

## English Literature I (ENGL 2316-11111)

MWF 10:00-10:50 in Irby 304

Dr. Katherine E.C. Willis

### Three Ways to Contact Me:

**Email:** [kwillis@uca.edu](mailto:kwillis@uca.edu)

- I only reply if you use basic etiquette (salutation, legible grammar, signature)
- Allow 24 hours for a response

**Meet with me in Irby 317D:**

- Stop by my office hours on **MWF 9-10, 11-12** or **T/Th 9:30-10:30**
- Schedule an appointment through the Calendly app: <https://calendly.com/katherinewillis>

**Phone:** 501-450-5100

### Course Description & Objectives:

Our overarching goal in this course is to acquire a deep appreciation for the literature of the early periods (i.e., the medieval period and the early modern period). This course will provide a thorough introduction to the major genres of early literature in English, along with a cross-section of key authors. You will develop a critical vocabulary for thinking about literature, refine your understanding of the history of English literature, enhance your research and writing techniques, and prepare for more advanced courses.

This course has a special focus that will help us meet that overarching goal. In all of our discussions of genre and conventions, we will have one question in the background: **How do we approach literature that is not committed to realism?** One of the hardest things to understand about early period literature is the difference between realistic detail and literary realism; the two are not the same. We will define literary realism, differentiate it from the use of realistic detail, and cover some alternatives to realism.

#### There are four main objectives for you in this course:

1. Acquire a grounding in the history of early English literature for the upper-division courses you take later on.
2. Improve your skills in analysis through close reading and mastery of key terms in the discipline.
3. Improve your ability to explain your ideas clearly through discussion and written assignments.
4. Gain familiarity with key library resources for literary research.

All the assignments for this class are meant to sharpen the top three skills every employer looks for: communication skills, writing skills, and analytical skills. What ever career you have or plan to have after college, every employer is looking for those three skills. If you apply yourself in working on each project, you will leave this class a better writer of literary critical prose—arguably the most challenging kind of nonfiction writing to master. Once you can write literary criticism, you can write anything.

### Required Materials:

- **Broadview Anthology of British Literature, Concise Volume A**, edited by Joseph Black, et al. (This book is currently in its third edition. You may use the previous two editions, but be aware that there will be slight differences, such as page numbers.)
- **Other materials distributed electronically or thru library reserve**

### Assignments and Grading:

- 100 pts Participation:** Come to class each day prepared to write and to discuss. Because this is a discussion-based course, our success as individuals and as a group depends upon your consistent, active, and vocal participation. Good participation means being regularly present and active in class, engaging with me and your classmates in generative, constructive discussion, and being prepared for each day of class (i.e., you completed the reading, finished the assignments, arrived with the text and/or notes in hand, etc). You will receive a score out of 50 points at midterms and the remainder at finals. See the rubric online.
- 100 pts Reading Journal:** For every class meeting that has an assigned reading, you must submit a reading response online before the start of class time. Your journal entry should be 100-200 words in length and focus on a specific passage from the reading. Here are a few examples of questions you can consider to write your journal entry: What is the significance of the passage in the context of the whole work so far? What kinds of literary conventions does the writer use? What major developments in character, theme, or style are taking place in the passage? Each journal entry is worth 3 points: 3 points for an entry that is solid and satisfactory; 2 points for an entry that is weak or incomplete; 1 point for an entry that is unsatisfactory (but you made an attempt); 0 points for an unsubmitted entry. I will drop your lowest two scores at the end of the semester.
- 100 pts Discussion question:** You will be responsible for starting class discussion of the assigned reading(s) once this semester. I will assign the discussion question in advance, and you will be randomly assigned a day to lead. Think of this as a presentation of 3-5 minutes (strictly timed): you'll present to your peers your answer to the discussion question and support that claim with specific details from the reading. Your answer should be original, thoughtful, and evidence-based. Your reading journal entry for that day can help you create a response, but you are not allowed to read off a prewritten statement. You will be graded on how focused

your response is, the depth of analytical thinking you demonstrate, the relevancy and quality of the connections you make to the text, and your level of engagement with your peers. See the rubric for more details. Because of the size of the class, there likely will not be an opportunity to go more than once or to make up a missed discussion question.

- 100 pts Glossing Project:** In the middle ages, glossing was a means of placing reading supports close to a text, sometimes in the margins or even between the lines. Your task is to gloss a passage (i.e., 15-20 lines of poetry) from one of the medieval texts we read in class. The interlinear glosses will be word definitions, and the marginal glosses will be commentary from scholarly sources and from your own critical analysis of the text. You will create your glossed text as either a physical poster or digital "poster." An assignment sheet and rubric will be distributed later in the semester.
- 250 pts Essays:** You will write a total of 4 essays throughout the semester. The due dates are staggered through the semester (see the course schedule). Each essay will be a close reading of a passage of your choice. Use your close reading skills to analyse the passage, connect its significance to the meaning of the text as a whole, and place it in the larger contexts of early English literature. Three of those four essays will be 1.5-2 pages in length in MLA formatting and worth 50 points each. One of those four essays will be 3-4 pages in length in MLA formatting and incorporate two scholarly sources (one hard copy source from the library stacks and one electronic source from the library databases). This essay will be worth 100 pts. See the assignment sheet and rubric for more details.
- 150 pts Midterm exam:** Expect a combination of multiple choice, matching, and short answer (i.e., paragraph length).
- 200 pts Final exam:** Same format as the midterm, but will be cumulative and include a take-home essay.

## Course Schedule:

Readings and assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day on which they are listed. Some days may specify other materials you are required to bring. Note: I reserve the right to change the schedule below if it will help the class. I will announce any changes in class and via email.

Aug. 24 Introduction to course. What is literary realism and what are we studying if we aren't studying it?

### THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD/THE MIDDLE AGES

Aug. 27 Common myths about the middle ages. Historical contexts for studying early English literature. No reading.

Aug. 29	Old English riddles and charms, "The Wanderer," and "The Wife's Lament"
Aug. 31	"The Seafarer" and selections from Bede's <i>Ecclesiastical History of the English People</i> : "The Coming of the English to Britain," "Abbess Hild of Whitby; the Miraculous Poet Cædmon," and "Cædmon's Hymn in Old and Modern English."
Sept. 3	No class — Labor Day
Sept. 5	"The Dream of the Rood"
Sept. 7	"The Ring of the Dove" and Arabic love poetry.
Sept. 10	"Lanval" by Marie de France.
Sept. 12	How to conduct literary research. No reading.
Sept. 14	"Chevrefoil" by Marie de France.
Sept. 17	"Sir Orfeo" (first half, thru about line 300)
Sept. 19	"Sir Orfeo" (finish)
Sept. 21	Medieval manuscript culture. No reading.
Sept. 24	"Sumer is icumen in," "Betwene Mersh and Averil," and lines 1-18 of Chaucer's "General Prologue" to the <i>Canterbury Tales</i> .
Sept. 26	"The Introduction to the Pardoner's Tale" and the "Prologue to the Pardoner's Tale." <b>DUE: ESSAY #1</b>
Sept. 28	"The Pardoner's Tale," through line 372.
Oct. 1	"The Pardoner's Tale," line 372 to the end.
Oct. 3	"The Nun's Priest's Prologue" and "The Nun's Priest's Tale," through line 390.
Oct. 5	"The Nun's Priest's Tale," through line 500.
Oct. 8	"The Nun's Priest's Tale," line 500 to the end, including the epilogue
<b>Oct. 10</b>	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>
Oct. 12	No class — fall break
Oct. 15	Syriac and Latin liturgical poetry.
Oct. 17	Julian of Norwich's "A Revelation of Love" (selections)
Oct. 19	Julian of Norwich's "A Revelation of Love" (selections)

- Oct. 22 Margery Kempe's "Book of Margery Kempe" (selections)  
**DUE: ESSAY #2**
- Oct. 24 "N-Town Emmaus drama"
- Oct. 26 Malory's Morte Darthur, Book I, ch. 5 excerpt
- Oct. 29 Malory's Morte Darthur, "The Death of King Arthur," ch. 1-3
- Oct. 31 Malory's Morte Darthur, "The Death of King Arthur," ch. 4-5

### THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD/THE RENAISSANCE

- Nov. 2 Historical contexts for studying the early modern period. No reading.  
**DUE: GLOSSING PROJECTS**
- Nov. 5 Edmund Spenser's Faerie Queene, Book I, canto 1
- Nov. 7 Edmund Spenser's Faerie Queene, Book I, cantos 3 and 4
- Nov. 9 Edmund Spenser's Faerie Queene, Book I, canto 8
- Nov. 12 Edmund Spenser's Faerie Queene, Book I, canto 11
- Nov. 14 Marlowe's Faustus, Prologue and Act I  
**DUE: ESSAY #3**
- Nov. 16 Marlowe's Faustus, Acts II-III
- Nov. 19 Marlowe's Faustus, Acts IV-V
- Nov. 21-23 No class — Thanksgiving break
- Nov. 26 Francesco Petrarch's "Amor, che nel penser mio vive et regna" ("Love, that doth reign and live within my thought").  
 Shakespeare's "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day," and "My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun."  
 Andrew Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress."  
 Robert Herrick's "To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time."
- Nov. 28 Lady Mary Wroth (selections)
- Nov. 30 John Donne's Meditation 17 from Devotions, "Batter my heart, three personed God," and "Death be not proud, though I have called thee"  
**DUE: ESSAY #4**
- Dec. 3 George Herbert's "The Windows," "Jordan (1)," and "Jordan (2)"

Dec. 5            Retrospective on the course.

Study Day:    Dec. 7

**Final exam:   Dec. 10, 8-10 am**

## **MY POLICIES FOR THIS COURSE:**

### **STUDENT CONDUCT:**

You are responsible for your conduct. I expect you to conduct yourself professionally and courteously in the classroom, in my office, and in your work. If your behavior seriously disrupts the learning experience of other students or my ability to teach, I will ask you to leave the classroom and/or the course.

### **ATTENDANCE AND DROP POLICY:**

Your attendance and active participation in each class meeting throughout the semester is the foundation of your whole grade in this course. I reserve the right to drop students who have an excessive amount of unexcused absences. For a MWF course, that begins at 4 unexcused absences. For a T/Th course, that begins at 3 unexcused absences.

As the Attendance section of the Student Handbook explains, "A student's official program is regarded as his or her obligation to the institution, full performance of which requires regular and punctual class attendance and active participation. A student is responsible for coming to class prepared, completing any missed work, and knowing the dates and places of required course examinations."

### **GRADING POLICIES:**

If you are unable to submit work on time due to an excused reason, it is your responsibility to contact me as soon as possible to document your reason and to make timely alternative arrangements. As the Student Handbook specifies in the section on Attendance, "Make-up examinations and assignments are required only for valid absences as determined by the faculty member. Students who miss an examination or assignment without a valid excuse may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment."

Excused reasons include (but are not limited to): official university-sanctioned athletic or organizational events (requires appropriate documentation), severe illness, death of a family member, court appearances, jury duty. For such excused reasons, late work will be accepted for full credit. However, be aware that some in-class activities may not be possible to make up.

Unexcused reasons include (but are not limited to): computer/printer malfunctions, traffic problems, family vacations/travel, or forgetfulness. For such unexcused reasons, I may be able to accept late work for partial credit, but you must discuss it with me first. The standard deduction for late work is one letter grade off per day.

#### **EMAIL ETIQUETTE:**

I will respond to your email within 24 hours. If you do not hear from me in that time window, contact me again. This means you should not, if at all possible, email last minute concerns. In addition, I only respond to emails that follow basic etiquette. That includes the following: a salutation line, readable grammar, and a signature line.

## **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

**As a general rule, you should know the policies described in the Student Handbook. The Sexual Harassment Policy and Academic Policies are especially important. You can find the current edition of the [Student Handbook online here](#).**

**Academic Integrity:** The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.

**Title IX Disclosure:** If a student discloses an act of sexual harassment, discrimination, assault, or other sexual misconduct to a faculty member (as it relates to "student-on-student" or "employee-on-student"), the faculty member cannot maintain complete confidentiality and is required to report the act and may be required to reveal the names of the parties involved. Any allegations made by a student may or may not trigger an investigation. Each situation differs, and the obligation to conduct an investigation will depend on the specific set of circumstances. The determination to conduct an investigation will be made by the Title IX Coordinator. For further information, please visit: <https://uca.edu/titleix>. \*Disclosure of sexual misconduct by a third party who is not a student and/or employee is also required if the misconduct occurs when the third party is a participant in a university-sponsored program, event, or activity.

**Americans with Disabilities Act:** The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this Act due to a disability, please contact the UCA Disability Resource Center, 450-3613.

**Building Emergency Plan:** An Emergency Procedures Summary (EPS) for the building in which this class is held will be discussed during the first week of this course. EPS documents for most buildings on campus are available at <http://uca.edu/mysafety/bep/>. Every student should be familiar with emergency procedures for any campus building in which they spend time for classes or other purposes.

**Course Evaluations:** Student evaluations of a course and its professor are a crucial element in helping faculty achieve excellence in the classroom and the institution in demonstrating that students are gaining knowledge. Students may evaluate courses they are taking starting on the Monday of the thirteenth week of instruction through the end of finals week by logging in to myUCA and clicking on the Course Evaluations task. This semester, course evaluations open on Monday Nov. 19.