

ENGL 410 RENAISSANCE STUDIES: LITERATURE & CULTURAL POLITICS (MILTON)

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

30 Points

Coordinator: Linda Hardy (linda.hardy@vuw.ac.nz)

VZ 812 ext 6806 Office Hours: t.b.a.

CLASS TIMES AND ROOMS

Seminars

Wednesdays 1-4 p.m. Von Zedlitz 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.

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. 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.

COURSE DELIVERY

This course will be taught through weekly seminars. You should be well-prepared for classes: up-to-date with your reading, and ready to introduce and lead discussion.

You are expected to attend **all** seminars. If you are unable to attend a seminar, please contact me as soon as possible.

EXPECTED 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.

READINGS

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.

A bibliography containing recommendations for extra reading will be posted on the course Blackboard site. Some additional texts (including important critical essays) will be circulated in class. See also the introductory 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 books will be placed on closed reserve in the VUW Library.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is designed to meet the course objectives by testing your familiarity with Milton's writing and by asking you to read it as an engagement with and interpretation of secular and sacred histories.

1. **1st essay** due on or before Thursday 9 April, of approximately **2,000** words. **25% of final result**. Topics to be circulated.
2. **2nd essay** due on or before Friday 15 May, of approximately **3,000** words. **35% of final result**. Topics to be circulated.
3. **Final examination. (3 hours) 40% of final result.**

The final examination will take place during the end-of-year examination period (12 June – 1 July). This will be a “**restricted materials**” exam, allowing you to bring **only your copies of the set texts** into the examination room. These may be moderately annotated. It 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]

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.

ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEETS

Assignment cover sheets and extension forms can be found on Blackboard or outside the Programme office.

PENALTIES AND EXTENSIONS

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 Coordinator.

The due dates for written work for this course 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 after the due date may be graded without comment. All written work **MUST** be handed in by **Friday 5 June**; only in exceptional circumstances will permission to submit work later than this date be granted by the Head of School.

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, by the due dates, two written assignments.

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 if possible 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

The course outline, announcements, assignment topics, information about seminars and recommendations for extra reading will be posted on the course's Blackboard site.

GENERAL UNIVERSITY STATUTES AND POLICIES

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

COURSE PROGRAMME

Week 1	4 March	Becoming a poet	"Lycidas" and Sonnet 7
Week 2	11 March	Courtly arts	"L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso"
Week 3	18 March	A Puritan masque?	Comus
Week 4	25 March	Left hand writing	Areopagitica
Week 5	1 April	Revolution	The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates & The Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth
Week 6	8 April	Rebellion	Paradise Lost
	9 April*	[1st essay due on Thursday]	
Mid Trimester Break: (Good) Friday 10 April – Friday 24 April 2009			
Week 7	29 April	Christian epic	Paradise Lost
Week 8	6 May	What is History?	Paradise Lost
Week 9	13 May	Anti-epic	Paradise Regained
	15 May*	[2nd essay due on Friday]	
Week 10	20 May	The end of politics?	Paradise Regained
Week 11	27 May	Resistance	Samson Agonistes
Week 12	3 June	Blind faith	Samson Agonistes

Examination Period: Friday 12 June – Wednesday 1 July 2009