You Say You Want a Revolution? British Romanticism

Dr. Lisa Crafton
Office TELC 2-227
Office Hours: M,W 12:30-2:30 and by appointment
Office Phone: 678-839-4871
Classroom: Pafford 307
Email: lcrafton@westga.edu

Course Description: The "revolutionary" spirit of Romanticism is defined by the political/cultural revolutions of the time and the self-conscious break with inherited literary tradition. Yet these assumptions are countered by notions of what has been called the "autonomous imagination" celebrated by Romantics, a desire to escape into what Shelley called the "still cave of the witch Poesy." Using a contemporary revisionist anthology of British Romanticism, we will read a diverse selection of Romantic texts and explore the movement of Romantic vision from flights of imaginative reverie to graphic renditions/distortions of history, including Wollstonecraft's cultural "vision," Blake's critiques of sexual, political, and aesthetic oppression, Wordsworth's revolutionary ballads, and Coleridge's and Keats' sites of imaginative retreats (the urn, a magical snake, a
pleasure dome and opium), We will also explore the gothic in Shelley and the performance of gender/empire in Austen. In all, we will explore Romantic contexts with regard to political, cultural, sexual, and spiritual liberation and the equally subversive Romantic imagination.

**Required Texts:** *Broadview Anthology of Romanticism Vol. 4*
Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*
Selected online texts as assigned and the film *Mansfield Park*, directed Patricia Roczema

**English 4002 Department Course Objectives:** Students will be able to
1. Understand and assess the traditions, conventions, and contexts associated with the study of the English language and its literatures in a particular literary period ranging from the nineteenth century through to the contemporary in Britain and the former British Empire, depending upon the specific course topic.
2. Apply critical thinking skills to the analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of information and ideas from diverse oral, written, and/or visual sources.
3. Conduct research, develop organizational strategies, and compose professional documents using the academic conventions of English Studies as a discipline.

**English 4002 British Romanticism Specific Course Objectives:**

To read critically and analytically selections from British Romantic writers in diverse genres and to read representative scholarship so as to consider these texts from a variety of critical perspectives

To consider the challenges of the definition of Romanticism, apparent in recent critical re-readings of the period, especially the "conflict" between a transcendental, visionary Romanticism and Romanticism as a socially-engaged cultural critique, and then to move beyond such arbitrary binary distinctions and re-define, for ourselves, what we mean by the term.

To consider current notions of "periodization" in general, especially with regard to Romanticism and gender, using Austen and Mary Shelley, whose texts imply a substantial divergence in terms of what we study in Romanticism.

To use a variety of written assignments (in-class writing exercises, analytical papers, researched papers) in the fulfillment of a Writing Across the Curriculum course.

**Course Requirements and Class Policies:**

1. Students are expected to have read all assigned texts before each class meeting and be prepared to discuss; students should bring specific questions to class each meeting. We
will have focused free writing exercises (quizzes) on the readings at the beginning of each class to enhance our discussions. Being prepared to discuss at each class meeting will shape the participation grade; thus absences in excess of 3 will lower the participation grade substantially.

2. Students will complete 2 brief (3 pages each) out of class response essays which will demonstrate the ability to synthesize material and discuss specific passages in a concise, report form. The 2nd essay may lead into the research paper.

3. Students will write a research paper (8-10 pp undergraduates, 12-15 graduates) using correct and current MLA style on a topic chosen in consultation with the professor. Papers should go through a cycle of drafting/revision before final submission at the end of the quarter.

4. Students will complete a midterm and a final to demonstrate broad knowledge of specific texts, ideas, from the course.

Plagiarism Policy: The Department of English and Philosophy defines plagiarism as taking personal credit for the words and ideas of others as they are presented in electronic, print, and verbal sources. The Department expects that students will accurately credit sources in all assignments. An equally dishonest practice is fabricating sources or facts; it is another form of misrepresenting the truth. Plagiarism is grounds for failing the course. Any assignment plagiarized will receive a ZERO. Students will be reported to the appropriate university officials.

Evaluation Procedures
Evaluation of assignments is based on the unique expectations of each kind of assignment. Grades are evaluated in terms of the following:

- Response essays 30%
- Research paper 20%
- Participation (quizzes, free writings, group work, writing workshops) 10%
- Mid-term 20%
- Final 20%

W 10 Introduction to course: Wordsworth “The World is too much with us” 244 / Excerpt *Fight Club*

M 15 Historical/Cultural Contexts of Revolution / in-class analysis of Price, Burke, Paine

W 17 Wollstonecraft pages TBA / Blake ‘Mary’ (read online)


M 29  London / Begin *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* (read text on Coursedsen but also view images from the Blake Archive

W 31  Finish *Visions*

M  5  Labor Day Holiday

W  7  Wordsworth: *Lyrical Ballads* selections 214-216, 220, “Preface” to LB 223-31/ “There Was a Boy” 231

M 12  Preface 223-31 / Letter to Fox (coursedsen) / The Brothers (online version)

W 14  Discharged Soldier” / on courseden V.S. Naipaul “Black Wordsworth” / assign discussion post postcolonial and Romanticism / assign essay 1

M 19  Tintern Abbey”/ Levinson/Vendler debate excerpts will be provided in class / Film excerpts *A River Runs Through* / assign essay 1

W 21  Essay 1 workshop (full draft A, half draft C, no draft = 0)

M 26  Coleridge  *Aeolian Harp* / *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* / essay 1 due

W 28  *Kubla Khan* / opium/addiction poems / essay 1 returned

Sept. 30 is last day to withdraw with grade of W

M  3  *Christabel* (Relation to Gothic)

W  5  Midterm Exam

M 10  Keats,  Select Letters, “La Belle Dame,” “Ode on a Grecian Urn”

W 12  Keats  *Lamia*

M 17  Byron *Manfred* / excerpt in class, Camus’ *Myth of Sisyphus*

W 19  Finish Byron

M 24  M. Shelley *Frankenstein*

W 26  Shelley cont’d / assign essay 2
M 31 Film versions of FRANKENSTEIN (choose creation scene, DeLacy episode, or female creature versions to analyze from ONE of these: 1931 Frankenstein, Bride of Frankenstein, Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, Young Frankenstein)

W 2 Austen: “My Jane Austen” phenomena / cultural artifacts search / essay 2 due

M 7 Austen, Mansfield Park

W 9 Austen

M 14 Austen / Butler/Johnson debate / discuss research paper

W 16 Research paper conferences as needed

M 21, W 23 THANKSGIVING BREAK

M 28 Research Paper Q and A

W 30 Final day of class: Discussion of “Romanticism and Revolution” / Final Exam Review

Final Exam: W Dec. 7 8-10