In this course, we will discuss some of the literature of the later Romantic period, focusing on the Shelleys, Keats, and Byron. These authors were concerned about their relationship to the newly-emerging notion of national literary histories as well as their relationships with their contemporaries. (The first chronologically-arranged, comprehensive anthology of English literature was produced in the late eighteenth century.) We will use those concerns to focus our exploration of their writings. The first half of the course will address their representations of literature, the act of reading, and authors; the second half of the course will address some of their more vexed attempts to deal with the rift between the world of writing and the world of writers (a distinction variously framed as that between the ideal and the real, the imaginary and the political, and so forth).

**Required Texts:**

**Requirements:**
Assignment (proposal and bibliography): c. 1,000 words, due January 30th (15%)
Quiz: in-class, February 13th (10%)
Essay: 2,500 words, due March 11th (45%)
Exam: in examination period (30%)
N.B.: You are responsible for knowing the contents of this syllabus and following all of the requirements that it describes.

**Notes Towards a Level Playing Field:**
These rules will be strictly followed in order to ensure that we can all make equally-informed decisions. 1) Saturday and Sunday as well as weekdays are counted in all "per day" calculations. 2) Extensions will not be granted, or discussed, on or after the due date and must be arranged with me in advance. 3) Extensions for a period of one week or less for one written assignment will be granted automatically; a simple request will suffice, and no explanations, justifications, or documentation will be required to arrange that extension (if you can’t speak to me about an extension in class or my office hours, please phone and leave a message on my voice mail or e-mail me—those are the most reliable ways of reaching me promptly). 4) Longer or additional extensions will require documentation (for instance, a note from a doctor) that establishes a need for the extension. 5) Penalties of 2% per day of lateness will be deducted from essay grades unless you provide documentation for a cause that justifies an assignment’s lateness and explains why an appropriate extension was not secured in advance. 6) Compelling documentation would be required before I could consider accepting an assignment after other assignments have been returned or allowing a make-up quiz. (NB: If a paper is going to be more than a week late or will not be submitted by your extension due date, you should let me know when you expect to submit it; if you do not, then I cannot warn you if that submission date falls after the date on which I will return the other papers.) 7) There will be no rewrites. 8) Papers not handed directly to me must be dated by one of the staff in the department and placed in my mailbox.

All students should carefully read the section on plagiarism (§1.7) in the *MLA Handbook* as well as the university policy on academic offenses (printed in the Undergraduate Calendar). You must ensure that all primary and secondary sources, whether quoted, paraphrased, or otherwise influential, are properly documented according to the MLA style (see *MLA Handbook*).
with page or line references as well as complete bibliographical information—the only permissible exceptions are outlined in the MLA Handbook (N.B.: textbooks, essays with one source, and editor’s notes are not on the list of exceptions). I reserve the right to interview a student on her/his essay’s contents before assigning the grade. I recognize the distinction between sloppy documentation and the theft of material with an intention to defraud, but such sloppiness is still very serious and it will be treated as such. Documentation not only operates as a gesture of respect for the work of others and an indication that you understand where your ideas begin and end, but also situates course work in the context of the notion of intellectual property upon which many of the university’s evaluative assumptions and practices are based and is therefore essential to the fair treatment of the class as a whole.

If you have any questions or concerns about the above—or anything else (from readings, essays and lectures to the illegibility of my handwriting)—please drop by my office to discuss the matter with me, during my office hours or by appointment.

Guidelines for Written Assignments:

Essentials: The assignment and the essay should be well-written, well-argued and fully as well as properly documented in accordance with the MLA style; you should strive to select, develop, substantiate, organize and communicate your ideas and insights persuasively in ways that are appropriate to formal academic writing. You should make and keep a copy of the work that you submit, especially if you do not give it directly to me. A staple in the upper lefthand corner is the preferred binding and essays must have page numbers. Each page should have 1" margins on all sides and be double-spaced throughout (including the Works Cited and offset quotations); one page in such a format, with a 12 cpi font, is usually about 250 words.

Resources for Research: Both the assignment and the essay require research. There are a number of advantages to reading critical sources: your argument might benefit from the results of someone else’s research; you can refine your argument by thinking about why you agree or disagree with a point that another critic has made; critical sources often lead to more helpful critical sources; the best examples of critical argumentation and composition appear in print and so can help you to refine your essay-writing on a rhetorical and formal level (note that the conventions and methodologies of critical essays have changed over the years, so an essay published in the 1980s is a better indication of current practices than an essay from the 1930s). The best place to start is the MLA Bibliography, available on-line in the library. There are excellent Romantic periodicals such as Studies in Romanticism and the Keats-Shelley Journal as well as general periodicals such as ELH, PMLA, and Papers on Language and Literature. When you find a relevant article, look through the bibliographical information it provides: the author might have used sources that are relevant to your work. You can also browse the web: Romantic Circles (http://www.inform.umd.edu/RC/rc.html) includes links to on-line editions of a variety of primary materials, bibliographical resources, and some secondary materials, as well as links to other relevant web sites (most notably, the Romantic Literature section of the Voice of the Shuttle at http://humanitas.ucsb.edu). Feel free to consult with me about these sources and others. Be careful to use secondary sources to develop your own position on the issues and texts rather than to replace or overwhelm your position. Secondary sources provide tools with which to hone your own reading, not "answers."

Assignment (proposal and bibliography): Your first assignment must consist of three parts: a tentative 300-word abstract of your paper (this must address one of the essay topics and selections of texts listed below); a list of 8-10 relevant critical sources; 200-word summaries of two of those sources. The abstract should explain, with some specificity, the primary texts you plan to use, the issues you plan to address and the approach you will use to address them, and anticipate some of the conclusions you expect to draw; the abstract must be fully documented and seek to be as persuasive as an essay (that is, you should try to persuade your reader that the
3. Discuss, comparatively, the representation of poetry and/or poets as immortal and/or mortal in Percy Shelley's *Adonais* and two other texts from the readings for Weeks 5-6 ("On the Poets"); you may, in addition, discuss one or two texts from the period not included in the readings.

4. Discuss, comparatively, the representation of the supernatural in *two* of the following (e.g., a and c): a) one act from Percy Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*; b) any five scenes from Byron's *Manfred*; c) Mary Shelley's "Transformation" and one other tale; d) Keats' "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" and "The Fall of Hyperion."

**Tentative Reading Schedule**

Please note that this is not a lecture schedule and that this schedule is "tentative": we can spend more time on some texts and less on others should the class's interest so incline. "Selections" and "from" designations refer to Wu's choices.

**INTRODUCTION**

Week 1: De Quincey, from *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*

**ON LITERATURE**

Week 2: Caroline Lamb, "A New Canto"; Byron, Dedication to *Don Juan*; Mary Shelley, "Preface to *The Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley* and "Introduction to *Frankenstein*"

Week 3: De Quincey, "On the Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth"; Keats, "On Sitting Down to Read *King Lear* Once Again"; Keats, letters of 22 November 1817, 3 February 1818, and 3 May 1818; Byron, first 50 stanzas of Canto I of *Don Juan*

Week 4: Percy Shelley, *A Defence of Poetry*; assignment due

**ON THE POETS**


Week 7: no classes

**ISOLATION AND DESPAIR**

Weeks 8-9: Keats, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," "Ode on a Grecian Urn"; Byron, *Manfred*

Weeks 9-10: Mary Shelley, *Mathilda*, "Transformation"; essay due

**REUNION AND HOPE**

Weeks 11-12: Percy Shelley, *Prometheus Unbound*

Week 12: Mary Shelley, "Loves of the Poets"; Keats, "The Eve of St. Agnes"; Woodhouse, Letter to John Taylor (27 October 1818)

**REVIEW**

Week 13: Keats, "The Fall of Hyperion"
argument is a good one). It will be evaluated on the basis of the articulateness of the writing, the coherence of the argument, and the clarity of the description. The second part, the list of critical sources, can be combined with any other texts you cite in this assignment in the Works Cited for the entire assignment. The critical sources must include at least two of the following kinds of academic publications: an article in a journal; an essay in a collection of essays by various authors; a book by a single author. You must also include at least two critical sources published in 1985 or earlier and at least two published after 1985. The list of critical sources will be evaluated for relevance, especially the specificity of the relevance, to your proposal (for instance, if a student were writing on Blake’s representation of women in *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*, an article on attitudes towards gender in the 1790s would be more relevant than an article on Blake’s use of meter in *Visions*). The third part, the summaries, should succinctly relay the overall argument of the works, emphasizing those elements of particular relevance to your essay; you might, for instance, write one short paragraph outlining the central concerns and the general approach of the critic and then, in a second paragraph, specify some points of particular interest to you. They will be evaluated for the accuracy and depth of understanding that the summaries exhibit as well as the judgment indicated by the selection of points relevant to the proposal. The format should be as follows: under the heading, "Proposal," print your abstract; then, under the heading, "Summary of [title of essay] by [author’s name],” print your first 200-word summary, and then repeat for the second; finally, attach a Works Cited that provides complete citations for your 8-10 critical sources and any other texts quoted, paraphrased, or otherwise influential in your proposal and your summaries.

**Essay:** Your essay should grow out of the research that you did for the first assignment, but need not be limited by the position you outline in your proposal. It is possible, perhaps even probable, that you will change your focus or your conclusions as you work on the essay so feel free to modify your primary or critical sources or adjust your argument or focus. But you must write your essay on the same general essay topic as that selected for your assignment; the four topics are listed below. Essay topics are defined broadly so that you can, while staying within their confines, choose from a variety of different texts and focusses. Your essay, like your assignment, should be well-written and persuade the reader of the validity of your argument.

If you have any questions at all, please come and talk to me.

**Assignment and Essay Topics**

N.B. All of the topics require comparisons of texts and thus a thesis that establishes some pattern of similitude and differences between the texts under consideration and an argument that discusses them in close relation to each other.

1. Discuss, comparatively, the representation of the act of narration by the different narrators in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* or in two of the following options (e.g., b and c): a) Mary Shelley’s *Mathilda*; b) two of Mary Shelley’s tales (excluding "Transformation"); c) Keats’ "Eve of St. Agnes"; d) Canto I of Byron’s *Don Juan*.

2. Using, comparatively, Percy Shelley’s statements about drama in *A Defence of Poetry*, discuss the significance or implications of the dramatic elements (for example, dialogue, stage directions, the absence of a narrator), or the absence or modification of those elements, in one of the following: Byron’s *Manfred*; any two acts of Percy Shelley’s *Prometheus Unbound*; one act of Percy Shelley’s *Prometheus Unbound* and one act of Percy Shelley’s *The Cenci* (The *Cenci*, unlike *Prometheus Unbound* and *Manfred*, was written for the stage rather than print; it is not included in Wu’s anthology so a copy has been placed on reserve).