

Literary Explorations III
Mod 1 and Mod 3, Fall, 2018

Dr. Devon Madon

Contact: dmadon@imsa.edu

Office: A111A

Hours: Drop-in Mod 4 daily; I will also be available to meet by appointment (email me to confirm appointments)

Course Description:

Students continue to develop their skills in reading, writing, discussion, and performance. Juniors will explore readings of aesthetic and cultural significance of medieval, early modern, restoration, romantic, and Victorian British literature (c.1000-1840), focusing in particular on their thematic and historical connections.

Meeting Days/Times:

Mod 1: usually 8:00-8:55 Mod 3 : usually 10:00-10:55

“A,” “B” and “D” Day
(room A119)

Required Materials

- **Texts** (subject to change depending on time/student and teacher preference/etc)
 - *Hagseed* by Margaret Atwood
 - *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare
 - *Beowulf*, unknown author
 - Selections from *Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer
 - Selections from *Paradise Lost* by John Milton
 - *A Modest Proposal* by Jonathan Swift
 - Selected Poems of Percy Shelley, William Blake and Samuel Taylor Coleridge
 - *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley
 - *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens
- **Additional Materials/Requirements:** I will frequently upload content to our Moodle page (IMSA's open source web-based course). Make sure you always have a copy of our current reading. We will also be doing a great deal of in class writing. Always bring a pen and paper.

Essential Questions we will attempt to answer this semester:

- How does a literary canon become constructed? Who constructs it?
- What is the purpose of literature? Does literature need a purpose?
- How did the English language come to be the language that we speak today? How is it still evolving?

Instructional Design and Approach:

In this course, we will further develop the critical thinking and critical reading skills introduced in the sophomore year. We will examine a variety of genres within foundational British literature, including poetry, drama, and fiction. Research-based student presentations will complement our readings and explore a range of historical topics related to the course. Because we are a community of learners, everyone's full participation in regular collaborative work is integral to the course.

Language is a central concept of the course, both as it is embodied in the texts we read and as we use it as a vehicle for response, analysis, and self-expression. We will practice various forms of writing, formal and informal, critical and creative. Students will produce a variety of creative works (e.g., sonnets, self-portraits, directorial visions for stage plays) using conventions and techniques modeled after our readings. Other writing assignments will focus on literary analysis and the creation of clear, unique thesis statements. At least one assigned essay will ask students to consider a text through the lens of another discipline (e.g., philosophy, history, or science). Students will have opportunities to revise written work for a higher grade.

Assessment Practices, Procedure, and Processes:

Assignments:

20% Presentations (one per quarter)

20% In-Class Writing, Homework, Class Participation, and Reading Quizzes

Frequently, we will open with a writing exercise asking you to critically engage with a passage from the assigned reading. You will also have several *unannounced* reading quizzes during the semester. Each quiz will cover that day's assigned reading, so it is essential that students come to each class having thoroughly read the required pages. Quizzes will be short-answer questions about characters and significant events in the plays and vocabulary terms defined and discussed in our reading. If students read the required material thoroughly, they will do well on the quizzes.

The course is a collaborative endeavor and we will work as a team to develop insightful and relevant readings. Students will come to class prepared to discuss and actively participate in debates about interpretations of our assigned reading. We will all be required to read aloud. We will also occasionally act out scenes for our classmates.

60% Essays

Essay Revision Policy: You may revise most major essays (the exception being essays at the end of each grading period). **Your grade will improve only when**

you revise, not if you proofread or simply edit. Proofreading corrects casual mistakes, mechanical errors or other such “polishing”. To revise you must reconsider and improve the argument of your paper; substantial rewriting of content, style, focus and organization need to be undertaken.

Most Essay Revisions will be due between 1 and 2 weeks after you receive your graded first draft. You must complete a “Revision Log” for each revision. I will discuss requirements for revision in more detail.

At times, if the criteria for the essay is not met, students may receive a grade of “MUST BE REVISED,” which means you will receive a grade of “60” in PowerSchool until you have met with me (within a week of receiving your essay back from me). Once we have met, you will have one week to revise the essay. Failure to meet with me and revise will result in a permanent “60” (not passing) grade for the essay.

When you revise an essay I will average together the point value of the original grade and the subsequent revision grade for your recorded grade.

Remember to use all the resources this school makes available to help you do the best job you can when you first start writing: The Writing Center @ IMSA can provide one-on-one tutoring sessions, from brainstorming through proofreading; in addition to daytime hours in the Writing Center, Writing Center tutors will also be available in the IRC and one res hall during most evenings. Peer tutors will work with you on a one-to-one basis on a variety of activities and projects. These activities might include narrowing a topic, focusing a thesis, deciding on strategies, and revising.

Policies and Expectations

What I will require from you –

Consistent attendance.

Whether or not you are present in class, you are responsible for class activities, presentations, and assignments. You may need to get the class notes from one of your classmates, and I would recommend emailing me as soon as possible after the absence to find out exactly what you missed.

Meeting with me outside of class and discussing your writing—both the process you go through as you write and your final product—is a key ingredient to improving your writing skills and can boost your grade. You will be able to give me written input on your participation grade each quarter.

Respectful behavior. The success of this class relies upon students treating their peers and their ideas with courtesy and respect. You should challenge each other, argue points, and of course be willing to challenge me, but remember to do so in a way that reflects your own dignity and intelligence.

Timeliness. All assignments should be turned in on time. Late essays (final drafts) will be penalized with the paper losing a letter grade for EACH day it is late. There are no extra credit assignments in this class and there are no make-up assignments. Computer glitches are no excuse for late work, so be sure to save your work OFTEN (I would recommend every 5 to 10 minutes) and save it in several places (the student server *and* a flash drive!).

Academic Honesty. See the handbook.

What you should expect from me –

Help and Guidance. I want you to succeed in my class, and am willing to work with you both in and out of class to make that happen. If you are confused by an assignment or are struggling with something we are doing in class, stop by my office or email me. I am more than willing to help you with things you don't understand, but be sure to ask me for assistance in advance. Showing up to class with an incomplete assignment "because you didn't understand" is not a valid excuse for missing work. Plan ahead so if you need help, you have time to get it!

Flexibility and respect. Just as I expect you to treat each other with interest, compassion, and civility, I strive to do the same for you. If, at any moment, you feel that I have failed to meet this goal, please let me know!

High standards. Grades in my class are not "given," they are ***earned***. At IMSA a "B" means that you have met expectations for a class. A "C" grade means that you did not meet expectations, and an "A" grade means you exceeded expectations. I am happy to spend time with you helping you improve your performance and meet the standards you set for yourself