

**ENGL 3004W-002**  
**Historical Survey of British Literatures II**  
**Fall 2011**  
**158 Amundson Hall**  
**M W 6:00-7:40 PM**  
**Instructor: John Pistelli**  
**Email: [piste004@umn.edu](mailto:piste004@umn.edu)**  
**Office: 4 Lind Hall**  
**Office hours: M W 5:00-6:00 PM**

### **Description**

If it were not for the Poetic or Prophetic Character the Philosophic & Experimental would soon be at the ratio of all things, and stand still, unable to do other than repeat the same dull round over again.  
—William Blake, “There Is No Natural Religion” (1788)

In this course, we will read some of the most influential and memorable writing by (mostly) British and Irish writers from the late eighteenth to the early twenty-first centuries. As this is a class with a historical component, we will be attentive to the political, social, scientific, economic, religious, artistic, and other contexts for this writing over a period of two centuries that, as an observer once commented, saw more change than all of prior recorded history. We will thus need to use our historical imaginations in encountering these works—they may look unfamiliar, off-putting, difficult, or offensively contrary to contemporary attitudes, but we will use our powers of empathy to understand the forces that influenced them. However, we will also heed Blake and other writers in recognizing the power of literary language and visionary imaginings to exceed history’s determinations and to resonate across time, going beyond the givens of any particular circumstance to create something new. Finally, this is a writing-intensive class: we will not only read powerful writing, but strive to compose some of our own, in several different genres, from close reading to the movie review to the argumentative essay.

### **Texts**

(available at the bookstore in Coffman Memorial Union—please purchase the specified editions)

- *Norton Anthology of English Literature: The Major Authors*, 8<sup>th</sup> edition, vol. B
- Jane Austen, *Persuasion* (Oxford World Classics)
- Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol* (Bantam Classics)
- Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (Harcourt)
- Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go* (Vintage International)



## Assignments

### *Grade breakdown:*

Attendance/Participation.....	10%
Poetry Close Reading.....	10%
Paper 1.....	15%
Paper 2.....	25%
Movie Review.....	10%
Commonplace book.....	05%
Final Exam.....	25%

*Attendance and participation.* Attendance will be taken at the beginning of every class. You are free to miss two classes without apology or excuse. This means you don't have to email me or otherwise explain yourself. Every subsequent absence will lower your participation grade by one percentage point (e.g., if you miss four classes, you can only get 8%). Similarly, however, you are responsible for finding out what you've missed by asking a classmate rather than the instructor. Good attendance will get you 7% of this grade; the rest will come from participation, defined as speaking up in class at least once a week.

*Commonplace book.* A commonplace book is a personal collection of quotations drawn from your reading. Commonplace books had their beginnings in classical and medieval readers' collections of particularly beautiful, wise or meaningful passages. Please buy a separate notebook to use as your commonplace book: this can be a 99-cent spiral notebook or the kind of blank journal you buy at any bookstore or whatever. Copy into this book, by hand, at least one passage/quotation per week drawn from your reading in the course. Make it a passage that you find particularly pleasing or moving or interesting, for whatever reason. You don't need to comment on the passage in your own words, but feel free to do so if you wish. The length of the particular quotation is not important; just make sure that you copy at least one passage per week drawn from our reading during the semester. Feel free to copy more things into this book if you wish: e.g., any dialogue you have encountered in a film or TV show that you personally consider well-said, powerful, or funny; overheard conversation; bits and pieces from other things you read in other classes or for pleasure. I will collect the commonplace books several times during the semester to keep track of your progress.

*Final exam.* This will be a two-part final. The first will be take-home: I'll hand out a set of open-ended questions, ask you to pick one, and to produce a one to two page single-spaced essay answering the question with reference to three texts from different historical periods. You'll have one week to do this. The second part will happen in class during finals week and will consist of word and passage identifications that will test what you've learned in the course.

Details for all other assignments will be given as the course progresses.

## **Grades**

*Grading Policy.* It conforms to CLA guidelines. Therefore a “C” is equivalent to basic fulfillment of requirements; to achieve a grade higher than a “C” a student must perform beyond the basic requirements. Please keep the following scale and criteria in mind:

- A (90-100): Outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements
- B (80-90): Significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements
- C (70-80): Meets the course requirements in every respect
- D (60-70): Worthy of credit, even though it fails to meet course requirements fully
- F (0-60): Work was not completed

*Incompletes.* A grade of incomplete (“I”) is given only in a genuine emergency, and *only* for work which is due during the last two weeks of the course. You must make arrangements with the instructor for an incomplete before the last day of class.

## **Student Conduct**

Please do not engage in behavior that disrupts the learning environment for others. This includes any behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either student learning or my ability to teach. In order to avoid disruptions, please observe the following policies: 1. Turn cell phones off and put them away before coming to class. 2. During class, your attention should be directed toward whomever is speaking or to your assigned task; this means no talking to your neighbor, no texting, no cross-word puzzling, etc. 3. I strongly discourage use of laptops during class time as they tend to isolate the user; if you have a pressing need to use one, come and talk to me about it. 4. During classroom discussions, robust debate and the voicing of all opinions are encouraged, but avoid abusive speech, personal attacks and generally offensive language.

## **Contact**

The best way to contact me with questions or concerns about the course is to come to my office hours. If your schedule conflicts with my office hours, please let me know so that we can arrange to meet at another time. Feel free to email me with brief, fact-based questions, but please allow 24 hours for a response. Don’t rely on email—face-to-face communication is best.

## **Access**

Any student with a documented disability condition who needs to arrange accommodations should contact the instructor and Disability Services (626-1333) at the beginning of the semester.

## Scholastic Dishonesty

The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows: “Scholastic Dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.”  
(<http://advisingtools.class.umn.edu/cgep/studentconduct.html>)

Plagiarism, representing someone else’s intellectual work as your own, will result in a failing for the assignment, and may result in a failing grade for the course. Plagiarism can include submitting a paper: 1. written by means of inappropriate collaboration; 2. written by you for another course, submitted without the permission of both instructors; 3. purchased, downloaded, or cut and pasted from the Internet; 4. that fails to properly acknowledge its sources through standard citations.

## Student Writing Support

Students can get one-to-one-consultations on any course paper or writing project at Student Writing Support. Student Writing Support has several campus locations, including the main location in 15 Nicholson Hall. See <http://writing.umn.edu/sws/index.htm> for details about locations, appointments, and online consultations.

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## SCHEDULE (subject to change)

*Note 1: Please complete all readings before the date indicated on the syllabus*

*Note 2: Though I haven’t specifically assigned them below, I will expect you to read the author biographies provided in the Norton Anthology, as well as the Anthology’s introductions to the historical periods (“The Romantic Period [1785-1830]” “The Victorian Age [1830-1901]” and “The Twentieth Century and After”)*

### Week One – Introductions

Wed 09/07 – Alexander Pope: from *Essay on Man* / Daniel Defoe: from *Robinson Crusoe*

### Week Two – Revolution in the Air

Mon 09/12 – Mary Wollstonecraft: from *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*

Wed 09/14 – William Blake: “There Is No Natural Religion,” from *Songs of Innocence and Experience, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*

### **Week Three – Revolutionary Poetry**

Mon 09/19 – William Wordsworth: “We Are Seven,” “Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey,” from Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, “A slumber did my spirit seal,” “Resolution and Independence,” “Ode”

Wed 09/21 – Samuel Taylor Coleridge: “The Eolian Harp,” “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,” “Kubla Khan,” “Christabel,” from *Biographia Literaria*

### **Week Four – Powers of the Poetic Imagination**

Mon 09/26 – Percy Bysshe Shelley: “Hymn to Intellectual Beauty,” “Ozymandias,” “England in 1919,” “Ode to the West Wind,” from *A Defence of Poetry* / Lord Byron: “She Walks in Beauty,” “So we’ll go no more a-roving,” “Prometheus” (handout)

Wed 09/28 – John Keats: “On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer,” “Ode to a Nightingale,” “Ode on a Grecian Urn,” “Ode on Melancholy,” “To Autumn,” “To George and Thomas Keats (Dec. 21, 27 [?], 1817),” “To Richard Woodhouse (Oct. 27, 1818)”

**\*\*Poetry close reading due Thu 09/29 to [piste004@umn.edu](mailto:piste004@umn.edu) by midnight\*\***

### **Week Five – Realism and the Novel**

Mon 10/03 – Jane Austen: *Persuasion* Volume I

Wed 10/05 – Jane Austen: *Persuasion* Volume II

### **Week Six – Domestic Sentiment, Domestic Gothic, and Political Reform**

Mon 10/10 – Charles Dickens: *A Christmas Carol*

Wed 10/12 – Elizabeth Gaskell: “The Old Nurse’s Story”

### **Week Seven – Faith and Doubt, Fantasy and History**

Mon 10/17 – Alfred, Lord Tennyson: “The Lady of Shalott,” “Locksley Hall,” from *In Memoriam* 54-59 and 126-127 / Christina Rossetti, “In an Artist’s Studio,” “After Death,” “A Triad,” “Up-Hill,” “Goblin Market”

Wed 10/19 – Robert Browning: “Porphyria’s Lover,” “My Last Duchess,” “Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came,” “Fra Lippo Lippi,” “Andrea del Sarto”

**\*\*Paper 1 pre-writing due Thu 10/20 to piste004@umn.edu by midnight\*\***

### **Week Eight – Vicissitudes of Aestheticism: Prayer and Play**

Mon 10/24 – Walter Pater: Conclusion to *The Renaissance* (handout) / Gerard Manley Hopkins: “God’s Grandeur,” “As Kingfishers Catch Fire,” “Pied Beauty,” “Duns Scotus’s Oxford,” “Felix Randal,” “Spring and Fall: to a young child,” “No Worst, There Is None,” “Thou Art Indeed Just, Lord”

Wed 10/26 – Oscar Wilde: Preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*

**\*\*Paper 1 due Thu 10/27 to piste004@umn.edu by midnight\*\***

### **Week Nine – Horror, Empire, and the Limits of Realism**

Mon 10/31 – Robert Louis Stevenson: *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

Wed 11/02 – Rudyard Kipling: “The Man Who Would Be King,” “The White Man’s Burden” / Beatrix Potter: *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (handout)

### **Week Ten – Modern Poetry Against the Modern Age**

Mon 11/07 – William Butler Yeats: “The Lake Isle of Innisfree,” “Who Goes with Fergus?” “Leda and the Swan,” “Easter 1916,” “The Second Coming,” “Sailing to Byzantium,” “Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop,” “Lapis Lazuli,” “The Circus Animals’ Desertion”

Wed 11/09 – T. S. Eliot: *The Waste Land*, “Tradition and the Individual Talent”

### **Week Eleven – Fictions of the Inner Life**

Mon 11/14 – James Joyce: “The Dead” / Katherine Mansfield: “The Garden Party”

Wed 11/16 – Virginia Woolf: “Modern Fiction,” *Mrs. Dalloway* pp. 3-70

**Week Twelve – Subjectivity and the City**

Mon 11/21 – Virginia Woolf: *Mrs. Dalloway* pp. 70-191

Wed 11/23 – No class

**Week Thirteen – After Empire, After Auschwitz**

Mon 11/28 – W. H. Auden: “Lullaby,” “As I Walked Out One Evening,” “Musée des Beaux Arts,” “In Memory of W. B. Yeats,” “The Unknown Citizen,” “September 1, 1939,” “The Shield of Achilles” / Philip Larkin: “Church Going,” “This Be the Verse,” “Aubade,” “Homage to a Government”

Wed 11/30 – Samuel Beckett: *Endgame*

**Week Fourteen – Cultural Memory and Global English**

Mon 12/05 – Jean Rhys: “The Day They Burned the Books” / Derek Walcott, “A Far Cry from Africa” / Seamus Heaney: “Digging,” “Punishment,” “The Grauballe Man”

Wed 12/07 – Salman Rushdie: “The Prophet’s Hair” / Kazuo Ishiguro: *Never Let Me Go* Part One

**Week Fifteen – Contemporary Literature and the Fate of the Individual**

Mon 12/12 – Kazuo Ishiguro: *Never Let Me Go* Parts Two and Three

Wed 12/14 – Final review, course evaluations, and conclusions

**\*\*Paper 2 due Mon 12/19 before final exam\*\***

**FINAL EXAM: MON 12/19 6:30-8:30**