English 484: Donne, Herbert, and the Psalms

Section 1
TuTh 11:30-12:50; HH 336
Winter 2012

Prof. Ken Graham
HH 246; ex.32124
k2graham@uwaterloo.ca

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1-2; or by appointment

Texts:
Philip and Mary Sidney, The Sidney Psalter (Oxford World’s Classics)
Fulke Greville, Selected Poems (University of Chicago Press)
George Herbert, The Complete English Poems (Penguin Classics)
English 484 Course Reader (available at Porter Library; includes Thomas Wyatt, A Paraphrase of the Penitential Psalms, and Anne Lock, A Meditation of a Penitent Sinner)

The following item has been placed on 1-hr reserve at Porter Library:

Aims of the Course
This class will provide a focused introduction to the Book of Psalms and its impact on English poetry after the Protestant Reformation. We will consider how the Psalms served as a thematic and formal model for both individual and communal expression; how the Psalms influenced attitudes towards and ideas of God, self, and others; and how post-Reformation England both interpreted the Psalms according to its own understanding and adapted them for its own uses. Above all, we will try to understand the Psalms and the early modern poetry they inspired as part of a tradition that approaches questions of justice through penitence and praise.

Methods and Requirements
This class will operate mainly as a seminar. Graded work comprises:

1) Class participation. I will expect you to attend conscientiously and to participate in an informed and productive manner. Quality is generally more important than quantity, but I am impressed by a willingness to go out on a limb. I am also as interested in the courtesy and respect with which you listen and respond to what others say as in the sharpness of your own perceptions. Attendance and punctuality count. It is your responsibility to inform me promptly of the reasons for an absence if you wish it to be excused. Weight = 10%

2) A shorter essay, 1500-2000 words in length. The full assignment is on page 4. Weight = 25%

4) A longer essay, 2500-3000 words in length. Part of this assignment is an annotated bibliography. The full assignment is on page 5. Weight = 5% (bibliography) + 30% = 35%

5) A closed-book final exam, essay-question format, two hours in length. Weight = 30%
Class Schedule

Jan.  3  Tu  Introduction to the class
      5  Th  Sidney, Psalms 2, 22, 24, 105, 110, 126, 137; Recommended: Alter, *Book of Psalms*, Introduction
      10 Tu  Sidney, Psalms 84, 93, 99, 100, 103, 111, 117, 139, 147, 150
      12 Th  Sidney, Psalms 19, 22, 51, 57, 71, 79, 88, 94
      17 Tu  Sidney, Psalms 1, 14, 15, 21, 37, 73, 112
      19 Th  Sidney, Psalms 52, 58, 72, 82, 98, 101, 149
      24 Tu  Wyatt, *A Paraphrase of the Penitential Psalms*, II. 1-394; **proposal #1**
      26 Th  Wyatt, *Penitential Psalms*, II. 395-end
      31 Tu  Lock, *A Meditation of a Penitent Sinner*

Feb.  2  Th  Lock, *A Meditation of a Penitent Sinner*
       7 Tu  Greville, *Caelica* IV, VII, X, XVI, XXXVIII-XL, LVI, LXVI, LXIX; **draft #1 due**
       9 Th  Greville, *Caelica* LXXXII-LXXXIX; **draft discussion day #1**
      14 Tu  Greville, *Caelica* XCVI-XCIX
      16 Th  Greville, *Caelica* C-CIII, CIX; **essay #1 due, 11:30 a.m.**

20-24 **Winter Study Period**

28 Tu  Donne, *Divine Meditations* 1-7; **proposal #2**

Mar.  1 Th  Donne, *Divine Meditations* 8-13
       6 Tu  Donne, *Divine Meditations* 14-19
       8 Th  Donne, “A Litany,” “Good Friday, 1613. Riding Westward,” “A Hymn to God the Father”; **annotated bibliography due**
      20 Tu  Herbert, “Affliction (1),” “The Temper (1),” “Sighs and Groans,” “Affliction (4),” “Justice (1),” “Affliction (5),” “Sion,” “Home,” “Confession,” “Justice (2),” “Discipline”; **draft discussion day #2**
      22 Th  No class scheduled
      29 Th  Herbert, “Church-Monuments,” “Frailty,” “Constancy,” “Avarice,” “Lent,” “The British Church,” “Divinity”; **essay #2 due, 11:30 a.m.**

**Final Exam TBA** (The Winter semester final exam period is April 9-21.)
Class and University Policies

Although in rare cases an electronic submission may show that an assignment has been completed (e.g. a late essay completed on a Saturday), you must turn in a paper copy of all written assignments to receive credit. Late essays will be accepted without penalty only if prior permission has been granted. Otherwise, the penalty will be 2% per day, including weekends. Late essays should be turned in either directly to me or to the English Department’s drop box on the second floor of Hagey Hall. Missed exams may be made up only with a valid medical excuse.

I will normally reply to email messages within 24 hours, weekends excepted. In the case of emails requiring lengthy replies, I may indicate to you that you should see me in person.

Laptop computers and other portable electronic devices can become distractions and so may not normally be used in class. E-book readers with limited connectivity may be used only if I grant permission.

Note for students with disabilities: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

Academic Integrity: in order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (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, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm.

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, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm. When in doubt please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm.

Academic Integrity website (Arts): http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html
Academic Integrity Office (UW): http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/

All sources of information that you use in your written work in this class must be cited fully and scrupulously. If I suspect that you have committed an academic offense, including plagiarism, I will report it to the Associate Dean; if the offense is confirmed, the normal result is a failing grade on the assignment and a further five marks off the course grade.
Essay Assignment #1

In this essay you will explore the relationship between how a psalm was understood and how it was translated after the Reformation. Choose a psalm that seems to you to involve interesting or controversial interpretive questions. See how the psalm was interpreted by Martin Luther, John Calvin, and at least one English Protestant interpreter between 1550 and 1650. Then select at least two Englishmetrical translations of the psalm, one of which must be from an edition of the Sternhold-Hopkins Psalter published between 1580 and 1625. Investigate the relationship between interpretive questions raised by your commentaries and the choices made by your translators. Do the translations reflect the interpretive controversies, and if so how? Your thesis will be your attempt to answer this question for the psalm you’ve chosen.

Before writing the essay, you will submit a proposal of roughly 150 words. The proposal must identify your topic, including your psalm, your commentators, and your translators, and it must describe the main interpretive issue(s) involved with your topic. It may also propose a hypothesis about how the translations reflect the interpretive issues. It will be necessary to conduct at least a preliminary survey of your materials to write the proposal. If you do not submit a proposal by January 24, you will receive a penalty of 5% on the essay.

A full-length draft of the essay is due February 7. You will need to bring a copy for everyone in your writing group and a copy to hand in. In exchange you will receive copies of the drafts of your group’s other members. You will need to read these and write thoughtful comments on them by February 9. If you do not turn in and distribute a completed draft of your essay on time, you will receive a penalty of 5% on the essay. If you do not satisfactorily complete the group draft response assignment on time, you will likewise receive a penalty of 5% on your essay.

Your essay should be 1500-2000 words long (12-point Times New Roman type, double-spaced, one-inch margins) and follow a consistent documentation format (e.g. MLA, Chicago). It must argue a clear thesis, and it must take the form of a unified and well-structured defence of that thesis. It will be judged on the strength and originality of its thesis, on the quality, clarity, and coherence of its supporting arguments, and on the felicity and correctness of its expression. Late essays will be accepted without penalty only if prior permission has been granted. Otherwise, the penalty will be 2% per day, including weekends.

You do not need to consult secondary sources to write this essay, and doing so could hinder your creativity. If you do make use of such sources, however, be sure that they do not control or determine your argument; rather, your critical engagement with them, whether it takes the form of agreement or disagreement, must serve to advance, and must be clearly subordinate to, your own original thesis. Also be sure to cite all use of such sources fully and scrupulously.

DUE DATE: FEBRUARY 16, 11:30 a.m.
Essay Assignment #2

Write an essay about 2–4 thematically-related poems by one of Greville, Donne, or Herbert (e.g. Greville’s conversion poems or Herbert’s “Affliction” poems). Your essay should be 2500-3000 words long (12-point Times New Roman type, double-spaced, one-inch margins) and follow a consistent documentation format (e.g. MLA, Chicago). It must argue a clear thesis, and it must take the form of a unified and well-structured defence of that thesis. It will be judged on the strength and originality of its thesis, on the quality, clarity, and coherence of its supporting arguments, and on the felicity and correctness of its expression. Late essays will be accepted without penalty only if prior permission has been granted. Otherwise, the penalty will be 2% per day, including weekends.

Before writing the essay, you will submit a proposal of roughly 150 words. The proposal must identify your topic, and it must pose the question that your essay will attempt to answer. It may also propose a hypothesis in the form of a preliminary answer to this question. If you do not submit a proposal by February 28, you will receive a penalty of 5% on the essay.

You will also write an annotated bibliography before writing this essay. In your bibliography, you will report on 3–5 secondary sources (essays or book chapters) chosen for their relevance to your topic. The bibliography will provide bibliographic information on these sources, as well as summaries of their arguments (roughly 150 words each). You do not need to mention or discuss these sources in your essay itself, but if you do, be sure that they do not control or determine your argument; rather, your critical engagement with them, whether it takes the form of agreement or disagreement, must serve to advance, and must be clearly subordinate to, your own original thesis. The bibliography is worth 5% of your class grade, and is due March 8.

A full-length draft of the essay is due March 15. You will need to bring a copy for everyone in your writing group and a copy to hand in. In exchange you will receive copies of the drafts of your group’s other members. You will need to read these and write thoughtful comments on them by March 20. If you do not turn in and distribute a completed draft of your essay on time, you will receive a penalty of 5% on the essay. If you do not satisfactorily complete the group draft response assignment on time, you will likewise receive a penalty of 5% on your essay.

DUE DATE: MARCH 29, 11:30 a.m.