

MILTON

ENGL 4309, CRN 27491
Hudspeth 300
MWF 10:30–11:20 a.m.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines a selection of the major poetic and prose works of John Milton. We will consider Milton's contribution to the political, theological, and cultural debates in seventeenth-century England, as well as Milton's own self-conscious relationship to literary tradition. The centerpiece of this course is a five-week unit on Milton's *Paradise Lost*, an astonishing reconception of the epic and arguably the finest poem in English. We will approach *Paradise Lost* from different critical perspectives, paying special attention to its relationship to Virgil's *Aeneid*, inarguably the most important classical epic. Throughout the semester, you will also engage in a variety of activities designed to show how the study of Milton's works can help us think and write about our own issues in the 21st century.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To gain a greater familiarity and appreciation of Milton's works
- To develop and improve your ability to read and write about poetry in a critical manner, with particular emphasis on close reading
- To become familiar with the different poetic genres prominent in Renaissance England, and to consider Milton's re-invention of these genres
- To learn about some of the major social, political, and theological controversies in Renaissance England, and to consider Milton's response to them
- To improve your critical research skills by performing secondary research and incorporating this research into your writing

TEXTBOOKS

- John Milton, *Milton's Selected Poetry and Prose*, ed. Jason P. Rosenblatt (New York: W. W. Norton, 2011). ISBN 9780393979879
- Virgil, *The Aeneid*, trans. Allen Mandelbaum (New York: Bantam, 2004). ISBN 9780553210415
- John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. David Scott Kastan (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2005). ISBN 9780872207332
- Additional readings on Blackboard

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Weekly Activities (20%)

Class Quizzes (20%)

Exams (20%)

Final Project (20%)

Attendance & Participation (20%)

Grading Scale: 100-90=A, 89-80=B, 79-70=C, 69-60=D

Weekly Activities

Throughout the semester you will be required to complete weekly activities designed to teach you important information and help you apply your learning beyond the classroom. There are three different types of activities, each with different requirements and deadlines, so it's important that you understand them.

Blackboard Activities. These activities typically require you to complete a reading or video and then pass an online quiz to show your mastery of the material. In a week with a Blackboard Activity, you must complete the activity by that Sunday at 11:59 p.m. (For example, the Week 1 Blackboard Activity is due by Sunday, January 25, 11:59 p.m.). If you complete the activity after the deadline, you will receive partial credit.

Open Activities. These activities can be completed at any time during the semester. In most cases, you will be asked to provide evidence that you have completed the activity. I encourage you to review all of the Open Activities as soon as they are posted, since you may be able to complete some of them early in the semester.

Optional Activities. As the name indicates, these activities are optional and will count as extra credit. However, you can only receive credit for an optional activity after you have completed ALL of the required Blackboard Activities and Open Activities.

Class Quizzes

Weekly open-book quizzes will be regularly given. These quizzes will test your knowledge of the reading assigned that week, though they may also include material covered in class and the Blackboard activities. At the end of the semester, I will drop your two lowest quiz scores. There is no make-up for quizzes. If you miss a quiz because you are absent or late to class, you will receive a zero for that quiz. No exceptions.

Final Project

Your final requirement for the course will be a substantial project on Milton's *Paradise Lost*. For this project, you will have the option of a traditional research paper or an original creative work. More information about this project will be given later in the semester.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance. Regular attendance is absolutely required. Your first 4 absences will be automatically excused. After that, each absence will result in a 3-point deduction from your final grade. *No exceptions.* It is your responsibility to use your excused absences for illness or other unavoidable circumstances only. More than 7 absences (both excused and unexcused) will result in automatic failure of the course.

In addition, I expect you to be in class on time. Three late attendances will be counted as one absence. If you are late to class and I have already taken attendance, it is your responsibility to ensure at the end of class that I have recorded you as present.

Texting. Absolutely prohibited. If you are observed texting or using a mobile phone in class, you will be counted absent for that day. If you need to check your phone for any reason, please excuse yourself from the room. Laptops are not permitted in class.

Plagiarism. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. If you submit work that is not your own, you will receive a failing grade for the course and a report will be filed with the Dean of Students. Please note that carelessness is not an excuse for submitting plagiarized work. For more information on what constitutes plagiarism in academic writing, you may consult http://www.plagiarism.org/plag_article_what_is_plagiarism

Class Participation. The course will be run as a discussion-based seminar. Therefore, you will be expected to contribute regularly to class discussion. I strongly believe that regular participation on your part not only increases learning, but also develops skills that will benefit you throughout your academic and professional career. Even with perfect attendance, you will not receive a strong grade in this component of the course without making a reasonable contribution to class discussion.

Office Hours. Mondays 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m., Wednesdays 9:00–10:00 a.m., and by appointment. You are encouraged to visit my office hours to follow up on questions raised in class or to get coaching on particular assignments.

Unit 1 Launching a Poetic Career		
Week 1	Jan. 21	Introduction. "On Shakespeare"
	Jan. 23	Blackboard Activity: Getting Started
Week 2	Jan. 26	Sonnets I, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII
	Jan. 28	Sonnets XIII, XIV, XVI, XIX, XX, XXIII
	Jan. 30	Blackboard Activity: Poetic Meter
Week 3	Feb. 2	<i>At a Solemn Music, Arcades, Lycidas</i>
	Feb. 4	<i>On the Morning of Christ's Nativity.</i> Poetry recital in class
	Feb. 6	Blackboard Activity: The Reformation
Week 4	Feb. 9	<i>Comus (A Masque Presented at Ludlow Castle)</i>
	Feb. 11	<i>Comus (A Masque Presented at Ludlow Castle)</i>
	Feb. 13	Open Activity: Theatrical Performance
Week 5	Feb. 16	Exam 1
	Feb. 18	<i>Areopagitica</i> (pp. 333–357) (no class)
	Feb. 20	Open Activity: Public Libraries
Unit 2 Classical Models		
Week 6	Feb. 23	Virgil, <i>The Aeneid</i> , Books 1–2
	Feb. 25	Virgil, <i>The Aeneid</i> , Books 3–4
	Feb. 27	Blackboard Activity: Ekphrasis
Week 7	Mar. 2	Virgil, <i>The Aeneid</i> , Books 5–6
	Mar. 4	Virgil, <i>The Aeneid</i> , Books 7–8
	Mar. 6	Open Activity: War Memorials
Week 8	Mar. 9	Virgil, <i>The Aeneid</i> , Books 9–12
	Mar. 11	Exam 2
	Mar. 13	Ramón Griffero events (TBD)
March 16–20 Spring Break		

Unit 3 <i>Paradise Lost</i>		
Week 9	Mar. 23	<i>Paradise Lost</i> , Books 1-2
	Mar. 25	<i>Paradise Lost</i> , Book 3 <i>The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates</i> , pp. 385–92 (Norton textbook)
	Mar. 27	Blackboard Activity: Ovid’s <i>Metamorphoses</i>
Week 10	Mar. 30	<i>Paradise Lost</i> , Book 4
	Apr. 1	<i>Paradise Lost</i> , Book 5
	Apr. 3	Open Activity: Humanities Events
Week 11	Apr. 6	<i>Paradise Lost</i> , Books 6–7
	Apr. 8	<i>Paradise Lost</i> , Book 8 Haydon, “Ambiguous Words” (BB)
	Apr. 10	Blackboard Activity: Secondary Reading
Week 12	Apr. 13	<i>Paradise Lost</i> , Book 9 <i>Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce</i> , pp. 230–33, 243–47 (Norton text)
	Apr. 15	<i>Paradise Lost</i> , Book 9 Dobranski, “The Matter of Hair in <i>Paradise Lost</i> ” (BB)
	Apr. 17	Open Activity: UTEP Library Trip
Week 13	Apr. 20	<i>Paradise Lost</i> , Books 10-11
	Apr. 22	<i>Paradise Lost</i> , Book 12
	Apr. 24	Optional Activity: Student choice
Week 14	Apr. 27	Final Project Preparation
	Apr. 29	Final Project Preparation. Proposal due
	May 1	Student conferences
Week 15	May 5–7	Project Presentations
Final Project due Monday, May 13		