6.0, Netscape Navigator 7.1
- Macintosh OS: Mozilla 1.4 (which uses the same engine as Netscape 7.1)

Once you have started up your browser, type in the following URL:

http://uwace.uwaterloo.ca

Please note that announcements regarding UW-ACE (service outages etc.) are posted below the Log On portion of the screen. It is a good idea to check these regularly.

Enter your Quest/UWdir userid and password. Once you have logged in, you should see a list of your UW-ACE courses under the Courses header bar. Clicking on the course name will take you to that course.

Checking Your Userid and Password

Your password can be checked by going to:
http://ego.uwaterloo.ca/~uwdir/UW-Passwd.html

If your password check fails, you can unlock your password and receive a new one by going to: http://ego.uwaterloo.ca/~uwdir/UnLock.html

If you still can not get on after checking and resetting your password, please confirm with your instructor that you are on the class roster. Only students with courses using UW-ACE will have access to the site.

Getting Help

A UW-ACE student guide can be found by selecting Help on left hand panel of the UW-ACE home page, and selecting the hyperlink UW-ACE (ANGEL 6.1) Student Quickstart Guide. Additional queries can be sent to uwacehelp@ist.uwaterloo.ca.