

**English 232**  
FG (TTH)  
1-3:00 pm  
Payne 2A

Prof. T. Howe  
howet@wlu.edu  
Office Phone: 458-8762  
Payne Hall 22  
MWF  
& by appointment

## The 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century British Novel: Shape and Substance

**Course Description:** Henry James once described novels as “loose, baggy monsters” with no clear, premeditated aesthetic structure; they seem, instead, to duplicate the complexities and confusions of life itself. Indeed the “novel,” as we now describe those “loose baggy monsters,” has often been cited as intimately bound up with the creation of the modern individual—think of Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*, lost on an island in the middle of nowhere, trying to survive a harsh new world with just his wits. This course is designed as an introduction to the modern novel from its “rise” to its “golden age.” We will read representative texts from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, with the overriding goal of tying shape to substance. What issues forged the common substance of the “novel,” and why? If the “novel” is a “loose, baggy monster,” how do we understand its monstrosity? Because novels are, first of all, long, the reading for this course will be extensive. Readings will include work by Defoe, Richardson, Sterne, Austen, Dickens, Bronte, Eliot, Hardy, and/or Thackeray. Coursework will include a reading journal, response papers, three short formal essays, a midterm and a final exam.

<b>Course Requirements:</b>	15%	Participation, Attendance, and Preparation (including quizzes/brief writing assignments)
	10%	Conceptual Vocabulary Report
	10%	Group Presentation
	15%	Essay 1
	20%	Essay 2
	15%	Midterm Exam
	15%	Final Exam

**Group Presentation:** At the beginning of the term, students will sign up in small groups of no more than three (3) for discussion-oriented presentations. Your presentations should be approximately thirty (30) minutes in length, but they should generate discussion for the entire class. I would like your presentations to follow a specific format. First, open with a brief historical or critical frame; for instance, if you are doing a presentation on *Moll Flanders*, you might use the eighteenth-century prison system as a frame. Second, look closely at one or two key scenes through the frame you have provided. And third, stimulate class discussion with questions calibrated to get our critical thought processors rolling. You might choose to put the class into smaller groups to discuss your questions. The remainder of the period will consist of full-class discussion. You should plan on distributing a handout during your presentation capturing important historical/critical points and key topics for discussion. Be sure to put your name/course information on the

handout, and include an interesting, informative title for your presentation. I suggest that you come see me, in your groups, before your presentation is scheduled; this will ensure that your presentations are as effective as possible. Groups will meet outside of class to prepare for the presentations.

***Assignments and Due Dates:*** All assignments must be typed and double-spaced, using a standard 12-point serifed font like Times New Roman. Margins must be reasonable, no more than 1.25 inches. Papers must include course information and a title at the top of the first page, not on a separate cover page. Any paper over two pages should be numbered. All writing assignments, unless otherwise specified, should be turned in at the beginning of class on the due date. Due dates are strict: late work will be penalized, and very late work may not be accepted. Any requests to change a due date should be discussed with me well in advance of the original deadline.

***Readings:*** Always read with a pen in your hand. Often, I will hand out reading guides filled with questions or topics to look out for as you read; mark these and any other points you find interesting. Ways to mark your text up vary, but you can use stars, question marks, exclamation points, or brief ideas in the margins; underline or highlight; or circle anything interesting. You might also like to asterisk the top or bottom corners of pages on which you've noted particularly significant points for ease of later recovery. I also like to keep lists with topics and page numbers on inside of the front and back covers. **An unmarked-up text is an unread text, because reading—real reading—involves engaging with the text.** Readings must be completed by the beginning of the class period during which we will discuss them. The syllabus indicates both discussion topics and assigned homework. If you have any questions or concerns about your reading habits, please ask me.

***Attendance*** is mandatory. Please come to every class period. You have two “free” absences; after that, any absence will result in a third of a letter deduction from your final grade.

***The 24-Hour Rule*** states that you may not come to me with questions or complaints about any given grade until 24 hours have lapsed since its return. You must come with specific questions and thoughtful replies to my comments.

***Plagiarism:*** “Plagiarism” derives from the Latin “plagiarius,” meaning “kidnapper.” To plagiarize, as to kidnap, is a kind of stealing, and it is both a fundamental transgression of the Honor System and an offense to our intellectual community. We will be doing research in this class, and students are responsible for understanding the rules of appropriate citation and turning in their own intellectual work. Any instance of plagiarism will meet with immediate disciplinary action. If you have any questions about this matter, including uncertainties about what constitutes plagiarism, please consult a writing handbook or ask me.

**Schedule (subject to change):**

- Tues 1/3: Before Novels: Romance
- Thurs 1/5: Eliza Haywood, *Fantomina; or, Love in a Maze* (1720) (CP)
- Tues 1/10: Daniel Defoe, *Moll Flanders* (1720)
- Thurs 1/12: *Moll Flanders*, cont'd
- Tues 1/17: *Moll Flanders*, cont'd
- Thurs 1/19: Founder's Day (altered class schedule)  
Samuel Richardson, *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* (1740)
- Tues 1/24: *Pamela*, cont'd
- Thurs 1/26: *Pamela*, cont'd
- Tues 1/31: *Pamela*, cont'd; Henry Fielding, *Shamela* (1741)
- Thurs 2/2: Henry Fielding, Preface to *Joseph Andrews*
- Tues 2/7: Laurence Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey* (1768)
- Thurs 2/9: *A Sentimental Journey*, cont'd  
**Essay 1 Due**
- Tues 2/14: Washington Break
- Thurs 2/16: Washington Break
- Tues 2/21: **Take-Home Midterm Exam Due**  
Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (1813)
- Thurs 2/23: *Pride and Prejudice*, cont'd
- Tues 2/28: *Pride and Prejudice*, cont'd
- Thurs 3/2: Charlotte Bronte, *Jane Eyre* (1847)
- Tues 3/7: *Jane Eyre*, cont'd
- Thurs 3/9: Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations* (1860)
- Tues 3/14: *Great Expectations*, cont'd
- Thurs 3/16: *Great Expectations*, cont'd

Tues 3/21: Thomas Hardy, *Jude the Obscure*

Thurs 3/23: *Jude the Obscure*, cont'd

Tues 3/28: *Jude the Obscure*, cont'd

Thurs: 3/30: Conclusions  
**Essay 2 Due**

**Exam Week: Final Exam**