

GENG 235: British Lit to 1798

Times & Location:

MWF 10:10-11:00 Section 2 Keezell G8

MWF 11:15-12:05 Section 3 Burruss 0036

Instructor: Julie Sorge Way

Contact: geng235@gmail.com

Office: Keezell 412

Office hours: MWF 12:15-1:20, 4:30-5:00 and by appt

Course Website:

<http://sites.google.com/site/sorgewayJMU/Home/english235>

To save space, university standard policies have been omitted, leaving only policies specific to the class. This syllabus is our agreement. Take time to read it carefully and ask any questions you may have.



Required

1. *Norton Anthology of English Literature*, Vol. ABC splits. 8th Ed. ISBN: 978-0393928334
2. An up-to-date guide to MLA Style guide of your choice. The best one: *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers 7th Edition*, ISBN: 978-1603290241 English majors should own this.
3. One 3-brad folder (not binder) for daily SRPs
4. 3x5 cards for quizzes
5. Attendance and discussion every class day

Course Goals

As part of Cluster Two, our goals are to help you learn to...

1. Enjoy English literature of this period.
2. Think and write critically about literary and cultural ideas.
3. Generate increasingly nuanced questions (interpretations, ideas) about literature and explain why those questions matter.
4. Use appropriate vocabulary and tactics to analyze specific literary expressions of culture and the relationship between the reader, the author, and text.
5. Define ways that texts serve as arguments and identify rhetorical and formal elements that inform these arguments.
6. Recognize appropriate contexts (such as genres, political perspectives, textual juxtapositions) and understand that readers may interpret literature from a variety of perspectives.
7. Articulate a variety of examples of the ways in which literature gives us access to the human experience that reveals what differentiates it from, and connects it to, the other disciplines that make up the arc of human learning.

Course Requirements

This is a class, a community of learners. Membership has its privileges, and also comes with certain responsibilities, which can be summarized thus: in your own unique way, help us make this class work. At the end of the semester, I will reward those who have consistently contributed to the class, and I will penalize those who have in any way hindered the class. Disrespectful behavior toward anyone in this class is, of course, prohibited.

Class Participation & Attendance

This is a discussion course. Our class work is designed to help you understand the reading and improve your thinking and writing. You should be present for every class. With new topics and assignments each day, absences are likely to create substantial gaps in your understanding and the continuity of your work. **Four absences will lower your final course grade by one letter (10 pts), and any subsequent absence will lower your course grade by one additional letter for each absence.** Thus it is mathematically impossible to pass this class if you accrue more than eight absences. Since this is a large amount of class time, there are **no excused absences**. The responsibility for both getting make-up work and completing it ahead of time is yours. Coming to class late or leaving early, for any reason, is considered a partial (0.34) absence. Missing more than 20 minutes of a class counts as a full absence. I generally take attendance at the very beginning of class; please note that **if you have come in late, it is your responsibility to make sure at the end of class that you were marked late rather than absent for the day.** This cannot be done after class is over for the day. Do not wear headphones in class. Do not read the newspaper in class. Do not explore the internet while in class. Do not do homework in class. Do not use your cell phone for any purpose during class. Do not allow your cell phone to ring or vibrate in class. Do not leave class to take or make a call. If you do any of these things, it will count as a partial absence. Three partial absences count as one full absence. If you have a need for special absences (e.g. mandated religious holidays, sports teams or debate), inform me within the first week of class. With genuinely extenuating circumstances, come see me beforehand or right away and we'll talk. **These rules apply to every member of this class.** This includes you. If you don't feel you will be able to attend consistently and on time, you should drop this class.

Reading Assignments

Read each assignment carefully before coming to class. In most cases, you will need to read the texts **more than once** in order to understand them for class discussion. **Always read with a pen in your hand!** Underline phrases, passages, and repetitions that stand out to you, and make notes in the margins. **Always bring your book to class** so that you can mark passages we discuss and follow along when someone points out a passage. Review your notes and underlining shortly before class so you will be prepared for thoughtful discussion. Informed discussion is paramount among our activities here; **it is NOT okay to come to class unprepared.** Here are ways to show your preparedness that will factor into your grade:

SRPs

Every class day, you will bring a typed, printed, one-page SRP with you to class in response to the day's assignment. This will contain:

- Synopsis: a very short summary of the plot of today's section. 2 sentence maximum.
- Remarks: Discuss at least two points in the reading that stood out to you, that you would be willing to bring up in class discussion. Use a short quote from the text as a jumping-off point, and cite it by page number (or line number if from a poem). Your "R" section can also involve questions for further discussion, or potential paper ideas that came to mind while reading.
- Parallels: Draw parallels between today's reading and some aspect of a previous day's. For the first week of class, you may draw parallels between today's reading and anything – another book, a movie, etc. After the first week, you should draw a parallel between today's reading and a previous reading for this class.

A successful SRP can be quite brief; a few thoughtful sentences with bulleted points for each category (S,R,P) can receive full credit. Keep your completed SRPs in a thin three-prong folder (NOT BINDER), and **bring it with you to every class.** They will be collected and graded at **random** points during the

semester. **Pickup dates cannot be made up unless you have emailed me that day's SRP before class time. (See website for more details.)** These will make up a large part of your Participation grade for the course. An informative page on SRPs, including an example of one that would receive full credit, is on our course website: **please read it before our next class** and come to me with any questions.

In-Class Writing/Shorter Writing Assignments

This may include journal entries, responses to reading assignments, responses to discussion, peer group responses, typed submissions, debates, in-class preparation for upcoming papers, or other activities. All assignments will contribute to your involvement in the class and development as a reader and writer. A focus of these assignments will be the idea that learning is process-based; you can write to learn. They will be part of your final course grade.

Quizzes

Simple content quizzes will sometimes be given at the top of the hour. Questions will not be repeated for latecomers. You will need a small supply of blank 3x5 cards on hand for quizzes.

In-Class Contribution

Discussion is important to making this class work. Since I will call on you in class, you should always have a few points prepared to contribute to class discussion (The "R" section of your SRPs can be helpful with this). With your reading thoughtfully done, you can have something to say. I am not out to "get" anyone with "trick" questions. Your in-class contributions to class will factor into your final course grade.

Papers

Two critical papers will be required. Expect each to total around 2,000 words (6-8 pages). These will be due in both paper and electronic formats, and may be accompanied by course work leading up to the paper and a written reflection. Reflections indicate how you, the writer, feel about the paper in its current form, and indicate how you would like the reader to focus comments. These will factor into the grade for each paper. My response to written papers is a one-page feedback sheet. I do not write all over your paper, but instead write back to it. Your reflection will help me give you the most useful possible feedback. Feel free to see me for clarification of what I mean by this. You may **always** consult me about your papers by email or in person. Please make use of my office hours and/or email me anytime to talk about your ideas. Earlier is, of course, better.

Exams & Grading

One midterm essay exam will be given, taking one regular class period. One longer final essay exam will be given during the specified final exam period. Both exams involve some short answer, some multiple choice, and at least two essays.

GRADING:	Participation	25% of final course grade
	(this includes SRPs, quizzes, in-class contribution, etc.)	
	Paper One	15% of final course grade
	Midterm Exam	20% of final course grade
	Paper Two	20% of final course grade
	Final Exam	20% of final course grade

GRADING SCALE:

A	93-100
A-	90-92.99
B+	87-89.99
B	83-86.99
B-	80-82.99
C+	77-79.99
C	73-76.99
C-	70-72.99
D	60-69.99
F	0-59.99

A Note on Late Work: Late work will not be graded unless we have made arrangements in advance. Remember that computers are not always reliable. Laptops crash and printers malfunction. Please note that computer failure is not a valid excuse for turning in late work. Be sure to print your papers with plenty of time to spare before class. **Every major assignment must be completed in order for you to pass this class.**

Conferencing with me

Successful writers generally collaborate with others to generate ideas, outline papers, proofread, etc. Since this is a literature survey, and not a writing class, we do not have class time allotted for in-class workshopping of your papers. However, I am **always** willing to meet individually to discuss your writing. I encourage you to meet with me during my office hours or at other times by appointment with any issue or assignment related to the course. **Don't hesitate to email me with ideas for potential paper topics, or just to kick around ideas for the class.** In fact, this often helps. I am here to help you succeed. As you probably know, most colleges and universities have a writing center, a place for students to talk about their writing with trained peer consultants. **For information on the many free resources available to you in the University Writing Center, see <http://www.jmu.edu/uwc/>**

Plagiarism & The Honor Code

Cheating in any form will not be tolerated. This includes falsifying word counts on papers. The JMU Honor Code states that, "students shall observe complete honesty in all academic matters." Plagiarism is an honor offense under section 15: "Committing the act of plagiarism - the copying, writing or presenting as one's own the information, ideas or phrasing of another person without proper acknowledgment of the true source." Penalties for an honor offense include a failing grade in the course, suspension or expulsion from the University.

A digital plagiarism detection program may be used to check papers submitted in this course. You will always be asked to submit your papers in digital format (email attachment, etc.) so that your paper can be checked against the web pages and existing papers. Although you may never have engaged in intentional plagiarism, many students do incorporate sources without citations; this program can alert me to your academic needs.

Disability Statement

Any student in this course who has a disability that prevents the fullest expression of his or her abilities should contact me as soon as possible so that we can discuss class requirements and recommendations necessary to ensure full participation.

Important Dates:

Paper One	Fri Sept 23
Midterm Exam	Fri Oct 21
Paper Two	Fri Nov 18
Final Exam	10:10-11:00 class (Section 2) exam time: Monday, December 12, 8:00am-10:00am
	11:15-12:05 class (Section 3) exam time: Friday, December 16, 10:30am-12:30pm
SRPs & Participation	Every class day

For everything else:

Please bookmark our course website below and consult it frequently for each unit's individual reading schedule, supplementary links for help with each day's readings, useful documents, and any changes that may transpire.

<http://sites.google.com/site/sorgewayJMU/Home/english235>

GENG 235: Unit I Reading Calendar

UNIT ONE: The Middle Ages

The *NAEL* provides brief biographical introductions to each author before his or her first work in the textbook, which you should include (and annotate) along with your daily readings.

Week 1	MON 8/29: Introduction, Syllabus, Reading & Writing Strategies
	WED 8/31: "The Middle Ages" 1-23, "The Story of Caedmon" & <i>The Dream of the Rood</i> 24-29 (SRP is based on Caedmon & Rood only, not intro)
	FRI 9/2: <i>Beowulf</i> 29-33, 36-69
Week 2	MON 9/5: No class meeting
	WED 9/7: Chaucer - begin <i>The General Prologue</i> 213-228 (stop at line 412)
	FRI 9/9: Chaucer - finish <i>The General Prologue</i> 228-238
Week 3	MON 9/12: Chaucer – <i>The Miller's Prologue</i> & <i>The Miller's Tale</i> 239-255
	WED 9/14: Julian of Norwich – from <i>A Book of Showings</i> 371-382
	FRI 9/16: Margery Kempe – from <i>The Book of Margery Kempe</i> 383-397
Week 4	MON 9/19: "Mystery Plays" & <i>The Wakefield Second Shepherds' Play</i> 406-435
	WED 9/21: Malory - <i>Morte Darthur</i> 438-456
	FRI 9/23: Middle English Lyrics 435-437 PAPER ONE DUE

On days with more than three texts assigned, you may choose just 3 to focus on for your SRP.

This information is also available on the course webpage:

<http://sites.google.com/site/sorgewayJMU/Home/english235>

GENG 235: Unit II Reading Assignments:

UNIT TWO: *The Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries*

The NAEL provides brief biographical introductions to each author before their first work in the textbook, which you should include (and annotate) along with your daily readings. On days with more than three texts assigned, you may choose just 3 to focus on for your SRP.

Week 5	MON 9/26 : 16 th C. Introduction (485-513), Elizabeth I (699) “Speech to the Troops....” SRP on Elizabeth only.
	WED 9/28 : More – from <i>Utopia</i> (545-556)
	FRI 9/30 : Spenser – from <i>Faerie Queene</i> III:6 (867-879)
Week 6	MON 10/3 : Marlowe – poem on 1022 & Raleigh poem on 917 – also Exploration: (935-943)
	WED 10/5 : Shakespeare – Bio & Sonnet Intro (1058-1061) and Sonnets 18, 29, 116, 130, & 135
	FRI 10/7 : Shakespeare – <i>Twelfth Night, or What You Will</i> , Introduction & Acts I and II (1077-1108)
Week 7	MON 10/10 : Class does not meet
	WED 10/12 : Shakespeare – <i>Twelfth Night</i> III & IV (1108-1129)
	FRI 10/14 : Shakespeare – <i>Twelfth Night</i> V (1129-1139) (finish the play) – Midterm take-home question will be distributed via course webpage
Week 8	MON 10/17 : 17 th c. Introduction (1235-1259), Donne – 1263 “The Flea”, 1295 “7”, 1296 “10”, 1297 “14”
	WED 10/19 : Jonson - 1444 (Both), Herrick – 1654, 1656 “Dreams”, 1659, 1664 “Upon Julia’s Clothes”
	FRI 10/21 : MIDTERM EXAM in class
Week 9	MON 10/24 : Marvell - 1699, 1703, 1704
	WED 10/26 : Milton – Bio and <i>Paradise Lost</i> Intro (1785-1789 and 1830-1831) and from Book 9 p.1976 (line 99) to p.1995 (line 1033)
	FRI 10/28 : Milton – sonnet “When I Consider How My Light Is Spent” (1828) and essay <i>Areopagitica</i> 1816-1825

This information is also available on the course webpage:

<http://sites.google.com/site/sorgewayJMU/Home/english235>

GENG 235: Unit III Reading Assignments:

UNIT THREE: *The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century*

The NAEL provides brief biographical introductions to each author before their first work in the textbook, which you should include (and annotate) along with your daily readings.

Week 10	MON 10/31: Introduction (2057-2082) No SRP is due.
	WED 11/2: Dryden – 2085 “Annus Mirabilis”, 2120 “Epigram...”, 2131-2132 “The Art of Satire”
	FRI 11/4: Bunyan – from <i>The Pilgrim’s Progress</i> 2143-2151
Week 11	MON 11/7: Astell – from <i>Some Reflections Upon Marriage</i> 2285-2288
	WED 11/9: Defoe – from <i>Roxana</i> 2289-2294
	FRI 11/11: Pope – “Essay on Criticism” 2497-2513
Week 14	MON 11/14: Swift – “A Modest Proposal” 2462-2468
	WED 11/16: Swift – from <i>Gulliver’s Travels</i> (2418-2435 and 2443-2449)
	FRI 11/18: Thomson – “Ode: Rule, Britannia” 2840-41 – No SRP is due. PAPER TWO OPTIONALLY DUE
	11/19 – 11/27: Thanksgiving Break, no class, no reading, no SRPs due
Week 15	MON 11/28: PAPER TWO DUE (extended date) if you turn it in 11/18, you have this day off. No SRP is due.
	WED 11/30: Johnson – “Rambler No. 4” 2743-2746 and excerpt from <i>Dictionary</i> 2750-2755
	FRI 12/2: Burney – from <i>The Journal and Letters of Frances Burney</i> 2811-2827
Week 16	MON 12/5: Gray – “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard” 2867-2870
	WED 12/7: Popular Ballads – Intro on 2898, and all ballads through p.2904
	FRI 12/9: Last things
	FINAL EXAM – Times and dates are on the syllabus and course webpage

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READING LITERATURE WELL: A FEW “TRICKS”

Adapted from *How to Read Literature Like a Professor: A Lively and Entertaining Guide to Reading Between the Lines* by Thomas C. Foster (ISBN 006000942X)

The main difference in the way that “professorial” readers read is that they look for memory, symbol, and pattern. Does this remind you of some bigger, older story? Are there small things here that seem to stand for something bigger? Are there repetitions here that seem like they might be important?

A few things to think about, to help us notice those “bigger stories” and what might be beneath the text’s surface meaning (the plot, characters, and setting that are immediately obvious):

1: Journeys: Every Trip is a Quest

Watch for modern day “knights” on a dangerous road of some sort, looking for a Holy Grail of some sort, fighting some sort of “dragon,” with a nemesis or two along the way. The real reason for this quest is almost always self-knowledge. See if you can list “the quester,” the place to go, the stated reason for going, challenges and trials along the way, and then the real reason for going.

2: Eating and Drinking: Acts of Communion

Whenever people eat or drink together, it’s communion. Not just in a Christian or “holy” sense, but in that the sharing of food and drink implies togetherness. If something goes wrong with that (e. g. a Mafia don inviting enemies to lunch and having them poisoned) it shows bigger things are wrong.

3: Biblical and Mythical Images

Many plots, characters, even specific lines draw parallels back to “famous” texts. Shakespeare and the Bible are always big ones. Watch for tragic heroes, gardens, (reenactments of Eden?), serpents, plagues, floods, loaves, fishes, “forty days” of anything, betrayal, denial, *losses of innocence*, and Christ figures (watch especially for those who are 33, celibate, wounded, self-sacrificing, or being tried in some sort of wilderness). According to Foster, there’s no such thing as a wholly original work of literature. Listen close for echoes of myths and fairy or folk-tales you already know. They’re in there.

4: Weather

Rain (cleansing? restorative?), snow, fog, floods, Biblical and mythological imagery, or just as a plot device. Seasonal weather changes can be symbolic for what’s going on inside characters’ heads. When the weather REALLY cooperates in a coincidental way with what’s happening in the plot, that’s called a *pathetic fallacy*.

5: Politics

In older literature, this can be more remote from the modern reader, but many of the conflicts had double meanings due to the politics of their times. Research the historical moment the work was written and where the author stood politically.

6: Sex

According to Foster, in literature, “Everything is about sex... except sex.” Watch for obvious phallic or yonic symbols (obelisks? caves?), for scenes of intimacy and/or communion (or botched attempts at either). It’s okay, now and then, to apply a little Freud, just for kicks. Sexual scenes, on the other hand, often can symbolize characters’ separate issues.

7: Water

If a character goes through water of some sort, it’s often a symbolic “baptism” of some sort, leaving one type of life and beginning another. Sometimes you don’t notice the importance of it until later.

8: Geography

Mountains? Beaches? Sometimes the characters surroundings tell us a great deal about them or their predicaments. Rivers are great because they’re always moving, often symbolic of life itself. Oceans have tides and rhythms. Things or people being sent “south” often implies a turn to the wild side or the subconscious.

9: Physical “deformities”

Often a character will have some sort of physical abnormality that “marks” them as a hero or villain and invokes a grand tradition going back to Cain, Quasimodo, or Richard III. Look for scars (Harry Potter?), blindness, heart troubles, illness, paralysis. They almost always mean something more.

10: Irony trumps everything:

Any single item on this list could be used for the opposite effect if a writer wants us to EXPECT the usual associations so that they can play with us a bit and surprise us. For example, roads mean travel, a pattern familiar to us in everything from the *Canterbury Tales* to Kerouac to the movie “*Thelma and Louise*.” But in his play *Waiting for Godot*, Samuel Beckett puts two tramps by the side of a road that they never take anywhere. He uses our subconscious expectations that “roads mean travel” to add more meaning and impact to his message. Careful with this one – you have to understand the item it’s ironically reacting to (1-9), first.

SAMPLE "SRP" ASSIGNMENT

Student Name
Mansfield SRP
Date of class discussion

"The Garden Party"

SUMMARY:

The free thinking main character, Laura, wants to cancel her family's party after she is informed of the death of a working-class man who lived down the hill. Mansfield describes Laura's conflicting ideas of listening to her mother, and her desire to resist class relations and society.

REMARKS:

- It was interesting to read the parallels between Laura and Katherine Mansfield herself. Laura as well as Mansfield came from very well-to-do families and were in the upper class in New Zealand. This gives an honest insight from the view of Mansfield which makes the whole story more credible and believable.
- "Oh, how extraordinarily nice workmen were, she thought. Why couldn't she have workmen for her friends rather than the silly boys she danced with and who came to Sunday night supper? She would get on much better with men like these" (Mansfield 2348) - This shows that Laura is aware of the social classes, but refuses to act upon them if she had her own free will without constraints of her mother. She admires the working class, instead of looking down upon them as her family and the majority of her upper class society would.
- "You won't bring a drunken workman back to life by being sentimental" (Mansfield 2352) - This is what Jose, Laura's sister said about her requesting to cancel the afternoon party. Her mother shared her sisters view on the matter and told her to stop asking for sympathy and raining on the party. She later brings a basket full of sandwiches to the house where he lived and there was not a mourning, but a joyous occasion. And this is where Laura has her epiphany, a modernistic trait.
- It was also an interesting mundane fact that Laura and her family's house was at the top of the hill, and the Scott's at the bottom. This is showing distinct class separation as Laura and her family are very wealthy and in the upper class, and the Scotts are on a lower working class status.

PARALLELS:

Both in this story as well as T. S. Eliot's poem "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," the authors use the characters' stream of consciousness to describe the situation and further depict social status and rankings and through the view of one person.