

English 1501: Survey of
British Literature II
MWTh 1:35-2:40
Snell Library 031

Professor Rachel Trousdale
Office: Holmes 417
Office hours: MW 3-4, Th 12-1

British Literature II: Syllabus

Course Description and Learning Goals:

This class is an introduction to the major movements, controversies, and innovations of British literature from the end of the eighteenth century through the middle of the twentieth century: the Romantic period (the 1780s to the 1830s), the Victorian period (the 1830s to 1901), and the Modernist period (roughly the first half of the twentieth century). As we shall see, the distinctions between these eras may be subject to debate, and we will be able to detect common themes as well as significant differences among the texts that we read. Topics will include gender and sexuality; literary lineages and literary rebellion; and the vexed relationship between literature and moral education.

Over the course of the semester, you will

- gain familiarity with the major features of three periods in English literary history (Romantic, Victorian, and Modern) and with some representative work
- acquire and use basic vocabulary for discussion of formal elements of poetry
- learn to construct a literary essay, from the formulation of a topic question through the production of a polished argument
- become a more thoughtful and sophisticated reader of literature, attentive to content, structure, and context

Required Texts (available at the Bookstore)

The Norton Anthology of English Literature, Volumes D, E, and F
Charles Dickens, *Hard Times*
Virginia Woolf, *Orlando*

Wednesday, September 4: Introduction

Th 5: Norton Introduction to the Romantic Period, 3-27; Timeline, 28-30

William Blake "Headnote," 112-114 (up to "Blake's Mythmaking")

William Blake, "There Is No Natural Religion," a and b 116-117

M 9: Blake, *Songs of Innocence*: "The Little Black Boy" (120); "The Chimney Sweeper" (121); "The Divine Image" (122)

W 11: Blake, *Songs of Experience*: "The Chimney Sweeper" (128); "The Tyger" (129); "The Garden of Love" (131); "London" (132-3); "A Divine Image" (135)

Th 12: Burke, from *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (187-194); Wollstonecraft, from *A Vindication of the Rights of Men* (194-199)

M 16: William Wordsworth, from Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads* (292-304); “Goody Blake and Harry Gill” (272-275); “We Are Seven” (278-9)
W 18: Wordsworth, “Strange fits of passion have I known” (305); “She dwelt among the untrodden ways” (305-6); “Three years she grew” (306-307); “Ode: Intimations of Immortality” (335-341)
Th 19: Samuel Taylor Coleridge, “Kubla Khan” (459-462); “Frost at Midnight” (477-479). **Deadline for poem recitation.**

M 23: Percy Bysshe Shelley, from *A Defence of Poetry* (856-869); “Ozymandias” (776); “To a Skylark” (834-836)
W 25: John Keats, “On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer” (904); “Ode on a Grecian Urn” (930)
Th 26: Elizabeth Gaskell, “The Old Nurse’s Story” (1260-1274)
F 27: **Paper 1 due**

M 30: Carlyle, from *Past and Present* (1067-1076)
W October 2: Elizabeth Barrett Browning, “The Cry of the Children” (1124-1128); “The Education of Aurora Leigh” (1138-1143)
Th 3: Dickens, *Hard Times* Book I, Chapters I-IX

M 7: *Hard Times* Book I Chapter X-Book II Chapter V
W 9: *Hard Times*, Book II Chapter VI-Book III Chapter III
Th 10: *Hard Times* through the end

M 14: Columbus Day—no classes
W 16: Robert Browning, “Porphyria’s Lover” (1278-1279); “Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister” (1280-1282); “The Lost Leader” (1283-1284); “Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came” (1294-1300)
Th 17: Christina Rossetti, “Goblin Market” (1496-1508)

M 21: Tennyson, “The Lady of Shalott” (1161-1166); “Ulysses” (1170-1172); “Tithonus” (1172-1174)
W 23: Gerard Manley Hopkins, “God’s Grandeur” (1548); “The Windhover” (1550); “Pied Beauty” (1551); “Spring and Fall” (1553-1554); “Carrion Comfort” (1554)
Th 24: Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Act 1
F 25: **Paper 2 due**

M 28: *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Act 2
W 30: *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Act 3
Th 31: Rudyard Kipling, *The Man Who Would Be King* (1853-1877)

M November 4: William Butler Yeats, “Leda and the Swan” (2102); “Among School Children” (2103-2105); “Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop” (2108); “Lapis Lazuli” (2109-2110)
W 6: James Joyce, “The Dead” (2282-2311)
Th 7: “The Dead”

M 11: Veterans Day—no classes

W 13: Virginia Woolf, *Orlando*

Th 14: *Orlando*

M 18: *Orlando*

W 20: *Orlando*

Th 21: *Orlando*

M 25: Walcott, “A Far Cry from Africa” (2801-2); from “The Schooner *Flight*” (2802-4)

W 27: Thanksgiving Recess

Th 28: Thanksgiving Recess

M December 2: Rushdie, “The Prophet’s Hair”

W 4: Summary discussion; **paper 3 due**

This syllabus is subject to change.

Course requirements:

Students will write three 5-page essays and memorize a poem.

Reading questions:

Bring a question about the reading with you to every class. These questions will be the basis for class discussions and paper topics.

Notes on the reading assignments:

Please bring copies of all reading assignments with you to class in a form on which you can make annotations. (For now, hard copy is still the easiest technology on which to scribble notes).

When reading seriously, it’s a good idea to have a dictionary handy. It can also be useful to have a good reference guide to Greek and Roman mythology. Bullfinch’s *Mythology*, available at <http://www.bartleby.com/>, is one useful resource.

If you get stuck on a difficult text, especially a poem, try reading it out loud. You’ll find it easier to catch both the text’s meaning and its beauty.

Attendance policy:

This class centers around discussion. If you don’t participate in discussions, whether by contributing or listening to your peers, you haven’t really taken the class. You will be allowed three absences over the course of the semester, but after that, your final grade will be penalized by one third of a letter grade for each absence. Since there can be no way to make up discussions, this policy applies even in cases where students have medical or other legitimate excuses. Excessive lateness will also result in a reduced grade. Participation grades do not reflect absences; rather, they reflect your performance once you’ve shown up.

Policy on Cell Phones, Laptops, Tablets, etc.

If you wish to take notes on your laptop or tablet, you are welcome to do so, but only if you first shut off the wi-fi. Texting / writing e-mail / checking Facebook / browsing the web etc. is strictly prohibited during class. Your cell phone should be invisible and silent for the whole 65 minutes.

Late paper policy:

You may have a three-day extension (i.e., from Friday to Monday) on any one assignment, no questions asked. Beyond that, all late papers will incur a penalty of one third of a grade per calendar day past deadline. Failure to hand in any one of the papers will result in failure of the class.

Academic honesty:

All students are expected to abide by Northeastern University's "Academic Honesty and Integrity Policy" (<http://www.northeastern.edu/osccr/academichonesty.html>). Violations will be taken very seriously. Plagiarism on a paper will result in automatic failure of the course. If you are unsure how to properly cite the work of others, please ask me for help.

Many students who choose to plagiarize seem to do so because they are afraid to turn in papers late; please remember that a late penalty is by far the lesser of two evils in this situation. If you're in over your head, contact me and we'll figure something out.

Grading:

Participation: 10%

Reading questions: 5%

Memorization: 5%

Paper 1: 25%

Paper 2: 25%

Paper 3: 30%

Office hours and how to reach me:

I will hold walk-in office hours on Monday and Wednesday from 3-4 and on Thursday from 12-1, and will be glad to schedule extra appointments. Come to discuss paper topics, to ask questions about the class, to get help with a confusing text, etc. To make an appointment, or for any other contact, it's best to e-mail me at [r.trousdale\[at\]neu.edu](mailto:r.trousdale@neu.edu).