English 373A: British Literature from *Beowulf* to *Paradise Lost*

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Mod. Lang. 494  Office Hours by Appointment  
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<th>SECTION LEADERS</th>
<th>SECTIONS</th>
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<td>Mary Bell</td>
<td>001</td>
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<td>Susan Thomas</td>
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<td>Cyndi Headley</td>
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**FACULTY AVAILABILITY**

Your section leaders will keep regular office hours and will be available by appointment. Though your primary faculty contact will usually be with your section leader, I am always happy to meet with you, briefly after class or at greater length in my office, to talk about the material of the course, to answer questions, and to offer reassurances. I enjoy working closely with students who wish to develop that kind of educational relationship. I will not keep office hours, but I am generally in my office on Tuesdays and often on Thursdays. You are welcome to drop by if you’re in the neighborhood, but if you don’t want to risk not finding me, please make an appointment.

**GRADING POLICIES**

- The Mid-Term Exam will count as 20% of your final grade.
- The Final Exam will count as 30% of your final grade.

Exams will be based on the assigned readings in the syllabus and on lectures. During the course of the semester, there will be a number of Handouts; these are also required reading.

The remaining 50% of your grade will be determined as follows:

- 20% = two short (2-3 page) papers, each worth 10%;
- 15% = average on weekly assignments; 15% = class participation.

Grading is primarily the responsibility of your section leaders, who will work together with me to ensure a reasonable uniformity of expectations across sections. If you believe that you are the victim of a misunderstanding, you may appeal to me directly. Your communication with me will be kept in confidence. Unless you request such an intervention, or your instructor asks for my assistance, I have very little involvement in assigning your grades. The only exception to that rule concerns the grade of “Incomplete.” Section leaders may not assign a grade of “I” without my express permission, which I shall be extremely reluctant to grant. In other words: first you have to persuade your instructor to assign an “I”; then your instructor has to persuade me. My decision will take account of, but will not necessarily endorse, a positive recommendation by the instructor.

**ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance is required for successful participation in this class. Students who miss more than three classes during the first eight weeks of the semester will be dropped from the class. After the first eight weeks, excessive absences will be severely penalized.
## TEXTS

*The Norton Anthology of English Literature*

*Volume 1A: The Middle Ages* (A)

*Volume 1B: The Sixteenth Century & The Early Seventeenth Century* (B)

## SYLLABUS

All of the texts below are to be read BEFORE the lecture/discussion for which they are assigned. If you have not read the assignment, you will not be able to follow the lecture, since I do not devote much time to going over the plot. Even more importantly, if you have not read the assignment, you will not be able to participate intelligently in discussions of the readings. In other words: **DO YOUR HOMEWORK.**

### Au. 25
**INTRODUCTION**
- 27 Introduction to “The Middle Ages” (A 1-23) & *Beowulf* (A 29-51)
- 29 *Beowulf* (A 51-100)

### Sep. 1
**LABOR DAY**
- 3 *Judith* (A 100-108) & *The Dream of the Rood* (A 27-29)
- 5

### Sep. 8
- 8 *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (A 160-213)
- 10 *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (A 160-213)
- 12

- 15 Geoffrey Chaucer: *General Prologue* (A 213-38)
- 17 Geoffrey Chaucer: *The Pardoner* (A 284-98)
- 19

- 22 Geoffrey Chaucer: *The Wife of Bath* (A 256-84)
- 24 Geoffrey Chaucer: *The Nun's Priest's Tale* (A 298-312)
- 26


### Oct. 1
- 1 *Everyman* (A 463-84)
- 3

- 6 Christopher Marlowe: *Dr. Faustus* (B 1002-04, 1022-57)
- 8 Edmund Spenser: *The Faerie Queene, Book 1*, Cantos 1-6 (B 714-86)
- 10

- 13 Edmund Spenser: *The Faerie Queene, Book 1*, Cantos 7-12 (B 786-856)
Mid-term Preview

MID-TERM EXAMINATION (also the last day on which classes may be dropped with a “W”)

“The Sixteenth Century” (B 485-513) & Sir Philip Sidney: *The Defense of Poesy* (B 953-974)

Sonnets I: Petrarch (Englished): Sir Thomas Wyatt (B 592-606), Henry Howard (B 607-15), Edmund Spenser (B 902-16), & William Shakespeare (B 1058-77)

Sonnets II: Sir Philip Sidney (B 975-92) & Lady Mary Wroth (B 1451-61)

“The Early Seventeenth Century” (B 1235-59) & John Donne (B 1260-88)

Nov. 3  John Donne  (B 1289-1308)
  5  George Herbert  (B 1605-25 )
  7

10  Ben Jonson: *Volpone* (B 1324-26, 1334-1427)
12  John Webster: *The Duchess of Malfi*  (B 1461-1533)
14

17  The Gender Wars: Joseph Swetnam (B 1544-46), Rachel Speght (B 1546-49), Aemelia Lanyer (B 1313-24 ), & Elizabeth Cary (B 1536-42)
21  MILTON MARATHON (in the Main Library Special Collections Meeting Room)

24  Andrew Marvell  (B 1695-1736)
26  The Culture Wars: “Faith in Conflict” (B 616-41) & “Religions in England” (Appendix 75-78);
28  THANKSGIVING

Dec.  1  John Milton: *Paradise Lost*, Books 1-4  (B 1830-1908)
  3  John Milton: *Paradise Lost*, Books 5-8  (B 1908-73)
  5  John Milton: *Paradise Lost*, Book 9  (B 1973-98)
  8  John Milton: *Paradise Lost*, Books 10-12 (B 1998-2055)
10  Final Exam Preview
17  FINAL EXAMINATION
   11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.