

ENGL 308

RENAISSANCE LITERATURE

Trimester 1 2009
(Monday 2 March – Friday 5 June 2009)
24 Points

Pieter Brueghel, *Battle of the Piggy-Banks and Strong-Boxes*, c. 1560

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CLASS TIMES AND ROOMS

Lectures Tuesday, Friday 1-2 pm Murphy (MY) LT 101 **Tutorials** t.b.a

COURSE CONTENT

This course is about the literary culture of Stuart England: the period from the end of the reign of Elizabeth I in 1603, through the Civil Wars of the 1640s culminating in the execution of Charles I and the establishment of an English Republic, to the restoration of monarchy in the 1660s and 1670s. It is based on a study of selected plays, poems and prose by Ben Jonson, John Webster, William Shakespeare, Francis Bacon, John Donne, Andrew Marvell, John Bunyan, John Milton and others. The course explores this turbulent period in English literary and political history with a focus on the relationship between writing, culture and politics. Topics include: tragedy and the politics of the court; London city comedy and the satire of commercial values; the culture of classical republicanism; and the culture of Puritan dissent. Issues of truth, integrity, conscience and free speech are in the foreground of much of this writing. The final section of the course examines Milton's biblical tragedy, *Samson Agonistes*, with its themes of violence and sacrifice, in the context of Milton's commitment to republican politics and as his deeply meditated response to the failure of the 'English revolution'.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, you should

- be familiar with all the set texts and capable of writing about them in detail
- be able to think and write comparatively about different texts – and different genres - from a particular historical “period”
- have developed a basic understanding of how to read literary and dramatic texts as complex, and sometimes competing, interpretations of the historical worlds in which they are made

COURSE DELIVERY

Students are expected to attend one tutorial, and the two scheduled lectures, each week.

EXPECTED WORKLOAD

You should expect to spend, on average, about **18 hours per week** on work for this course (*in addition* to time in class). Please note that this is a rough guideline only. Some students might have to put in more time, others less. The time commitment will be greatest in the weeks immediately prior to essay submission dates.

READINGS

(Main texts in order of study): John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*, ed. John Russell Brown (Revels Student Editions); Ben Jonson, *The Alchemist* (Penguin); William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar* (Arden Shakespeare: Third Series); Andrew Marvell, “An Horatian Ode” (in *Renaissance Anthology*, Student Notes); John Milton, *Samson Agonistes* (*Renaissance Anthology*); John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim’s Progress* (Oxford World’s Classics).

ASSESSMENT

Your final grade will be based on either a combination of your in-term work (50%) and your exam mark (50%); or your examination mark alone (100%); whichever is the higher mark. **You must however complete both assignments as well as sit the examination in order to pass the course.**

Term Work (50%) There are *two* assessed pieces of written work.

- Critical analysis.** 20 % of final grade. Length: 1500 words.
Due date: **Tuesday 31 March**
- Comparative essay.** 30% of final grade. Length: 2500-3000 words.
Due date: **Friday 8 May**

Final Examination (3 hours, 50% of final grade, or 100% if in your favour).

The final exam will take place during the end-of-year examination period (12 June – 1 July). Course texts may be taken into the exam. Lecture and other notes are not permitted, though your texts may contain a moderate amount of annotation.

Section A (50% of examination): a choice of essay topics on either Milton’s *Samson Agonistes*, or Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*, or both.

Section B (50% of examination): a choice of general essay topics, from which you must select one. You will be expected to include evidence to support your argument from at least four (any four) of the set texts. Topics will however be drawn principally from the parts of the course taught after the mid-trimester break.

ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEETS

Assignment cover sheets and extension forms can be found on Blackboard or outside the Programme office. Remember to fill in your tutor’s name.

PENALTIES AND EXTENSIONS

If work is handed in late, then one grade is subtracted and no comments are offered.

If you require an extension, you must complete an extension request form (available on your course Blackboard site) prior to the assignment due date. This must be accompanied by relevant documentation (e.g. a doctor’s certificate) where appropriate. Extension requests must be submitted to the Course Co-ordinator. Tutors cannot grant extensions.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In order to satisfy the course requirements, you must:

- attend at least **70% of tutorials** (i.e., at least 8 of the 11 tutorials);
- complete all of the internal assessment pieces
- sit the final **examination**.

Failure to meet mandatory requirements does not prevent a student completing other pieces of assessment, including any examination (Assessment Handbook 2.4). 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).

PRESENTATION OF WORK

Remember to fill out and attach a cover sheet (see above). Print on one side of the page only; use double spacing; leave a wide margin on the right for comments; ensure all pages are numbered and securely attached.

N.B. All written work should follow MLA conventions for style, citations and bibliography. A basic outline of these conventions is available on Blackboard.

Full details of the MLA style are provided in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (6th edition) and the *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing* (2nd edition), both of which are available in the Library. Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL) offers an excellent internet resource on MLA style:
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/>.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such MATERIAL.

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

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Tutorial lists and other information about this course (including the time and place of the final examination when this is announced in May) will be posted on Blackboard, and on the English noticeboard on the third floor outside Hugh Mackenzie 206. See <<http://blackboard.scs.vuw.ac.nz/>>

Some additional material for ENGL 308 in 2009 will be online as part of the 'Blackboard' project. This will include the course outline, announcements, assignment topics, tutorial worksheets and supplementary lecture materials and notes (n.b. these are **not** a substitute for attendance at lectures!).

GENERAL UNIVERSITY STATUTES AND POLICIES

A copy of the General University Statutes and Policies can be found on Blackboard.

COURSE PROGRAMME

Includes: lecture content, assessment dates and examination period if relevant

Week 1	3 Mar	Introduction
	6 Mar	Tragedy at court: Webster's <i>The Duchess of Malfi</i> (1)
Week 2	10 Mar	<i>Duchess of Malfi</i> (2)
	13 Mar	<i>Duchess of Malfi</i> (3)
Week 3	17 Mar	Ethics and politics: Bacon, "Of Simulation and Dissimulation"
	20 Mar	Satire and the city: Jonson's <i>The Alchemist</i> (1)
Week 4	24 Mar	<i>The Alchemist</i> (2)
	27 Mar	<i>The Alchemist</i> (3)
Week 5	31 Mar	<i>The Alchemist</i> (4); 1st assignment due.
	3 April	The idea of a republic: Shakespeare's <i>Julius Caesar</i> (1)
Week 6	7 April	<i>Julius Caesar</i> (2)
Mid Trimester Break: (Good) Friday 10 April – Friday 24 April 2009		
Week 7	28 Apr	<i>Julius Caesar</i> (3)
	1 May	Republican poetics: Andrew Marvell's "Horatian Ode"
Week 8	5 May	The problem of truth: Bacon, "Of Truth"; Milton, from <i>Areopagitica</i>
	8 May	John Milton: Judges and <i>Samson Agonistes</i> (1); 2nd assignment due
Week 9	12 May	<i>Samson Agonistes</i> (2)
	15 May	<i>Samson Agonistes</i> (3)
Week 10	19 May	<i>Samson Agonistes</i> (4)
	22 May	Church, state and conscience: Donne's "Satire 3" and Bacon's "Of Unity in Religion"
Week 11	26 May	John Bunyan, <i>The Pilgrim's Progress</i> (1)
	29 May	<i>The Pilgrim's Progress</i> (2)
Week 12	2 Jun	<i>The Pilgrim's Progress</i> (3)
	5 Jun	Conclusion

Examination Period: Friday 12 June – Wednesday 1 July 2009

CHRONOLOGICAL OUTLINE: Stuart England

Jacobean period 1603-1625

- 1599 Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* first performed (first published 1623)
- 1603 Death of Elizabeth I; James (Stuart) VI of Scotland crowned James I of England.
- 1610 Ben Jonson's *The Alchemist* first performed (first published 1612)
- 1611-12 Ben Jonson writes "To Penshurst"
- 1612-14 Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* first performed (first published 1623)

Caroline period 1625-1649

- 1625 Accession of James I's son Charles I
- 1629-40 "Personal rule" of Charles I, without recourse to Parliament
- 1640 Parliament meets for the first time since 1629; conflict between the King and parliamentary leaders
- 1642-48 Two civil wars between royalist and parliamentary armies
- 1644 Milton's *Areopagitica* published
- 1649 Trial and execution of Charles I; England proclaimed a republic

Republican England 1649-1660

- 1650 Marvell writes "An Horatian Ode"
- 1653 Oliver Cromwell proclaimed Lord Protector
- 1658 Death of Cromwell

Restoration England 1660-1688

- 1660 Restoration of monarchy; Charles II (son of Charles I) reigns till 1685
- 1667 Milton's *Paradise Lost* first published
- 1671 Milton's *Samson Agonistes* and *Paradise Regained* first published
- 1678 Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* first published