

BRITISH LITERATURE AFTER 1789

ENGL 2240 – 4
Haley Center 2312
Mon., Wed., Fri. 11:00–11:50 am
Spring 2022

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“Dream for one mad moment that the grass is green. Unlearn that sinister learning that you think so clear; deny that deadly knowledge that you think you know.”

—G. K. Chesterton



Why read 230 years of British writing in sixteen weeks? Curiously, in Great Britain, such survey courses are infrequently offered. Why do *Americans* read 230 years of British writing? To make this journey more coherent, we will structure the course around a few swings of the pendulum of intellectual history, in a thesis/antithesis pattern—perhaps with no synthesis. Enlightenment is followed by a form of counter-enlightenment; Victorians are followed by counter-Victorians.

Further, we will expand our sense of “literature” beyond the trinity of fiction, poetry, and drama to include philosophy, television, and rock music. Students undertaking this course will consider intellectual and aesthetic movements of the past two centuries through works by Wordsworth and Coleridge, Austen and Woolf, the Beatles and Monty Python.

As much as possible, this course will be run as a seminar: students will read each assignment carefully and prepare to discuss in class.

REQUIRED READING:

- Appelbaum, Stanley, ed. *English Romantic Poetry: An Anthology*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1996. 978-0486292823
- Austen, Jane. *Sense and Sensibility*. 1811. New York: Bantam, 2006. 978-0553213348
- Dickens, Charles. *Oliver Twist; or, The Parish Boy's Progress*. 1837–1839. London: Penguin Books, 2003. 978-0141439747
- Haggard, H. Rider. *King Solomon's Mines*. 1885. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. 978-0198722953
- Joyce, James. *Dubliners*. 1914. London: Penguin Books, 1993. 978-0140186475

Please use recommended editions so that we are all on the same page (literally). New and/or used copies can be purchased at the Auburn University Bookstore. All other readings will be made available online.

ASSESSMENT:

- I. Attendance: 10 points
- II. Participation and group work: 10 points
- III. Unannounced quizzes: 10 points
- IV. Annotations: 10 points
- V. Digital project: 10 points
- VI. Essay: 10 points
- VII. Group presentation: 10 points
- VIII. Final examination: 30 points

TOTAL = 100 points

EXPECTATIONS:*Attendance*

Marshall Brickman once told a reporter that 80 percent of success is showing up. In this course, attendance will count for 10 percent of your final grade. Attendance, for our purposes, means showing up for all scheduled classes on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Each student is permitted up to five *unexcused* absences. It's five for free, no questions asked. However, if you miss six or more classes, then your attendance grade will be calculated as a percent (e.g. you attend 25 out of 35 classes = 71 percent or 7.1 points). An *excused* absence is one for which someone—not you—writes to the instructor to explain your absence on a particular day.

Preparation

One goal of this course is to get students to read and think critically. You should read each assignment in its entirety before the class session listed. Be an *active* reader: underline words, scribble in the margins, write down questions, and make note of passages that confused you. It is also helpful to write a quick summary after finishing a

reading assignment: spend two or three minutes noting key words and ideas.

Lectures

Formal lectures will be made available as pre-recorded videos. In a given week, we will have no more than thirty minutes of lectures. Some weeks we will have zero. In each case, watch the video in its entirety, with full attention. There are some advantages to a video lecture: you can watch it when and where you choose; you can hit pause; you can take a break; you can “rewind” to catch something you missed. The recorded lectures will be available for *one week only*, to encourage note-taking and to help you to stay current. At the end of the semester, the lectures will be available again when you prepare for the final.

Screenings

Occasionally, there will be a required screening. Whenever the syllabus says “SCREEN,” you are expected to watch that film or television show before the class date mentioned. All of these screenings will be available online. You will find access information on the website adamabraham.info.

Group Work

Everyone will be assigned to a group of five or so students. This will be your group for the *entire semester*. In each class, you will work with your group: discussing course material and solving problems. In order to perform well in this group, you have to read the weekly assignments and watch the required videos before the class session begins. You will help one another to learn the course material.

Group Presentations

Toward the end of the semester, you will work with your group to offer a presentation of no more than ten minutes in length. Each group will present on one author that we have studied. The topic and format will be developed by each group. For example, a given group may choose to employ PowerPoint. In any case, each individual member must contribute in some tangible way. This assignment will help you to develop your research, public speaking, and collaboration skills.

Assignments

Apart from the group presentations, you will be expected to work *individually* on three other assignments. These assignments ask you to interact with literary texts in different ways. One is a traditional essay; one is an annotation assignment, for which you will mark up a single page in a book with your underlines and comments. The other assignment, a digital project, will employ Twitter. Each student will be asked to impersonate a character in *Oliver Twist* and tweet as that character for one week. Details for all assignments will be provided when the dates draw closer.

Late Work

You are a busy person; I understand. If you want to submit a late assignment, send me an email one or two days before the deadline to request permission to submit late. *Do not tell me your reasons.* Simply ask for permission. I will reply by email and extend the deadline by one calendar week. If you do not seek permission or do so too late, the assignment will be marked down by one point. Please note that any assignments submitted after the final day of classes (Friday 29 April) will receive a score of zero. The group presentation is an exception to this lenient policy. Please show up for the presentation unless there is an extreme emergency.

Quizzes

In order to assess that you are reading the assigned books and watching all the lectures, there will be four unannounced quizzes over the semester. These will be relatively easy if you have completed the work for that week. I will drop the lowest score. Because the element of surprise is essential, you will *not* be able make up these quizzes under any circumstances.

Final Examination

At the end of the semester, there will be a cumulative final exam. It will be made available on my website; you must submit your answers within three days. The exam will ask you to demonstrate mastery of the required readings and the content of the lectures. The work you do with your group will help you to prepare. Allow yourself two to three hours to write your responses—as if you were sitting for a regular, in-class exam. This is not a research paper. Of course you are allowed to access your books, your notes, my website, and the Internet to develop your answers. Please note that any exam submitted after Friday 6 May will receive a score of zero.

Learning Needs

You are welcome to schedule a one-on-one meeting (via Zoom) to discuss anything related to the course. If you require accommodation for a diagnosed disability, please notify me privately at the beginning of the semester.

Academic Integrity

It is the assumption that the work you present in this course will be your own. If you incorporate someone else's words or ideas, you must cite that person, text, or source. If you do not know how to cite sources, read chapter 14 of *The Chicago Manual of Style* or ask me for guidance. If you submit someone else's work as your own, you may be in violation of the Student Academic Honesty Code.

SCHEDULE:

Reading assignments must be completed by the start of the class period mentioned.
Items marked with an infinity sign (∞) will be found on the website adamabraham.info.

I. ENLIGHTENMENT

12–16 January WEEK 1 The Eighteenth-Century Mind

Wed. 12 Introduction & The Idea of Enlightenment
 Fri. 14 • Rousseau, *The Social Contract* ∞
 • Kant, “What Is Enlightenment?” ∞
 Sat. 15–Sun. 16 • LECTURE: “Key Concepts in Literary Study” and “Jane Austen” ∞

17–23 January WEEK 2 Equipoise

Mon. 17 NO CLASS (Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Birthday Observed)
 Wed. 19 • *Sense and Sensibility*, pp. 1–114
 Fri. 21 • *Sense and Sensibility*, pp. 115–160

24–30 January WEEK 3 Equipoise (continued)

Mon. 24 • *Sense and Sensibility*, pp. 161–235
 Wed. 26 • *Sense and Sensibility*, pp. 235–282
 Fri. 28 • *Sense and Sensibility*, pp. 282–323
 • SCREEN: *Sense and Sensibility* (1995) ∞
 Sat. 29–Sun. 30 • LECTURE: “How to Read a Poem, Parts I and II” and “How to Read
 a Poem, Parts III and IV” ∞

II. COUNTER-ENLIGHTENMENT

31 January–6 February WEEK 4 Prophet & Bard

Mon. 31 • Blake, in *English Romantic Poetry*, pp. 4–9
 Wed. 2 • Wordsworth, in *English Romantic Poetry*, pp. 23–25, 30–34,
 42–44, 51
 Fri. 4 NO CLASS (Reading Day)

••• **ANNOTATIONS DUE** Friday 4 February by 4:30 pm

7–13 February WEEK 5 Archangel & Ephebe

- Mon. 7 • Coleridge, in *English Romantic Poetry*, pp. 63–81
 Wed. 9 • Keats, in *English Romantic Poetry*, pp. 205–219, 224–225
 Thu. 10 • LECTURE: “Charles Dickens”
 Fri. 11 • *Oliver Twist*, pp. 3–50
 Sat. 12–Sun. 13 • LECTURE: “Digital Project” ∞
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III. VICTORIANS

14–20 February WEEK 6 Culture and Anarchy

- Mon. 14 • *Oliver Twist*, pp. 51–123
 Wed. 16 • *Oliver Twist*, pp. 124–170
 Fri. 18 • *Oliver Twist*, pp. 170–215
 Sat. 19–Sun. 20 • LECTURE: “The Victorians” ∞

21–27 February WEEK 7 Culture and Anarchy (continued)

- Mon. 21 • *Oliver Twist*, pp. 216–291
 Wed. 23 • *Oliver Twist*, pp. 291–338
 Fri. 25 • *Oliver Twist*, pp. 339–390

28 February–6 March WEEK 8 Past and Present

••• **DIGITAL PROJECT DUE** Monday 28 February by 4:30 pm

- Mon. 28 • *Oliver Twist*, pp. 390–455
 • Victorian poetry, part 1 ∞
 Wed. 2 • Victorian poetry, part 2 ∞
 Fri. 4 NO CLASS (Reading Day)

7–13 March WEEK 9 Spring Break

- Mon. 7 NO CLASS
 Wed. 9 NO CLASS
 Fri. 11 NO CLASS

14–20 March	WEEK 10	Conferences
Mon. 14	NO CLASS (Scheduled conferences)	
Wed. 16	NO CLASS (Scheduled conferences)	
Fri. 18	NO CLASS (Scheduled conferences)	
21–27 March	WEEK 11	England and Empire
Mon. 21	• <i>King Solomon’s Mines</i> , pp. 3–157	
Wed. 23	• <i>King Solomon’s Mines</i> , pp. 158–198	
••• ESSAY DUE Thursday 24 March by 4:30 pm		
Fri. 25	• Kingsley, <i>Travels in West Africa</i> (selections) ∞	

IV. COUNTER-VICTORIANS

28 March–3 April	WEEK 12	Making It New
Mon. 28	• Three Versions of Pygmalion ∞	
Wed. 30	• Three Versions of Pygmalion ∞	
Fri. 1	• SCREEN: <i>Gaslight</i> (1940) ∞	
Sat. 2–Sun. 3	• LECTURE: “Twentieth-Century Breakdown” ∞	
4–10 April	WEEK 13	Fragments
Mon. 4	• “The Sisters,” “An Encounter,” “Araby,” “Eveline,” “Two Gallants,” and “The Boarding House,” in <i>Dubliners</i>	
Wed. 6	• “A Little Cloud,” “Counterparts,” “A Painful Case,” in <i>Dubliners</i>	
Fri. 8	• “The Dead,” in <i>Dubliners</i>	
11–17 April	WEEK 14	Everyday Noise
Mon. 11	• Woolf, <i>A Room of One’s Own</i> (selections) ∞	
Wed. 13	• Eliot, selections ∞	
Fri. 15	NO CLASS (Reading Day)	

18–24 April

WEEK 15

Group Presentations

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- Mon. 18 Prep time for group presentations
- Wed. 20 ••• **PRESENTATIONS IN CLASS** (Alpha, Beta, Gamma)
- Fri. 22 ••• **PRESENTATIONS IN CLASS** (Delta, Epsilon, Zeta)
- Sat. 23–Sun. 24 • LECTURE: “The Beatles and the Sixties” ∞
 • SCREEN: *Monty Python’s Flying Circus* (1969–1974), episode 1.8
 “Full Frontal Nudity” (on Netflix)
 • SCREEN: *The Office* (2001–2003), episode 1.4 “Training” (on Hulu)

V. WHAT COMES AFTER

25 April–6 May

WEEKS 16–17

Counterculture & After Britain?

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- Mon. 25 • LISTEN: “Strawberry Fields Forever,” “Penny Lane,” and
Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band (on YouTube)
- Wed. 27 • Oyeyemi, “If a Book Is Locked There’s Probably a Good Reason for
 That Don’t You Think” ∞
 • Smith, “Kelso Deconstructed” ∞
 And a final exam review session
- Fri. 29 NO CLASS (Reading Day)

••• **TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAMINATION**

Available Tuesday 3 May at 4:30 pm

DUE Friday 6 May by 4:30 pm



UNIVERSITY BOILERPLATE:

Academic Honesty

All portions of the Auburn University Student Academic Honesty code (Title XII) found in the *Student Policy eHandbook* at http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_policies/ will apply to this class. All academic honesty violations or alleged violations of the SGA Code of Laws will be reported to the Office of the Provost, which will then refer the case to the Academic Honesty Committee.

Accessibility Statement

Students who need accommodations are asked to electronically submit their approved accommodations through AU Access and to make an individual appointment with the instructor during the first week of classes – or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. If a student has not established accommodations through the Office of Accessibility, but need accommodations, the student should make an appointment with the Office of Accessibility, 1228 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT).

Early Alert Grade

You will receive an Early Alert Grade one week prior to mid semester (31st class day). The Early Alert Grade represents your current performance on class work graded at that point in the semester. Check the grading scale for this course so that you are aware of what percentage of the total points is represented by your Early Alert Grade. If your Early Alert Grade is a "D", "F", or "FA" you will receive an email from the Retention Coordinator.

Early Alert Grades can be viewed by logging into AU Access and opening the *tiger i* tab. Select "Student Records" and open the "Midterm Grades" window from the dropdown box. If the grade seems inaccurate, please contact the instructor.

Emergency Contingency

If normal class and/or lab activities are disrupted due to illness, emergency, or crisis situation, the syllabus and other course plans and assignments may be modified to allow completion of the course. If this occurs, an addendum to your syllabus and/or course assignments will replace the original materials.

Withdrawal from the Course

No grade penalty will be assigned for dropping a course on or before midterm. A student who withdraws from a course prior to the 15th class day during Fall or Spring semester will receive no grade assignment; however, after the first 15 days, a "W" (Withdrawn Passing) grade will be recorded for the course. A course may be dropped with a "W" after midterm only under unusual conditions (e.g., serious illness of the student, serious illness or death of a member of the student's immediate family). When approval for dropping the course under such circumstances is granted by the student's dean, a "W" may be assigned only when the instructor indicates that the student is clearly passing the course. Otherwise, a grade of "WF" (Withdrawn Failing) will be assigned. The last day to withdraw with no grade penalty is 22 April.