

MEDAILLE COLLEGE  
AGASSIZ CIRCLE  
BUFFALO, NEW YORK

COURSE OUTLINE

Program: Humanities  
Course Number: ENG 415  
Course Title: Themes & Topics in British Literature: The Romantic Era  
Number of Credits: 3  
Prerequisites: any 200-level literature course

A. Course Description:

This course examines poetry, drama, and prose produced during the Romantic period in Britain (1789 – 1832). Students will read and analyze both canonical and non-canonical writers of the period. Additionally, students will explore the history of critical explanations of Romanticism, as well as scholarship on individual writers and key issues in Romantic studies.

B. Goals:

- To enrich students' understanding of the scope and impact of literary Romanticism
- To provide students with the necessary background information to understand Romantic literature within its historical, social, and political contexts
- To develop students' abilities to read texts closely and respond maturely, both orally and in writing
- To expose students to critical resources on British Romanticism

C. Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify major themes and forms of literary Romanticism
- Analyze Romantic writing as both a register and response to historical, social, and political developments of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries
- Analyze, explicate, and interpret poetry, prose, and drama of the Romantic era

- Apply literary scholarship on Romanticism to selected works studied

D. Outline of Course Content:

- Romanticism and the Imagination
- Romanticism and Nature
- Romantic Anti-Capitalism
- Romanticism and Gender
- Romantic Orientalism
- Romanticism and War

E. Suggested Texts:

*Poetry, Prose, and Drama:*

Wu, Duncan, ed. Romanticism: An Anthology. Boston: Blackwell, 2005.

McGann, Jerome, ed. Romantic Period Verse. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1993.

*Novels:*

Shelley, Mary. Frankenstein: Or, The Modern Prometheus.

Lewis, Matthew. The Monk.

Austen, Jane. Pride and Prejudice.

F. Suggested Modes, Media, and Techniques of Instruction:

Lecture/discussion  
 Small groups  
 Collaborative projects  
 Class presentations  
 Written Assignments  
 Guest lecturers  
 Films/videos  
 Recordings

G. Instructor References:

Abrams, M. H. The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition.  
 New York: Oxford, 1953.

---. Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature. New  
 York: Norton, 1971.

Bloom, Harold. The Visionary Company: A Reading of English Romantic Poetry.

- Ithaca: Cornell, 1971.
- Bowra, C.M. The Romantic Imagination. New York: Oxford, 1961.
- Butler, Marilyn. "Plotting the Revolution: The Political Narratives of Romantic Poetry and Criticism." Romantic Revolutions: Criticism and Theory. Ed. Kenneth R. Johnston, et al. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990.
- . Romantics, Rebels and Revolutionaries: English Literature and its Background, 1760-1830. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1981.
- Cameron, Kenneth Neil. Shelley: The Golden Years. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1974.
- Chandler, David. "'One Consciousness,' Historical Criticism and the Romantic Canon." *Romanticism on the Net* 17 (February 2000)  
<<http://users.ox.ac.uk/~scat0385/17ideology.html>>.
- Chandler, James. England in 1819: The Politics of Literary Culture and the Case of Romantic Historicism. Chicago: Chicago UP, 1998.
- Clark, David L., and Donald C. Goellnicht, eds. New Romanticisms: Theory and Critical Practice. Toronto: U of Toronto Press, 1994.
- Cox, Jeffrey. Poetry and Politics in the Cockney School: Keats, Shelley, Hunt and their Circle. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998.
- Cronin, Richard, ed. 1798: The Year of the Lyrical Ballads. New York: Macmillan, 1998.
- Erdman, David V. Blake: Prophet against Empire: A Poet's Interpretation of the History of His Own Time. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1954.
- Gaul, Marilyn. English Romanticism: The Human Context. New York: Norton, 1988.
- Gilmartin, Kevin. Print Politics: The Press and Radical Opposition in Early Nineteenth-Century England. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996.
- Hobsbawn, E.J. The Age of Revolution, 1789 – 1848. New York: New American Library, 1962.
- Keach, William. Arbitrary Power: Romanticism, Language, Politics. Princeton:

Princeton, 2004.

Levinson, Marjorie. Wordsworth's Great Period Poems: Four Essays. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986.

Liu, Alan. Wordsworth: The Sense of History. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1989.

Lovejoy, Arthur O. "On the Discrimination of Romanticism's" in *PMLA* 39 (1924): 229-253.

Makdisi, Saree. Romantic Imperialism: Universal Empire and the Culture of Modernity. New York: Cambridge, 1998.

McGann, Jerome J. Byron and Romanticism. New York: Cambridge, 2002.

---. The Romantic Ideology. Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1983.

Mellor, Anne K, ed. Romanticism and Feminism. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1988.

---. Romanticism and Gender. New York: Routledge, 1993.

Perry, Seamus. "Coleridge, the Return to Nature, and the New Anti-Romanticism: An Essay in Polemic." *Romanticism on the Net* 4 (November 1996)  
<<http://users.ox.ac.uk/~scat0385/antirom.html>>.

Pfau, Thomas and Robert F. Gleckner, eds. Lessons of Romanticism: A Critical Companion. Durham: Duke, 1998.

Rajan, Tilottama. Dark Interpreter: The Discourse of Romanticism. Ithaca: Cornell, 1980.

Rajan, Tilottama, and Julia M. Wright, eds. Romanticism, History, and the Possibilities of Genre. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998.

Richardson, Alan. "British Romanticism as a Cognitive Category." *Romanticism on the Net* 8 (November 1997) <<http://users.ox.ac.uk/~scat0385/cognitive.html>>.

Roe, Nicholas. John Keats and the Culture of Dissent. Oxford: Claredon, 1997.

Ross, Marlon. "Naturalizing Gender: Woman's Place in Wordsworth's Ideological Landscape." *ELH* 53 (1986): 391-410.

Sayre, Robert, and Michael Lowy. "Figures of Romantic Anticapitalism." Spirits of

Fire: English Romantic Writers and Contemporary Historical Methods. Eds. G.A. Rosso and Daniel P. Watkins. London: AUP, 1990. 23-68.

Thompson, E.P. The Making of the English Working Class. New York: Vintage, 1966.

Watkins, Daniel P. Keats's Poetry and the Politics of the Imagination. Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 1989.

---. A Materialist Critique of English Romantic Drama. Gainesville: U of Florida Press, 1993.

Wellek, Renee. "The Concept of Romanticism in Literary History." *Comparative Literature* 1 (1949): 1-23, 147-72.

Williams, Raymond. Culture and Society: 1780 – 1950. New York: Columbia, 1958.

Wolfson, Susan J. Formal Charges: The Shaping of Poetry in British Romanticism. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1997.

Wu, Duncan, ed. A Companion to Romanticism. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1998.