

English 304: Tudor and Early Elizabethan Literature

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Office Hours: Mon 2:15-4:00; Tues 11:15-1:00; Thurs 9:45-12:15



This course focuses on a border area, one which falls between two more distinct periods in literary history: the Middle Ages (or medieval period) and the English Renaissance (or early modern period). There has long been a lively debate concerning when the Middle Ages ended and modernity began, but traditional literary criticism has sometimes obscured this by focusing on the “core years” of each distinct period: Chaucer and the Ricardian poets in the late 14th century, and Shakespeare and his contemporaries in the late 16th century. The intervening years have been dismissed as a dull age, but if the Middle Ages evolved into the Renaissance, this cannot quite be true: something must have been happening in between Chaucer and Shakespeare (or, better, Marlowe). What were these things: artistic, historical, technological? Did anything of medieval culture survive? This course will read broadly in the years between 1485, the advent of the so-called Tudor Dynasty, and the mid-point of Elizabeth’s reign (partly through Shakespeare’s fictional/dramatic account of 1485, *Richard III*). Texts will include poetry and drama, the religious, the popular, and the political.

Textbooks (Required)

Many of you will be tempted to buy books for your Kindle, etc. All I can say is that success in most courses, including and especially Literature courses (Philosophy, too), depends on engaging with your assigned texts in a more than superficial way. Write notes in them to remind you of passages worth asking about, or passages discussed in class; have the book with you so that you can refer to it quickly; studying for exams in English means reading the texts and often re-reading them. Essays will require page numbers to both quotations and paraphrases in MLA style, regardless of whether Kindle includes these. Your technology isn't taking your course. You are.

Thomas Malory, *LE MORTE D'ARTHUR* (V1) (ED COWEN) (Penguin) ISBN: 9780140430431

John Gassner (ed.) *MEDIEVAL & TUDOR DRAMA* (Applause) ISBN: 9780936839844

Marie H. Loughlin et al. (eds.) *BROADVIEW ANTHOLOGY OF SIXTEENTH-CENTURY PROSE AND VERSE* (Broadview)
ISBN: 9781551111629

William Shakespeare, *KING RICHARD III*, 2ND Edition(Arden) ISBN: 9781903436899

Schedule

Readings assigned for a given day should be completed for that day. BV = Broadview.

Sept 5: Introduction and questions

Sept 10: 1485

Sept 12: Holinshed (BV 516-18); Malory, "Arthur's Early Wars"

Sept 17: Malory, "The Tale of Lancelot du Lac"

Sept 19: Malory, "The Book of Gareth"

Sept 24: *Everyman* (Gassner)

Sept 26: Heywood, *The Play Called the Four PP* (Gassner)

Oct 1: Skelton, *Tuning of Elynour Rummyng* (BV 1-10)

Oct 3: **Midterm (in-class)**

Oct 8: Thanksgiving, no classes

Oct 10: "A Christmas Mumming: A Play of St George" (Gassner); Spenser, *Faerie Queene* 1.1-3

Oct 15: Spenser, *Faerie Queene* 1.4-6

Oct 17: Spenser, *Faerie Queene* 1.7-9

Oct 22: Spenser, *Faerie Queene* 1.10-12

Oct 24: Wyatt (BV 203-5) and Tallis (audio)

Oct 29: Political Rhetoric: Harrison, "Of Universities" (BV 528-29); Elizabeth (402-5). **Short Response Paper Due**

Oct 31: The Monstrous Children Broadside (BV 556-71) and Witchcraft documents (BV 571-77)

Nov 5: Exploration: Dee, *Perfect Art of Navigation* (BV 406-12); Raleigh, "Discovery of Guiana" (BV 1126-37); Hakluyt (BV 645-52)

Nov 7: Political Poems: Parr (BV 163), Mary of Scots (BV 308), Elizabeth (BV 400-2).

Nov 12: Norton and Sackville, *Gorboduc* 1-3 (Gassner)

Nov 14: Norton and Sackville, *Gorboduc* 4-5 (Gassner)

Nov 19: Shakespeare, *Richard III* 1-3

Nov 21: Shakespeare, *Richard III* 4

Nov 26: Shakespeare, *Richard III* 5

Nov 28: Last class. **Research Paper Due**

EVALUATION

Midterm (Oct. 3): 10%

Short Response Paper (Oct. 29): 20%

Research Paper (c. 2000 words, Nov. 28): 40%

Final Exam (date tba): 20%

Participation/Attendance: 10% (attending every class but never speaking is worth around 6/10).

RESEARCH AND WRITING

A professional attitude is required for all written assignments: essays will include a title page and will draw upon research. Books, journal articles, chapters in edited collections, and articles from on-line literary and historical journals may be used; for the major essay, **no less than five such sources should appear in your bibliography, and the essay should reflect the sources you cite.** Wikipedia, Cole Notes, Sparks Notes, etc. are **not** acceptable research sources. MLA style is required both within the essay and in the Works Cited list; failure to do use MLA in a consistent manner will result in lost points.

The rules concerning sources are not arbitrary, although the number itself might be: the rule exists because no decent research question, no thesis, can be adequately explored or argued without engaging with previous ideas and arguments. “No less” indicates that this is a minimum number of sources, which approximately translates to a B-C range grade (depending on the validity of the sources and the depth and intelligence with which they are engaged). While it is admittedly strange given that students write for an audience of one (the person grading the essay), it is best practice to write as though you were participating in the broader conversation about the text, the traditions it comes from, and the world in which it exists.

In general, NO extensions on written work will be granted without a written note from Health Services, a University Counselor, or the Dean’s Office. However, in practice things do happen: life is really one thing after another. Take all negotiations with me concerning exceptions seriously, and I will take you seriously.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism and cheating are taken seriously, and can damage your academic career. Please review Section 3.9 of the *St. Francis Xavier University Academic Calendar*, and consult me if you need clarification. Plagiarism does not need to be deliberate to be damaging; it is your responsibility to ensure that you have not broken the rules, just as it is my responsibility to watch for plagiarism. All such incidents will be reported as required by the University.