

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

Case College of Literature, Arts, and Social Sciences | Department of Languages and Literature

English 2322: British Literature I (Middle Ages to Age of Reason)

Semester: Fall 2026

Instructor: Dr. Laura Payne	Office Hours: By Appointment (Online/In-Person)
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Course Description

English 2322 is a survey of major works of British literature from its Anglo-Saxon beginnings through the 18th-century Age of Reason. As an asynchronous online course, we will explore how foundational texts reflect changing political, religious, and cultural landscapes. Through critical reading, active weekly discussions, and analytical writing, students will engage with epic poetry, medieval romance, Renaissance drama, and Enlightenment satire.

Course Learning Objectives (SLOs)

- **1. Analyze** foundational texts of British literature within their historical, political, and cultural contexts.
- **2. Identify** literary movements, genres, and structures spanning from the early Middle Ages to the 18th century.
- **3. Evaluate** diverse perspectives and ethical dilemmas presented in early literature to develop principles of Personal and Social Responsibility in a global community.
- **4. Construct** logically organized, mechanically clear literary analyses supported by text-based evidence.

Required Materials

The Norton Anthology of English Literature, 11th Edition

- Volume A: The Middle Ages
- Volume B: The Sixteenth Century & Early Seventeenth Century
- Volume C: The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century

Reliable high-speed internet access and regular access to the SRSU Blackboard LMS are required for course completion.

Grading & Evaluation Policy

Your grade will be calculated according to the following breakdown:

Assignment Category	Percentage Weight
Weekly Discussion Boards	20%
Course Journal Elements	20%
Literary Analysis Essay 1 (Medieval / Renaissance focus)	20%
Literary Analysis Essay 2 (Restoration / Enlightenment focus)	20%
Final Comprehensive Essay Exam	20%

Grading Scale: A: 90-100% | B: 80-89% | C: 70-79% | D: 60-69% | F: <60%

Course Policies & Student Expectations

Asynchronous Structure & Attendance

While this class does not hold live video meetings, it is not a self-paced course. Weekly modules unlock on prior Wednesdays at 8:00 a.m. to allow students to work ahead and to project each unit's expectations. The reading schedule and major assignment due dates are also listed here in this syllabus, if you wish to work ahead. Online attendance is measured by timely interactions with course discussion forums.

Late Submission Policy

- **Weekly Discussion Boards:** These require collaborative timing. Missed assignments cannot be submitted late without permission from the instructor. If you see a zero in the gradebook, move on to the next assignment and remain current.

- **Major Essays:** Late essays lose 10% of their total value if late without an excused permission. No late work is accepted after the Final Comprehensive Exam, as the course is considered closed.

Online Netiquette & Communication in Discussion Boards

In an online literature forum, diverse academic interpretations are expected and welcomed. We will explore challenging, historically distant concepts. In discussions, you must argue your case based strictly on textual evidence. Personal attacks, harassment, or dismissive behavior will result in removal from the discussions and a zero for the week. Replies must indicate you have read the original posts, citing details from it as evidence. Avoid generic, undeveloped writing at all costs: This is the main cause for low grades in discussion boards. **The initial discussion board must be 300 words with replies at 100 words.**

University Regulations and Resources

Academic Integrity & AI Policy

Academic dishonesty (plagiarism, collusion, cheating, or turning in work that is not yours) carries severe penalties, ranging from an F on the assignment to expulsion from the university. In this class, you are developing your critical analytical voice. The use of Generative AI (such as ChatGPT) to write, structure, or generate content for any course submission is strictly prohibited. AI-assisted work will be treated as plagiarism. Additionally, always respect privacy: never submit proprietary prompts or personal identifiers to generative AI models. Please note that AI-developed work tends to rely on generic information, offering little to no specifics or evidence.

Statement Regarding Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The University does not recommend or endorse any specific AI tools or resources. Students should be aware that many generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot) store user input and may use this data to train future models. For this reason, students should never upload or share personal, confidential, or identifiable information — such as names, ID numbers, health data, or assignment submissions containing such details — into any generative AI platform.

When using AI tools, students should verify whether the tool complies with student privacy standards as indicated by the University. Faculty may recommend specific tools that better align with institutional data privacy policies, but ultimate responsibility for data protection rests with users. Students are encouraged to use faculty-recommended platforms when engaging in coursework involving generative AI. The University is not liable for any adverse experience or impact when students interact with these tools.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students in English studies will demonstrate that they can

1. Construct essays that demonstrate unity, organization, coherence, and development (SLO 1);

2. Analyze literary works by applying principles of literary criticism or theory (SLO 2);
3. Produce research papers that demonstrate the ability to locate a variety of acceptable sources, employ them effectively through quotations or paraphrases, integrate them smoothly into the writer's own prose, and document them correctly using MLA format (SLO 3);
4. Demonstrate creativity or originality of thought in written or multimedia projects (SLO 3);
5. Compare/contrast and analyze major works and periods within World, English, and American literature (SLO 3).

Marketable Skills and Core Curriculum SLOs

The marketable skills and student learning outcomes for English 2322, a core curriculum course, include higher-level communication, reading comprehension, analytical and critical thinking, and historical interpretive thinking in a global society.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

SRSU Accessibility Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. To help protect confidentiality, students seeking accessibility/accommodation services must submit the Accommodation Request Form located on the SRSU website.

Students are welcome to call the Office of Accessibility Services at 432-837-8203 or stop by Ferguson Hall Room 112 with any additional questions regarding the process. Mailing address: PO Box C-122, Alpine, TX 79832.

Student Responsibilities Statement

All full-time and part-time students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the Student Handbook and the Undergraduate & Graduate Catalog, and for abiding by University rules and regulations. Additionally, students are responsible for checking their Sul Ross email as an official form of communication from the University. Every student is expected to obey all federal, state, and local laws and to familiarize themselves with the requirements of such laws.

SRSU Distance Education Statement

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the University's academic support services, such as library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website.

Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires a secure login. Students enrolled in distance education courses are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct as described in the Student Handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and

software according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website. Directions for filing a student complaint are located in the Student Handbook.

Academic Integrity

Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. Students should submit work that is their own and avoid the temptation to engage in behaviors that violate academic integrity, such as turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; or collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden. Students should also avoid using open AI sources unless permission is expressly given for an assignment or course. Violations of academic integrity can result in failing assignments, failing a class, and/or more serious university consequences. These behaviors also erode the value of college degrees and higher education overall.

Classroom Climate of Respect

This class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all class members must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, all must learn how to probe, oppose, and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still, the class will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing politically sensitive issues.

Counseling

Sul Ross has partnered with TimelyCare, giving all SR students access to nine free counseling sessions. More information about this 24/7/365 support is available by visiting [TimelyCare/SRSU](https://www.timelycare.com/sulross). The SR Counseling and Accessibility Services office continues to offer in-person counseling in Ferguson Hall Room 112 (Alpine campus), and telehealth Zoom sessions for remote and International students.

Libraries

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library and Archives of the Big Bend in Alpine offer free resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Students can access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website at library.sulross.edu. Off-campus access requires logging in with a LoboID and password. Librarians can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or by phone (432-837-8123).

SRSU TexShare Cardholders can access additional services and resources at various libraries across Texas through the TexShare program (library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/). Mike Fernandez, SRSU Librarian, is based in Eagle Pass (Building D-129) and offers specialized library services including InterLibrary Loan (ILL), ScanIt, and Direct Mail delivery.

Supportive Statement

This course aims to create a learning environment that supports various perspectives and experiences. Economic disparity, health concerns, or unexpected life events may impact the conditions necessary for students to succeed. The instructor's commitment is to help students meet the learning objectives of the course, consistent with Sul Ross State University's mission to create a supportive environment and care for the whole student as part of the Sul Ross Familia. Students whose performance is being impacted by experiences outside of class are encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Tutoring Resources

The University Writing Center is a virtual writing center at which students may choose between synchronous and asynchronous writing appointments. The UWC is located in Blackboard under the “organizations” tab.

The Lobo Den Tutoring Center offers free tutoring support in Writing, Math, Science, and other subjects.

- Drop-in and scheduled appointments: flexible options to fit student needs
- Hours of operation: Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
- Workshops: regularly hosted academic workshops on STEM topics and professional development
- Location: BWML Room 128
- Contact: tutoring@sulross.edu or (432) 837-8726

Tutor.com offers free 24/7 online tutoring in over 200 subjects, including specialized support for ESL and ELL learners with native Spanish-speaking tutors. Tutor.com is accessible via Blackboard.

Course Schedule & Readings

Important Note: Weekly readings are listed below. All major assignment deadlines are noted in the Blackboard modules. *For each specific reading assignment, please also read the introductions—they are invaluable to understanding the literature!*

- **Week 1: Introduction to the Middle Ages**

Readings: The Middle Ages Introduction; “The Dream of the Rood,” “The Wanderer”

Assignments: Discussion Board 1; Journal Element 1

- **Week 2: Heroic Code & the Anglo-Saxon Epic**

Readings: *Beowulf* (Lines 1–1250)

Assignments: Discussion Board 2; Journal Element 2

- **Week 3: Monsters & Elegy**

Readings: *Beowulf* (Lines 1251–End)

Assignments: Discussion Board 3; Journal Element 3

- **Week 4: Chivalry & Courtly Romance**

Readings: Marie de France, “Lanval”; *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Parts 1 & 2)

Assignments: Discussion Board 4; Journal Element 4

- **Week 5: Estates Satire & Social Critique**

Readings: Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales* (“General Prologue”)

Assignments: Discussion Board 5; Journal Element 5

- **Week 6: Gender & Authority in Medieval Society**

Readings: Chaucer, “The Wife of Bath’s Prologue and Tale”

Assignments: Discussion Board 6; Journal Element 6

- **Week 7: The Tudor Court & Renaissance Poetics**

Readings: The 16th Century Introduction; Sonnets by Wyatt, Howard, and Shakespeare

Assignments: Discussion Board 7; Journal Element 7; **LITERARY ANALYSIS ESSAY 1 DUE**

- **Week 8: Humanism & Renaissance Tragedy**

Readings: Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus* (Acts 1–3)

Assignments: Discussion Board 8; Journal Element 8

- **Week 9: Pride, Power, & Damnation**

Readings: Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus* (Acts 4–5)

Assignments: Discussion Board 9; Journal Element 9

- **Week 10: Seventeenth-Century Devotion & Wit**

Readings: John Donne, Selected Poems; Aemilia Lanyer, “Eve’s Apology”

Assignments: Discussion Board 10; Journal Element 10

- **Week 11: Radical Shifts & The Epic Reimagined**

Readings: The Restoration Introduction; John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (Book 1)

Assignments: Discussion Board 11; Journal Element 11

- **Week 12: Colonialism & Early Prose Narratives**

Readings: Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko*

Assignments: Discussion Board 12; Journal Element 12

- **Week 13: The Golden Age of Satire**

Readings: Jonathan Swift, “A Modest Proposal” & *Gulliver's Travels* (Part 4)

Assignments: Discussion Board 13; Journal Element 13

- **Week 14: Gender, Wit, & Public Spheres**

Readings: Alexander Pope, “The Rape of the Lock” (Cantos 1–3)

Assignments: Discussion Board 14; **LITERARY ANALYSIS ESSAY 2 DUE**

- **Week 15: The Age of Reason Review**

Readings: Course wrap-up, review materials

Assignments: Journal Element 14; **COURSE ELEMENTS JOURNAL DUE**

- **Week 16: Final Examinations Week**

FINAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAM DUE