

## Department of English &amp; Writing Studies

**English 1020E (001)**  
**Understanding Literature Today**  
Fall/Winter 2025-26**Instructor:** Dr. Jo Devereux**Antirequisites:** English 1024E, 1036E.**Prerequisites:** Grade 12U English or permission of the Department. For part time students who have been admitted without the OSSD, this permission will be granted as a matter of course.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description

To understand English literature today, we first need to learn about the literature that went before, so that we can build a strong foundation for exploring many genres of writing. In this course, we study a broad range of exciting and important literary works from the past and present and from diverse communities of the English-speaking world. We will learn about formal and thematic elements of texts, how they are constructed, how their historical context affects their creation and reception, and how they relate to political and social issues, such as gender, race, intersectionality, colonization, decolonization, and the environment. In class and tutorials, we will cover research skills, including how to research and write effective MLA undergraduate essays in English. Most importantly, students will learn how to construct persuasive arguments about the texts we will be reading together.

**Objectives:**

By the end of the course, successful students will be able to:

- Develop an appreciation of literature that unites historical observation and literary analysis;
- Build a critical reading of a text and write essays that have an effective thesis and a logical argument supported by evidence from the text(s);
- Engage in research and properly document their essays using the MLA guidelines;
- Converse in the language of the discipline, using literary terms and concepts, both in written and oral forms.

### Course Materials

**NB: All these books are required, and you must bring to class the edition listed below and use that edition for your essays. Failure to use the correct edition will result in a failing grade on your essay. No exceptions.**

Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre* (Broadview) \$20.15  
Drew Hayden Taylor, *In a World Created by a Drunken God* (Talon Books) \$17.95  
Téa Muttonji, *Shut Up You're Pretty* (Arsenal Pulp) \$17.95  
Mary Seacole, *Wonderful Adventures of Mrs. Seacole in Many Lands* (Penguin) \$23.00  
Shakespeare, William. *As You Like It* (Folger Shakespeare Library) \$12.99

### Methods of Evaluation

The grade for the course will be arrived at as follows:

Essay 1: 10%, 50 minutes, in-class October 23, 2025  
Essay 2: 15%, 1000 words, Due December 3, 2025  
Midterm test: 10%, 50 minutes, in-class, January 28, 2026  
Essay 3: 20%, 2500 words, Due March 18, 2025  
Attendance / participation in tutorials: 10%

Sliding scale for attendance grade:

Days missed	Grade.
0-2	10/10
3-5	8/10
6-7	6/10
8-9	4/10
10	2/10
>10	0/5

Final Exam: 35%, 3 hours, closed book, in-person, April 2026, date TBA

**Electronic Devices:** *No aids are permitted for this exam. Electronic devices of any kind (including calculators, cell phones and smart watches) are not permitted.*

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/Student%20Information.html>.

### **Academic Consideration**

Students may request academic consideration in cases of extenuating circumstances – that is, personal circumstances beyond the student's control that have a **substantial but temporary** impact on the student's ability to meet essential academic requirements.

1. Requests for academic consideration are made to the Academic Advising office of the student's Faculty of Registration.

2. Requests for academic consideration include the following components:
  - a. Self-attestation signed by the student;
  - b. Indication of the course(s) and assessment(s) relevant to the request;
  - c. Supporting documentation as relevant.

Requests without supporting documentation are **limited to one per term**.

Assignments with flexible deadlines and any term work that does not count towards the course grade are **not** eligible for additional consideration.

Documentation for medical illness, when required, includes the completion of a [Western Student Medical Certificate \(SMC\)](#) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation, by a health care practitioner.

Requests linked to examinations scheduled by the Office of the Registrar during official examination periods as well as practice laboratory and performance tests typically scheduled in the last week of term **always** require formal supporting documentation.

### **Attendance**

Attendance is mandatory in all classes and tutorials. In cases of excessive absenteeism (e.g. more than 9 unexcused hours for a half course, 18 for a full course), which are not accounted for by either academic consideration or accommodation, students may be debarred from taking the final examination, and will receive an official warning to this effect by or before the course drop date (see Senate policy). In classes with or without final exams, students who do not attend class will receive 0% for course participation grades. Unless other policies dictate a different set of penalties in specific English and Writing Studies programs, this will apply to all department programs.

### **Gender-Based and Sexual Violence**

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website:

[https://www.uwo.ca/health/student\\_support/survivor\\_support/get-help.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html). To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca).

### **Intellectual Property/Copyright**

All instructor-written materials (e.g. PowerPoints, lecture notes, oral lectures) for this course are created solely for students' personal use within the course, and remain the instructor's intellectual property. Further reproduction, fixation, distribution, transmission, dissemination, communication, or any other uses, without securing the consent of the copyright owner (the course instructor) may be an infringement of copyright. You may not distribute, email, or otherwise communicate these materials to any other person. These limitations extend to recording, photographing, or sharing lectures (online or in-person) and lecture material without permission. Posting the instructor's content from this course to online course sharing sites like OneClass or Course Hero without permission is both an infringement of intellectual property law and a violation of academic integrity guidelines. The instructor will pass these cases on to the Western University Ombudsperson or their Department Chair as appropriate.

### **Religious Accommodation**

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar.

### **Support Services**

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Academic Support & Engagement <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western:  
<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

### **Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence**

\*The use of generative AI, such as ChatGPT, is **not** permitted and will be considered a scholastic offence in this course.

### Academic Integrity Tutorial

All students are required to enroll in and complete the Centre for Teaching and Learning's Academic Integrity Tutorial. To access the tutorial, please use the link provided in the Resource tab in the course OWL Brightspace site. Once the tutorial has been completed, you will receive a downloadable certificate. You must upload the certificate and submit it through the course Assignments tab in order to complete this assignment. The tutorial must be completed by Friday in the second week of term. This tutorial is mandatory in order for you to complete and pass the course. If you have completed the tutorial already for another course, you may upload the same certificate for this course; you do not need to repeat the tutorial.

### Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at  
[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

### **Plagiarism**

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

### **Plagiarism Checking**

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

### Schedule of Classes and Assignments

#### **Fall Term 2025**

Sept.8-10	Introduction; Prosody
Sept.15-17	Sonnets <b>(posted on OWL)</b>
Sept.22-24	Sonnets continued <b>(posted on OWL)</b>
Sept.29-Oct.1	<i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i> <b>(posted on OWL)</b>
Oct.6-8	<i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i> <b>(posted on OWL)</b>
Oct.15	Shakespeare introduced
Oct.20-23	Shakespeare, <i>As You Like It</i> <b>(bring your copy)</b> ; <u>Essay 1 In-class, Wednesday</u>
Oct.27-29	Shakespeare, <i>As You Like It</i> <b>(bring your copy)</b>
Nov.3-5	FALL READING WEEK
Nov.10-12	Drew Hayden Taylor, <i>In a World created by a Drunken God</i> <b>(bring your copy)</b>
Nov.17-19	Téa Mutojji, <i>Shut Up You're Pretty</i> <b>(bring your copy)</b>
Nov.24-26	Téa Mutojji, <i>Shut Up You're Pretty</i> <b>(bring your copy)</b>
Dec.1-3	Charlotte Smith sonnets <b>(posted on OWL)</b> ; <u>Essay 2 Due Wednesday</u>
Dec. 8	TBA

#### **NO CHRISTMAS EXAM**

#### **Winter Term 2025 (13 weeks)**

Jan.5-7	Wordsworth poems <b>(posted on OWL)</b>
Jan.12-14	Keats poems <b>(posted on OWL)</b>
Jan.19-21	Tennyson, "Mariana," "Lady of Shalott" <b>(posted on OWL)</b>
Jan.26-28	Brontë, <i>Jane Eyre</i> <b>(bring your copy)</b> ; <u>Midterm Test Wednesday</u>
Feb.2-4	Brontë, <i>Jane Eyre</i> <b>(bring your copy)</b>
Feb.9-11	Frances Harper poems <b>(posted on OWL)</b>
Feb.16-18	<b>WINTER READING WEEK</b>
Feb.23-25	Mary Seacole, <i>Wonderful Adventures</i> <b>(bring your copy)</b>
Mar.2-4	Seacole continued <b>(bring your copy)</b>
Mar.9-11	Rossetti, "Goblin Market" <b>(posted on OWL)</b>
Mar.16-18	Browning, "My Last Duchess"; "Porphyria's Lover" <b>(posted on OWL)</b> ; <u>Essay 3</u>

#### **Due Wednesday**

Mar.23-25	Yeats, "The Second Coming"; "Sailing to Byzantium" <b>(posted on OWL)</b>
Mar.30-Apr.1	Gwendolyn Brooks poems <b>(posted on OWL)</b>
Apr.6-8	TBA