

San José State University
Department of English and Comparative Literature
ENGL 50: Beginnings to the American Experiment / Spring 2021

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Dr. José Juan Villagrana
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Office Hours:	Wednesdays 1:00pm – 2:00pm and by appointment
Class Days/Time:	Monday and Wednesday, 10:30am – 11:45am
Prerequisites:	ENGL 001 A

Course Format

The course format is lecture and discussion as a synchronous online course.

Course Description

This course introduces students to the study of English literary fiction from its “beginnings” to the early eighteenth century. Students will examine how various texts return to and elaborate on shared concerns: How does something that’s entirely made up (literary fiction) question and inform social power relations and politics? How does a religious devotee praise God through a poem that contains both erotic and spiritual elements? How do dramatic works talk about their own language and performance in terms of illusion, magic, and deception? By addressing these questions which treat the literary object and its creation, students will access and analyze the way in which these elucidate concerns about constructing race and gender, fashioning the colonial other, dealing with religious conflict, and theorizing political violence.

Course Goals

Students will learn how the elements of figurative language and literary fiction interact with central religious, political, and artistic concerns. Students will learn to see patterns: an author’s imitation, response, and development of a literary tradition, literary form, or literary conceit. Students will write essays of literary analysis by quoting textual evidence, making informed inferences about the evidence, and placing the discussion within the appropriate context of the literary piece and its conventions.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for English and Comparative Literature

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of close reading in the study of literature, creative writing, and/or rhetoric.
2. Show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches to British literature.
3. Write clearly, effectively, and creatively.
4. Develop and carry out research projects.
5. Articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts.

This course serves the department's Student Learning Objectives 1 and 2 (LO1 and LO2) by introducing you to a variety of literary forms. You will read poetry, drama, speeches, travel literature, and narrative fiction.

Students are asked to write two essays for this course including one research assignment; this clearly serves Learning Objectives 3 and 4 (LO3 and LO4). Assessment of student success in LO3 and LO4 will be measured by their grades on these essays.

Students are asked to come to class prepared to talk about the material they read, and my lectures aim to help students to realize the relations among culture, history, and the texts we read. The ability to articulate the relationships listed in Learning Objective 5 (LO5) is measured by the students' participation in the course.

Required Texts/Readings

This textbook is required for the course in either print or eBook format. You can obtain the eBook here: <https://broadviewpress.com/product/the-broadview-anthology-of-british-literature-concise-volume-a-third-edition/#tab-description>

Black, Joseph, et al., editors, *The Broadview Anthology of British Literature, Concise Edition, Volume A*, 3rd edition. Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview, 2018. ISBN: 978-1-55481-312-4.

Other Readings and Media

Additional required readings are marked with an asterisk (*) in the schedule of reading below. These will be made available on Canvas.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Participation (LO1 and LO5): Students discuss significant features of the works, providing specific textual evidence sourced from the works. The participation grade includes class preparation (bring your book, read your book, and engage with colleagues).

Essays (LO1, LO2, LO3): Essays 1 and 2 (each 1,500 words) are formal argumentative essays of literary analysis.

Research exercise (LO4): The research exercise asks students to develop a position in the form of a question that makes an intervention in response to a reading presented in class.

Midterm and Final (LO1, LO2, LO5): This is a take-home exam. It will require you to connect and analyze specific literary features of a passage with aspects of literary history and/or thematic question. The exam will include a close-reading section and a literary history section.

Late papers: Late work is subject to a 1/3 grade reduction (e.g. B to B-) for each day it is late. Please contact the instructor to request an extensions, and be prepared to show work in progress.

Grading Information

Please see the Rubric for Argumentative Literary Analysis Essays available on Canvas to review expectations for graded essays.

Determination of Grades

Grading Breakdown:

Class Participation (discussion and in-class exercises):	15%
Research question exercise	15%
Essay 1:	15%
Essay 2:	15%
Midterm:	20%
Final Exam	20%

All of the assignments above must be completed to a satisfactory level to earn a passing grade in the course.

Each graded component shall receive a score as a percentage which corresponds to the letter grade below.

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>A plus</i>	<i>96 to 100%</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>93 to 95%</i>
<i>A minus</i>	<i>90 to 92%</i>
<i>B plus</i>	<i>86 to 89 %</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>83 to 85%</i>
<i>B minus</i>	<i>80 to 82%</i>
<i>C plus</i>	<i>76 to 79%</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>73 to 75%</i>
<i>C minus</i>	<i>70 to 72%</i>
<i>D plus</i>	<i>66 to 69%</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>63 to 65%</i>
<i>D minus</i>	<i>60 to 62%</i>

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9 (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant information to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. is available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>.

The [University Policy S16-9, Course Syllabi](#) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>) requires the following language to be included in the syllabus:

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practice. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

English 50 / Beginnings, Spring 2021, Course Schedule

The following schedule is subject to change with advance notice through a Canvas Announcement.

Course Schedule

Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
W 1/27	Introductions
M 2/1	Bede, <i>Ecclesiastical History of the English people</i> , sections 1 and 2 (pages 41-46)
W 2/3	<i>Beowulf</i> , lines 1-1320 (starts on page 81)
M 2/8	<i>Beowulf</i> , lines 1321-2390
W 2/10	<i>Beowulf</i> , lines 2391-3182
M 2/15	Chaucer, <i>The Canterbury Tales</i> , “General Prologue,” lines 1- 476 (starts on page 297)
W 2/17	Chaucer, <i>The Canterbury Tales</i> , “General Prologue,” lines 477-858
M 2/22	Chaucer, “The Prioress’ Prologue and Tale” (starts on page 364)
W 2/24	Chaucer, continued
M 3/1	Exam Review
W 3/3	MIDTERM EXAM DUE (Class does not meet)
M 3/8	Sir Thomas Wyatt the Elder, “The long love that in my thought doth harbor” (page 611); Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, “Love that doth reign and live within my thought” (page 620).
W 3/10	Edmund Spenser, <i>Amoretti</i> sonnets 75 and 82 (starts on page 725); Sir Philip Sidney, <i>Astrophil and Stella</i> sonnets 1, 2, 45, 69, and 108 (starts on page 731)
M 3/15	Queen Elizabeth I, “To the Troops at Tilbury” (page 772) and “On Monsieur’s Departure” (page 761)
W 3/17	Christopher Marlowe, <i>The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus</i> (A text) (starts on page 846)
M 3/22	Christopher Marlowe, <i>The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus</i> (A text)
W 3/24	Christopher Marlowe, <i>The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus</i> (A text)
SPRING RECESS, MARCH 29 – APRIL 2	
M 4/5	ESSAY 1 DUE. Thomas Harriot, <i>Briefe and True Report of the Newfound Land of Virginia</i> (reading available on Canvas)
W 4/7	Bartolomé de las Casas, <i>A Brief Account of the Destruction of the Indies</i> (reading available on Canvas)

Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
M 4/12	John Donne, "Elegy 19. To His Mistress Going to Bed" (starts on page 915).
W 4/14	John Donne, "The Flea"
M 4/19	John Donne's Holy Sonnets 7, 10, 14, and 18 (starts on page 935)
W 4/21	George Herbert, "The Altar," "Prayer (1)," "Love (3)" (starts on page 961)
M 4/26	John Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i> , "The Verse," Book 1 (starts on page 1015)
W 4/28	Book 2
M 5/3	From Book 3, Book 4
W 5/5	ESSAY 2 DUE , From Book 5, Argument to Book 6, From Book 7, From Book 8
M 5/10	Book 9
W 5/12	Book 10, Arguments to Books 11 and 12
M 5/17	RESEARCH EXERCISE DUE , Final Exam Review
Final Exam Due Tuesday, 25 May by 11:59pm	