

TERM: Fall 2025

COURSE NUMBER & CATEGORY: ENGL 2300: History of Lit, Media, and Culture

COURSE TITLE: The First Journalists

SECTION TIMES/DAYS: TR 9:55-11:35 am

INSTRUCTOR: Shepherd

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS:

Before the rise of the first newspapers, how did people know what was going on, and how did writers in English (and other languages of England) understand and convey “The News” and opinion on “Current Affairs?” When and how did journalism, strictly defined as we know it today, actually become “a thing?” This course investigates literary manifestations of reportage from the very earliest years (5th century) up to the meteoric rise of the first newspapers, periodical essays, and journals in the 17th and 18th centuries.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

We will learn about the evolution of journalism across at least nine successive eras, from the Anglo-Saxon period through to the time of the first official printed newspapers and journals. We will also learn how primary texts and artefacts, such as the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, the Bayeux Tapestry, government proclamations, peasant-activist poems, exotic travelogues like Mandeville's Travels, the first autobiographies, accounts of exploration and early critiques of colonial exploitation, reports on new medicine such as vaccines, satires, abolitionist essays, and even poems inscribed on dog collars, all influenced a variety of cultural developments.

CLASS LEVEL RESTRICTION:

N/A

RECOMMENDED/PREREQUISITES:

N/A

COURSE ATTRIBUTES:

OLD CURRICULUM

- GENRES (LD)
- HISTORIES (LD)
- AUTHORS (UD)
- CRITICAL/THEORETICAL (UD)
- COMPARATIVE (UD)
- CREATIVE/ARTISTRY

CORE ATTRIBUTES:

N/A

NEW CURRICULUM

- DISCIPLINARY RESEARCH (LD)
- HISTORY OF LIT, MEDIA, AND CULTURE (LD)
- READING AND WRITING GENRES (LD)
- THEORY, POWER, AND RHETORIC (LD)
- PRE-1800 (UD)
- CREATIVE ARTISTRY (UD)
- RACE, INTERSECTIONALITY, AND POWER (UD)
- UPPER-DIVISION ELECTIVE (UD)
- 5000-LEVEL SEMINAR (UD)