

General Education Submission Form

Electronic submissions are preferred.

- A. GE component for which course is being proposed: Thinking Historically
- B. Submitted by: _____ Sarah Skripsky _____
- C. Ideally, submissions should be discussed by the entire department prior to submittal.
 Chair has reviewed and approved the course.
- D. Course being proposed (please attach syllabus): ENG-046 Survey of British Literature to 1800
- E. This course

particular theme is discussed in a particular historical time compared with the way that that theme is discussed in literary writing today.

secondary source for their entry each day, they will see the entries of their peers and therefore read multiple historical interpretations of contextualizing material. The instructor during class will often then use the various contextualizing details identified by students to point out differences in historical interpretation. Such differences can then be used to think about the literary texts from different interpretive viewpoints, emphasizing the ways in which careful interpretation of (historical, political, cultural, religious) context affects literary interpretation. Class Presentations: Students are required to use three secondary sources as they prepare their class presentation: the contextualizing material from the anthology textbook assigned for the course and two additional secondary sources from resources such as British History Online, The British Library, The

and encouraged an approach to religious devotion that we might historically interpret as "feminine." Class activities are also used to highlight differences in interpretation of secondary sources. This is dramatized, for example, in the way

ENG 046 Survey of British Literature to 1800

Westmont College, Room: TBD

Dr. Rebecca F. McNamara

Email: rmcnamara@westmont.edu, Office: Reynolds Hall 103, Office Hours: TBD

Required Text (no substitutions): *Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 10th edition (June 2018). Sold as Package 1: Vols A, B, & C.

Course Description: "Historical overview of authors, genres, and literary developments, as well as relevant cultural context, from the medieval through the Renaissance, seventeenth-century, and eighteenth-century eras." (From the Westmont Course Catalogue)

That brief synopsis of ENG 046 already begins to place meaning around a 1,300-year-wide stretch of British literature. It names temporal units (medieval, seventeenth-century era, etc.), informs you that we will use a historical (and chronological) approach, and it provides some of the contexts (author, genre, culture) in which we will consider this literature. Indeed, much of the work we do in this class will be underscored by asking *how can we make meaning* out of the literary texts we read. There are many ways to make meaning out of literature—this class will focus on using history, culture, and form to interpret literary writing. You will analyze historical contexts alongside literature in order to understand how texts are products of a specific time, place, and culture. In reading chronologically, we'll notice shifts and continuities in literary genres, subjects, styles—though we will be careful in how we think about these changes (not as developments toward a literary ideal but as shifts informed by history, culture, language, and personal and communal social practices). The authors represented in this syllabus and in the *Norton Anthology* are not the only writers in English prior to 1800, but through our broad (yet selective) reading, we will develop interpretive frameworks that can be adapted for reading literature in other periods and places. In addition to close reading and the application of different interpretive lenses, we will also exercise other integral skills in Liberal Arts studies, including critical thinking, collaborative learning, and ethical engagement. I look forward to encountering British literature to 1800 together.

Course Learning Outcomes: These learning outcomes are measured specifically through the assessments listed below, but you will also exercise these practices in discussion and collaborative group work in class.

Demonstrate knowledge of major literary themes and styles specific to chronological periods of English literary history between 500 AD and 1800 AD.

This will be measured by exams.

Comprehend a literary selection well enough to be able to explain clearly in writing *what* a passage says and *how* the text works, using terms specific to the discipline of literary studies. (Relates to the Thinking Critically and Reading Carefully Program Learning Outcomes for English).

This will be measured by exams.

Analyze texts with appropriate attention to their various contexts, including historical and social contexts, author, audience, and genre. (Relates to the Thinking Historically General Education Learning Outcome and the Thinking Critically and Reading Carefully Program Learning Outcomes for English).

This will be measured by the Literature in Context Journal, a class presentation, the Literature and Material Culture Project, and exams.

Identify the arguments of secondary sources and recognize differences in their interpretation (Relates to the Thinking Historically General Education Learning Outcome and the Thinking Critically and Reading Carefully Program Learning Outcomes for English).

This will be measured by class presentation and the Literature and Material Culture Project.

Assessment:

Attendance and Participation	7%
Literature in Context Journal	10%
Unit Quests (3)	33% (10, 11, 12% each)
Class Presentation	7%
Recitation	5%
Lit & Material Culture Project	10%
Final Exam	23%
Course Reflection Paper	5%

Attendance and Participation: 8%

Given the brisk pace of our reading schedule and the interactive nature of our class, it will be vital for you to keep up with our reading, attend class regularly, and be an active participant.

secondary material in your *Norton Anthology* as you prepare your presentation; sources such as *British History Online*, *The British Library*,

challenged you about the literature? How has this course changed the way you think about literature, or history, or language? This paper is pass/fail: you will not be docked points for writing about parts of the class that you didn't like or didn't find interesting.

Reading and Assessment Schedule (subject to revision as needed)

Read the assigned texts before class, along with any introductory and footnote material you encounter. Don't forget to post your Literature in Context Journal entry by 8:00am each day of class.

The Middle Ages (c. 650 – c. 1485)

Aug 28 Welcome to ENG 046! Intro to Middle Ages, Anglo-Saxon Culture; Bede, *Cædmon's Hymn*, 30-33
 Aug 30 "Dream of the Rood," 32-37; *Judith*, 110-118; "Wanderer," 118-21; "Wulf and Eadwacer," 121-23; "Wife's Lament," 123-25

Sep 4 *Beowulf*, lines 1-862, 1251-1798, 2510-3182 (pp. 37-60, 70-81, 96-109)

Sep 6 "The Myth of Arthur's Return": Geoffrey of Monmouth, Wace, and Layamon, 136-37; Marie de France, *Chevrefoil*, 185-87; Intro to Medieval English (Middle English), 20-26; *Sir Orfeo*, 187-200

Sep 11 "Foweles in the Frith," 532; "Cuckoo Song," 532; "Alison," 533; "My Lief is Faren in Londe," 533; "Western Wind," 534; "I Am of Ireland," 534; Geoffrey Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales: General Prologue*, 259-81

Sep 13 Chaucer, *Miller's Prologue and Tale*, 282-98

Sep 18 Chaucer, *Man of Law's Epilogue, Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale*, 298-328

Sep 20 Chaucer, "Retraction," 360-61, "To His Scribe Adam," 363; Thomas Hoccleve, "My Complaint," 377-87

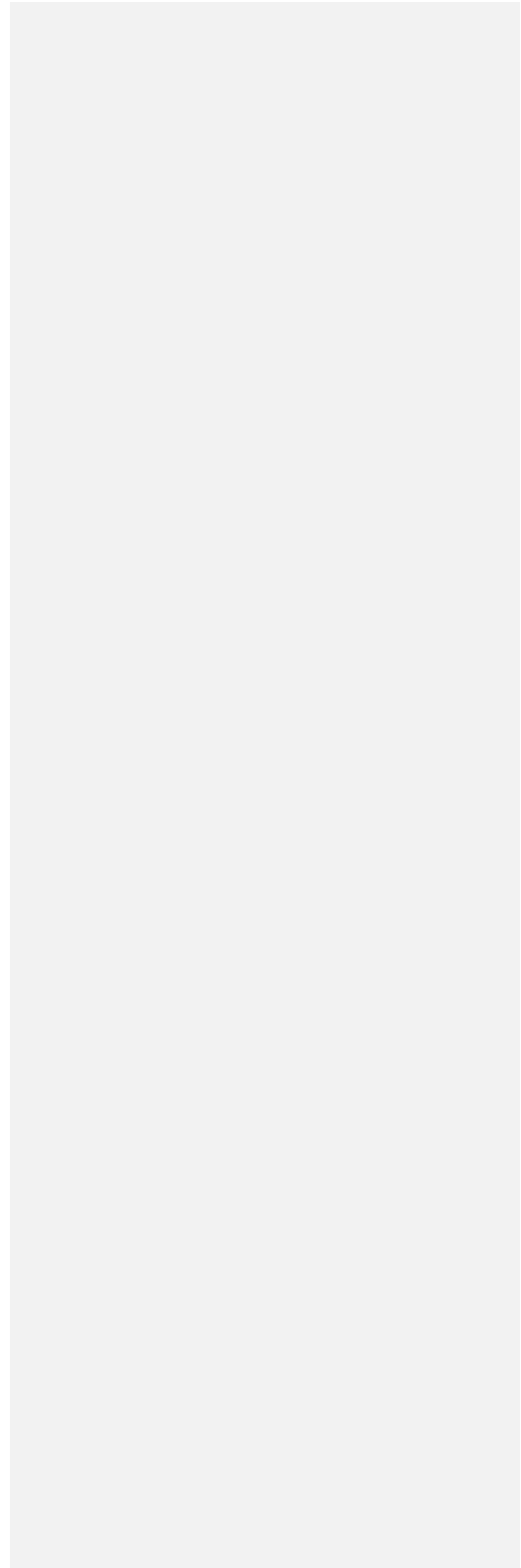
Sep 25 William Langland, *Piers Plowman*, 388-98; Julian of Norwich, *Book of Showings*, 430-42; Margery Kempe, *Book of Margery Kempe*, 442-56

Sep 27 Unit 1 Quest. (Remember to [sign up](#) for your class presentation by midnight tonight)
York Play of the Crucifixion, 457-65; "What is He, This Lordling, That Cometh from the Fight," 427; "Ye That Pasen by the Weye," 428; "Sunset on Calvary," 428; "I Sing of a Maiden," 428; "Adam Lay Bound," 429; "The Corpus Christi Carol," 429

The Sixteenth Century (1485 – 1603)

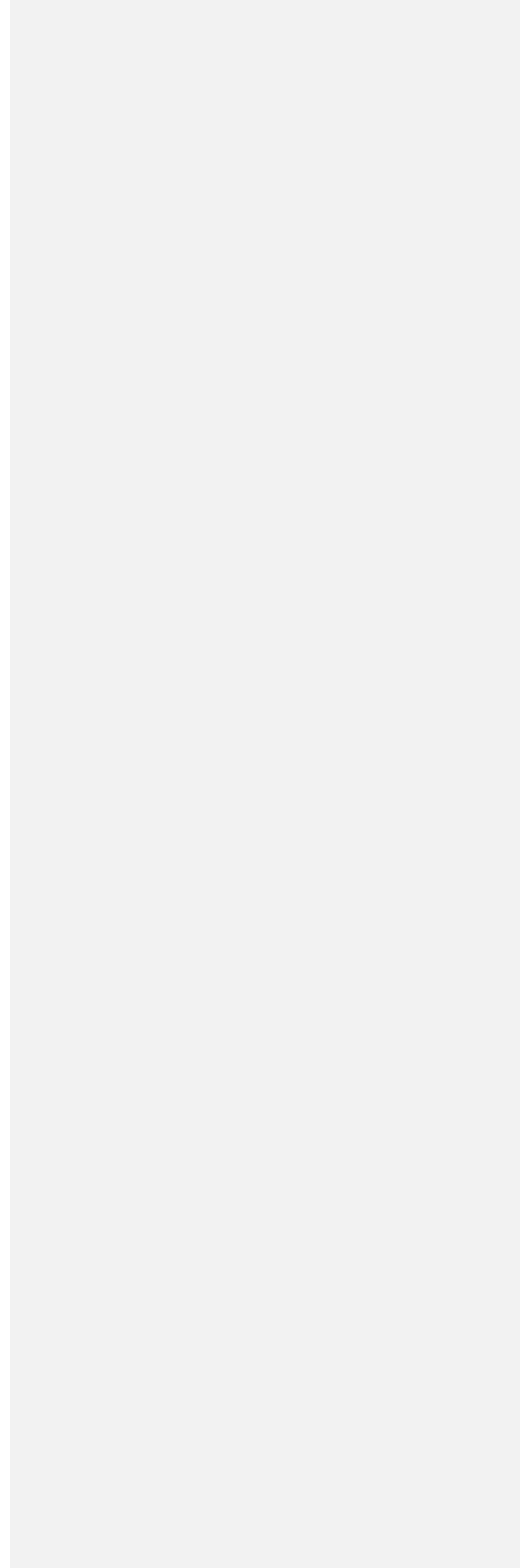
Oct 2 [***Presentation**: Renaissance Humanism, 6-9] Thomas Wyatt, "Long Love" & Petrarch's "Rima 140," 120-21 "Whoso List to Hunt" & Petrarch's "Rima 190," 121, "They Flee from Me," 125; "My Lute Awake!" 127, "Stand Whoso List," 129; "Who List his Wealth & Ease Retain," 130; Henry Howard, "Soote Season," Petrarch's "Rima 3P

Oct 16 [*Presentation



Nov 27

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You are encouraged to take advantage of the "[Take a Professor to Lunch](#)" program as an opportunity to get to know each of your professors over a shared meal. I would enjoy the opportunity to have a lunch conversation with you (or you and a friend), just email me to arrange a lunch.

Technology Policy:

In-class use of digital technology (laptops, iPads, phones) is prohibited unless specified by me (e.g., during class break). Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis after advance discussion with me.

Resources for British Literature to 1800:

Norton Anthology of English Literature: Norton Topics Online:

<https://www.wwnorton.com/college/english/nael/welcome.htm>

British Library's English Timeline (English Language and Literary History from 1100 to Present):

<http://www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/evolvingenglish/accessvers/index.html>

The British Museum (check out Research/ Blog): <http://www.britishmuseum.org>