

SCHOOL OF ENGLISH, FILM, THEATRE & MEDIA STUDIES

ENGL 410 : RENAISSANCE STUDIES 2008 1/3

Convenor: Linda Hardy (linda.hardy@vuw.ac.nz) VZ 812 Ph. 463- 6806

Seminar time and place: Friday, 10-12 noon. VZ 808

Course content

A study of Milton's major poetry and prose, including *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*, and his prose pamphlets *Areopagitica* and *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*. Students taking this course will be encouraged to think about the relationship of Milton's writing to the general political and cultural ferment of mid seventeenth century England, and to the (eventually thwarted) attempt to establish an English Republic and make a "true reformation" of church and state.

Objectives

By the end of the course, you should be familiar with all the set texts and capable of writing about them in detail. You should also have developed a good understanding of how to read both literary and polemical texts as complex responses to, and interpretations of, the historical worlds in which they are made.

Where to find additional information

Further information will be circulated in seminars, and posted on the **ENGL 410 Blackboard site**.

Set Texts

John Milton, *The Major Works*, ed. Stephen Orgel and Jonathan Goldberg (Oxford World's Classics) is the prescribed edition; because it is inexpensive and it contains generous selections from Milton's prose as well as all his poetry in English. Other editions of Milton's writings are acceptable, and in many cases preferable. A good alternative is the Milton volume in the Modern Library series: *The Complete Poetry and Essential Prose of John Milton*, edited by William Kerrigan, John Rumrich and Stephen M. Fallon (New York: Random House, 2007). This is a big heavy hardback, but it is reasonably priced, and it carries detailed annotation on the page, unlike the World's Classics edition.

Attendance and seminar preparation

Honours students are expected to be well-prepared for classes, particularly in their reading, and to be ready to lead discussion.

It is expected that you will attend **all** seminars. If you are unable to attend a seminar, please contact me as soon as you can in order to find out what you will need to do before the next meeting of the class.

ENGL 410 SEMINAR TIMETABLE 1/3 2008

Fridays, 10am - 12 noon. VZ 808

(1) 29 February *Becoming a poet*

- from *Poems 1645*: Sonnet 7 (“How soon hath time”); “L’ Allegro” & “Il Penseroso”; “Lycidas”

(2) 7 March *Aristocratic entertainment; puritan masque?*

- from *Poems 1645*: : *A Masque... (Comus)*

(3) 14 March *Left hand writing*

- *Areopagitica*

EASTER

(4) 28 March *Of tyrants and the people* [1st essay due]

- *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*
- *The Ready and Easy Way to establish a Free Commonwealth*

(5) 4 April *Cosmic politics: rebellion*

- *Paradise Lost* (1)

(6) 11 April *Liberty and obedience*

- *Paradise Lost* (2)

MID-TRIMESTER BREAK

(7) 2 May *Sin and history*

- *Paradise Lost* (3)

(8) 9 May *Temptation* [2nd essay due]

- *Paradise Regained* (1)

(9) 16 May *Christian heroism*

- *Paradise Regained* (2)

(10) 23 May *Oppression and resistance*

- *Samson Agonistes* (1)

(11) 30 May *Providential history*

- *Samson Agonistes* (2)

ASSESSMENT

- Assessment is designed to meet the course objectives by testing your familiarity with Milton's writing and by asking you read it as an engagement with and interpretation of secular and sacred histories.
- Essays must be presented in accordance with the conventions outlined in the School's style sheet, *Guidelines for SEFT Students* (revised version 2008).

1. **1st essay** due on or before **Friday 28 March**, of approximately **2,000** words. **25% of final result.** Topics to be circulated.

2. **2nd essay** due on or before **Friday 9 May**, of approximately **3,000** words. **35% of final result.** Topics to be circulated.

Due dates & extensions: The due dates for written work for this course are flexible and can be negotiated in advance to fit in with your overall timetable. However, work handed in after the due date without permission from me will be penalised by the deduction of a part grade. Any work submitted more than two weeks after the due date may be graded without comment. All written work **MUST** be handed in by **Friday 30 May**; only in exceptional circumstances will permission to submit work later than this date be granted by the Head of School.

3. **Final examination.** (3 hours) **40% of final result.**

The exam will consist of two sections.

Section A: you will be asked to write brief commentaries on several unidentified extracts from Milton's work. [40% of exam mark]

Section B: a choice of essay topics; you must write on **two** of these. [each essay will be worth 30% of exam mark]

This will be a "**restricted materials**" examination, allowing you to bring only your copies of the set texts into the examination room. These may be moderately annotated.

Note: Grades gained in individual [Honours] papers are always subordinate to the overall assessment made by the full group of examiners for the Honours programme as a whole.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to sitting the exam, and maintaining a satisfactory attendance at and participation in the seminars, you must complete and hand in two assignments by May 30 at the latest, unless a special exemption from these requirements has been granted by the Head of School.

A student who has obtained an overall mark of 50% or more, but failed to satisfy a mandatory requirement for a course, will receive a K (fail) grade, while a course mark less than 50% will result in the appropriate fail grade (D, E or F).

GUIDES TO EXTRA READING

See the essays and bibliographies in:

- *The Cambridge Companion to Milton*. Ed. Dennis Danielson. 2nd edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- *A Companion to Milton*. Ed Michael N. Corns. London: Blackwell, 2001.

These texts will be placed on closed reserve in the VUW Library.

WORKLOAD

The university expects that you should be able to devote at least **24 hours per week** to a one trimester paper in a full-time 4-paper graduate programme. (This estimate includes seminar attendance and preparation for seminars and essays.) Individual students will of course need to make their own judgements about the amount of time they must give to the course in order to maintain satisfactory progress.

WEBSITE

<<http://blackboard.scs.vuw.ac.nz/>>

Some material for ENGL 410 in 2008 will be online as part of the 'Blackboard' project. This will include the material on this handout, announcements, assignment topics, information about seminars and recommendations for extra reading.

GENERAL UNIVERSITY STATUTES AND POLICIES

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* available in hardcopy or under "about Victoria" on the Victoria homepage at:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/calendar_intro.html

Information on the following topics is available electronically under "Course Outline General Information" at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/newspubs/universitypubs.aspx#general>

- Academic Grievances
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely.

Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html