ANG1031: Survey of British Literature to 1650

This course will provide you with a broad overview of British literature from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. We will explore the historical, material, cultural, and rhetorical aspects of textual production as we read literature from a wide variety of authors and genres. The course offers you the opportunity to read widely in English Literature; introduces some of the major critical debates that have formed our view of early English literature; and provides you with the opportunity to read and come to an understanding of texts that are considered to be some of the most important works of English literature. The texts that we will read are often referred to as “canonical,” as “the classics,” or as “the greats.” Some of these works were appreciated at the time that they were written and have been admired continuously ever since; others were immediate bestsellers but were not regarded in elevated terms by their early readers; others were hardly read in their own time, or were forgotten soon after they were written, but they have still survived, and are now considered to be especially significant due to their beauty or intellectual importance. By looking at the history of the literary reception of the texts under consideration and by reading the texts in their historical contexts, we will seek to understand why these texts are considered to be so central to English literary history, and we will learn to appreciate texts that are culturally and historically remote.

**Texts:**

Study questions and selected readings and recordings on Studium

**Evaluation:**

- Mid-term Exam: 30%
- Final Exam: 30%
- Poetry Presentation and Essay: 30%
- Participation: 10%