

Department of English & Writing Studies
Topics in Nineteenth-Century Literature: Jane Austen
English 3369F (001)
Fall 2020

Instructor: Mary Helen McMurrin

Course Date/Time: M 1:30 pm-3:20 pm/W
1:30 pm-2:20 pm

Delivery Type: Virtual Format (Zoom),
Synchronous

Antirequisites: The former English 3445E.

Prerequisites: At least 60% in 1.0 of English 1020-1999 or permission of the Department.

Unless you have either the requisites 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

NOTE: This course is required to be taught remotely, but will be as much like an in-person course as we can make it.

You will be required to come to Zoom class during all the scheduled class times; lectures and discussions will be live on Zoom. We may use breakout rooms in Zoom and interactive tools in OWL.

Also note that this course requires quite a lot of reading and writing! You are expected to do all the reading in advance of the class for that day and come prepared to participate. Your essays are expected to be high quality work. Austen is fun to read and talk about, but this is an academic course with upper-level expectations regarding literary analysis.

Jane Austen's novels are some of the most loved in all of English literature. They have inspired countless television and film adaptations making her a unique icon in contemporary culture. Why do they remain so popular and so important? Although Austen seems like a reclusive observer of a narrow social world rather than as a revolutionary voice in women's literature, she deserves to be read again in 2020. This course includes some of Austen's major novels, which are filled with psychological insight and bristling with new narrative techniques. We will also study one of her lesser known, belatedly published novels, which present women very differently. Our aim is to investigate her characters and why we identify with them, the social and cultural contexts of her fictional world, and Austen's distinct voice.

Objectives:

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

GOALS

- Speak and write **critically** about Austen's novels focusing on
 - close textual analysis of Austen's style including character, themes, use of free indirect discourse
 - interpreting the significance of narrative form and themes
 - writing complex thesis statements and reasoned arguments with a sophisticated use of evidence
- Gain familiarity with historical and literary context of Austen's novels: 18th-century British fiction and its themes, as well as Georgian and Regency British culture
- Grasp the biographical and reception history of Jane Austen from her own time to our present moment

Course Materials

You are required to purchase paperback books so that we can use them during our Zoom discussions. The books, in the editions listed below are all REQUIRED. They will be available for purchase at the Western Bookstore. If you will not be in London, the Bookstore will be able to mail the books to you. Please do not use other editions or ebooks.

Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* Edited by James Kinsley, Oxford World's Classics, 2008

Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* Edited by James Kinsley, Oxford World's Classics, 2020

Jane Austen, *Persuasion* Edited by James Kinsley, Oxford World's Classics, 2008

Jane Austen, *Lady Susan*, Penguin (Little Black Classics series), 2016

Other materials will be made available on OWL.

Methods of Evaluation

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

Two essays total of 60%

Discussion posts and replies to other's posts 20%

Analysis of non-scholarly/journalistic writing on Austen 10%

Creative assignment/journalistic essay 10%

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>.

Notes on Written Work

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person's work and is one of the most serious academic offences, since it involves fraud and misrepresentation. In plagiarizing, one is in effect claiming another person's words or ideas or data as one's own work, and thus misrepresenting material subject to academic evaluation. It is necessary, therefore, that plagiarism carry appropriate penalties. These are within the discretion of the instructor in consultation with the Chair of English Undergraduate Studies, but may include failure of a course or a grade of zero on an assignment, without the privilege of resubmitting it.

Writing Process: We will discuss and practice ways to achieve: 1. a complex, arguable thesis; 2. a structured argument using reasons for the thesis; 3. the use and analysis of evidence to support your points; 4. engaging introduction and conclusions. These sessions on the writing process take place throughout the course and will require some group work and individual in-class writing to help you learn how to build and evaluate the components of great essays from the ground up. None of the in-class writing will be graded, but you will be required to hand in three formal essays. In addition, there will be a creative writing exercise which will not be graded. It is designed to help you appreciate Austen style from the inside out.

Late work is unacceptable, and will be penalized 5% per 24 hours it is late. All essays will be submitted electronically to our OWL site. You will also be required to upload your essay to turnitin.com.

Presentation of Written Work:

- Written work should be submitted double-spaced (including inset quotations), in 12 point font, on standard 8 1/2 x 11 inch (letter size) paper. Use one side of the paper only.
 - Use 1 inch margins for all four edges of the paper except the top, which should be a 1/2 inch margin to accommodate a "Header". Do not use justification on the right margin
 - Each page should be numbered consecutively in the top-right hand corner of the page next to your surname.
 - Use italics for the titles of works.
 - Use a "Works Cited" list ONLY if you have consulted secondary sources, i.e., anything other than the Austen novels we are reading for the course.
- *Use MLA style first-page header with your name, etc.

General Marking Criteria:

80-100: An exceptional analysis of an issue or problem in one or more literary texts. The exceptional essay contains a complex main idea along with supporting evidence, i.e., it is not just an observation about the text. Its main idea uses some concept (agency, individuality, sensibility, etc.), which the student defines in his/her own terms, and then analyses. The exceptional essay breaks down its complex main idea into several parts in order to organize the paper. Each part includes some use of the text as evidence, but also forwards the main argument. It goes beyond merely giving evidence, and it goes beyond merely quoting the texts. Rather, the exceptional essay takes apart the quotations to reveal shades of meaning or ambiguities. An A essay must be very well written and show logic and coherence. It will not have awkward word usage or awkward sentence structures. It will follow MLA format perfectly.

70-80: A well-written, coherent essay with a main idea and evidence, but not exceptional. It may have too much plot summary for example, or not enough time and effort was spent in articulating a main idea. Or, it may not use the text well, missing the good quotations, or quoting without analyzing. It might have some awkwardness or lapses in logic, poor grammar, spelling errors, etc.

60-70 A response, but not very deeply considered or well written, or contains errors of comprehension.

50-60: No real main idea; not logically or smoothly written.

Attendance:

If you miss more than two classes your final mark will be adversely affected. If you miss an excessive number of classes I may bar you from taking the final exam. You must pass both the term work and the final exam to pass the course.

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.

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.

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

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