

PhD Program in English Literature
Department of English Language and Literature
Faculty of Foreign Languages
University of Jordan

Course number: 2201943

Course title: Eighteenth-Century English Literature

Course Description:

The eighteenth-century English Literature cannot and should not be seen merely through labels and terms used by critics and literary historians partly for convenience: Neo-classicism, Rationalism, Deism, Optimism, Satire, etc. No doubt, such terms help to understand the literary output of the age, but equally significant is to observe the richness, variety and diversity of the literary kinds produced throughout this age. Therefore, emphasis will be placed on the primary works of such writers as Swift, Pope, Johnson, Addison, Steele, Defoe, Gray, Collins, Cowper, Goldsmith, Sheridan and others. Representative examples will be chosen for critical and analytical study in the areas of prose, poetry, essay, drama, novel, literary criticism, etc. Meantime, secondary sources will also be consulted for further illumination.

Conducting the Seminars:

In each meeting, one student or more are expected to give a presentation on an assigned topic, which must be prepared carefully, typed and distributed to their colleagues beforehand. Upon the delivery of the presentation (for about 15 minutes) students engage in the discussion of the topic, raise pertinent and relevant questions and comment. The leader / coach (myself) will assess all that has been said and thought about the subject. All students in the seminar are expected to take part in the seminar activities.

Evaluation:

Midterm Examination:	30%
Presentation and Participation:	10%
A Research Paper (20 pages):	20%
Final Examination:	40%

Note: The research paper should be submitted two weeks before the date of the final examination. **No late submissions will be allowed.**

Course Policies:

- Punctuality and regular attendance of the seminar must be strictly observed.
- Plagiarism will result in automatic failure.
- Students are urged to use the scholarly version of English, especially in their writings.

Study Plan:

Week one:

- Intellectual, social, economic, religious, and literary background of the eighteenth century
- Major literary movements of the age as reflected in such terms as: Satire, Reason, Neoclassicism, Sublime and Language, Deism, Enlightenment, Journalism, etc.

Week two:

Daniel Defoe (1659 – 1731)

- A Journal of the Plague Year (1722)
- The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, of York, Mariner (1719)
- Defoe and Journalism

Week three:

Joseph Addison (1672 – 1719) and Richard Steele (1672 – 1729)

- Essays and papers / The Periodical Essay
- *The Spectator* and *The Tatler*
- Language used and ultimate purpose of writing declared

Week four:

Jonathan Swift (1667 – 1745): A Major Satirist

Gulliver's Travels

Week five:

Jonathan Swift (1667 – 1745) / cont'd

- Battle of Books (1697, 1704)
- A Modest Proposal (1729)
- Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift (1731, 1739)
- A Satirical Elegy on the Death of a Late Famous General (1722)
- Critical Evaluation of Swift as a satirist by different Literary critics

Week six:

Alexander Pope (1688 – 1744): A Major Satirist

- The Rape of the Lock (1712)
- The Dunciad (1728, 1742, 1743)
- Essay on Man (1733, 1734)

Week seven:

Alexander Pope (1688 – 1744) / cont'd

- Essay on Criticism (1711)
- An Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot
- Critical evaluation of Pope's contributions

Week eight:

Midterm Examination

Week nine:

Samuel Johnson (1709 – 1784): A staunch critic, Editor, Lexicologist, Satirist, Poet, Scholar, A great Conversationalist, and Prose-fiction Writer.

- The Preface to Shakespeare (1725)
- The Lives of English Poets (1779; 1781): Milton, Cowley, Dryden, and Pope as examples.

Week ten:

Samuel Johnson (1709 – 1784) / cont'd

- A Dictionary of English Language (1755)
- The Prince of Abyssinia: A Tale (1759, 1787)
- The Vanity of Human Wishes, The Tenth Satire of Juvenal Imitated (1749)
- Critical Evaluation of Johnson's contributions

Week eleven:

James Boswell (1740 – 1795)

- The Life of Samuel Johnson (1791)
- The Letter to Chesterfield

The Poetry of Sensibility:

- James Thomson (1700 – 1748)
 - From the "Seasons" (1727, 1728)
- Thomas Gray (1716 – 1771)
 - Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard
- Oliver Goldsmith (1730 – 1774)
 - The Deserted Village (1770)

Week twelve:

The Development of the English Novel

- Examples of major Eighteenth-Century Novelists:
- Samuel Richardson (1689 – 1767)
 - Pamela: or Virtue Rewarded* (1740, 1741)
- Henry Fielding (1707 – 1754)
 - Joseph Andrews* (1742)
- Laurence Sterne (1713 – 1768)
 - The Life and Opinion of Tristram Shandy* (1760 – 1767)

Week thirteen:

- The Novel of Sentiment: Oliver Goldsmith (1728 – 1774)
The Virtue of Wakefield (1762, 1766)
- The Gothic Novel:
- Horace Walpole (1717 – 1797)
The Castle of Otranto: A Gothic Story
- William Beckford (1759 – 1844)
Vathek: An Arabian Tale (1781, 1782)

Week fourteen:

Sentimental Comedy

- Oliver Goldsmith
She Stoops to Conquer
- Richard Sheridan (1751 – 1816)
The School for Scandal (1777)

Week fifteen:

- The Movement away from Neoclassicism in preparation for the Revolutionary Era and the Romantic Movement: Pre-Romanticism
- Wrap Up

Sources:**1. Primary Sources:**

- 1) M. Abrams *et al.* ed. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 7th ed. vol.1. New York: Norton, 2000.
- 2) Johnson, Samuel. *'Rasselas' and Essays*. Ed. Charles Peake. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967.

2. Secondary Sources:

- 1) Addison, Joseph. *The Poetical Works of Joseph Addison*. Adamant Media Corporation, 2001.
- 2) Addison, Joseph and Richard Steele. *The Commerce of Everyday Life: Selections from The Tatler and The Spectator*. Bedford / St. Martins, 1998.
- 3) Ayres, Philip. *Classical Culture and the Idea of Rome in Eighteenth-Century England*. Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- 4) Brooks. Cleanth, John Thibaut and Robert Penn Warren ed. *An Approach to Literature*. 5th ed. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1975.

- 5) Clifford, James L. *Eighteenth-Century English Literature: Modern Essays in Criticism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1959.
- 6) Greene, Donald J. *Samuel Johnson: A Collection of Critical Essays*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1965.
- 7) Griffin, Dustin. *Satire: A Critical Reintroduction*. Oxford University Press, 1994.
- 8) Hodgart, Mathew. *Satire*. London: World University Library, 1969.
- 9) Humphreys, A. R. *The Augustan World: Society, Thought, and Letters in Eighteenth-Century England*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1963.
- 10) Johnson, Samuel. *Samuel Johnson: The Major Works*. Oxford University Press, 2009.
- 11) Johnson, Samuel. *The Works of Samuel Johnson*. Hard Press, 2006
- 12) Jones, Vivien, ed. *Women and Literature in Britain: 1700 – 1800*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- 13) Lonsdale, Roger ed. *Eighteenth-Century Women Poets: An Oxford Anthology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- 14) Noggle, James. *Skeptical Sublime: Aesthetics Ideology in Pope and the Tory Satirists*. Oxford University Press, 2001.
- 15) O'Brien, Karen. *Women and Enlightenment in Eighteenth-Century England*. Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- 16) Pfordresher, John, Gladys V. Veidemanis, and Helen McDonell ed. *England in Literature*. classic ed. Illinois: Foresman, 1989.
- 17) Reitan, Earl I. *Eighteenth-Century England: History, Literature, Theatre, Architecture, Art, Music*. IUniverse, 2009.
- 18) Schellenberg, Betty A. *The Professionalization of Women Writers in Eighteenth-Century Britain*. Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- 19) Sherman, Stuart, ed. *The Restoration and the 18th Century*. New York: Longman, 1999.