ENGLISH 288
ENGLISH LITERATURE

BULLETIN INFORMATION
ENGL 288 - English Literature (3 credit hours)
Course Description:
An introduction to English literary history, emphasizing the analysis of literary texts, the
development of literary traditions over time, the emergence of new genres and forms, and the
writing of successful essays about literature. Designed for English majors
Prerequisites: ENGL 101 and 102 or equivalent

SAMPLE COURSE OVERVIEW
This introduction to British literature extends from 1500 to 1700, beginning with Thomas
More’s fictive travelogue *Utopia* and concluding with Aphra Behn’s new-world novel *Oroonoko*.
Readings will concentrate on selected canonical texts from this 200 year period, supplemented
by a sampling of modern critical essays. We’ll proceed chronologically, looking at ways these
well-known works spoke to the times and to each other—about questions of monarchy,
religion, rebellion, revolution, and new world contact, for example—and we’ll give some
thought to larger questions about print technology, readership, and audiences. In a series of
short, web-surfing assignments using the on-line archive EEBO (Early English Books On-Line),
you’ll also have the chance to explore some of the popular reading that doesn’t make it into
standard “English Lit” anthologies—cheap pamphlets on witchcraft and necromancy,
cookbooks and travel guides, for example, and all sorts of “how-to” manuals.

ITEMIZED LEARNING OUTCOMES
Upon successful completion of English 288, students will be able to:
1. Demonstrate familiarity with the British authors taught, their formal, thematic, and
   social concerns, and their fit within their literary/historical periods.
2. Read and interpret British literature carefully and closely.
3. Define, compare, contrast, justify, and interrogate the major British literary movements
   or periods covered in class.
4. Engage in meaningful debate about the literary texts we have studied.
5. Demonstrate critical reading skills of literary conventions.
6. Demonstrate understanding of and apply an analytical vocabulary to literature.
7. Identify and differentiate among key features of literary texts (e.g., themes, genres,
   forms, styles, movements)
8. Write effective analytical essays interpreting literary texts.

SAMPLE REQUIRED TEXTS/SUGGESTED READINGS/MATERIALS
1. The Norton Anthology of British Literature, 8th ed.
SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS AND/OR EXAM

1. **Examinations:** The exams will involve identifications of passages from the readings and an essay. To do well on the exams, it is important that you keep up with the readings and attend all the classes. The exams will evaluate not only your familiarity with the texts, but also your ability to synthesize material from our discussions and to write clearly and critically. The final exam will *not* be cumulative.

2. **Papers:** This course requires two critical papers (4-5 pages, 1250-1500 words). Topics will be assigned in advance of each due date. Papers must be typed, double-spaced, and in MLA format.

3. **Quizzes:** You will have quizzes on the assigned readings given at the beginning of class.

4. **EEBO:** For these assignments, you’ll select and browse an early printed book or pamphlet using the on-line archive of early English books, submitting a one paragraph description (200-250 words) of your book along with a photocopy of the title page.

5. **Abstracts:** A one page narrative summary (200-250 words, *not to exceed* one page, double-spaced) of each critical reading (Berger and Orgel) isolating the argument, key claims, and connecting logic of the piece. This is not a critique of the argument but rather a concise summation. Abstracts are due at the start of class.

SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE WITH TIMELINE OF TOPICS, READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS, EXAMS/PROJECTS

**Week 1:** Introduction: Course overview
- “The Sixteenth Century” and Timeline (*Norton* 485-513)
- More’s *Utopia*, Book 1 (*Norton* 518-545)

**Week 2:** *Utopia*, Book 2 (*Norton* 545-590)

**Week 3:** *Utopia* (in-class film clip: More’s execution from *The Tudors*)
- “Faith in Conflict” (*Norton* 616-641)
- Greenblatt, “The Word of God in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” (BB)

**Week 4:** Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus*, scenes 1-6 (1002-03; 1022-42)
- *Doctor Faustus*, finish play

**Week 5:** Sonnets: Sidney and Spenser
- *EEBO* #1 due (books printed between 1500-1600)
Shakespeare, Richard III, act 1

**Week 6:** Richard III, acts 2-3
Richard III, act 4
*Berger, “Conscience and Complicity in Richard III” (abstract due) BB/Norton

**Week 7:** Richard III, act 5
More’s Richard III (BB) and McKellen’s Richard III (in-class film clips)
**paper #1 due (close reading of passage)

**Week 8:** Sonnets: Shakespeare
*Exam

**Week 9:** John Donne (Norton 1260-1275)
Jonson, “Masque of Blackness” (Norton 1324-1333)
“The Wider World” (Norton 927-35); “The Early Seventeenth Century 1603-1660” and Timeline (Norton 1235-1259)

**Week 10:** Shakespeare, The Tempest

**Week 11:** The Tempest
*Orgel, “Shakespeare and the Cannibals” (BB—abstract due)
Florio’s Montaigne, “Of the Cannibals” (BB)
Virginia Reports—Amadas and Barlowe (1584); Hariot (1585) Norton 935-43

**Week 12:** Paradise Lost, Book 1
Paradise Lost, Book 2

**Week 13:** Paradise Lost, Book 4
EEBO #2 (books printed between 1600-1700)
Paradise Lost, Book 9

**Week 14:** Behn, Oroonoko

**Week 15:** Milton, from Areopagitica (Norton 1816-25)
Borges, “Utopia of a Tired Man” (BB)
**Paper #2 due

**Final Exam according to university exam schedule**