ENG225

ENGLISH LITERATURE: BEFORE 1800

3 Credit Hours

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Arts and Science Education
Dr. Mindy Selsor, Dean
I. CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION

Prerequisite: None
3 semester credit hours

English Literature: Before 1800 explores selected British works from Beowulf through the prose, poetry, and plays of Middle and early Modern English. Students will have the opportunity to study the relationships of philosophy, history, and literature. English Literature: Before 1800 will partially fulfill the humanities requirement for the associate degree. (F)

II. GENERAL COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

A. Read (in the original or translation) representative examples of the literary works of each literary period: Old English; Middle English; Modern English (Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries).

B. Demonstrate an understanding of the historical context in which each piece was written (e.g., Henry IV compared with the historical Henry IV).

C. Demonstrate an understanding of the general theme of each work (e.g., the heroic ideal in Beowulf).

D. Begin to see the connection of these historic themes, ideas, philosophies, and concerns with their descendants in the academic and/or popular culture today (e.g., connect Dr. Faustus with our role as scholars in pursuit of knowledge).

E. Where applicable, be able to demonstrate the rhythmic, structural, and linguistic characteristics of the writing.

III. COURSE OUTLINE (Course content will be drawn from this)

A. Old English: The Heroic Ideal
   1. Anglo-Saxon Background
   2. Beowulf

B. Middle English
   1. Historical background
      a. 1066: The French Influence
      b. The Role of Religion
   2. Knighthood in Flower
a. Sir Gawain and the Green Knight
b. Morte Darthur

3. Chaucer and Medieval Drama
   a. Selected Canterbury Tales
   b. Everyman

C. The Elizabethan Age: Religious Strife
   1. The Faerie Queene
   2. Dr. Faustus
   3. Twelfth Night

D. The 17th Century
   1. The Metaphysical Poets
   2. The Cavalier Poets

E. The Restoration and 18th Century
   1. Oroonoko
   2. Gulliver’s Travels, selections

IV. UNIT OBJECTIVES

A. Old English
   1. Define the Anglo-Saxon heroic ideal
   2. Read Beowulf
   3. Apply the definition of the heroic ideal to the poem

B. Middle English
   1. Knighthood
      a. Define chivalry
      b. Read Sir Gawain and the Green Knight
      c. Read Morte Darthur
      d. Summarize the major Arthurian legends
         i. The Grail Quest
         ii. Lovers
         iii. Merlin
         iv. The coming and the passing of Arthur
      e. Compare the legends with modern adaptations (movies, poems, books)
   2. Chaucer
      a. Read the General Prologue
      b. Read the Wife of Bath’s prologue tale
      c. Read the Miller’s prologue and tale
      d. Define the major categories of the tales (e.g., fabliau, beast fable, etc.)
      e. Explain the importance of Chaucer in terms of the English language
and in terms of introducing Renaissance issues (e.g., the role of women, religious strife, etc.).

3. Medieval Drama
   a. Define morality play, mystery play, and allegory
   b. Watch video performance of a portion of Everyman
   c. Explain development of mystery and morality plays

C. The Elizabethan Age
   1. Know the major historical influences of the period.
   2. Spenser
      a. Read the first book of *The Faerie Queene*.
      b. Explain the literal meaning of the first book of *The Faerie Queene*.
      c. Explain the allegorical meaning of the first book of *The Faerie Queene*
   3. Marlowe
      a. Explain *Dr. Faustus* in terms of Humanism
      b. Explain how the religious turmoil of Renaissance England is expressed in the play.
   4. Shakespeare
      a. Read *Twelfth Night*
      b. View a modern production of the play
      c. Explain the major themes of the play

D. The 17th Century
   1. Read selections from the Metaphysical Poets (Donne, Herbert, Crashaw)
   2. Define “metaphysical,” and list characteristics of metaphysical poetry.
   3. Read selections from the Cavalier Poets (Jonson, Herrick, Marvell).
   4. Define “cavalier.”
   5. Read Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, selections.
   6. Explain how Milton “justified” the ways of God to man through the poem.

E. The Restoration and 18th Century
   1. Read Behn’s *Oroonoko*.
   2. Discuss slavery in terms of the Old World versus New World
   3. Analyze Behn’s use of conventions from the romance and from travel writing.
   4. Read selections from Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*.
   5. Explain Swift’s allegory.

V. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION
   A. Lecture
   B. Textbook Readings
   C. Small Group Analysis
   D. Expository Papers
E. Videos
F. Study Guides

VI. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS (with publication information)


VII. REQUIRED MATERIALS

A. Textbooks

VIII. SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS
None

IX. METHODS OF EVALUATION

A. Student essays
B. Quizzes
C. Exams
D. Study Guides

X. GRADING SCALE

A = 90-100
B = 80-89
C = 70-79
D = 60-79
F = below 60