

Department of English & Writing Studies
English 4350F (001)
Seminar in Nineteenth-Century Literature
The Brontës: Romance, Realism, and Myth
Fall 2026



Instructor: Dr. Monika Lee

Office: UC 3421

Office Hours: Tues. 11:00 – 12:00 Wed. 1:00 – 2:00 or by appointment

E-mail: mlee5@uwo.ca.

(Work e-mail is checked regularly Monday through Friday but not on weekends). Attachments will not be opened. If you wish to discuss your ideas, please come to an office hour.

Prerequisites: 1.0 course from English 3000–3999 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

This course explores novels by Charlotte, Emily, and Anne Brontë in the context of nineteenth-century British literature, Romanticism, Victorian social history, narrative, and ideologies of class, gender, religion, and empire. We examine and question the myth-making which surrounds the Brontës (through biography and popular adaptation), as well as the mythic structures and patterns in their texts. Students will engage in critical analysis of narrative, stylistic, symbolic, and theoretical aspects of the Brontës' writings.

Required Course Materials

You may purchase the books through: <https://www.oupcanada.com>

Brontë, Anne. *Agnes Grey*. Oxford. (\$10.95)

Brontë, Anne. *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*. Oxford. (\$12.50)

Brontë, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*. Oxford. (\$8.95)

Brontë, Charlotte. *Villette*. Oxford. (\$13.50)

Brontë, Emily. Poems. <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/emily-bronte#about>

Brontë, Emily. *Wuthering Heights*. Oxford, (\$7.95).

Free e-books of the above are not suitable, but any Penguin, Norton, Broadview, or Oxford edition is adequate.

Recommended: Elizabeth Gaskell. *The Life of Charlotte Brontë*.

Electronic Devices, including laptops and phones, are NOT allowed in class, except with special permission from the instructor.

Statement on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

In this course, the use of AI (automatic translation tools, grammar checkers, ChatGPT...) is prohibited. If AI use is suspected, the instructor will ask for research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and other materials used in preparing assignments. Students are expected to retain these materials until after final grades have been entered. In the unlikely event of concerns being raised about the authenticity of any assignment, students may be asked to produce these materials; an inability to do so may weigh heavily against them.

Schedule of Classes and Assignments

Wed. Sept. 9 - Introduction to the Brontës and course business, seminar sign-up sheet

Wed. Sept. 16 – Poems by Emily Brontë

<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/emily-bronte#about>

Wed. Sept. 23 – **In-class Essay:** Anne Brontë's *Agnes Grey*

Wed. Sept. 30 – no class

Wed. Oct. 7 – Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*

FALL READING WEEK (no classes Oct. 10 to 18)

Wed. Oct. 21 – *Jane Eyre*

Wed. Oct. 28 – **In-class Essay:** Charlotte Brontë's *Villette*

Wed. Nov. 4 – *Villette*

Wed. Nov. 11 – **In-class Essay:** Anne Brontë's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*

Wed. Nov. 18 - *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*

Wed. Nov. 25 – Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*: **Essays due**

Wed. Dec. 2 – *Wuthering Heights*

Wed. Dec. 9 – Review

Methods of Evaluation

- Seminar: (one hour – presentation and discussion) 25%
(Designated: without documentation will receive a grade of 0)
- Research Essay: (approximately 2000 words - *see policy of Late essays below) 25%
- (Essay and Seminar may not be on the same authors)**
- Regular Attendance and Participation
(includes unscheduled pop quizzes) 20%
- In-class essays (15% each) best 2 out of 3
(flexible assignment ineligible for academic consideration) 30%

*The use of generative AI (Chatgpt and other plagiarism software) will be considered a scholastic offence in this course. Plagiarized or partly plagiarized assignments will receive a grade of 0.

Students are advised the plagiarism is a serious academic offence. Electronic and manual plagiarism detection devices may be employed and an electronic copy of a completed assignment should be available to the instructor upon request. Be certain to document all sources carefully.

***Policy on Late Essay Submission**

Extensions on essays may be granted when a request in writing is made to me BEFORE the day on which the essay is due. Otherwise, a penalty of 2% per day will be deducted from the essay grade. Late essays will not be accepted after the end of term. You must acquire academic accommodation for a missed seminar presentation or a grade of 0 will apply.

General information about missed coursework

Students must familiarize themselves with the *University Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs* posted on the Academic Calendar:

<https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academicpolicies/appeals/academicconsiderationSep24.pdf>

This policy does not apply to requests for academic consideration submitted for **attempted or completed work**, whether online or in person. The policy also does not apply to students experiencing longer-term impacts on their academic responsibilities. These students should consult: [Accessible Education](#).

For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar's webpage:

<https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academicconsiderations/>

All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline.

Scholastic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously, and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, here:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academicpolicies/appeals/scholasticdisciplineundergrad.pdf>.

Statement on the use of plagiarism-checking software

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>).

Policy on Accommodation for Religious Holidays

Students should review the [policy for Accommodation for Religious Holidays](#). Where a student will be unable to write examinations and term tests due to a conflicting religious holiday, they should inform their instructors as soon as possible but **not later than two weeks** prior to writing the examination/term test. In the case of conflict with a midterm test, students should inform their instructor as soon as possible but not later than one week prior to the midterm.

Religious Accommodation requests for final exams should be submitted via the Student Absence Portal.

Academic Accommodation is “a means of adjusting the academic activities associated with a course or program of student in order to permit students with disabilities to participate in those activities at the University and to fulfill the essential requirements of a course or program.” <https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academicpolicies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodationdisabilities.pdf>. Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with **Accessible Education** at the earliest opportunity. “Accessible Education plays a central role in Western’s efforts to ensure that its academic programs are accessible for all students” <http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessibleeducation/index.html>

Support Services

Academic Advising

Your Home Faculty’s Academic Advising Office will support or refer whenever you have an issue that is affecting your studies, including information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters. Do not hesitate to reach out to them if you are struggling and unsure where to go for help. Contact info for all Faculties is here: <https://registrar.uwo.ca/facultyacademiccounselling.html>

Mental Health Support

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<https://uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Gender-based and sexual violence

Western University [is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence](#) (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/studentssupport/survivorsupport/get-help.html>. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Learning Development and Success

Counsellors at the Learning Development and Success Centre <https://learning.uwo.ca> are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

USC

Additional student-run support services are offered by the USC, <https://westernusc.ca/services/>.