

**English 261:
English Literature Before 1800**

Class Meeting: MWF 11.00 – 11.50am

Professor: Rebecca Lemon, English Department, THH 429

Email: rlemon@usc.edu; phone: 213.740.3732 (email is the best way to reach me)

Office Hours: Wednesday 9-11am, or by appointment

Course Description

English 261 will introduce you to the joyful variations of the English language and its literatures before 1800. This course moves from the playfulness of Chaucer's Middle English in *The Canterbury Tales* to the Thomas More's witty rhetorical games in *Utopia*; from the dazzling formal accomplishment of sonnets by Wyatt, Shakespeare and Donne, to the dramatic immediacy of plays by Marlowe and Shakespeare; from the coy flirtation of Cavalier poets to the moving chronicle of Behn's *Oroonoko*. In the process, we will study the formal properties of these texts (genre, rhetoric, form) as well as their engagements in the political, social, and religious conversations of their time.

Textbook

The Norton Anthology of English Literature, ninth edition, Package 1 (Volumes A, B, and C), ISBN 0393913007. Or you might get the single edition, *Norton Anthology of English Literature*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt (ISBN: 0393925315). Please purchase for the first day of class, either at the bookstore or online (which might be cheaper).

Course Requirements

- Two essays of 5-6 double spaced pages (one inch margins; times, times new roman font or similar; 12 point). The essays are due on the dates shown below.
- A mandatory in-class midterm exam
 - The midterm will take place in class on Wednesday, Oct 23rd. It will include a section of short IDs, a passage identification and analysis section, and a short essay. I will offer a handout with precise directions the week before the exam. Please bring a blue book.
- Keyword research project
 - As a class, we will develop an Early English Literature Dictionary. You will each participate by selecting and researching three keywords (or, for our last unit, a key image or key figure). These keywords should be ones that you find especially significant, challenging or difficult. You are welcome to select keywords that interest you; I am also happy to help with your selection. For this assignment, you will use the time of our Friday class, starting in week four, to conduct independent research on and writing of these keyword dictionary entries. You will research the word's etymology (using the *Oxford English Dictionary* online), and its usage (using *Early English Books Online*, or through electronic searches of your author/text online). Some of you may be interested in interviewing classmates, family members, or friends on their understanding of the word, or you may want to research newspaper/popular cultural uses to help track the shift in

the word's meaning over time. Then, for each word, you will post your write-up of etymology and usages on Blackboard.

- Participation in class
Participation includes the General Prologue assignment (explained below), as well as attendance, and *thoughtful* contributions to class discussion.
- Attendance and class participation are an important part of the course. Any more than seven absences will be reason for a failing grade in the course. Being tardy counts as half an absence (i.e. 2 tardies = 1 absence).

The two papers, the midterm, the keyword assignment, and participation are each worth 20% of your grade (roughly – I like to leave room for improvement). With essays, I am available to look at drafts up to one class period before the essay due date (i.e. Monday before Wednesday due date; or Friday before Monday due date).

Joint Educational Project (JEP):

Our course will include a service-learning option for those of you interested in teaching our material to students in elementary, middle or high school in the neighborhood around USC. This will be a potentially rewarding and time-intensive opportunity to design lesson plans and visit classrooms, where you will teach Shakespeare (or related poetry/drama) to younger students. You will receive a bump of 1/3 of a grade for successful completion of the JEP requirements (based on a report generated by their office at the end of the semester). So, for example, a B grade for the course would become a B+.

General Prologue Assignment:

You are responsible for memorizing the first 18 lines of the General Prologue with a decent Middle English pronunciation. For a good reading of these lines, visit the Luminarium website: <http://www.luminarium.org/medlit/gp.htm>. (If this doesn't work then enter "Chaucer general prologue audio" into Google and it will bring up this site.) You might also find this YouTube video helpful: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GihRWuysnrc>.

Assignment Submission Policy

All papers are due in lecture on the date listed on the syllabus. **You are also required to submit a copy of the papers through Turnitin on Blackboard.**

Computer Policy

In this class you are invited to take notes in your book and in a notebook. Please do not use an electronic device (computer, phone, iPad, etc.) to take notes, unless you have a documented disability that requires it (in which case, please provide me with this notification). If you need more information on why I have this policy, please feel free to ask me! I put this policy in place with your health, wellbeing, and education in mind. For more information, please see:
<http://www.newyorker.com/tech/elements/the-case-for-banning-laptops-in-the-classroom>
<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/>
<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0360131512002254>
http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2013/05/multitasking_while_studyng_divided_attention_and_technological_gadgets.html
<http://pss.sagepub.com/content/early/2014/04/22/0956797614524581.abstract>

Course Goals

- To introduce you to three key periods of English Literature: Medieval, Renaissance and Restoration
- To teach you about the range of literary genres of these periods, including epic, prose travel writings, drama, lyric poetry and political theory
- To foster skills of close reading and analysis through deep engagement with texts, and through learning the history of keywords.
- To develop skills of argumentation and comparison by encouraging cross-textual analysis
- To encourage skills of written and spoken communication through class participation, on Blackboard and through papers

Class Schedule, Fall 2019

Week One:

8/26: Introduction; Geoffrey Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, General Prologue, 1-200

8/28: General Prologue, 200-541

8/30: General Prologue, continued

Week Two:

9/2: Labor Day, holiday

9/4: General Prologue, 542-end

Individual meetings on General Prologue, 1-18

9/6: Summary of the Knight's Tale; Miller's Prologue and Tale

Week Three:

9/9: Wife of Bath's Prologue

9/11: Wife of Bath's Tale

9/13: Wife of Bath's Tale, Pardoner's Introduction and Prologue

Last day to change enrollment option to Pass/No Pass

Week Four:

9/16: Pardoner's Introduction, Prologue and Tale

9/18: Introduction to the Renaissance: Thomas Wyatt, especially "The long love that in my thought doth harbour;" "My galley," "Whoso list to hunt," "They flee from me"; Thomas Howard, earl of Surrey, "Love that doth reign and live within my thought" and "Wyatt resteth here"

9/20: Keyword #1 etymology research

Chaucer paper due

Week Five:

9/23: Thomas More, *Utopia*9/25: Thomas More, *Utopia*

9/27: Keyword #1 usage research

Week Six:

9/30: *The English Bible*, 1 Corinthians 13; William Tyndale, "Obedience of a Christian Man"10/2: Christopher Marlowe, *Dr. Faustus*10/4: **Keyword #1 entry due (on Blackboard)**

Week Seven:

10/7: Christopher Marlowe, *Dr. Faustus*

10/9: Sonnets: Shakespeare, esp. 12, 18, 19, 20, 60, 73, 116, 129, 130, 147

10/11: Keyword #2 etymology research

Last day to drop a course without a mark of "W" on the transcript

Last day to change a Pass/No Pass course to letter grade

Week Eight:

10/14: William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*

10/16: Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*

10/18: Fall recess

Week Nine:

10/21: Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*

10/23: **Midterm Exam**

10/25: Keyword #2 usage research

Week Ten:

10/28: Ben Jonson, *Volpone*

10/30: Jonson, *Volpone*

11/1: **Keyword #2 entry due (on Blackboard)**

Week Eleven:

11/4: Francis Bacon, selections from the *Essays*

11/6: Metaphysical verse: Songs and sonnets: Donne, esp. "The Flea," "The Sun Rising," "The Canonization," "A Valediction: forbidding mourning"

11/8: Keyword/key image #3 etymology research

Week Twelve:

11/11: Donne, Holy Sonnets #7, 10, 14 and "Good Friday, Riding Westward"

11/13: George Herbert, "The Altar," "Affliction (1)," "Jordan (1)," "Easter Wings," "The Collar," "Church Monuments"

Second paper due

11/15: Keyword/key image #3 usage research

Last day to drop a class with a mark of "W"

Week Thirteen:

11/18: Cavalier poetry: Jonson, "Inviting a friend to supper," Herrick, "The Hock-cart," "Delight in Disorder," "Farewell to sack," "To the Virgins, to make much of time," "Corrina's going a-maying"

11/20: Marvell, "To his coy mistress," "The Garden"

11/22: **Keyword/key image #3 entry due (on Blackboard)**

Week Fourteen

11/25: Creative day for us to design

11/27: Reading and response day

11/29: Thanksgiving Break

Week Fifteen:

12/2: Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko*

12/4: Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko*

12/6: *Oroonoko* and class party

University Policies

Academic Accommodations

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30am-5:00pm, Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Support Systems:

Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: sarc.usc.edu

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. equity.usc.edu

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. dsp.usc.edu

USC Support and Advocacy (USCSA) – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. diversity.usc.edu

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.

Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu

Statement on Student Behavior

Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action. These strictures may extend to behaviors outside the classroom that are related to the course.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the Department of Public Safety <http://capsnet.usc.edu/departments/departments-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.