

Engl 315 S12 Syllabus



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Class time and place

Tuesday-Thursday 10-11:15 a.m., Milne 105

Office hours

- Tuesday-Thursday 3-4 p.m., and by appointment
- Find me online: see profile at right (you must be logged in).

Learning outcomes

Individual learning outcomes

Students who have completed English 315 will:

- understand the major historical trends (such as industrialism) and intellectual debates (such as the debate over evolution) that form the context of British literature from 1832-1901
- know and be able to discuss critically, in context, the works of major British Victorian authors
- understand and be able to employ the conventions of critical writing about literature
- know how to find, use, and properly acknowledge secondary sources for an essay of literary criticism

Community learning outcomes

The Engl 315-01 (Spring 2012) community will:

- produce new knowledge (new for this community) about Victorian literature and its contexts
- share knowledge about Victorian literature and its contexts in accordance with scholarly conventions
- discuss and debate ideas about Victorian literature and its contexts in ways that respect the diversity of the community

Requirements

Texts

- Carol T. Christ, et al., *The Victorian Age* (Volume E of *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 8th ed.)
- Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist* (Norton)
- Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*
- Amy Levy, *Reuben Sachs: A Sketch* (Broadview)
- Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (e-text)

Papers, exams, other assignments

- One 5-page essay - 25%

- One 7-page essay - 35%
- Online writing - 10%
- Oral presentation - 10%
- Final Exam (May 7, 8-11 a.m.) - 20%

Oral presentation

You are required to make an [oral presentation](#) on an article, essay, or book related to the current reading. Your oral presentation should last no longer than *5 minutes* and provide a summary of your chosen source.

Before or immediately after giving your presentation, you must contribute an entry on your source to the [Annotated Bibliography of Victorian Literature](#). Together, the oral presentation and bibliography entry count for 5% of the final course grade.

Online writing

You are *required* to participate in [online discussion forums](#) for this class. I will post a discussion question before each *Tuesday* class. You are required to post a response by 11:59 p.m. of the preceding *Monday*.

You may post discussion questions of your own at any time. Just follow the instructions on the [forums](#) page.

You are *required* to participate in collaborative writing on the SUNY Geneseo wiki. In addition to making your required contribution to the [Annotated Bibliography of Victorian Literature](#), you may be asked in some discussion questions to [annotate a literary text](#). Blogging is optional but strongly encouraged. For the optional project (described below), you may wish to contribute to [Genetically Modified Literature](#).

Optional project

You *may* permit 50% of your final exam grade to be determined by an optional project that explores, examines, or illuminates one or more of the semester's texts using means other than the conventional literary essay. You'll find examples of such projects at [Genetically Modified Literature](#).

Bear in mind the following constraints on optional projects:

- Your project will be judged by the degree to which it genuinely sheds light or offers meaningful commentary on the text(s) in question. (You may, if you like, provide a written explanation of how it does so.)
- The project must be approved by me in advance.
- So that others in the class may view the project, the project must be submitted no later than
- For team projects, all team members must be listed in the original proposal.

Students with disabilities

SUNY Geneseo will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented physical, emotional or learning disabilities. Contact [Tabitha Buggie-Hunt](#), Director of [Disability Services](#) to discuss needed accommodations as early as possible in the semester.

Exam and paper details

A make-up final exam will be administered for medical reasons only. You must supply documentation of all illnesses and accidents. (A note indicating merely that you were seen at the infirmary won't suffice.) Please do not request special arrangements to alleviate any of the following: a crowded exam schedule; a heavy workload; conflicts with employment, extra-curricular responsibilities, or job-hunting; familial celebrations (e.g., weddings or graduations); crises in other people's lives (e.g., severe depression of best friend's roommate); crises in your own life that are a normal and inevitable part of the collegiate experience (e.g., demise of relationship with boyfriend or girlfriend.) Fairness dictates that such accommodations cannot be made for one without being offered to all.

For help writing exam essays, consult [Writing Essays Exams](#) in the [SUNY Geneseo Writing Guide](#).

You will write two papers for this course. The [first paper](#) is worth 25% in the calculation of your final grade and should be approximately 5 double-spaced pages long. The [second paper](#) is worth 35% in the calculation of your final grade and should be approximately 5-7 double-spaced pages long. For the second paper, you must draw on at least ~~two~~ one critical or scholarly work on Victorian literature.

The "due-date" for each of the papers in this class is not a single date but a one-week range during which you may share your finished work. I grade and return papers in the order in which I receive them, so the earlier you share, the sooner your work will be shared back. The [SUNY Geneseo Writing Guide](#) offers help on a wide range of essay-writing matters, including proper conventions for citation. In both papers for this class, you must follow MLA format for citations.

The [first paper](#) is due **between February 16 and February 23** (no later than 11:59 p.m. on February 23). Target length: 5 double-spaced pages.

The [second paper](#) is due **between April 22 and April 27** (no later than 11:59 p.m. on April 27). Target length: 5-7 double-spaced pages.

The two papers for this class must be **shared electronically** by 11:59 p.m. of the last date in the due-date range. ~~Submit your papers using the drop box in myCourses. (Look for the Drop Boxes under the "Tools" tab.)~~ Share your papers using Google Docs. Late papers lose one-half grade per day.

Be sure to keep a copy of your work.

I will share back your work electronically, in the order in which it was received, with corrections and comments included in the file. Please do not expect work shared close to the deadline to be returned in less than 2-3 weeks.

Schedule

Date	Assignment
Preliminaries	
1/17	Introduction
1/19	What are you here to learn, and how will you learn it?
Victorian Voices	
1/24	Carlyle, <i>Sartor Resartus</i> (excerpts in Norton)
1/26	Carlyle, <i>Past and Present</i> ; Mill, <i>Autobiography</i>
The 99%	
1/31	<i>Oliver Twist</i>
2/2	<i>Oliver Twist</i>
2/7	<i>Oliver Twist</i>
2/9	<i>Oliver Twist</i>
Evolution: A Matter of Life and Death	
2/14	Selections on evolution from Norton; Newman, " Liberalism " (19-21 of pdf); Huxley, "Agnosticism and Christianity"; Arnold, "Dover Beach," "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse"
2/16	Tennyson, "Ulysses," "Tithonus"; <i>In Memoriam</i> (selections in Norton)
2/21	Tennyson, <i>In Memoriam</i>
The Woman Question	
2/23	Mill, <i>On Liberty</i> ; <i>The Subjection of Women</i>
2/28	Brontë, <i>Wuthering Heights</i>
3/1	<i>Wuthering Heights</i>
3/6	<i>Wuthering Heights</i>
3/8	<i>Wuthering Heights</i>
3/13 - 3/15	Spring Break
3/20	C. Rossetti, "Goblin Market"; E.B. Browning, excerpts from <i>Aurora Leigh</i>
The Word as Body	
3/22	R. Browning, "Porphyria's Lover," "Fra Lippo Lippi," "The Bishop Orders His Tomb"
3/27	Tennyson, Songs from <i>The Princess</i> , "The Lady of Shalott"; Pater, excerpts from <i>The Renaissance</i> ; Wilde, Preface to <i>Dorian Gray</i> ; D.G. Rossetti, "The Blessed Damozel," "The House of Life"; Swinburne, "Hymn to Proserpine," "The Garden of Proserpine"
3/29	Wilde, The Importance of Being Earnest
The "New Woman" Question	
4/3	Levy, <i>Reuben Sachs: A Sketch</i>
4/5	<i>Reuben Sachs: A Sketch</i>
4/10	<i>Reuben Sachs: A Sketch</i>
4/12	Hardy, <i>Tess of the d'Urbervilles</i>
4/17	GREAT DAY
4/19	<i>Tess of the d'Urbervilles</i>
4/24	<i>Tess of the d'Urbervilles</i>
4/26	<i>Tess of the d'Urbervilles</i>
5/1	What have we learned?

The Fine Print

Office hours

During office hours I am available to talk with you about anything related to this class or to your studies at Geneseo. No need to make an appointment for an office hour; just drop in. I encourage you to come. I get to know you; you learn more from me. If you cannot make it to any of the scheduled office hours, we can set up a time to meet.

Email

From time to time I will need to communicate with the class as a whole or with you individually by means of email. When communicating with the class as a whole, I will use the class listserv address. Since emails sent to this address will come to students' Geneseo email accounts, it is absolutely imperative that you either regularly check your Geneseo email or have it automatically forwarded to the account you prefer to use. To set up automatic forwarding, go to <http://webmail.geneseo.edu> from any internet-connected computer, on campus or off. Log in with your Geneseo username and email password. In the left-navigation bar, click "forward account" and carefully follow instructions.

Please feel free to email me at schacht AT geneseo DOT edu on any matter related to the class or to academics generally. I will reply to whatever email address you send from; if the email comes back to me as undeliverable, I will reply to your Geneseo address.

Attendance

Attendance is your responsibility. Please do not phone or email just to explain why you weren't in or won't be in class on a particular day. On the other hand, if sickness or genuine crisis keeps you from the classroom for any length of time, of course I want to know. Conflicts with other classes or your personal life (weddings, friends who've just broken up with boyfriends/girlfriends, etc.) must be resolved by you. I regret that I cannot make special arrangements to accommodate them.

Cellphones and Laptops in the Classroom

As a courtesy to your classmates, be sure that your cellphone is off or set to "silent" or "vibrate" before class begins. In general, it is prohibited to take phone calls during class. However, if you know before class begins that you must be prepared to take an important call, you may sit near the door and take the call outside the classroom when it comes. If you have a laptop computer, I encourage you to bring it to class in order to take notes or consult appropriate knowledge sources online. However, there may be times when I ask all laptop users to close their screens in order to promote maximum concentration on live discussion.

Papers

Be sure to proofread your paper closely for faulty grammar or usage, spelling errors, and typos; you are being graded partly on your ability to produce presentable work, an ability that matters both in the classroom and in the world beyond it.

Papers must be submitted electronically. I will grade papers in the order that I receive them and return them electronically.

Plagiarism

Though committed with alarming frequency and dispiriting casualness by people in high places, plagiarism is still a serious academic offense. You are committing plagiarism any time you borrow another writer's words without using quotation marks or providing appropriate documentation; borrow another writer's ideas without citing the source in which you found them.

If it is discovered that you have plagiarized on an assignment for this class, you will certainly fail the assignment and probably fail the class. In addition, the Dean of the College will be notified that you have committed an act of academic dishonesty, and you may face disciplinary measures from the administration. No excuses. No second chances. Not even for graduating seniors.

Examples of plagiarism:

- An essay that uses, without proper documentation, words or ideas that you find in another student's paper--for example, a paper in the files of a fraternity or sorority, or a paper available on the Internet.
- An essay that uses, without proper documentation, words or ideas that you find on a website.
- An essay that uses, without proper documentation, words or ideas that you find in any secondary source, including Cliff's Notes, Sparks Notes, Classic Comics, or other guides of comparable scholarly respectability.

Since other students' papers and Cliff's or Sparks Notes are not appropriate sources for a college essay, you should avoid them altogether.

There is no such thing as accidental plagiarism. If you are unsure of the proper conventions for documentation, see me and I will tell you how to find the information you need. Better yet, consult the reference librarian at Milne.

If you think for yourself and use sources properly, you will not run into trouble. But remember, in questionable cases you are unlikely to receive the benefit of the doubt. If you err, be sure it is on the side of caution.

Exams

For help writing exam essays, consult Writing Essays Exams in the [SUNY Geneseo Writing Guide](#).

Grades

Your grade reflects my honest and considered evaluation of your work. You have the right to question it. I have the right to stick by it, and that is what I invariably do (with certain obvious exceptions, such as miscalculation of an exam score). Total objectivity is no more possible in grading writing than in making any other judgment of value, but I do my best to maintain consistency and adhere to clearly defined standards. I base my grade on my opinion of your work, not on my opinion of you. If you have a question about your grade on an assignment, I encourage you to see me during office hours or schedule an appointment. I welcome the opportunity to explain to you why you got what you did. In grading papers and exams, my reference point is the "B."

- A **B** paper or exam fulfills the terms of the assignment and is, in general, a competent performance. It is lucid, intelligent, and grammatical. If you receive a "B" on written work for this class, don't ask yourself, "What did I do wrong?" However, you may well want to ask yourself — and I encourage you to ask me — "What more could I have done right?"
- An **A** paper or exam, then, is obviously better than competent. It not only fulfills the terms of the assignment but does so with unusual grace, wit, insight, imagination, originality, or clarity. It shows special and impressive care in the arrangement of ideas and the construction of sentences. Its organization is not only logical but interesting, its language not simply grammatical but striking. "A" work is extraordinary, outstanding, superior, distinguished. By definition, then, it is also rare.
- A **C** paper or exam usually contains one or more serious defects in logic, organization, or grammar. If it contains none of these, it has probably failed in some way to fulfill the basic terms of the assignment. Perhaps it is 3 or 8 pages long rather than the required 5, or perhaps it discusses two texts without fulfilling the requirement to "compare and contrast" them. Be sure to read assignments carefully — at least twice — and ask questions, if you have them, well before the due date. Do not risk modifying assignments without permission — e.g., writing on a different text or submitting a poem or dialogue in place of an essay. Such gross failures to comply with an assignment may result in an "E."
- A **D** paper or exam has the faults of a "C" paper to a larger extent or a greater degree. It has very few virtues.
- An **E** paper or exam has completely missed the boat. "E" work is even rarer than "A" work, though naturally much easier to produce. Bear in mind, however, that an otherwise good or even excellent piece of writing may receive an "E" for fraud or flagrant negligence. Included here are, among other things, plagiarism, collaborative work presented as that of a single author, failure to quote from texts, and blatant disregard of an assignment's basic terms (see above under "C").