

TERM: Spring 2026

COURSE TITLE: Pre-1800: Saints, Fiends and Virgin Queens

COURSE NUMBER: ENGL 3100.02

SECTION TIMES/DAYS: TR 3:40 PM – 5:20 PM

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Aimee Ross-Kilroy

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS

Devils and werewolves, saints who walled themselves inside churches, and a Queen who never married: England in the pivotal years from 1450-1650 saw upheaval, radical transformation, and imaginative anomalies. This course covers 200 years of transition from the English middle ages to the early modern. This course will examine literature of this time period through the lenses of religion, politics, and the adaptation of previous forms and tropes to a new era.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students will learn about the distinctions and overlap between the global middle ages, the early modern period, and the ways that English texts both correlate with and diverge from these distinctions.
- Students will learn about the variety of genres that emerge in response to the religious shifts in the English early modern period.
- Students will learn about the ways various genres of literature shaped the discourse around religion in the English early modern period.

PREREQUISITES/RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND

Junior or Senior standing

REQUIRED TEXTS

Julian of Norwich, *Showings*.

The Penguin Book of Renaissance Verse: 1509-1659.

Everyman and The Second Shepherd's Play: Literary Touchstones Classic.

Christopher Marlowe, *Dr. Faustus*

Ben Jonson, *The Alchemist*

John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*

William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*

William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Edmund Spenser *The Fairie Queene*

Excerpts from *Autobiography of a Hunted Priest*

COURSE WORK / EXPECTATIONS

Daily reading, quizzes and class participation 10%

Portfolio handed in at regular intervals, consisting of:

Paper #1 and drafts: 15%

Paper #2 and drafts: 20%

Final Project and drafts: 25%

And all accompanying materials

This course fulfills the following undergraduate English Major requirements:

Old Curriculum: Critical/Theoretical

New Curriculum: Pre-1800 Literature