Course Objectives: The goal of the course is to inform students about the poetry of John Milton in its historical circumstances and to consider the poet’s lasting pertinence. To this end we will also read certain of his prose works and assess their historical significance.


Exams: Midterm (25%); Final (35%). Exams will test students’ ability to analyze verse and their familiarity with course readings and lectures. Scheduling of the final exam is done by the University approximately four weeks before the semester ends; please consult the Registrar’s page for details: [http://registrar.utexas.edu/students/exams/index.html](http://registrar.utexas.edu/students/exams/index.html)

Memorization: (20%) Students will memorize 80 lines of verse: 40 by midterm; another 40 before the end of classes. At least half of the lines must come from *Paradise Lost*.

Quizzes: (20%) Five or six unannounced quizzes on the reading will be given. Students are expected to have read the assignments attentively.

NO MAKEUPS: This rule is in effect the attendance policy. If you miss classes, your quiz average will likely suffer. This consequence is intended. As a concession to unforeseeable circumstances, your lowest quiz score will be dropped. That is the only concession.

Journals: Make two entries per week. Each should take 30 minutes to write and consist of a blend of summary and commentary, though some meandering is expected. The crucial requirement is that you write, continuously if possible, for thirty minutes. When you are stuck, one thing you might do is look up any words, names, places in the reading that you don’t recognize and write out the definitions or explanations in your journal. You should consult the *OED* and the classical dictionaries on the library’s electronic reference site. For instructional purposes, I may refer to specific journal entries in class, but the identities of those responsible for particular comments will be shielded. Performance as a journal writer cannot hurt your course grade unless you skimp on entries. The point of the assignment is to practice writing and is more about day-to-day discipline than inspiration.

Scholastic Dishonesty: Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty may incur disciplinary penalties including failure of the course and dismissal from the university.

Students with disabilities may seek appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259.
Schedule of Readings (supplemental or substitute readings may be assigned):

19 January: Introduction.


26 January: On the Morning of Christ’s Nativity (aka Nativity Ode); At a Vacation Exercise; Elegy 6, Upon the Circumcision, The Passion.

28 January: L’Allegro, Il Penseroso; Prolusions 1 & 7; Elegy 1, Fifth Ode of Horace.

2 Feb: Letter to a Friend, Sonnet 7, On Time, That Nature does not Suffer from Old Age.

4 Feb: Ad Patrem, On Shakespeare, Areopagitica. [full paragraph in MLM, 930-31].

9 Feb: Mask [Comus].


18 Feb: Diodati Greets Milton [both], To Charles Diodati [both], Wotton to Milton, To Lukas Holste, To Leonora poems [in Elegies], To Salzilli [in Miscellaneous Latin poems], Epitaph for Damon.

23 Feb: Apology (845-52), Doctrine and Discipline, Sonnets 10, 11, & 12.

25 Feb: Areopagitica.

2 Mar: TKM, Eikonoklastes.

4 Mar: First half of memorization assignment must be complete by this date. Midterm.


11 Mar: Ready and Easy Way.

23 Mar: PL 1, Christian Doctrine [hereafter, CD], Book 1, chapters 2-3 & 30 [1.2-3, 30].

30 Mar: PL 3, 4 [to line 287], CD 1.3-4.

1 Apr: PL 4.288-5.219, CD 1.10.

6 Apr: PL 5.219-end, PL 6, CD 1.5 (to bottom of 1181).

8 Apr: PL 7-8, CD 1.7.

13 Apr: PL 9, CD 1.11-12.


20 Apr: PL 11-12, CD 1.14-27.

22 Apr: Paradise Regained 1.

27 Apr: PR 2-3.

29 Apr: PR 4.

4-6 May: Samson Agonistes. Complete second half of memorization assignment before last class day.