

ENGLISH 3310: ENGLISH LITERATURE BEFORE 1790

FRANK GRADY
461 LUCAS
516-5510 / fgrady@umsl.edu
W 12:30-2:00 & by
Zoom appointment

FALL 2021
Blended / W 9:30-10:45
SSB 202
[SEC. 001, #14977]

In this course we will be reading, writing about and discussing "representative works of selected major authors" from the tenth century through the seventeenth. While surveying the first eight centuries of English poetry, prose and drama, we'll be asking what makes some works "representative" and some writers "major," and what these works want of their readers--not so much what they want us to know, but what they want us to do, what they want to do to us, and why we might sometimes want to resist their designs for us. The author of *The Battle of Maldon* might assume that you are a tenth-century, land-owning, English-speaking, Viking-hating patriot, but you're not, and while there can certainly be some literary pleasure derived from pretending for a little while that you are, there's often more to be gained from resisting that assumption. Thus we will be exploring the context as well as the content of the texts we study, so as to reveal and understand the things they take for granted that might or might not be true for us today. We'll also practice using some of the conventional tools of literary analysis—formal, historical, and theoretical.

This will be a blended course, which means we will meet together only on Wednesdays for discussions and in-person activities. There will be additional online activities that will frequently take place—or whose deadlines will fall—on Mondays, and material posted online that you will be responsible for reading and reviewing according to the schedule below.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- *The Norton Anthology of English Literature: The Major Authors*, Volume 1. Ed. Stephen Greenblatt, et. al. 9th or 10th edition (Norton, 2013 & 2018; hence NA).
- Shakespeare, William. *King Lear*. Ed. Grace Toppolo. Norton Critical Edition (Norton, 2007).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- All relevant documents (e.g., syllabus, supplementary readings, essay topics, Power Points, recorded lectures) will be posted in clearly defined modules on Canvas.
- Norton maintains a very useful web page designed to supplement our use of the Anthology at <https://digital.wwnorton.com/englishlit10major>, to which we will make regular reference; in fact some of the texts we'll be reading are stored in their on-line archive.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS (What *I* want you to do):

- Come to class, and come on time. Arriving late is not an endearing habit, and more than three unexcused Wednesday absences (20% of our face-to-face time) will have an adverse effect on your grade. I do record attendance, though I will also excuse explained absences. (Please do not come to class if you're feeling ill.)
- Keep up with the reading. This won't always be easy; this is a survey course, which means that we'll be moving fairly quickly (see "eight centuries," above) through a heavy and probably unfamiliar reading load, one that cannot be adequately metabolized in an hour before class. Try to budget your time, and then try to add a little more to the budget, whenever you can. Remember that we are not just *reading* the texts assigned, but *studying* them, so
- Think about the reading and be prepared to discuss it: about what happens in it, and to whom it happens; about what it assumes that you know about the world and about how people ought to behave (and how they actually do); about what it thinks is interesting, how it tries to make you feel, and whether it succeeds; about what form it implies that writing should take and how it tries to distinguish or aggrandize or beautify itself. The "Focus Check" assignments—see below—are designed to help you do these things. Please learn the names of major characters. (Further details on the English Department's goals for its courses can be found [here](#).)
- [Please see the Assignment Overview document for details of what follows.] Your final grade will consist of the results of two mini-midterms (10% each) and one final exam (10%); one literary imitation (15%) and two longer four- to six-page essays (15% and 20%); a series of "Focus Check " assignments (10%); and a pair of reading summaries (10%). You will have three chances to write the two longer papers, and I will distribute suggested topics about ten days in

advance of each due date (though you will not be limited to those topics). Plagiarism on papers, electronic or the old-fashioned kind, will mean an instant F for the assignment, my undying disapprobation, and possible disciplinary action by the university; please refer to [this site](#) for further details, and *please please* ask me if you have any questions.

Tentative Syllabus:

MODULE	WEEKS	DATES	READINGS ETC.	WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS	OTHER ASSIGNMENTS
Ø	1	M AUG 23	Course syllabus Welcome & Introductory lectures	Introductory survey	
1: Old English Writing	1 - 2	W AUG 25 & W SEP 1	For 8/25: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Wanderer</i> (NA 110-13) • Anglo-Saxon Literature (NA 6-11) For 9/1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Battle of Maldon</i> [Canvas] • <i>Beowulf</i> ll. 1-1070 (NA 37-70) • <i>Caedmon's Hymn</i> (NA 30-33) 	Focus Check - T 8/31	
2: Anglo-Norman and Middle English Literature	3 -5	W SEP 8, W SEP 15, W SEP 22	For 9/8: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Anglo-Norman Literature" (NA 10-13) • "Romance" (NA 115-16) • Marie de France, <i>Lanval</i> (NA 116-3) For 9/15:	Focus Check - T 9/7 Summaries due W 9/8 Focus Check – T 9/14	

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Middle English Literature...” (NA 14-20) and “Medieval English” (NA 20-25); • <i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i>, Fitts i-iii (NA 140-84) <p>For 9/22:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i>, Fitt iv (NA 184-95) 	<p>Summaries due W 9/15</p> <p>Focus Check – T 9/21</p> <p>Summaries due W 9/22</p>	
3: Medieval and Early Modern Drama	6-7	W SEP 29, W OCT 6, W Oct 13	<p>For 9/29:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Mystery Plays” (NA 308-09); • <i>Play of Abraham and Isaac</i> [Canvas] • “The Elizabethan Theater” (NA 383-89) • “William Shakespeare” (NA 550-54) • <i>King Lear</i>, Act 1 <p>For 10/6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>King Lear</i>, Acts 2-4 <p>By 10/6: “The Sixteenth Century, 1485-1603” (NA 349-73)</p> <p>For 10/13</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>King Lear</i>, Act 5 • excerpts from Holinshed (KL 148-50) and Geoffrey of Monmouth (KL 162-65) 	<p>Focus Check - T 9/28</p> <p>Focus Check - T 10/5</p> <p>Summaries due W 10/6</p> <p>Focus Check - T 10/12</p> <p>Summaries due W 10/13</p>	<p>Essay Due Date #1 – F Oct 1</p> <p>First Mini-Midterm - M Oct 4</p>

4: Renaissance Poesy and Poetry	8-9	W Oct 20 – W Oct 27	For 10/20: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Sir Philip Sidney” (NA 503-04); • Sidney, <i>Defence of Poesy</i> [Canvas] • Castiglione/Hoby, <i>The Courtier</i> [Canvas]; • Gosson, from <i>The School of Abuse</i> (web link) <p>For 10/27</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16th- and 17th-century sonnets (poems tba) <p>By 10/27:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Early Seventeenth Century” II (NA 672-81) 	Focus Check - T 10/19 Focus Check – T 10/26	Second Mini-Midterm – M 10/25

5: 17 th Century & Milton	11-14	W NOV 3	For 11/3: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “John Milton” (NA 789-92)• Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i>, Book 1 (NA 820-41)	Focus Check - T 11/2	Essay Due Date #2 – F 11/5
		W NOV 10			
		W NOV 17	For 11/10: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Paradise Lost</i>, Books 2 & 3 (NA 841-77)	Focus Check - T 11/9 Summaries due, W 11/10	
		W DEC 1	For 11/17: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Paradise Lost</i>, Book 4 (NA 877-93)• <i>Paradise Lost</i>, Book 5 (NA 893-900) & Book 8 (NA 902-910, plus Canvas supplements)	Focus Check - T 11/16 Summaries due, W 11/17	
			For 12/1: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Paradise Lost</i>, Book 9 (NA 911-36)• <i>Paradise Lost</i>, Book 10 (NA 936-49, plus Canvas supplements)• 	Focus Check - T 11/30 Summaries due, W 12/1	Literary Imitation Due Date – F 11/19
6: 18 th Century and Alexander Pope	15	W DEC 8	For 12/8: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Paradise Lost</i>, Book 12 (NA 949-53, plus Canvas supplements)• Greenblatt, from <i>The Rise and Fall of Adam and Eve</i>• <i>English 3310 Spectator</i>, vols I & II	Focus Check - T 12/7	Essay Due Date # 3 - F 12/10
					Mini-Final – W 12/15