

# ENGLISH 312: Studies in Renaissance & 17<sup>th</sup>-Century British Literature Fall 2016

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**Dr. Christopher L. Morrow**

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**Office Hours:** Tuesdays, 3:15 pm – 4:15 pm  
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Thursdays, 3:15 pm – 4:15 pm  
or by appointment

**Email:** cl-morrow@wiu.edu

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**Meeting Times:** 2:00 pm – 3:15 pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays, in Simpkins 027

**Pre-/Co-Requisite:** ENG 299 or consent of instructor

*A person may sleep many years at the fountain of learning, and yet awake no physician.*  
Mary Trye, *Medicatrix*, (1675)

## **Course Description and Objectives**

The English Renaissance, spanning roughly 1485 to 1660, was an age of explorations where writers were consistently seeking to understand new and old frontiers, both literal and metaphoric. In this course, we will read a wide variety of Renaissance texts – poetry, drama, and prose – and follow them on their explorations into the New World, into the mythical past and into concepts such as love, religion and science. We will read authors you may already be familiar with such as William Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe as well as many that you may not know such as John Donne and Amelia Lanyer.

We will examine and discuss these texts within contemporary intellectual, political, and literary contexts and trace the development of concepts and themes across a variety of voices. Ultimately, this course will provide students with a broad understanding of the literary voices, genres, and concepts that flourished in early modern England.

## **Required Texts:**

Please purchase the following books:

Ford, John. *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*. Edited by Martin Wiggins. Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, 2015. New Mermaids.

*MLA Handbook*. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Modern Language Association of America, 2016.

Norbrook, David, editor. *The Penguin Book of Renaissance Verse, 1509-1659*. Penguin Books, 2005. Penguin Classics.

Salzman, Paul, editor. *An Anthology of Elizabethan Prose Fiction*. Oxford University Press, 2008.

Shakespeare, William. *The Winter's Tale*. Edited by John Pitcher. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015.  
The Arden Shakespeare. Third Series.

\*Any additional readings will be provided on WesternOnline.

### **Bring Appropriate Book(s) to Every Class**

Recommended:

Writer's handbook such as Hacker's *Pocket Style Manual* or Graff & Birkenstein's *They Say/I Say*.

### **Course Requirements & Assignments**

**Participation (10%):** Discussion in this course relies on strong, nuanced, and consistent participation from each student in the class. Therefore, I expect students to have read and reflected on the assignment in advance and to come to class prepared to discuss it. Students are required to participate in discussion regularly by answering questions, posing questions, and making analytical comments. The reading miscellany assignment (see below) is designed to provide you with discussion material. Participation will be evaluated using the following general criteria:

- A: Student contributes *daily* and *significantly* and always actively focuses on class discussion.
- B: Student contributes *regularly* and always actively focuses on class discussion.
- C: Student contributes *sporadically* and/or always actively focuses on class discussion.
- D: Student contributes *rarely* and/or often does not stay actively focused on the discussion.
- F: Student does not contribute and regularly does not stay actively focused on the discussion.

I do not expect nor require students to have the "right" answer or to provide ground-breaking analysis but merely to engage in the process of discussing and analyzing the literature. Remember that quality is better than quantity, but quantity is better than no quantity. I will generally (but not always) rely on voluntary participation. Depending on the level of class participation and how well the class is keeping up with the reading, I may also give announced or unannounced objective reading quizzes covering the reading assigned for that class period. These quizzes will be figured into the participation grade.

**Reading Miscellany (20%):** Readers in early modern England would often keep small notebooks in which they would copy down quotes of poems, books, or plays that they found intriguing or particularly exceptional. In this course, students will keep a form of the reading miscellany by identifying a substantial quote from the day's assigned reading and then critically reflecting on this quote, unpacking the concepts and/or teasing out the hidden complications and moving beyond explanation/explication to make contestable analytical assertions. This assignment formalizes (and rewards) work that you are already be doing as English majors. A detailed prompt will follow.

**DUE: Prior to each class period unless otherwise noted in calendar.**

**Guide to Renaissance Literature (20%):** Rather than have students take a final examination to assess their overall comprehension of the course, each student will write and produce a "Guide to Renaissance Literature." This guide will include information from throughout the course. Therefore, it is essential that you work on this assignment throughout the semester. It will contain 5 required sections:

- 1) Glossary of 15 Renaissance words (approximately 1 from each week)
- 2) Definitions for 5 literary terms useful for understanding Renaissance Literature

- 3) Top 5 Lists: your top 5 favorite and least favorite individual works and 1-2 sentence explanations for each
- 4) 5-10 Fun Facts about the Renaissance from this course
- 5) [Your Choice! – you might have additional top 5 lists (e.g. best metaphors) or maybe a list of “firsts” that happened in the Renaissance]

**DUE: December 13<sup>th</sup> at 3:00pm**

**Formal Writing Assignments:** Each student will write 3 formal essays. While brief descriptions can be found below, detailed prompts for each will be circulated in class and/or available on WesternOnline. Each essay must conform to MLA guidelines for format, in-text citation, and the works cited page. The following policies apply to all formal writing assignments.

Pre-writing: There may be pre-writing assignments (such as topic paragraph, thesis sentence, outline, etc.) for each essay. Failure to complete these assignments will result in a penalty to the final paper grade.

Rough Drafts: For essays which we will peer review, you must bring a complete, typed, rough draft that meets the minimum length requirements for the assignment. If you fail to do so, the highest grade the final draft can receive is a D.

Late Work: Papers are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Papers will be submitted in print in class and electronically via WesternOnline. Late essays incur a 5% penalty for every calendar day. If you need an extension, send a email request (prior to the due date) stating the specific reason for the extension request. In the event that you submit the printed copy outside of class (i.e. under my door, etc.), it is your responsibility to confirm that I received it.

Explication (15%): Students will write a 3-page explication of a Renaissance poem. Briefly, an explication is a line-by-line explanation of a poem which summarizes the poem on a literal level and examines how the poetic and rhetorical features of the poem construct a more figurative argument. Students will need to use the Oxford English Dictionary and possibly a reference work on literary terms but are not allowed to consult literary criticism.

**Rough Draft DUE: September 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Final Draft DUE: Sept 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Literary Analysis Essay (15%): Students will write a 4-5 page analytical essay which advances and demonstrates a coherent, argumentative, and significant interpretation of a specific work of literature from class. The argument of your essay will be developed and supported by strong textual analysis and close reading. This assignment showcases your interpretation and analysis and does not include secondary critical research.

**Rough Draft DUE: October 25<sup>th</sup>**

**Final Draft DUE: November 1<sup>st</sup>**

Scholarly Essay (20%): Students will write a 7-8 page essay which advances a specific, contestable, and significant literary argument that is contextualized within and contributes to current literary scholarship. The argument must be developed, demonstrated, and supported with textual analysis and close reading as well as at least three scholarly sources (published after 1990). More than unambiguous support, the argument needs to engage these sources and conceptually extend, revise, or reject analysis/argument from the scholarly sources.

**Rough Draft DUE: December 1<sup>st</sup>**

**Final Draft DUE: December 8<sup>th</sup>**

**Distribution and Grading Scale**

Participation	10%
Reading Miscellany	20%
Explication	15%
Literary Analysis Essay	15%
Scholarly Essay	20%
Guide to Renaissance Literature	20%

<b>A</b>	93-100%	<b>B+</b>	87-89%	<b>C+</b>	77-79%	<b>D+</b>	67-69%	<b>F</b>	0%-59%
<b>A-</b>	90-92%	<b>B</b>	83-86%	<b>C</b>	73-76%	<b>D</b>	63-66%		
		<b>B-</b>	80-82%	<b>C-</b>	70-72%	<b>D-</b>	60-62%		

*\*Failure to complete all four major writing assignments will result in a failing grade.*

**Course Policies**

**Attendance:** Regular attendance is not only mandatory but essential for success in this course. Students are expected to attend class on a regular basis and will be held accountable for any material covered in class, including class discussion, announcements, and any changes to the reading schedule and assignments. Students are responsible for getting information and class notes from a fellow classmate. Preparation is a crucial part of attendance. Therefore, students are required to bring the appropriate text to every class meeting.

Each student is allowed *four* absences for any reason -- ranging from illness to oversleeping. I do not distinguish between "excused" and "unexcused" absences. As such, students are not expected to document these absences, nor does documentation "excuse" the absence. Allowances may be made in extreme circumstances that necessitate missing multiple days. These circumstances will need to be documented, and you must contact me as soon as possible.

Possible Attendance/Preparation Penalties:

- Failure to bring the appropriate text to class will result in a 5% penalty to the participation grade.
- After four, each subsequent absence will result in a 3% penalty to the final grade.
- Students who miss more than 8 total classes will receive an automatic **F** for the course.

**Tardiness:** I am not bothered by individuals who are occasionally late for class or must occasionally leave class early – the key word being *occasionally*. However, if you anticipate that you must consistently arrive late or leave early, you need to replace this course with another.

If you arrive after I take roll, it is your responsibility to speak with me after class to ensure I record your attendance. If you do not speak with me, you may be counted absent. If you miss more than half of the class due to tardiness or leaving early, it will count as an absence.

**Email:** Email correspondence is a quick and easy way to communicate during this semester. I will use it frequently to communicate with the class, and I encourage you to use to it contact me to set up an appointment, ask questions, make comments, etc. I do consider email to be formal communication so I expect emails to be properly addressed, to maintain a professional tone, and to

be grammatically correct. If your question or request is too large to be handily resolved over email, I will ask you to set an appointment to discuss it in an individual conference. Do Not Use WesternOnline email – I will not check that email regularly.

**Office Hours:** Students are encouraged to visit during office hours. These are available to use without setting an appointment. Additionally, if I am in my office, feel free to drop in to see if I am available to meet. If you are not able to meet during office hours, please email me with a couple of potential times, and we can schedule an appointment.

I always enjoy speaking with students about their writing, the readings for the course, or literary topics large or small! Additionally, if you are working on a paper and have questions or would like feedback, I am happy to work with you on your paper at any stage of the writing process.

**Scholastic Dishonesty:** Scholastic dishonesty of any kind on any assignment undermines the quality of education at WIU and will not be tolerated under any circumstances. This includes cheating, fabrication, falsification, multiple submissions, and plagiarism. Scholastic dishonesty of any kind will result in an F in the course and will be reported to CAGAS. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes scholastic dishonesty. I will also be happy to answer any questions you may have. You should also consult the University policy at <http://www.wiu.edu/policies/acintegrity.php>.

**Students with disabilities:** In accordance with University values and disability law, students with disabilities may request academic accommodations where there are aspects of a course that result in barriers to inclusion or accurate assessment of achievement. To file an official request for disability-related accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center at **309-298-2512**, [disability@wiu.edu](mailto:disability@wiu.edu) or in 143 Memorial Hall. Please notify me as soon as possible to ensure that this course is accessible to you in a timely manner.

**Classroom Behavior:** Students are expected to behave with respect toward the course, their fellow students, and the instructor. We will be reading a variety of pieces which contain subject matter that may be deemed offensive to some people, such as profanity and depictions of sex and violence. I expect students to be able to discuss this material in a mature way and maintain an appropriate demeanor during class. If you have extenuating circumstances with encountering this material, please set an appointment with me immediately.

Private conversations and other disruptive behaviors interfere with teaching and learning and will not be tolerated. Continued disruptive behavior can result in an assigned classroom seat, penalty to final grade, and/or expulsion from the class for the day or the semester.

**Electronic Devices:** Laptops and tablets are acceptable for note-taking and consulting electronic versions of required readings as long as the technology does not become a distraction.

Cellphones, which can play a valuable role in the event of an emergency, should be set to vibrate at the beginning of class. If you need to take a call, you are welcome to step outside of class briefly. Texting, emailing, social media, and non-class related activities are strictly prohibited and will negatively affect your grade. After an initial warning, violation of this policy will result in dismissal from the class and a 15% penalty to your participation grade per instance.

**University Writing Center:** The UWC is available to assist you with general and specific questions on any of the writing assignments for this course. Consultants can provide another voice on your

writing at any stage in the writing process from brainstorming to polishing the final product. Please call for an appointment (298-2815) and be sure to bring a copy of your assignment to your session. A visit to the UWC should be a supplement to rather than a replacement for talking about your paper with me.

**WesternOnline:** We will be using WesternOnline for the online submission of formal essays and for providing electronic access to course documents. If you need help using WesternOnline, please let me know.

**Title IX Announcement:** University values, Title IX, and other federal and state laws prohibit sex discrimination, including sexual assault/misconduct, dating/domestic violence, and stalking. If you, or someone you know, has been the victim of any of these offenses, we encourage you to report this to the Title IX Coordinator at 309-298-1977 or anonymously online at:

**[http://www.wiu.edu/equal\\_opportunity\\_and\\_access/request\\_form/index.php](http://www.wiu.edu/equal_opportunity_and_access/request_form/index.php).** If you disclose an incident to a faculty member, the faculty member must notify the Title IX Coordinator. The complete Title IX policy is available at: **<http://www.wiu.edu/vpas/policies/titleIX.php>.**

**Students' Rights and Responsibilities:** For information, visit **[www.wiu.edu/provost/student/](http://www.wiu.edu/provost/student/)**