



RANGER COLLEGE
STEPHENVILLE, TEXAS

COURSE SYLLABUS and INSTRUCTOR PLAN

BRITISH LITERATURE I

English 2322

Summer 2016

INSTRUCTOR: Matt Cardin

“In great literature, I become a thousand different men but still remain myself.”

— C.S. Lewis

Once the requirements for your degree are completed, what ultimately matters are not the courses listed on your transcript but the sensibilities and habits of mind that you bring to your work, friends, family, and, indeed, the rest of your life. A healthy economy changes and grows with the times; people do too if they are prepared for more than simply filling a job description. The range and variety of life that literature affords can help you to interpret your own experiences and the world in which you live.

—Michael Meyer

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The following rules about classroom behavior are to be memorized, internalized, and strictly followed. Failure to do so will negatively impact both a student's grade and his or her experience of this class.

1. **Arrive on time.** Class begins promptly at the scheduled time. This means students should be in their seats and ready to work (see rules 2, 3, and 4) every Tuesday and Thursday at 9:00 a.m.
2. **Always bring the assigned reading to class.** In order for students to participate in close readings and discussions (and we will do a lot of reading together in class), it is crucial for them to have in hand all of the assigned texts for each day.
3. **Come to class prepared.** Students are expected to participate in class discussions and come to class meetings having completed all readings assigned for independent completion (as distinct from the extensive reading that we will do together in class) as well as any assigned written work.
4. **Turn in work on time.** Submitting any assignment late is inequitable to the students who submit theirs on time; therefore, no late work will be accepted. By agreeing to the terms of this syllabus, students agree to accept a score of zero on any late work.
5. **Don't cheat.** Any assignment reflecting cheating, plagiarism, or any other form of academic dishonesty will receive a grade of zero. A second instance will result in automatic failure of the class and a report being submitted to Ranger College's Vice President of Instruction.
6. **Three absences = Dropped from class with a failing grade.** Students are expected to attend all class meetings. As per Ranger College's stated absence policy in the general college catalog (see pages 25-26 at <http://rangercollege.edu/catalog.pdf>), the only absences that will be excused are "official" ones, defined as those that occur due to authorized Ranger College activities (such as sporting events). Unofficial absences are counted from the first day of class as listed in the College Calendar, regardless of the date of a student's registration.
7. **No phones, laptops, or other digital devices in class. This even rules out using devices to access course materials.** Phones must be turned off and given to the instructor (or to the class proctor, for students participating via ITV) prior to the beginning of each class, which is promptly at 9 a.m. (see rule #1 above). Laptop computers should be left at home. Long experience has shown that these devices tend to destroy the educational atmosphere of a classroom, as about ninety percent of people using them will be doing things unrelated to, and frequently even antagonistic to, that atmosphere. Classroom space is sacred. The prohibition on digital devices is intended to preserve it as such.

ADA Statement: Ranger College provides a variety of services for students with learning and/or physical disabilities. Students are responsible for making the initial contact with the Ranger College Counselor. It is advisable to make this contact before or immediately after the semester begins.

Non-discrimination Statement: Admissions, employment, and program policies of Ranger College are nondiscriminatory in regard to race, creed, color, sex, age, disability, and national origin.

Email: I am happy to communicate with students by email and will do my best to respond within 24 hours during the week. Messages sent over the weekend will be read on Mondays. In the subject line of any email sent to me, students should indicate the content of the email. Then they should begin the message in the following manner:

Dear Mr. Cardin [or Matt, if you like; I'm fine with first names],

My name is _____ and I am in your British literature class.

Response Papers

(NOTE: Grateful acknowledgment is made to Tracey Grau of the University of North Texas, from one of whose English syllabi this assignment description has been quoted and adapted.)

A one-page, one-paragraph, double-spaced, typed paper is required for each major text (8 throughout the semester). Each paper is an opportunity for the student to sustain a thoughtful discussion about a specific topic from the reading. These papers are meant to prepare students for class discussion, to deepen their understanding of the texts, and to encourage them to make connections among the various texts we read. The papers are evaluated on a 0-2 point scale.

For credit a response paper must meet the criteria listed below. Note that a response paper does NOT summarize; instead, it should, in some way, make a point and substantiate that point with specific examples from the text in question. In short, the writer should seek to make an interpretive claim, to draw a conclusion, or to make an application about the text.

Criteria for Response Papers:

- The student should apply his or her own **critical thinking** to the text by questioning it, analyzing it, evaluating it, arguing for or against a particular idea, or extending its argument.
- The paper should follow **MLA format** for heading, spacing, margins, and citations.
- The paper should be **one full typed page** (no more, no less), using **12-point font**, preferably Times New Roman.
- The **title** should be centered. It should *not* be emphasized in bold or italics. It should reflect the writer's main point.
- The paper should be limited to **a single main idea, question, topic, or line of thought**, preferably in a single paragraph.
- The student should **use the text to substantiate that main idea or to answer/explore that question, WITHOUT merely summarizing the text**. In addition, on occasion and if appropriate, the writer may use his or her own personal experience to reflect on the particular topic.
- The paper should **quote briefly, at least once, from the text**. Quotations must 1) accurately reflect the text's meaning; 2) be integrated into the writer's own sentence structures and ideas; and 3) be cited correctly.
- The paper should anchor the composition to the text but **extend the discussion by adding to it the writer's own conclusions**.
- The student should **revise the paper as many times as necessary** to meet these criteria, and also to ensure that the paper is written in a pleasing style and free of errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and mechanics. The student should ALWAYS edit and spell check using not just a word processor but his or her own eyes and intelligence.

NOTE: I do NOT recommend, require, or encourage the use of secondary sources in writing these response papers. The primary purpose of the assignment is for each student to have an idea about the work of literature then to articulate and substantiate that idea in writing. Reading what someone else thinks about the work may impede this process.

Course Outline and Schedule

Reading assignments and the dates of exams and written assignments are subject to revision as needed. I will announce all revisions in class, post them on Blackboard, and do my best to make sure that everyone knows about the changes. If you miss a class meeting, you are still responsible for submitting assignments according to any revisions that we make to the schedule.

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC/ASSIGNMENT
1	May 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to class • The broad outline of British literature <p style="text-align: center;"><u>THE MIDDLE AGES (to ca. 1485)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles of effective reading, both silent and oral (see handout from <i>The Progressive Course in Reading</i>, Third Book, 1900) • Introduction to Beowulf: 36-40 • <i>Beowulf</i> 41-71
	June 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DUE: Response Paper #1 on <i>Beowulf</i> • The Middle Ages and its literature: 3-29 • Sir Thomas Malory and <i>Le Morte D'Arthur</i>: 328-47
2	June 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DUE: Response Paper #2 on <i>Le Morte D'Arthur</i> • QUIZ over the Middle Ages, <i>Beowulf</i> (36-71), and <i>Le Morte D'Arthur</i> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY (1485-1603)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shakespeare and his sonnets: 536-52 • The sixteenth century and its literature: 349-81
	June 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DUE: Response Paper #3 on one of Shakespeare's sonnets • Christopher Marlowe and <i>The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus</i>: 498-535
3	June 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DUE: Response Paper #4 on <i>The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus</i> • QUIZ over the sixteenth century and <i>Doctor Faustus</i> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY (1603-1660)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Donne, "Death Be Not Proud," and <i>Meditation 17</i>: 666-8, 691, & 697-8 • The early seventeenth century and its literature: 637-65

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	June 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DUE: Response Paper #5 on “Death Be Not Proud” OR <i>Meditation 17</i> • Thomas Hobbes and <i>Leviathan</i>, Part 1, Chapter 13: 724-9 • A few words on John Milton and <i>Paradise Lost</i>: 768-72 and 799-802
4	June 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DUE: Response Paper #6 on <i>Leviathan</i> • Quiz over the early seventeenth century, <i>Leviathan</i>, and <i>Paradise Lost</i> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>THE RESTORATION AND THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY (1660-1785)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jonathan Swift and <i>Gulliver’s Travels</i>, prefatory materials plus Part 1, Chapter 1: 1055-6 and 1059-69 • History and literature of the Restoration and the eighteenth century: 931-60
	June 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Gulliver’s Travels</i>, Chapters 2-8 (finish Part 1): 1069-1100
5	June 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DUE: Response Paper #7 on <i>Gulliver’s Travels</i> • Alexander Pope and <i>An Essay on Man</i>: 1205-9 and 1245-52 • Thomas Gray and “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard”: 1395 and 1396-1400
	June 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DUE: Response Paper #8 on “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard” • Quiz over the Restoration and the eighteenth century, <i>Gulliver’s Travels</i>, <i>An Essay on Man</i>, and “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard”
6	July 5	<u>FINAL EXAM</u>