

## Department of English &amp; Writing Studies

**Desire in the Renaissance**  
**English 3320F (001)**  
Fall 2020**DRAFT SYLLABUS**

**Instructor:** Dr. Madeline Bassnett  
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**Course Day/Time:** Zoom meetings  
Thursday 11:30 am-1:30 pm

**Office Hours:** Zoom appointments

**TA:** tba

**Course Delivery:** This course includes synchronous and asynchronous components. Lectures will be delivered as narrated PowerPoints and posted on OWL each week by Monday at noon. These lectures will include weekly preparation and guidelines for the Zoom discussions that will take place each Thursday at 11:30 am. You must attend the synchronous meetings in order to complete the course.

**Prerequisites:** At least 60% in 1.0 of English 1020E or 1022E or 1024E or 1035E or 1036E or 1042E or both of English 1027F/G and 1028F/G, or permission of the Department.

Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description

This course will examine the profuse complexity of Renaissance love poetry. Love poems were transgressive, fantastical, and even political. They allowed both men and women to break through cultural and religious restrictions on the expression of desire, and gave them a language to discuss gendered and political dynamics of dominance and submission.

In this course, I'm especially interested in the idea of "writing back." While we'll take care to establish the normative language of desire, we'll also think extensively about how writers transgress that language. We'll ask questions such as: How do women writers establish themselves as desiring subjects using the patriarchal discourse of Petrarchism and Neoplatonism? How do both male and female writers destabilize normative gender hierarchies, express same-sex desires, and even gesture towards non-binary identities? How do Renaissance writers respond to and reshape traditional narratives of desire in ways that allow us, today, to reflect on our own increasingly multidimensional experience of desire, gender, and sexuality?

### **Objectives:**

By the end of the course, successful students will be able to:

- Identify traditional discourses of Renaissance desire, including Petrarchism and Neoplatonism
- Analyse generic, formal, and discursive methods of expressing desire
- Examine the development of non-normative expressions of desire
- Engage with theoretical and critical examinations of gender, desire, and sexuality
- Engage critically and creatively with Renaissance literature
- Develop effective arguments through a combination of close reading and independent research
- Evaluate, critique, and integrate secondary criticism
- Discover connections between the past and present

### Required Course Materials

Available through the Western Bookstore as **print** copies. The Bookstore will ship book orders.

*Broadview Coursepack* bundled with Elizabeth Cary, *The Tragedy of Mariam*

Plus selected readings (to come) available through OWL. I encourage you to print out this material for easy access during discussions.

### Methods of Evaluation

The grade for the course will be arrived at as follows:

#### **To come**

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/Student%20Information.html>.

### Academic Consideration for Missed Work

Students who are temporarily unable to meet academic requirements (e.g. attending lectures or labs, writing tests or midterm exams, completing and submitting assignments, participating in presentations) may submit a self-reported absence form online (available on your Student Center) provided that the absence is 48 hours or less and the other conditions specified in the Senate policy are met. Students can self-report only two absences per academic year. See policy here:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/Academic\\_Consideration\\_for\\_absences.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Consideration_for_absences.pdf).

Students whose absences are expected to last longer than 48 hours, or where the other conditions detailed in the policy are not met (e.g., work is worth more than 30% of the final grade, the student has already used 2 self-reported absences, the absence is during the final exam period), may receive academic consideration by submitting a Student Medical Certificate (for illness) or other appropriate documentation (for compassionate grounds) to Academic Counselling. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. The Student Medical Certificate is available online at [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf).

All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must contact their instructors no less than 24 hours following the end of the period of absence to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic responsibilities missed during their absence. Students are reminded that they should consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying submission of work, and are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances.

Students who have conditions for which academic accommodation is appropriate, such as disabilities or ongoing or chronic health conditions, should work with Accessible Education Services to determine appropriate forms of accommodation.

### Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

### **Plagiarism:**

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

### **Plagiarism Checking:**

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

### Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

### Timetable

TBA