

**Winter 2018**  
**Department of English**  
**English 2300A British Literatures I**  
**Major Authors from Riche to Marvell**  
 Prerequisites: second-year standing or permission of the department  
**Time: Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:00-2:30**

**Instructor: D.A. Beecher**  
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**Office hours: Mondays, 2:30-3:30**

**Course Requirements:** The orientation of this course is not only historical and thematic but critical. It is intended to serve as a thorough introduction to the chosen authors and their texts, and as an introduction to basic methodologies of textual criticism and critical terminology. The lectures will thus contain factual and theoretical information, thereby providing a variety of paradigms for the study of literature (not to mention numerous excursions important to me and to most students into matters cultural, contextual, and evaluative). Success in the course will ultimately depend upon the student's ability to work with critical ideas in the term paper and exam questions. Historically, the readings cover a period from 1580 to 1673, thus literature from the Tudor and Stuart eras. This was a dynamic period socially and politically that witnessed the reformation of the church, English mercantile exploration, major scientific revolutions, and the formation of the modern nation states constituting western Europe, with an emerging sense of national identities and concerns. It was also the period of the new learning and its effects upon pedagogy, mores and ethics, and of reconsidered social life, the family, expressions of love, marriage, and divorce. Their literature reflects many of these issues and anxieties. At the same time, the course should extend the critical acumen of students, adding new terms and concepts to their critical vocabularies, and provide opportunities for honing and perfecting their critical writing. All of these matters are related to **objectives** of the course which may be summarized as follows:

- To acquaint the student with representative works from the best writers of the period.
- To gain a sense of the chronological unfolding of early English literary styles.
- To achieve some insight into the historical and cultural developments of early modern England.
- To develop a sense of the themes and universal ideas of literature and to compare early themes with issues of our own day.
- To look at specific issues concerning protagonists, heroism, narrative and story telling, epic, comic and tragic forms, modes of allegory, symbolism, lyric styles, matters of love and friendship, satire, the destiny of the soul, questing and return, and many more related issues.
- To extend the vocabulary of literary terms and critical concepts, and especially those which will be named and discussed in class.
- To acquire and improve writing skills relating to literature, argumentation,

research techniques, and the conventions pertaining to the presentation of scholarly writing in general.

**The texts are:** *The Norton Anthology of English Literature, The Sixteenth Century/The Early Seventeenth Century*, (Ninth edition, Vol. B) Norton; and *Barnabe Riche His Farewell to Military Profession*, Dovehouse Editions. These have been ordered through the University Bookstore in the Student Union. Authors will include: Spenser, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Barnabe Riche, John Donne, Ben Jonson, John Milton, and Andrew Marvell.

**Course work:** A 10-page term paper will be due on the last day of class: April 9. It will count for 20% of the final grade. At the end of the course there will be a scheduled 3 hour exam. It will consist of short essay questions, covering all the major authors, and some latitude for choice. The exam counts for 25% of the final grade. That leaves 5% for attendance and participation. It is fair to remind students, moreover, that all term work must be submitted before a final grade can be assigned as per the university regulations.

**Early Feedback:** If you are concerned, you are invited to submit a 2-3 page essay on one of the first two authors studied which I can provisionally evaluate, although the grade will not be recorded. This paper is entirely optional. It should propose a specific point that is debated in the usual manner of literary-critical writing, giving you an opportunity to explore a methodical approach to a literary problem in miniature. This will give me an idea of your critical skills, and give you an idea of my expectations in a core course at the second-year university level. The thesis is open, but might touch upon allegory, narrative design, approaches to character, symbolism, myth, medieval or Renaissance social issues, literary genres, and much more. It is due by the second week in February.

Class time will be divided among several approaches: historical background, literary contexts, contemporary authors, themes, genres, textual analysis, and the many ways in which such works can be read according to types of critical thinking. These theoretical discussions may be wide ranging, speculative, and philosophical. The goal of the course involves both literary history and critical approaches, with an emphasis on literary ideas. Ideally, the lectures will provide paradigms of criticism that you can adapt to your own writing about literature. In particular, I will be concentrating on select critical terms germane to the study of literature, and for that reason would encourage you to include a good glossary of literary terms in your personal library.

The schedule of readings is as follows:

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|-----------|---|
| January 8 | Introductory lecture                                    |
| 10        | <i>Fairie Queen</i> Bk. III, summary and Canto 6 p. 946 |
| 15        | <i>Fairie Queen</i> Bk. III, summary and Cantos 11      |
| 17        | <i>Fairie Queen</i> Bk. III, canto 12                   |
| 22        | Spenser's "Epithalamion," p. 990                        |
| 24        | Marlowe, <i>Dr. Faustus</i>                             |
| 29        | Marlowe, <i>Dr. Faustus</i> , p. 1127                   |
| 31        | Ben Jonson, <i>Volpone</i>                              |

- February, 5 Ben Jonson, *Volpone*, p. 1443  
 7 Ben Jonson, *Volpone*  
 12 Ben Jonson, pp. 1542, 1544, 1546, 1549, 1556, 1558  
 14 John Donne, pp. 1373-77  
 19-23 Study Week  
 26 John Donne, pp. 1384-86, 1410-15  
 28 Barnabe Riche, stories 2, 3, 4
- March 5 Barnabe Riche, stories 5, 6  
 7 Barnabe Riche, stories 7, 8  
 12 John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Bks. 1-2  
 14 John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Bks. 3-5  
 19 *Paradise Lost*, Bks. 6-8  
 21 *Paradise Lost*, Bks. 9-10  
 26 *Paradise Lost*, Bks. 11-12  
 28 Andrew Marvell, pp. 1791-99
- April 2 Andrew Marvell, pp. 1800-11. (stop on 1811!)  
 4 Shakespeare, Sonnets, 18-73 p. 1172  
 9 Shakespeare, Sonnets, 87-152 p. 1178  
 Term paper due.

**Regulations:** For all the official university regulations, deadlines, and statements on plagiarism, see the University Calendar.

**Writing-Attentive Course:** English 2300 has been designated “writing-attentive,” which means that writing skills are part of the course’s goals and part of its pedagogical design, including the writing on final exams—which is arguably a form of writing all its own. The term paper is the heart of the course and represents a precious opportunity for students to gain real writing experience. To miss this learning opportunity by borrowing from the writing of others is pure folly. Skilled writing will be part of a successful career for many after university. Ideally, these creations should be under consideration well before the end of term, and they should be vehicles for all the critical and analytic insight you can bring to bear on a literary problem. They should be written in a considered, clear, logical, and idiomatic style, and should seek to avoid the many pitfalls associated with effective communication in English. Typically, such papers will have clear thematic direction, a well-marked unfolding of an argument, and they will employ a critical vocabulary requisite to the forceful presentation of ideas. They should be instruments in literary problem solving, make use of secondary sources in an integrated way, and employ standard practices in documentation. Most if not all of these skills should now be in place for students of literature at the university level, but some generic and strategic matters may come up for reconsideration. Nevertheless, this cannot be a remedial course in writing and still leave time to move through the literature; hence students will be responsible for vetting their own work to address short comings. There are many guides and manuals to scholarly writing and documentation, including the famous MLA style guide, and there is help for those in real trouble through the Writing Tutorial Services.

The department defines “writing attentive” in the following terms:

Students will write at least one examination.

Students will write a number of formal essays in which they are expected to:

- develop an argumentative thesis statement across each essay.
- develop complex ideas using correct and effective expression, according to academic English practice.
- use and cite evidence from primary texts appropriately.
- read genres and language from early periods critically.
- demonstrate mastery of MLA documentation practices

A portion of class time will be devoted to developing and improving essay-writing skills.

**Plagiarism:** Adding to the university statement, all written work for this course must be your own. Where you borrow or adapt the ideas of others, you must cite them and their sources responsibly and reliably. Academic integrity and intellectual property are important concepts germane to all professional training. In a more legalistic sense, the university takes unqualified plagiarism quite seriously and imposes punitive measures. Similar principles apply to cheating during exams in all the ways known to and discussed among students. All these matters are regulated by Carleton's new student academic conduct policy. If you are in doubt about what constitutes the work of others and what constitutes your own work, you may consult, but the distinction seems rather patent in most cases. Plagiarism, in academic practice, also includes papers written for you, even if they are original to the "guest" author, and papers written by yourself but already submitted to other courses.

**Deadlines:** I've given up negotiating deadlines in order to be fair to all. Bona fide documentation, of course, is something else and will win for you all the accommodations proffered by the official system. See the Academic Calendar, Regulation 2.6. Term Papers are due on the last day of class.

**Exams:** If you miss the final exam, that too falls outside my jurisdiction; for that you have to make the appropriate arrangements with the Registrar—again check the Calendar. You must be in good standing in the course in order to apply.

**Research:** About Web and Net research essays: articles posted there are extremely uneven and very often lack the authority or the vetting of published material. I prefer you avoid them altogether unless you are really confident about separating the useful from the vacuous. In any case, surfers beware of third-rate materials! Vetted scholarly journals on line are, of course, quite another thing and may be cited in the normal way.

**Term papers:** I prefer well-researched term papers, those that have been built in dialogue with other scholarly voices. This is not to say that the paper should be a work-a-day gathering of opinions neatly linked; that formula, though much taught, is deadly. The topic and the direction should be your own, debating your own informed views in dialogic fashion with others. Above all, for a paper to succeed, it needs a clear statement of purpose, a sense of methodology, and a well-posted progression toward a cogently

argued conclusion. This is predicated on the notion that literature makes complex demands upon its readers, raising problems that invite scrutiny, and that such scrutiny will lead to primary questions about the nature of literature, itself, and the multitudinous ways in which it generates experience from moral instruction to sheer aesthetic delight. In a larger sense, writing about literature is about reading accurately, reflecting critically, and writing cogently—operations not unlike those called for by all enquiries into the nature of things social or creative across the gamut of university disciplines. Keep back-up copies of your work in the event a paper gets lost, and always hand in paper copies; never submit them to me as an e-mail attachment.

**Paul Menton Centre** is available to students with learning disabilities or for those requiring accommodation for exams, Rm. 500 Unicentre.

**The Centre for Student Academic Success** offers Writing Services on a one-to-one basis, 4<sup>th</sup> floor MacOdrum Library.

**The Academic Success Centre** is located in 302 Tory.

**Request for Academic Accommodation:**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

**Pregnancy obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

**Religious obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your **Letter of Accommodation** at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). **Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.** After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website ([www.carleton.ca/pmc](http://www.carleton.ca/pmc)) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (*if applicable*).