

ENGLISH 575
RESTORATION AND 18TH-CENTURY
BRITISH LITERATURE
FALL 2007
(THREE SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS)

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CLASS DAYS AND TIMES: TUESDAYS, 6:00 P.M. TO 9:00 P.M.

CONDUCTED IN ITV FORMAT, THE CLASS MEETS CONCURRENTLY AT THE UNIVERSITY CENTER IN THE WOODLANDS AND IN EVANS 154 ON THE HUNTSVILLE CAMPUS

CAMPUS OFFICE HOURS: MWF 11:00 A.M. TO 12:00 A.M., AND BY APPOINTMENT
UNIVERSITY CENTER OFFICE HOURS: BY APPOINTMENT

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

English 575, Studies in Restoration and Eighteenth-Century English Literature, is a graduate-level survey of the literature of Great Britain from 1660, the year in which the English restored the monarchy after the Interregnum, to 1798, the year in which Wordsworth and Coleridge ushered in “Romanticism” with the publication of their *Lyrical Ballads*. Among the familiar and not-so-familiar authors that we read are Pepys, Sprat, Locke, Butler, Rochester, Behn, Dryden, Addison and Steele, Swift, Pope, Richardson, Fielding, Sterne, Gray, Johnson, Goldsmith, Chatterton, Wollstonecraft, and Blake. In reading their works, we test some of the popular myths about the so-called “long eighteenth century”: Was this, in fact, an “age of reason”? an age of “enlightenment”? a “neoclassical” age? an age of “sensibility”?

Grounding the writers and their works in their cultural and historical contexts, the course seeks to dispel the myth that the eighteenth century was an age of stiff brocades, unswerving gentlemanly and gentlewomanly decorum, and stuffy dinner conversations over port wine. It was, rather, a time of brawling, bustling, busybodying, sometimes meditative but often reckless, boisterous, inquisitive and acquisitive, often daring and sometimes smug, grave and querulous, gossipy, blushing and bawdy, blustering, earthy, exuberant, and embattled men and women who saw the birth of the information age and a consumer economy, the blurring of class lines, and the groundswell of the *-isms* that we call “modern”: secularism, skepticism, and empiricism. Standing thus at the edge of our own world, the writers of the day acknowledged and ignored, recorded, and wrestled with these developments, encouraged them, resisted them, and debated them. Their responses are the stuff of our course.

Requirements include ten reading response papers, a term paper and various preliminary steps, midterm and final examinations, and active and steady participation.

Course value: three semester credit hours

2. COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course aims not only to give you a broad, graduate-level survey of different genres of literature from 1660-1798 but also to give you a greater understanding of and appreciation for the intellectual and cultural developments of the day.

The course also seeks to make of you independent readers, scholars and teachers who will contribute significantly to the *profession* of literature and language. Accordingly, it encourages you to develop your abilities to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view and to engage the ongoing critical conversations about the works and authors of the long eighteenth century cogently and skillfully in writing.

3. POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

A. REQUIRED TEXTS

I have ordered the following editions of texts for the class. These should be available in bookstores that serve the university; you may also get them on line, if you have time. While you must purchase the required edition of the Longman anthology, our central reader, you may get variant authoritative editions of the other works. Please keep in mind, however, that because I will be citing the prescribed editions in class discussions, you may have to do a little searching for page numbers. This shouldn't be much of a problem with most of the texts; Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Richardson's *Pamela*, however, are not broken into discrete chapters, so they may be more difficult than others to negotiate. I would appreciate your getting the listed editions of those two works.

The Longman Anthology of British Literature Volume 1C: The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century. 3rd ed. Longman 0-321-33393-4

Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*. Ed. Richetti. Penguin 0-14-143982-3

Henry Fielding, *Joseph Andrews/Shamela*. Ed. Battestin. Riverside 0-395-05150-9

Samuel Richardson, *Pamela*. Ed. Eaves and Kimpel. Riverside 0-395-11152-8

Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*. Ed. Fox. Bedford/St. Martin's 0-312-06665-1

Course Supplement (provided)

Each of you should also own a copy of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, ed. Joseph Gibaldi, 6th ed. (2003) or later, and be familiar with methods of scholarship and conventions of documentation.

B. COURSE REQUIREMENTS (WITH APPROXIMATE RELATIVE VALUES)

1. Ten reading response papers of two-three typed pages: 40% collectively
2. A critical research paper of between ten and twelve pages and preliminary research assignments: 35% collectively
3. A midterm essay examination (Tuesday, October 9): 10%
4. A comprehensive final essay examination (Tuesday, December 11): 15%

C. ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Because you have chosen to take this graduate-level course, I presume that you *want* to be here. Accordingly, I expect that you will never miss a session, except under the most unusual circumstances. If you have a job, a demanding pet, "personal problems," or any other extracurricular distractions that will prevent your attending class weekly and submitting all assignments on time, please take another course.

More than two absences will lower your final grade.

An extended illness does not excuse you from the requirement that you attend class; my rationale is that if you are too ill to attend all classes, you should withdraw from your courses and try them again when you can make a serious commitment to them without distraction or dis-ease.

Please come to class having read all the assigned materials carefully and thoughtfully. Whether you are shy or not, I expect that you will engage discussions enthusiastically.

D. EXAMINATIONS

To demonstrate your ability to see the works, authors, and ideas comprehensively, you will have both a midterm and a final examination. The final examination will be comprehensive. Typically the exams will ask that you respond to two of three prompts.

Despite the academic terror, in-class, closed book essay examinations serve several purposes:

First, preparing for such an exam requires that you sift through a large and not very cohesive body of materials and make comprehensive sense of them. As you develop your own interests in reading the works and exercise your critical intelligence in preparing, you may see common themes, methods, and interests that I myself haven't considered. Good!—provided that you can make sturdy arguments about such themes, methods, and interests.

Second, being forced to articulate your arguments about the literature under time constraints resembles something closer to what you might face as a teacher, if you are classroom-bound; there you should have enough of a comprehensive understanding of your subject so that you are able to field questions from your students.

Finally, the MA comprehensive examination that will crown the graduate career of those of you taking a degree in English at Sam Houston State University requires that you address three two-hour long questions over literature and language. The midterm and final for this course are good rehearsals.

E. GRADING POLICY

We follow a standard ten-point grading scale in this class.

Some materials, like certain preliminary steps in the research project, will not be graded. However, you should submit them on time to avoid incurring my displeasure. To avoid incurring incremental penalties of one letter grade for every late calendar day, turn in all graded materials on time. An absence (oh, no) does not excuse you from turning in an assignment on a due date.

F. ADDENDA

Pace your reading and writing assignments well; I am reluctant to give incompletes.

Any student convicted of plagiarism or another form of academic dishonesty will fail the assignment or examination and be subject to University disciplinary action. (Unintentional plagiarism is plagiarism nevertheless; please be careful in borrowing from original sources.)

Please observe the customary classroom courtesies.

Students with Disabilities: Sam Houston State University responsibly observes the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you have a disability that may adversely affect your work in this class, please register with the SHSU Counseling Center and talk with your professor about how he can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. No accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center, however. Contact the Chair of the Committee for Continuing Assistance for Disabled Students and Director of the Counseling Center, Lee Drain Annex, by calling (936) 294-1720.

Observance of Religious Holy Days: Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself or herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s) early in the term. The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable time frame in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed.

Visitors in the Classroom: I always welcome visitors in the class-room—a chance for *you* to show off. But the visitor must not disrupt the classroom with his or her attendance.

Instructor Evaluation: The University asks that you complete a course/ instructor evaluation form toward the end of the term. So, if you bide your time patiently, you will have the opportunity to turn the tables on your professor by evaluating *him*.

E-Mail Policy: I am always happy to answer questions or address concerns by e-mail (eng_pwc@shsu.edu). But in e-mailing, please address me (“Dear Professor Child”), and identify yourself clearly. (Thank you.)

And Finally: I reserve the right to make minor changes in the syllabus.