English 350B

Seventeenth-Century Non-Dramatic Literature 2

Winter 1994

Course Outline

1. Francis Bacon.  
a) *The Advancement of Learning*, Books I, II (sel.)  
b) "The Four Idols" in *The New Organon*  
c) *Essays* (selection)

2. Thomas Browne.  
*Religio Medici*

a) *Areopagitica*  
b) *Of Education*

a) Nativity Ode  
b) L'Allegro and Il Penseroso  
c) *A Maske at Ludlow Castle* (Comus)  
d) *Lycidas*  
g) *Paradise Lost*  
h) *Paradise Regained*  
i) *Samson Agonistes*

Texts

4. Selections from Bacon's *The Advancement of Learning* and *The New Organon* (available through the Book Store)

Assignments

1. Essay on the prose works of Bacon, Browne and Milton - about 6 pages long (about 1500 words) - worth 20% of the final grade  
2. Research essay on Milton's poetry about 8 pages long (about 2000 words) - worth 40% of the final grade.  
3. Final Examination - three hours long - worth 40% of the final grade.

Other Information

1. Instructor: a) Office - HH 258, Phone 885-1211, ext. 2121  
   b) Office Hours - 9:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (or by appointment)  
   c) Home Phone - 884-8395  
2. *Rewrites*. You may rewire the first essay with no penalty.  
3. *Lates*. Unless acceptable reasons for delay are presented in advance, late essays will be penalized half a grade.  
4. *Incompletes*. Incompletes will be permitted only by prior arrangement and for an agreed period of time. Thereafter, a grade based on the work actually completed will be submitted.
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R.R. Dubinski

Essay I

Instructions:

1. Choose one of the following topics. If you wish to write on another topic, please consult with me.

2. Write an essay about 6 pages in length (about 1500 words). Consult secondary material if you wish.

3. Due Date: 17 February 1994

Topics:


2. Compare and contrast Bacon and Browne's attitudes to death. Refer to Bacon's Essay II and Browne's Religio Medici, Book I, Sections 38-45)

3. Compare Browne and Milton's attitudes to toleration in religion.

4. Compare and contrast Bacon and Milton's attitudes to freedom of inquiry into both religious and scientific issues.

5. Suggest how Bacon would respond to Milton's model curriculum in Of Education.

6. Compare and contrast Browne and Milton's attitudes to the reading of all kinds of books.
Essay II

Instructions

1. Choose one of the following topics. If you wish to write on another topic, please consult with me.

2. Write a research paper about 8 pages in length (about 2,000 words). Your essay should attempt to take into account scholarship and criticism of the past 10-15 years relevant to the topic.

3. Due Date: 5 April 1994

Topics

1. The Theme of Vocation in Milton's Earlier Poetry

2. The Lady in Comus

3. "Lycidas" and Religious Controversy in the 1630's

4. The Experience of Damnation in Paradise Lost

5. Paradise Lost as a Temptation for the Reader

6. The Heroic in Paradise Lost

7. The Theology of Paradise Lost

8. Milton's Conception of the Unfallen World

9. Milton's Eve and Feminist Criticism

10. The Theme of Identity in Paradise Regained

11. Paradise Regained and Samson Agonistes as Contraries

12. Temptation as Milton's Master Theme
General Instructions for Preparing Assignments

1. The assigned topics provide you with a central theme or problem which is intended as a focus for your paper. Limit your analysis and discussion to the topic and avoid introducing peripheral or extraneous material into your essay that has little or no bearing on your topic.

2. You must support your analysis or interpretation with evidence from the text(s) in question. This may take the form of a direct quotation or a brief paraphrase or summary. However, try to avoid including summaries for their own sake or evidence that may be either peripheral or redundant.

3. Organize your essay carefully so that it has a central idea or argument and a coherent structure. Make sure that there are adequate transitions between the various paragraphs and sections of your essay and that it ends with a logical conclusion based on the evidence you have provided in support of your argument or thesis.

4. In topics requiring comparisons and contrasts, organize your essay around points of comparison and contrast rather than examining each work separately and then drawing some comparisons. This type of organization will help you to avoid repetition.

5. Write your essay in a style that is clear, precise and concise. You should use as few words as necessary to make your points clearly. Avoid loose and rambling sentences and exclude all redundancy and repetition. Avoid vagueness, ambiguity and awkwardness in expression. If a sentence seems awkward to you, rephrase it.

6. Before you start to write an essay, it is essential for you to do some concentrated thinking about the issues raised by the topic. I have found it useful making a list of what I call "random reflections" as a way of surveying my thoughts on the subject. Once you have such a list, try to order these reflections in some coherent manner. Make an outline of the main divisions and subdivisions in your argument. Then, try to keep to your outline as you compose the essay.

After you have completed a rough draft, I suggest you let it sit for a day or two before beginning revisions. This is to allow for second thoughts and reconsideration. In revising make sure that your points are well supported, that there are adequate transitions between parts of your essay, and that the essay has a firm conclusion. Finally, examine the essay for style. Remove all verbiage, tighten and rephrase sentences, try to vary the syntactical structure of your sentences, and especially avoid sentences that string together clauses joined by the conjunctions "and". Needless to say, you should insure that your sentences are grammatically correct and that your spelling and punctuation are accurate.

7. You are asked to use secondary material in writing your essay. But, it is important that you try to assemble your own insights and tentative conclusions before turning to the secondary material. This will enable you to enter into dialogue with other critics and to integrate other views into your own. Be sure that you acknowledge all borrowings from secondary sources.

8. I do not insist that your essays be typewritten, though I would prefer it. If you turn in a hand-written essay, make it as legible as possible, and please leave a good margin on the left side for comments.

9. For matters of form, I refer you to W.K. Thomas's Correct Form in Essay Writing. You are expected to follow this manual for such matters as the correct form for quoting from a text, for footnoting, and for bibliographies.