

Fall 2026 British Literature Syllabus

ENGL 2321-004 | TR 11:00 am - 12:15 pm | CAB 334

Texas A&M University-San Antonio

Professor Robert J. Cavazos, MFA

Email: rcavazos@tamusa.edu (please include "ENGL 2321-004" in subject line)

Office: HALL 314C | I will hold office hours every Tuesday and Thursday from 9-11 am

Course Description

Compares a variety of texts from the British Isles, its former colonies, and Commonwealth nations, and considers the ways that literature has shaped and reflected images of British cultural identity. Prerequisite: ENGL 1301.

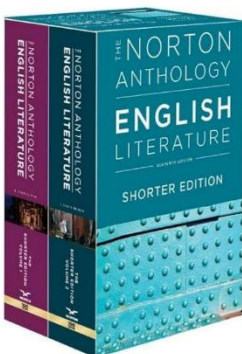
Course Overview

This course will explore the evolution of the English language across literary periods and genres, from the Middle Ages to the 21st century. We will examine how linguistics, poetics, culture, art, history, and religion shaped Old English hymns and elegies; Middle English mystic visions and chivalric romances; Early Modern sonnets and biblical translations; autobiographies and letters from across the British Empire; a Romantic epistolary novella and Victorian gothic tales, as well as a Modern English short story and historical play.

Learning Objectives	Description
Critical Thinking Skills	creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
Communication Skills	effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication
Social Responsibility	intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
Personal Responsibility	ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making

Course Goals

- demonstrate understanding of the major themes and genres of British literature
- read and analyze, critically, a range of texts, with attention to the relationships between the texts and their historical and cultural contexts
- hone written and oral communication skills



Required Materials

- A notebook and pen for weekly scrapbook entries.
- A laptop and charger for database research sessions.
- Greenblatt, Stephen, general editor. [*The Norton Anthology of English Literature*](#). Shorter 11th ed., vol. 1 & 2, W.W. Norton & Company, 2024. ISBN: 9781324062875.

Book Clubs

This semester, you and your fellow scholars will work together in small-group Book Clubs. While you will spend a lot of time by yourself reading, researching, and writing about literature, you cannot wholly succeed as a literary reader, writer, and scholar on your own. You need an audience who cares just as much as you do about literature and literary research to discuss difficult passages, read assignment drafts, and offer constructive feedback.

Digital Tools

This course uses Blackboard. While instruction will be provided, it is your responsibility to submit assignments on time. If you experience technical difficulties with Blackboard, please try a different browser, contact me, or contact the ITS Help Desk: (210) 784-4357 or helpdesk@tamusa.edu. Please note that you may only upload PDF files, Word documents, videos, or audio files directly to Blackboard. Links to Google Docs or SharePoint files will not be accepted, as I am often unable to view those files due to sharing permissions.

Grades

This course is reading-intensive (20-40 pages per week), and will also include a lot of writing and research. Please be prepared each class to discuss assigned readings, but do not be afraid to voice different and unique perspectives on literary texts and their meanings. To succeed in this course, it is crucial that you read all assigned texts, develop original ideas about those texts and their authors, attend class, take detailed notes, engage with your peers during discussions and workshops, write with integrity and inspiration, and ask for help!

I grade assignments each week with feedback. You can check your total grade at any time in Blackboard. Please email me or visit my office during office hours to request an extension in advance, or a revision. Late assignments lose 1 point per day late.

This semester, you will complete:

Assignment	Description	Points
Class Attendance	Showing up on time each class, prepared and actively engaged in discussions and notetaking	100 points
Quizzes & Responses	Weekly handwritten quizzes and reading responses completed and discussed in class	10 points each
Physical Scrapbook	Weekly handwritten entries incorporating both words and visuals in response to assigned texts	10 points each
Digital Media Review	Critical evaluation of chosen media adaptation's reinterpretation of <i>Sir Gawain & the Green Knight</i>	50 points
Group Performance	Close reading and dramatic performance of Wole Soyinka's <i>Death and the King's Horseman</i>	50 points
Final Research Paper	6-8 pages in MLA format advancing an original argument on a course text's contributions to the evolution of the English language and literature	100 points

Attendance

You are absent if you are not present for class and late if you arrive after attendance has been taken. You must communicate the circumstances with me in advance to be excused for an absence or late arrival. Your success and development as a writer depend on your active participation within your writing workshop group. Consistent attendance is crucial and is graded. You will receive a 75 for an unexcused late arrival and a 0 for an unexcused absence.

Respect

I am committed to fostering a respectful classroom environment in which different backgrounds and perspectives are acknowledged. While working with classmates and instructors, you will respectfully listen to others' experiences and perspectives, share your own experiences and perspectives, and value the opportunity to learn from each other. Demonstrating respect for those different from you not only prepares you for success in the classroom, but also prepares you for success as citizens and professionals. If you use violent, harassing, and or discriminatory language, you will be reported to the university and may be subject to Student Code of Conduct policies.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as the intentional use of another's "language, ideas, or original (not common-knowledge) material" without acknowledgement ("[Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism](#)"). If you plagiarize, copy, or otherwise cheat on an assignment, you will receive a permanent zero on that assignment without the opportunity for revision.

Generative AI

I expect you to generate your own content this semester. Relying on generative AI to write content for you prevents you from growing as a university-level writer and critical thinker. However, there are situations and contexts within this course where you may use generative artificial intelligence (GAI) tools to support your work as a literary writer and scholar. For example, GAI technologies such as ChatGPT can work well as a starting point for written assignments, assisting you with brainstorming, outlining, generating ideas, and collecting basic information about a topic/idea. Note that the emphasis here is on "support." GAI programs have been shown to provide biased or incorrect information, and to generate writing that lacks human imagination. For these reasons, I discourage you from using GAI technology to generate content **for you**. If you have reason to use GAI to generate content **with you**, consult with me before doing so. If your professor approves your use, you should acknowledge the GAI program you have used and identify which portions of the text you submitted were produced by GAI. Using GAI content without your professor's permission and/or without proper attribution qualifies as plagiarism.

Important Policies And Resources

University Email Policy and Course Communications: All correspondence between professors and students must occur via university email accounts. You must have your Jaguar email account ready and working. If it is not working, contact the help desk at helpdesk@tamusa.edu or at 210-784-HELP (4357). If you don't hear back within 48 hours, contact them again. They have many requests during the first part of the semester, so you may need to follow up with them.

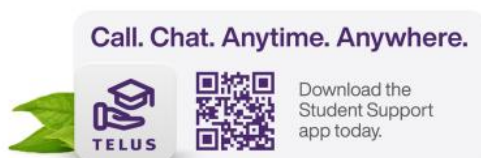
Academic Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to providing all students with reasonable access to learning opportunities and accommodations in accordance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, Disability Support Services is located in the Central Academic Building, Suite 210. You can also contact us via phone at (210) 784-1335, visit us at our [website](#) or email us at dss@tamusa.edu. Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their academic accommodations with DSS and their instructors as soon as possible.

Academic Learning Center: All currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio can utilize the Academic Learning Center for subject-area tutoring. The Academic Learning Center provides free course-based tutoring to all currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. Students wishing to work with a tutor can make appointments through the Brainfuse online tutoring platform. Brainfuse can be accessed in the *Tools* section of Blackboard. You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing tutoring@tamusa.edu, calling (210) 784-1307, or visiting the Central Academic Building, room 202. Online tutoring is also available for after hours and weekend assistance. While tutoring hours may change based on tutor schedules and availability, the current tutoring hours for MATH in the ALC are as follows:

Day of the Week	Appointments available	Walk-in Tutoring – No appointment needed
Monday	8 am – 6 pm	9 am – 5 pm
Tuesday	8 am – 6 pm	9 am – 5 pm
Wednesday	8 am – 6 pm	9 am – 5 pm
Thursday	8 am – 6 pm	9 am – 5 pm
Friday	8 am – 5 pm	11 am – 4 pm

Counseling/Mental Health Resources: As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and negatively impact your daily functioning. If you are experiencing emotional difficulties or mental health concerns, support is available to you through the Student Counseling Center (SCC). To schedule an appointment, visit our [website](#), call 210-784-1331 or visit Madla 120 between the hours of 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM.

All mental health services provided by the SCC are free and confidential (as the law allows). The Student Counseling Center provides brief individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services. Crisis support is available 24/7/365 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 or through the TELUS student support App. The TELUS Student Support App provides a variety of mental health resources, including 24/7/365 support for in the moment distress, crisis support, an anonymous peer-to-peer support network, mental health screenings, podcasts, and articles to improve your mental wellbeing.



Emergency Preparedness: JagE Alert is Texas A&M University-San Antonio's mass notification system. In the event of an emergency, such as inclement weather, students, staff and faculty, who are registered, will have the option to receive a text message, email with instructions and updates. To register or update your information visit: [this website](#). More information about Emergency Operations Plan and the Emergency Action Plan can be found at [Emergency Operations Plan](#) and the [Emergency Action Plan](#). Download [the SafeZone App](#) for emergencies or call (210) 784-1911. Non-Emergency (210) 784-1900.

Financial Aid and Verification of Attendance: According to the following federal regulation, 34 CFR 668.21: U.S. Department of Education (DoE) Title IV regulation, a student can only receive Title IV funds based on Title IV eligibility criteria which include class attendance. If Title IV funds are disbursed to ineligible students (including students who fail to begin attendance), the institution must return these funds to the U.S. DoE within 30 days of becoming aware that the student will not or has not begun attendance. Faculty will provide the Office of Financial Aid with an electronic notification if a student has not attended by the published Census Date (the first week of class). Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend prior to the published Census Date (the first week of class) will have their aid terminated and returned to the DoE. Please note that any student who stops attending at any time during the semester may also need to return a portion of their federal aid.

Jaguar Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center (WLDCC): The WLDCC provides writing support to graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges as well as faculty and staff. Writing tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. Our language tutors support students enrolled in Spanish courses and students composing in Spanish for any assignment. Our digital studio tutors support students working on digital projects such as eportfolios, class presentations, or other digital multimedia projects. The WLDCC offers face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous digital appointments. Students can schedule appointments with the WLDCC in JagWire under the Student Services tab. Click

on “Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center” to make your appointment. Students wanting to work in real time with a tutor can schedule an “Online Appointment.” Students wishing to receive asynchronous, written feedback from a tutor can schedule an “eTutoring” appointment. More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found on our [website](#). The WLDCC can also be reached by emailing wldcc@tamusa.edu.

Meeting Basic Needs: Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to submit a [CARE Referral](#) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to direct you to available resources. A food pantry is available on campus; click [here](#) for hours and contact information.

Military Affairs: Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to visit the Office of Military Affairs for any question involving federal or state VA Education Benefits. Visit the Patriots’ Casa building, room 202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at military.va@tamusa.edu or (210)784-1397.

Religious Observances: Texas A&M University-San Antonio recognizes the wide variety of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or course work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes.

The Six-Drop Rule: Students are subject to the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 1231 passed by the Texas Legislature in 2007. SB 1231 limits students to a maximum of six (6) non-punitive course drops (i.e., courses a student chooses to drop) during their undergraduate careers. A non-punitive drop does not affect the student’s GPA. However, course drops that exceed the maximum allowed by SB 1231 will be treated as “F” grades and will impact the student’s GPA.

Statement of Harassment and Discrimination: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equal opportunity, and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, A&M-San Antonio encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality and the uniqueness of the individual on our campus and within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees are to be based on applicable law and individual merit. Texas A&M University-San Antonio, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or pregnancy/parenting status. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the University’s Civil Rights Officer at 210-784-2061 or titleix@tamusa.edu.

Texas A&M University-San Antonio faculty are committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of sex discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic or dating violence, or stalking based on sex, know that help and support are available. A&M-San Antonio's Title IX Coordinator can support those impacted by such conduct in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The university strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the Title IX Coordinator. Please be aware that all A&M-San Antonio employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors and trained victim advocates) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the university. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment, sexual violence, or other related sex-based misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator (titleix@tamusa.edu, 210-784-2061, CAB 439K). If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting requirement, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331 or visit them in Madla 120.

Pregnant/Parenting Students: Texas A&M-San Antonio does not require a pregnant or parenting student, solely because of that status or issues related to that status, to (1) take a leave of absence or withdraw from their degree or certificate program; (2) limit the student's studies; (3) participate in an alternative program; (4) change the student's major, degree, or certificate program; or (5) refrain from joining or cease participating in any course, activity, or program at the University. The university will provide such reasonable accommodations to pregnant students as would be provided to a student with a temporary medical condition that are related to the health and safety of the student and the student's unborn child. These could include maintaining a safe distance from substances, areas, and activities known to be hazardous to pregnant individuals and their unborn child; excused absences because of illness or medical appointments; modified due dates for assignments; rescheduled tests/exams; taking a leave of absence; and being provided access to instructional materials and video recordings of lectures for excused absences, if these would be provided to any other student with an excused absence. Pregnant/parenting students are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator with any questions or concerns related to their status (titleix@tamusa.edu; 210-784-2061; CAB 439K). Texas A&M-San Antonio has also designated the Title IX Coordinator as the liaison officer for current or incoming students who are the parent or guardian of a child younger than 18 years of age. The Title IX Coordinator can provide students with information regarding support services and other resources.

Young Jaguars can support parenting students with daycare if students meet this criteria: (1) must be enrolled in classes at Texas A&M-San Antonio in the current semester, (2) must be Pell eligible or a single parent, (3) child(ren) must be aged 3 to 12-years-old, and (4) child(ren) must be enrolled in Pre-K-3 through 6th grade. Hours of operation are Monday-Thursday 3:30-9:00 pm. For more information, please contact Young Jaguars at youngjaguars@tamusa.edu or call (210) 784-2636.

Students' Rights and Responsibilities: The following statement of students' rights and responsibilities is intended to reflect the philosophical base upon which University Student Rules are built. This philosophy acknowledges the existence of both rights and responsibilities, which is inherent to an individual not only as a student at Texas A&M University-San Antonio but also as a citizen of this country.

Students' Rights

1. A student shall have the right to participate in a free exchange of ideas, and there shall be no University rule or administrative rule that in any way abridges the rights of freedom of speech, expression, petition and peaceful assembly as set forth in the U.S. Constitution.
2. Each student shall have the right to participate in all areas and activities of the University, free from any form of discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, and pregnancy/parenting or veteran status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.
3. A student has the right to personal privacy except as otherwise provided by law, and this will be observed by students and University authorities alike.
4. Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university student rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

Students' Responsibilities

1. A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty, and administration.
2. A student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with the published University Student Rules found in the Student Handbook, Student Code of Conduct, on our website, and University Catalog, and to comply with them, as well as with federal, state, and local laws.
3. A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire University community.
4. A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide a safe environment for learning.
5. A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notifications.

We expect that students will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful, and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, or disability. Conduct that infringes on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated. Students are expected to exhibit a high level of honesty and integrity in their pursuit of higher education. Students engaging in an act that violates the standards of academic integrity will find themselves facing academic and/or disciplinary sanctions. Academic misconduct is any act, or attempt, which gives an unfair advantage to the student. Additionally, any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion may be considered as academic misconduct. For more information on academic misconduct policies and procedures please review the [Student Code of Conduct](#) or visit the resources available in the [OSRR website](#).

Course Calendar

Each week's assignments are due on Friday by 11:59 pm.

Important Dates:

Aug. 24 th	First class day
Sept. 7 th	Labor Day Holiday
Nov. 13 th	Last day to drop with a "W"
Nov. 25 th -28 th	Thanksgiving Holiday
Dec. 4 th	Last class day
Dec. 5 th -11 th	Final exams

The complete [academic calendar](#) is available online (Fall 2026)

The Middle Ages (Start of Volume I)

Week 1: The Middle Ages to ca. 1485

Readings – Introduction (3-27)

Assignments – Academic Integrity Commitment, Reading Quiz, Scrapbook Entry

Week 2: The Early Middle Ages

Readings – *Cædmon's Hymn* (30-33), *The Wanderer* (110-13), *The Wife's Lament* (113-15)

Assignments – Lyrical Response, Scrapbook Entry

Week 3: Literature of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries

Readings – Romance (119-20), Marie De France (121-34), *God's Body* (138-39),

Julian Of Norwich (140-44), Margery Kempe (144-48)

Assignments – Reading Quiz, Scrapbook Entry

Week 4: Literature of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries

Readings – Religious Exclusions (178-79), Meir Ben Elijah (182-84), *Sir Gawain* (247-302)

Assignments – Reading Quiz, Scrapbook Entry

The Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries

Week 5: The Sixteenth Century (1485-1603)

Readings – Introduction (397-431), *The English Bible* (437-41)

Assignments – Digital Media Review Topic Proposal, Translation Lab, Scrapbook Entry

Week 6: The Sixteenth Century (1485-1603)

Readings – Elizabeth I (441-49), William Shakespeare (610-26)

Assignments – Reading Quiz, Scrapbook Entry

Week 7: The Early Seventeenth Century (1603-1660)

Readings – Introduction (713-45), Thomas Hobbes (813-17), George Herbert (818-25)

Assignments – Reading Quiz, Scrapbook Entry

Week 8: The Early Seventeenth Century (1603-1660)

Readings – Margaret Cavendish (846-64), John Milton (864-67, 881-94)

Assignments – Writing Workshop, Scrapbook Entry

The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century

Week 9: The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century (1660-1785)

Readings – Introduction (1029-55), Empire (1185-87), Samson Occom (1195-97), Phillis Wheatley (1495-99), Olaudah Equiano (1534-54)

Assignments – Digital Media Review, Letter Response, Scrapbook Entry

The Romantic Period (Start of Volume II)

Week 10: The Romantic Period (1785-1832)

Readings – Introduction (3-32), Jane Austen (316-37)

Assignments – Research Paper Topic Proposal, Reading Quiz, Scrapbook Entry

The Victorian Age

Week 11: The Victorian Age (1830-1901)

Readings – Introduction (507-31), Charles Dickens (751-810)

Assignments – Reading Quiz, Scrapbook Entry

The Twentieth And Twenty-First Centuries

Week 12: The Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries

Readings – Robert Louis Stevenson (896-939), Introduction (1009-39)

Assignments – Reading Quiz, Scrapbook Entry

Week 13: The Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries

Readings – Wole Soyinka (1448-97)

Assignments – Writing Workshop, Scrapbook Entry

Week 14: Thanksgiving Break (No Classes)

Week 15: The Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries

Readings – Kazuo Ishiguro (1603-11)

Assignments – Group Performance, Physical Scrapbook

Week 16: Final Examinations Week

Assignments – Final Research Paper