

Department of English & Writing Studies

English 1020E (002)
Understanding Literature Today
Fall/Winter 2025-26

Instructor: Prof. Matthew Rowlinson (he/him)
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Prerequisite(s): Grade 12U English or permission of the Department. For part time students who have been admitted without the OSSD, this permission will be granted as a matter of course.

Antirequisite(s): English 1022E, English 1035E.

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

Poems, plays, and stories are the most vital way people and cultures understand themselves, and as we read together we will enter a conversation between generations of writers in English that will illuminate their different cultures and our own. You will learn the techniques of scholarly interpretation that enable us to understand writers from four hundred years ago and from our own time and you will study the forms and genres they use. You will learn to write critical and interpretative essays and how to present evidence from the works we read to support your arguments about their meaning.

Objectives:

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

- Develop an informed and analytic appreciation of literary works
- Build a critical reading of a work and write essays that have an effective thesis and a logical argument supported by evidence from the text(s);
- Engage in research and properly document sources;
- Use literary terms and concepts in both speech and writing.

Course Materials

Required Books

All four of these books are required in paper (not digital) copies. You are encouraged to make notes in your copies as you read and during class. You will need these books for in class exercises and for the open-book final exam.

The four required books are available at a discount in a package at the bookstore; the package price is \$81.56. The package has the ISBN 978-1-0393-0675-2

The Broadview Introduction to Literature: Poetry – Second Edition

Edited by: Lisa Chalykoff; Neta Gordon; Paul Lumsden

ISBN: 9781554814053 / 1554814057

William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*

Edited by: David Bevington. Broadview 2018.

ISBN: 9781554813780 / 1554813786

Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*

Edited by: Robert P. Irvine. Broadview 2020.

ISBN: 9781554814893 / 1554814898

Oscar Wilde, Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest*

Edited by: Samuel Lyndon Gladden. Broadview 2009.

ISBN: 9781551116945 / 1551116944

Methods of Evaluation

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

During the course of the year you will write 4 papers. Essay 1, 300-500 words, due October 10; 5%.

Essay 2, due December 7, 2000 words, will be worth 20% of your final grade.

Essay 3, 300-500 words, February 1; 5%

Essay 4, 2000 words due April 4, will be worth 20% of your final grade.

Tutorial enagement 10%

In-class excercises 15%, spread over 6 excercises.

Final exam: 25%

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>.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory in all classes and tutorials. Attendance will be taken at tutorials, and 10% of your final grade will be detrmned by your engagement in tutorial discussions. Your engagement grade will be negatively affected by absences, and more than 10 unexcused absences from tutorial (without a grant of academic accommodation) will result in an engagement grade of 0.

Additional Information

Papers are to be uploaded to the course OWL as Microsoft Word (.docx) files. Please double-space and use a 12-point font. Save and upload your paper with a file name in the format <lastname firstname Essay #> like this: "Rowlinson Matthew Essay 1." In the absence of an extension granted by the instructor or accommodation approved by the Academic Counselling office of your home faculty, papers submitted after the due date papers will be penalized at a rate of 1% per calendar day.

Phones are **not** to be used during lectures or tutorials. In the event of a call or text that you **must** attend to, please step out of the room.

The use of laptops in class or tutorials is **strongly discouraged**. If you decide that you must use a laptop to take notes in lecture, you will be asked to sit near the back of the hall to avoid distracting other students.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

Academic Consideration

Students may request academic consideration in cases of extenuating circumstances – that is, personal circumstances beyond the student's control that have a substantial but temporary impact on the student's ability to meet essential academic requirements.

1. Requests for academic consideration are made to the Academic Advising office of the student's Faculty of Registration.
2. Requests for academic consideration include the following components:
 - a. Self-attestation signed by the student;
 - b. Indication of the course(s) and assessment(s) relevant to the request;
 - c. Supporting documentation as relevant.

Requests without supporting documentation are limited to one per term per course.

Documentation for medical illness, when required, includes the completion of a [Western Student Medical Certificate \(SMC\)](#) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation, by a health care practitioner.

Requests linked to examinations scheduled by the Office of the Registrar during official examination periods as well as practice laboratory and performance tests typically scheduled in the last week of term always require formal supporting documentation.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance.

Academic Integrity Tutorial

All students are required to enroll in and complete the Centre for Teaching and Learning's Academic Integrity Tutorial. To access the tutorial, follow this link to the [Academic Integrity Tutorial](#) and select "Enroll in Course" to begin. Once the tutorial has been completed, you will receive a downloadable certificate. You must upload the certificate and submit it through the course Assignments tab in order to complete this assignment. The tutorial must be completed by Friday in the second week of fall term. This tutorial is mandatory in order for you to complete and pass the course. If you have completed the tutorial already for another course, you may upload the same certificate for this course; you do not need to repeat the tutorial.

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

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 includes the submission of material generated by so-called artificial intelligence programs or large language models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT; students should be aware that LLMs are trained with an archive of already existing writing, but do not provide citations of the work they use. Citations and statements of fact generated by LLMs are frequently in error; submission of work containing hallucinations or invented text or citations will be viewed as evidence that AI has been used.

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.

Statement on Gender-Based and Sexual Violence

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced gender-based or sexual violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts, [here](#). To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

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/>

Academic Support & Engagement <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.

Schedule of Classes and Assignments (page numbers in parentheses refer to *The Broadview Introduction to Literature: Poetry*)

Sept 4: Introductions.

Sept 9: William Blake, "The Lamb" (101), "The Tyger" (104).

Sept. 11: William Blake, "The Chimney Sweeper" (103; from *Songs of Innocence*); "The Chimney Sweeper" (104; from *Songs of Experience*)

Sept. 16: Anna Laetitia Barbauld "The Caterpillar" (98). In class exercise 1.

Sept 18: Introduction to library resources.

Sept. 23: Ballads: "Sir Patrick Spens" "Lord Randall" (handout)

Sept. 25: Sappho, "Ode to Aphrodite" (handout); fragments 2 and 55 (477-79)

Sept. 30: National Day for Truth and Reconciliation NO CLASS

Oct. 2: Petrarch, sonnet 294 (481)

Oct. 7: Marlowe, "The Passionate Shepherd to his Love" (41) Essay 1 due; 300-500 words.

Oct. 9: Shakespeare, sonnets 18, 29, 73, 116, 130. (43-45)

Oct. 14: Wyatt, "They flee from me that sometime did me seek" (35), "Whoso list to hunt, I know where there is an hind" (36).

Oct. 16: Donne, "The Flea" (46), "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" (48).

Oct. 21: Donne, *Holy Sonnets* 10 (47), 14 (48).

Oct. 23: Shakespeare, *Hamlet* In class exercise 2

Oct. 28: Shakespeare, *Hamlet*

Oct. 30 Shakespeare, *Hamlet*

Reading week.

Nov. 11: Shakespeare, *Hamlet*

Nov. 13: Shakespeare, *Hamlet*

Nov. 18: LLM AI (so-called) and its limitations.

Nov. 20: Wordsworth, "Lines Written a few Miles above Tintern Abbey" (108). In class exercise 3.

Nov. 25: Wordsworth, "Lines Written a few Miles above Tintern Abbey" (108); "The world is too much with us" (112), Shelley, "Ozymandias" (118).

Nov. 27: Keats, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci: A Ballad" (124)

Dec. 2: Keats "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (128).

Dec. 4: Keats "Ode on a Grecian Urn;" Essay 2 due; 2000 words.

CHRISTMAS BREAK.

Jan. 6: Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* In class exercise 4.

Jan. 8: *Pride and Prejudice*

Jan. 13: *Pride and Prejudice*

Jan. 15: *Pride and Prejudice*

Jan. 20: *Pride and Prejudice*

Jan. 22: *Pride and Prejudice*

Jan. 27: Robert Browning, "My Last Duchess" (151).

Jan. 29: Essay 3 due. Matthew Arnold, "Dover Beach" (160).

Feb. 3: C. Rossetti, "Goblin Market" (167).

Feb. 5: "Goblin Market"

Feb. 10: Emily Dickinson, poems 249, 288, 341, 465, 712, 754, 1129 (162-66)

Feb. 12: Emily Dickinson

Reading week

Feb. 24: Melville, "Bartleby the Scrivener." (handout) In class exercise 5

Feb. 26: "Bartleby"

Mar. 3: Yeats, "The Second Coming" (193), "Leda and the Swan" (194), "Sailing to Byzantium" (194).

Mar. 5: Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (211).

Mar. 10: Quotation and citation in humanities scholarship

Mar. 12: (328) Elizabeth Bishop, "One Art" (253); Seamus Heaney, "Digging" (330)

Mar. 17: Frank Bidart, "Half-Light"

Mar. 19: Dionne Brand, from *thirsty* 30, 32 (382-83)

Mar. 24: Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest*. In class exercise 6.

Mar. 26: *The Importance of Being Earnest*

Mar 31: *The Importance of Being Earnest*

April 2: *The Importance of Being Earnest*

April 7: *The Importance of Being Earnest*, questions about essays.

April 9: Conclusions & review. Essay 4 due; 2000 words.

There will be 3-hour exam during the regular exam period. You will be allowed to bring the assigned books for the course into the exam.