



HL 2002 | RENAISSANCE LITERATURE

Nanyang Technological University

Division of English, School of Humanities

Course Blog: <https://renaissanceliterature.wordpress.com/>

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Course Description

This course introduces major authors and themes in English Renaissance Literature. The works that we will be studying are concerned with Renaissance political traditions and intersections in European intellectual thought. These include ideas of governance and kingship, writing and patronage (and censorship), ethics and morality, and religious turmoil and civil strife in early modern England. More importantly, we will consider how these concepts are represented in Renaissance literature through different genres and literary devices. This course aims to develop a strong foundation of what is arguably the most important historical period in the development of English literature. The materials covered in the course should also encourage students to consider how literary narratives merge with historical discourse to produce meaningful interpretations of English culture in the early modern period.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- 1) identify key historical events between mid-16th century and mid-17th century and how literary works produced during this period were often influenced and shaped by these events,
- 2) explain the significance of patronage and the production of literary works in early modern England,
- 3) contextualize recurring themes and key concepts in the literary works covered in this course,
- 4) engage with secondary scholarly resources that help broaden your interpretive strategies in approaching Renaissance literature, and employ these resources professionally in your critical analysis of the texts covered in this course,
- 5) raise critically informed questions in class discussion and assignments which sustain an extended critical treatment of a major author/text,
- 6) and demonstrate teamwork co-operation by developing compelling arguments supported by textual evidence and the capacity to take intellectual risks.

Course Guidelines

You are welcome to make an appointment to see me in my office if you have any concerns about the course. Please keep in mind that appointments should be arranged at least 3 working days in advance.

All materials distributed in class and on the course blog are strictly meant for class lectures and assignments only. These materials are protected by copyright laws and are not to be re-distributed outside of class for any other purposes. If you wish to use the materials for your assignments, you must cite them accordingly.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic integrity. If you are not familiar with plagiarism guidelines, please consult the university's plagiarism policy here:

<http://www.ntu.edu.sg/ai/Pages/academic-integrity-policy.aspx>

Course Assessment

Final Essay	30%
Presentation & Participation	20%
Exam	50%

Required Texts

Kyd, Thomas. *The Spanish Tragedy*. ISBN: 978-1904271604

Shakespeare, William. *The History of King Lear: The Oxford Shakespeare The History of King Lear*. ISBN: 978-0199535828*

Shakespeare, William. *Henry IV: Part One* (Signet Classics). ISBN:978-0451527110*

Shakespeare, William. *Henry IV: Part Two* (Signet Classics). ISBN: 978-0451528537*

Spenser, Edmund. *The Faerie Queene, Books Three and Four (Bk. 3 & 4)* (Hackett). ISBN: 978-0872208551

Marlowe, Christopher. *Doctor Faustus* (Norton Critical Editions). ISBN: 978-0393977547

Milton, John. *Paradise Lost* (Hackett Classics). ISBN: 978-0872207332

Foxe, John. *Foxe's Book of Martyrs: Selected Narratives* (Oxford). ISBN: 978-0199236848

*NOTE: Students planning on taking HL 3030: Major Author: Shakespeare next term should purchase *The Complete Pelican Shakespeare* (Penguin, 2002). ISBN: 978-0141000589 instead of separate Shakespeare texts for this class. This text has not been ordered for HL 2002.

Reading Schedule

Week	Topic	Text
1	Introduction	Contextualizing Renaissance Literature in Literary Studies
2	Romance	Excerpts from Edmund Spenser's <i>Faerie Queene Book 3</i> (Cantos 1–3)
3	Romance	Excerpts from Edmund Spenser's <i>Faerie Queene Book 3</i> (Cantos 4–7)
4	Kingship & Governance	William Shakespeare's <i>1 Henry IV</i>
5	Kingship & Governance	William Shakespeare's <i>2 Henry IV</i>

6	Tragedy	Introduction to Tragedy (Pls. read the essay on “Tragedy and the Classical Inheritance” posted on our course blog)
7	Tragedy	Thomas Kyd’s <i>The Spanish Tragedy</i>
8	Tragedy	William Shakespeare’s <i>King Lear</i>
9	Reformation	Excerpts from John Foxe’s <i>Book of Martyrs</i>
10	Reformation & Repentance	Christopher Marlowe’s <i>Dr. Faustus</i> (A-text)
11	Reformation & Repentance	Excerpts from John Milton’s <i>Paradise Lost</i> (Books 1 and 2)
12	Reformation & Repentance	Excerpts from John Milton’s <i>Paradise Lost</i> (Books 3 - 5)
13	Review	Exam Review