ENGLISH 350A: 17th-Century English Literature
Fall term, 1999
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Office hours: 12:00-1:00, Tuesday and Thursday, or by appointment

Welcome to English 350A. The focus of our studies this term will be English poetry of the first half of the seventeenth century, especially works by John Donne, George Herbert, Ben Jonson, Andrew Marvell, Richard Crashaw, Robert Herrick and Thomas Traherne. We will also do a unit on early 17th century drama in which we will study two plays concerned with the status of women.

Textbooks: I have ordered collections of poetry by Ben Jonson, George Herbert and John Donne, and copies of The Tragedy of Mariam and The Roaring Girl. (I also ordered copies of The Duchess of Malfi, but we don’t have time to do it, so don’t buy it).

On Participation and Attendance: There is no mark for either participation or attendance. In my experience, students who attend and participate in class do better in courses, and I recommend that you do both.

On Late Assignments: There is no room for late assignments in the schedule of the course; the seminars must be done on the days they are scheduled, and the other assignments must be turned in on time. This is not intentional; it’s just how the schedule worked out. Sorry.

Academic Offences: The Arts Faculty Council requires that I tell you that 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 Polity #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 discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean.

I will also remind you that many academic offense cases are brought each year, and that the penalties which can result are severe and can have very long term effects on students’ prospects and opportunities. In other words, it’s probably not worth it. If you have any questions about this, or if you have problems scheduling the completion of your assignments, or if you run into personal or academic difficulties in the term which are affecting your work, talk to me.

Assignments

Seminar: Your seminar will be in a group. You will receive individual marks, although groups dynamics is part of each individual’s mark. The task is to present a cogent argument, with critical or historical and textual support, about any aspect of the literature which you have been assigned. You may take up any topic which comes up in class, or a different one. You will want to do some research; you can start with the essays in the back of the texts, move on to the library. You will need to keep in close touch with the members of your group on all matters, including topic, areas of the topic, nature of the arguments, and presentation. You may use the overhead or any other equipment you think is appropriate; if you need anything other than the overhead projector, let me know two weeks in advance so that I can book the equipment. The seminar is worth 20% of your final mark.

Essay: The essay is a research project; the final essay will be about 10 standard pages long (250 words per page) plus a list of works cited. You may not write on the author you did your seminar on, but you may pursue the topic or approach you used there, and any of the relevant research from the seminar; that is, if you looked at religious symbolism in Herbert’s poetry in your seminar, you may write your essay on religious symbolism in Donne, or Crashaw and Traherne. It is of the greatest importance that your essay be argumentative in tone, and that the argument be well supported with evidence from the literature. That is, the basic format of the essay is as follows: you state a position, you outline the argument, you go on to prove the argument and thus your position using evidence from the texts.

The essay will be written in three stages. The first is the research report. This is a discursive summary of the research you have done on your topic, which should be about 6 to 10 articles. You will tell me what the essays are about, and how they are related to each other; ideally, the nature of your argument about the topic you have chosen will begin to emerge in the research report. The research report is worth 10% of your final mark. IT IS
DUE NOVEMBER 16 AND WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU ON NOVEMBER 18.

The second stage is to write up the thesis statement of your essay. It is very important that you understand what I mean by thesis statement, which is the substantial first paragraph of an essay. It will open with a statement of your topic and your general argument about it; it will then outline the stages of the argument; along the way, or perhaps in the concluding sentence, you will suggest the evidence you are going to use to support your contentions. The thesis statement will be one-half to one whole page long. The thesis statement is worth 10% of your final mark. IT IS DUE NOVEMBER 23RD AND WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU ON NOVEMBER 25TH.

The last stage is to write the essay. It will be cogent, intelligent, elegantly written, perfectly documented, serious in tone but not ponderous in execution, instructive yet delightful to read; just kidding. One hopes it will be some of these things, and you must strive to do your best. It will be marked as follows:

Quality of argument: 20%
Structure of argument: 20%
Quality and use of evidence, including documentation: 40%
Sentence and paragraph structure: 10%
Grammar and spelling: 10%

The last two categories are worth a negative point per error; that is, if you make 3 spelling mistakes (including typos) and 4 grammar errors, you will be down to 3/10 in the last category. If you make no mistakes in spelling and grammar, you get the full 10 marks. The other categories are marked more conventionally; e.g., if the quality of the argument is A, you get 17 out of 20. The essay is worth 30% of your final mark. IT IS DUE ON DECEMBER 2 WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU AT THE FINAL EXAM, TIME PERMITTING.

Exam: The final exam will be on all the material we have studied this term, although there will be sufficient choice for you to be able to be selective in your studies. I will give further information about the exam closer to the end of term (i.e., when I figure out what the format and content are going to be!). The exam is worth 30% of your final mark.

Schedule

September 14: Introduction
September 16: Introduction
September 21: Jonson; "Timber" (401-417), "Conversations with Drummond" (417-420)
September 23: Jonson; "To Lucy...with Mr. Donne’s Satires" (11), "Inviting a Friend to Supper" (12), "Epistle to Katharine, Lady Aubigny" (38), "Ode to Himself" (63), "To the Memory of Mr. Wm. Shakespeare" (85)
September 28: Jonson; "To Penshurst" (21); Lyly; "Of Cookham" (handout)
September 30: Seminar on Jonson; Group A
October 5: Donne; "An Anatomy of the World: The First Anniversary"
October 7: Donne; divine poems (109-129)
October 12: Donne; divine poems (109-129)
October 14: Seminar on Donne; Group B
October 19: Herbert, all poems in textbook
October 21: Herbert
October 26: Herbert
October 28: Seminar on Herbert; Group C
November 2: Herrick (Jonson book); "Farewell to Sack" (110), "Welcome to Sack" (117), "Corrina’s Going A-Maying" (113), "Art Above Nature: To Julia" (135), "The Night-Piece: To Julia" (136)
November 4: Marvell (Herbert book); "On a Drop of Dew" (95), "The Coronet" (96), "Nymph" (101), "Mower Against the Gardens" (107), "The Garden" (112)
November 9: Crashaw (Herbert book); "Saint Mary Magdalene" (80), "Saint Teresa" (84), "The Flaming Heart" (88), "Countess of Denbigh" (89)
November 11: Traherne (Herbert book); "The Salutation" (181), "Eden" (184), "Innocence" (185), "The Preparative" (187), "The Rapture" (189), "My Spirit" (189).
November 16: Seminar on any or all of Herrick, Marvell, Crashaw, Traherne; Group D; RESEARCH REPORT DUE
November 18: Cary, The Tragedy of Mariam
November 23: Cary, The Tragedy of Mariam. THESIS STATEMENT DUE
November 25: Middleton and Dekker, The Roaring Girl
November 30: Middleton and Dekker, The Roaring Girl
December 2: Seminar on drama; Group E. ESSAY DUE