

## Brief Course Outline

**Course Title:** **Literary and Cultural Texts: Pre-1700**

**Course Number and Section:**

ENGLISH

2228F 550

**Instructor Name(s):** Amanda Di Ponio

**Instructor Email(s):** adiponi@uwo.ca

Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

### Course Description:

In this course, students will have the opportunity to study some of the greatest known – and lesser known – literary and cultural texts written from the Medieval, Renaissance, and Restoration periods. These periods are marked by a shift in perspective and understanding, from the supremacy of the divine to the emergence of the prodigious human being and, most importantly, his/her/their potential to incite change. While this understanding may appear fundamental to us in the 21st century, this new way of thinking caused great upheaval in individual and collective life, socially and politically, and led to the beginning of the early modern period.

To fully understand these awesome changes, we will not only delve into the literary achievements of the period, but also the historical events and cultural practices that inspired them, including but not limited to cycles of carnival/purgation, the Protestant Reformation, outbreaks of Bubonic plague, and the invention of the Gutenberg Press (ca. 1440), the event which propelled the Rinascimento – literally, the “rebirth” – for it enabled the accessibility of these texts, the tools for empowering the human mind. Crucially, in our critical investigations, we will be mindful of human life which is persistently marginalized during this time.

Literature – narratives, dramas, poetry, pamphlets – will include works by familiar masters such as Geoffrey Chaucer, William Shakespeare, and Aphra Behn, and perhaps the not-as-familiar, such as Guillaume de Lorris, Thomas Dekker, and Mary Pix. Theory is supplied by Mikhail Bakhtin’s Rabelais and His World, among others.

### Learning Outcomes:

- Explore a wide range of forms of creative expression in the Pre-1700 period, including long and short narratives, drama, poetry, pamphlets, travelogues, music, and visual art
- Place individual texts in their socio-historical and geographical context within the pre-1700 period
- Recognize and understand the features of genres such as tragedy, comedy, farce, allegory, etc.
- Analyze texts employing the skills of literary analysis, considering features such as narrative technique, symbolism, rhyme and rhythm, etc.

- Understand and discuss the political, religious, moral, and philosophical substructures of the texts on the course
- Communicate ideas effectively through readings, reflections, classroom discussion, blogging, creative composition, presentation (group and/or individual), and persuasive essays
- View recorded performances of professional theatre production
- Attend a live theatre production at the Stratford Festival in the Fall 2024 term
- Write logically and persuasively in fluent, standard English using the appropriate conventions for scholarly-critical writing
- Construct strong thesis statements and structured arguments in persuasive essays which incorporate evidence, from both primary and secondary texts, in support of arguments
- Evaluate the relevance, reliability, and usefulness of research sources, including those obtained through the Internet
- Integrate outside research materials (not generated by AI) and references to the original text into an essay through use of quotations and paraphrases using correct MLA documentation

### **Textbooks and Course Materials:**

Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, *The Romance of the Rose*, trans. by Charles Dahlberg. Princeton UP, 1995. ISBN 9780691044569 (available via Course Readings on OWL Brightspace)

François Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (any copy available, preferably one which includes the drawings of Gustave Doré. (available via Course Readings on OWL Brightspace))

### **RECOMMENDED TEXTS**

The Broadview Anthology of British Literature Volume 1: The Medieval Period, eds. Joseph Black, et. al. 3rd edn. Broadview, 2015. (Selections from this text are available via Course Readings on OWL Brightspace)

The Broadview Anthology of British Literature Volume 2: Renaissance and The Early Seventeenth Century, eds. Joseph Black, et. al. 3rd edn. Broadview, 2016. (Selections from this text are available via Course Readings on OWL Brightspace)

### **Methods Of Evaluation:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due Date mm/dd/yy</b>	<b>Weight - %</b>
Performance Analysis	10/9/2024	15
Midterm	11/04/2024	10
Research Essay Proposal	11/13/2024	5
Research Essay	11/27/2024	25
Creative Assignment	12/04/2024	10

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due Date mm/dd/yy</b>	<b>Weight - %</b>
In-class tasks, including Participation & Discussion	12/04/2024	10
Final Exam	TBD	25

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.

Saturday, August 3, 2024