University of Waterloo
Department of English

ENGL200B: Survey of British Literature II (Section 001)
Spring 2019

Tuesdays and Thursdays
1:00 p.m. – 2:20 p.m.

Instructor Information

Instructor: Mike Lesiuk
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Email: mlesiuk@uwaterloo.ca
Office Hours: 12:00-1:00 Tues/Thurs

Course Description

The goal of British Literature II is to introduce you to the three major literary periods of literature in Britain dating from the latter decades of the eighteenth-century to the mid-twentieth century; these include the Romantic period, the Victorian period, and the Modern period. Each of these movements involved a variety of literary forms and genres that were in a dynamic, ongoing conversation with each other, with their past, and with the times in which they were written. As we will discover, the questions and issues writers faced back then are not totally divorced from the questions and issues we face today; indeed, one of the reasons to study texts from the past is they help us make sense of the present.

In addition to the close reading and literary analysis you do in this course, by the end of the term you should be able to describe and intelligently discuss some of the primary concerns of each of these three periods, as well as several of their most distinctive literary forms, such as the lyric, the dramatic monologue, the realist novel, and others.

Survey of British Literature II follows directly from British Literature I; however, British Literature I is not a strict requirement for this course.

Required Novels

If you use a physical copy, please use the one in the bookstore. If you want to get a digital copy, make sure you get the 1818 edition, not the 1831 edition.

Joseph Conrad, *The Secret Agent: A Simple Tale*
As above, if you use a physical copy, use the one in the bookstore. Digital copies are fine, as long as you can quickly “ctrl-f” or “cmd-f” your way to the passage we’re looking at in class. You need to be able to follow along.

Other Texts

There is no textbook! I will post everything else on LEARN, either as a PDF to download or as a link to visit. If I post a specific text, please use that one.
Course Policies

Classroom Etiquette

Civility: No student should ever be teased, or made to feel small, embarrassed, self-conscious, or unsafe. Good close reading often requires asking silly or naive questions, and if people don’t feel comfortable doing that, the class won’t work very well.

Technology: Print out the readings so you can scribble all over them. I recommend doing it once at the beginning of term. The style of reading we’ll be doing is a skill that takes practice, and this requires a kind of focus and concentration that’s not conducive to reading them on a screen; you need to write all over them and mark them up.

Accommodations

Every student with a permanent or temporary disability has the right to UW’s AccessAbility Services, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401). This is true for every class you take at this university. The AccessAbility office collaborates with all departments to arrange accommodations. Please visit https://uwaterloo.ca/accessability-services for more information on how to do this. Beyond that: talk to me and we’ll figure something out off the record. It’s cool.

Mental Health

Human beings need support systems. I, and the rest of the faculty and staff in Arts, encourage you to seek out mental health support if you need it. The university has a variety of on-campus services and support systems you can use, and there are also off-campus options. The faculty of arts has a page with links, phone numbers and a bunch more information, here: https://uwaterloo.ca/arts/get-mental-health-support-when-you-need-it. If you’re struggling, especially with something related to this course, I’m happy to talk.

Major Assignments & Grade Breakdown

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<tr>
<th>Knowledge &amp; Synthesis</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>In-Class Romantics Quiz</td>
<td>Thursday, June 6</td>
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<td>In-Class Victorians Quiz</td>
<td>Thursday, July 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>Exam Period (TBD)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Participation Portfolio</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>In-Class Participation</td>
<td>throughout the term</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Responses (x5)</td>
<td>throughout the term</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Retrospective</td>
<td>Monday, July 29th @ 11:59 p.m.</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<th>Analysis Essay</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal</td>
<td>Friday, July 12th @ 11:59 pm</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>Monday, July 29th @ 11:59 pm</td>
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Knowledge and Synthesis (50%)

There are several tests/exams in this course, perhaps more than in other English courses you will take. The flip side of this is that I am very, very open about what will be on the tests. I will distribute sample questions and terms you should use as practice. There are no trick questions. If you do the readings, you come to class, and you make an effort to keep relatively decent notes, sure, you will still want to study, but you’ll be able in a great place to do that.

Our course is divided into three units: Romantics, Victorians, Moderns. At the end of the Romantics unit, we’ll have an in-class midterm on the Romantics. At the end of the Victorians unit, we’ll have an in-class midterm on the Victorians. We won’t have an in-class midterm for the Moderns, because you’ll be busy working on your essays around that time, and because we can cover them during the exam.

The midterms and exam cannot be rescheduled without a doctor’s note.

Participation Portfolio (25%)

There are three parts to your Participation Portfolio: your In-Class Participation, your Reading Responses, and your Short Retrospective.

The Reading Responses will be handed in throughout the term, and your In-Class Participation will obviously be throughout the term as well. The Short Retrospective will be handed in like an assignment towards the very end of the term, and here’s the catch: in your Short Retrospective you will grade your own participation. You’ll find a rubric you can use on LEARN, and I’ll give you more in-depth guidelines for the Short Retrospective closer to the date.

I will take attendance and notes throughout the term on people’s participation, but otherwise I will trust you. Yes, I’ll step in if I see something really wild, but otherwise, it really is your own grade, even if I disagree with it. Be honest. Push yourself and earn a really high grade that you can be proud of.

Reading Responses (x5)

You’ll find all the reading responses questions on LEARN, organized according to our reading schedule. You only need to do five of these in total, and you can submit one for any day on the schedule for which we have readings. The only other caveat to this is that you must do at least one of these for each of our three units. Don’t leave these until the last five classes.

Here are the guidelines for the Reading Responses:

- Use complete sentences. Use paragraphs. Don’t submit responses in note-form.
- Each response should be 200 words minimum.
- For a given set of questions, you don’t need to answer all the questions you see listed for that day. You can pick one question and just focus on it. It’s up to you.
- You can answer a day’s questions in one long “mini essay,” or you can copy and paste the questions and answer each one directly. Either method works, as long as you use complete, well-articulated sentences.
- Don’t use Sparknotes, Shmoop, or other, similar websites. I care more about honest attempts to engage with the readings than I do about you being “right.” An honest attempt that’s wrong will earn more points than giving up and regurgitating what the Internet says.
- Each response is due 11:59 p.m. the night before the relevant class. Since you can submit these for any day on the schedule, late submissions won’t be accepted.
- Tip: Use lots of quotations from a given day’s readings, and take your time to discuss the implications and meanings of those quotations. Depth is better than breadth.

My rubric for these will be very simple, and I’ll only have four levels:

Reading Responses Rubric
Grade | Level | Description
---|---|---
2 | Excellent! | Wow. Excellent, excellent work. I might have one or two quibbles, but given the rhetorical constraints and guidelines for the assignment, I can’t reasonably ask a student for more. This is outstanding. I want to use this as a model to show other students.

1.7 | Good. (the baseline) | This follows the guidelines, adequately answers the questions with depth and nuance, and is generally well-written.

1.3 | Good—but… | This is generally good work, but I think you’re capable of more (e.g., more depth, detail or nuance, or perhaps just more precision or clarity in the writing). At this level, I will usually specify what I mean or why you’re not at the “Good” level.

1 or below | Unsatisfactory. | Something major is off. The guidelines are not being followed. The level of the assignment is not at a university level. Examples: the word count is substantially below the requirement, or the assignment is in note-form when the guidelines call for complete sentences.

If you follow the guidelines, and you hand the response in on time, you’ll get the baseline grade of 1.7 out of 2 for that response. This means that if you hand in all five, you’ll get 8.5 out of 10 for the term on these. You can be objectively wrong on some questions and still get an A. If you do happen to get a lower grade, that’s just a signal that you’re capable of a bit more for these, and I’m looking for a bit more from you. Conversely, if you do an extremely stellar job, I will happily award grades above 1.7.

I will use your responses to help guide some of our in-class discussions AND to help design the midterms. You will also be able to use the questions as study questions to prep for the midterms, since the short-answer questions will look very similar to mini homework questions.

**Essay (25%)**

**Proposal**

I’ll post more in-depth guidelines on LEARN, but your essay proposal is like a sixth reading response. I will even grade it with a similar rubric. If you give it an honest effort you’ll get at least 4 out of 5. Even if I see a fair number of potential hiccups in your essay, or even if I detect a slight misunderstanding of the guidelines on your part, you can still get an 80 on it.

**Alternate Option:** Instead of writing a proposal, an alternate option is to just come talk to me with your notes and annotations for your proposed text. We’ll talk for 10-15 minutes. You’ll tell me what you’re thinking, and I’ll give you my thoughts and a grade.

**Essay**

The Literary Analysis Essay should be between 2,000 and 2,500 words. Use MLA formatting; include a word count at the bottom; and use .doc or .docx. If you use Linux or an app that doesn’t produce .doc or .docx files without an export, and you’re worried what’ll happen to the formatting, you can also include a PDF in addition to the .doc or .docx.

Your essay should close read one text from our syllabus. Yes, one. (If you want to analyze a work of British literature written after 1790 that isn’t on our syllabus, just come talk to me.) You can mention other texts, briefly, but this is not a compare and contrast essay and you do NOT need secondary sources. This essay is just a reading of One. Single. Text. Indeed, you can even dig down and just talk about a few lines or a couple sentences. I want you to argue something interesting about the meaning, power, or structure of your text. Your **thesis statement** should therefore make a claim that is, in some way, about one or several of those three things.

Again, you do **not** need to do secondary research for this assignment. You also do not need to link your analysis to the themes of your text’s literary period or movement. You can if you want, but you are not required to do so. So, for example, you don’t need to talk about what William Wordsworth’s “Tintern Abbey” has to do with Romanticism; you
don't need to tell me what Robert Browning’s “My Last Duchess” has to do with the Victorian period. The midterms will ask you questions about that.

For your literary analysis essay, you can say whatever you want; it’s not about the “right” answer so much as it’s about the answer that comes from the most in-depth, most nitty gritty reading of your text.

We will talk about this more as the deadline approaches, and several of the short homework assignments will help you prepare for this. However, beyond that, I do recommend checking out Katherine Acheson’s book, *Writing Essays About Literature*, which is usually available at the campus bookstore and on Amazon.

The late penalty for the essay will be 5% per day for the first six days. I'll cap the late penalty at 30%, but if it has been longer than a week you must speak with me, because the term will be almost over. I will grant short extensions if you have a good reason and you talk to me *in advance* (and you do it professionally and courteously).
Schedule of Readings

Please have the readings done by class time.

Unit 1. Romantic Period

“And what if all of animated nature / Be but organic Harps diversely framed?” — Samuel Taylor Coleridge

The Romantic Period came shortly after the French Revolution (and this tells you a lot about the period’s overarching concerns). The Romantics liked nature, sure, but they also questioned our relation to it. They broke down or complicated the line separating subject and object—you and I over here versus the external world over there. The Romantics asked what the difference was between what’s natural and what’s unnatural, since the line between the two is not always as easy to delineate as we might like to believe.

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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| 1    | May 7   | Intro and Welcome  
Setting the stage with the sublime. |
|      | Thursday | Reading  
William Blake, *Marriage of Heaven and Hell* excerpts  
William Blake, from *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, read “The Lamb” & “The Tyger” |

Note: Spend most of your time on “The Lamb” and “The Tyger.” The Marriage excerpts are for context.

| Week | Tuesday | Reading  
|      | Thursday | Reading  
Charlotte Smith, from *Elegiac Sonnets* read #1, #2, #3, #7 and #44. |

| Week | Tuesday | Reading  
William Wordsworth, *1798 Advertisement* and *1800 Preface* excerpts from *Lyrical Ballads*  
William Wordsworth, from *Lyrical Ballads*, read “Simon Lee” and “Animal Tranquillity and Decay” |
|      | Thursday | Reading  
William Wordsworth, from *Lyrical Ballads*, read “Tintern Abbey”  
Read “Abrams – Greater Romantic Lyric” handout. |

| Week | Tuesday | Reading  
John Keats, “Ode to a Nightingale” and “Ode on a Grecian Urn” |
|      | Thursday | Reading  
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*  
(Please have the entire novel read by this class. It’s short. Also: plan ahead!) |

| Week | Tuesday | Reading  
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* |
|      | Thursday | Reading  
No readings! (And no homework questions!) |

Romanticism  
In-Class Midterm
Unit 2. Victorian Period

“Men are grown mechanical in head and in heart, as well as in hand.” – Thomas Carlyle

The Victorians are so named because they lived under the reign of Queen Victoria. In England, a series of reform acts and social changes were instated to try to prevent a revolution similar to the ones experienced in the United States and France in the late 1700s. The Victorians also lived in a time of huge industrial, economic and scientific upheaval—the Industrial Revolution and its effects. London grew into what might be called the first truly modern city; it was the centre of a huge web of trade and colonial expansion. To paraphrase Raymond Williams (and to slightly oversimplify things), the literature moved from the country to the city.

| Week 6 | Tuesday June 11 | Charles Dickens, “Our Next-Door Neighbour”
|        |                | Charles Dickens, Bleak House excerpts.
|        |                | Robert Douglas-Fairhurst, Becoming Dickens excerpt.
|        | Thursday June 13 | Christina Rossetti, “Goblin Market”

| Week 7 | Tuesday June 18 | Alfred Lord Tennyson, In Memoriam – #27, #55, #56, #96
|        | Thursday June 20 | Alfred Lord Tennyson, “Ulysses” and “The Lotos-Eaters”

| Week 8 | Tuesday June 25 | Robert Browning, “My Last Duchess” and “Porphyria’s Lover”
|        | Robert Langbaum, “The Dramatic Monologue” ★
|        | Thursday June 27 | Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Sonnets from the Portuguese - #12, #13, #28, #43
|        | George Meredith, “Lucifer in Starlight”

| Week 9 | Tuesday July 2 | No class. You’re following a Monday schedule today.
|        | Thursday July 4 | No readings!

Victorian In-Class Midterm
Unit 3. Modern Period

About suffering they were never wrong,
The old Masters: how well they understood
Its human position: how it takes place
While someone else is eating or opening a window or just walking dully along
— W.H. Auden

The Modern period, whose roots begin in the very late nineteenth-century, saw the world as something that was coming apart at the seams, revealing something like a terrifying, nihilistic void underneath. On the one hand, writers like T.S. Eliot and W.H. Auden had tremendous respect for the old order and the tradition; on the other, the old order just wasn’t working any more, and, to paraphrase William Butler Yeats, the centre was not holding.

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>July 9</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>July 11</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rudyard Kipling, “Gunga Din”</td>
<td>W. H. Auden, “Musée des Beaux Arts” and “September 1, 1939”</td>
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<td>Wilfred Owen, “Dulce et Decorum Est”</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>July 16</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>July 18</th>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Virginia Woolf, “A Room of One’s Own”</td>
<td>W. H. Auden, “Musée des Beaux Arts” and “September 1, 1939”</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>July 23</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>July 25</th>
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<td></td>
<td>(Please have the entire novel read by this class. It’s short. Also: plan ahead!)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>July 30</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>No readings!</td>
<td>Exam Prep and Review</td>
<td>Short Retrospective and Final Essay due Monday, Jul 29th, by 11:59 p.m.</td>
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Academic Integrity

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage and the Arts Academic Integrity webpage for more information.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline. For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties.

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72 - Student Appeals.

Territorial Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River.