

## Girton English Literature 2022-2023

### Part 1A Scheme of Work, Year Overview, Reading Suggestions

Faculty of English: <https://www.english.cam.ac.uk/>

'I greet you at the beginning of a great career', said the poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti to his friend Allen Ginsberg around the time he published *Howl* (1956). Before that, Ralph Waldo Emerson had celebrated Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* (1855) in very similar terms. Now we, the English Literature team here at Girton College, would like to offer the same words to you. We are delighted that you will be joining us. You are about to start a wonderful, challenging, exciting course of study and we are sure your careers as undergraduates will be full of great things. Welcome aboard.

Below are a few notes about the English Literature course (the 'Tripos') and the scheme of work you will be following in your first year. We will be having more extensive and detailed group meetings at the start of the term and the Faculty of English will be running its own induction programme. Further details of these will be provided in due course. In the meantime please do try and follow the suggested preparatory reading suggestions as you are able. Starting the term having done some preparation will help you hit the ground running.

The information below contains a series of links to the English Faculty website. Some of these links may require you to have an operational Cambridge e-mail, which you will be provided with soon. If so, please bookmark the links and refer to them when you can. A series of online 'on-ramping' sessions will be offered shortly before the official start of term to introduce the course and the team as well as the structure of university learning. For now, please take your time with the material listed below.

Finally, to loop back to the subject of careers, many of those who have studied English Literature (here at Cambridge and in the Higher Education sector overall), have gone on to become agenda-setting creatives and influencers. A brief list can be found [here](#). You are now following in their footsteps. So: jump in, have fun and get ready to make your own mark on the world.

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## The Course

The Cambridge English Literature Tripos consists of two parts. Part I is studied over the course of your first two years, Part II is studied over the course of your third year. The two years of Part I are also divided into Part IA and Part IB. The academic year 2022 / 23 – your first year – represents Part IA. Your learning this year will consist of regular ‘supervisions’ and seminar-type small classes conducted at Girton College. There will also be a full lecture programme offered by the Faculty of English. At Cambridge, the English Faculty organises the course, the colleges deliver it.

Supervisions will consist of single or paired groups working closely with a supervisor on either submitted essays or provided reading, most likely a combination of the two. Classes will be slightly larger and will follow a seminar-type routine based on provided reading and group discussion. Lectures are designed to be delivered to a large group and will consist of a presentation – often heavily illustrated – delivered by a single lecturer alongside supplementary material (handouts, links etc). Details of lectures can be found in the document ‘Notes on Courses’ provided at the start each term by the Faculty of English. Clarification will be offered in due course as to the nature and location of teaching.

### Year 1 (Part 1A) 2022-23

Each term consists of 8 weeks of teaching. The teaching ‘weeks’ begin on Thursdays.

#### 1. Michealmas Term (Tuesday 4th October – Friday 2nd December 2022)

Paper 1: Practical Criticism and Critical Practice

English Faculty information: <https://www.english.cam.ac.uk/students/partia/index.html>

Supervisor: Dr. Adam Crothers.

Teaching: College-based supervisions and seminars; Faculty lectures.

Suggested preparatory reading:

- I.A. Richards, *Practical Criticism*
- I.A. Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism*
- Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*
- Chris Baldick, *Concise Dictionary of Literary Terms*
- John Lennard, *The Poetry Handbook*
- Philip Hobsbaum, *Metre, Rhythm and Verse Form*
- Bernard O Donoghue, *Poetry*

Recommended purchase for reading and reference:

Margaret Ferguson *et al*, *The Norton Anthology of Poetry (fourth edition)*.

Vincent B. Leitch *et al*, *The Norton Anthology of Criticism and Theory*.

Paper 4: English Literature and its Contexts, 1300-1550 (Medieval)

English Faculty information: <https://www.english.cam.ac.uk/students/parti/paper03.html>

Supervisor: Dr. James Wade.

Teaching: supervisions and translation classes (details to be provided).

Suggested preparatory reading: See accompanying PDF.

## **2. Lent Term (Tuesday 17th January – Friday 17th March 2023)**

Paper 1: Practical Criticism and Critical Practice.

Supervisor: Dr. James Riley.

Teaching: College-based supervisions and group seminars on literary theory; Faculty lectures.

Suggested preparatory reading: See above

Paper 5: English Literature and its Contexts, 1500-1700 (Renaissance).

English Faculty information: <https://www.english.cam.ac.uk/students/parti/paper04.html>

Supervisor: Dr. Kaye McLelland.

Teaching: College-based supervisions and seminars; Faculty lectures.

Suggested preparatory reading:

John Milton, *Paradise Lost*

John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*

Thomas More, *Utopia*

Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queen*

## **3. Easter Term (Thursday 25th April – Friday 16th June 2021)**

Paper 1: Practical Criticism and Critical Practice.

Supervisor: Dr. James Riley.

Teaching: College-based supervisions and group seminars on literary theory; Faculty lectures.

Suggested preparatory reading: See above.

Paper 2: Shakespeare.

English Faculty Information: <https://www.english.cam.ac.uk/students/partia/paper02.html>

Supervisor: Dr. James Wade.

Suggested preparatory reading:

William Shakespeare, *The Complete Works*.

## **Assessment**

Part 1A will be assessed on two components, Papers 1 and 2. Paper 1 will be assessed via a formal exam at the end of Easter term. Ahead of this, you will be offered the opportunity to take a college-based 'mock' exam. Paper 2 will be assessed via coursework. The coursework element will take the form of a 'portfolio' of essays. You will be asked to submit three essays 1500-2000 words each. Working with your supervisor via weekly sessions, you will compose these essays over the course of Easter term and submit them to the Faculty of English by term's end. Full details regarding deadlines, submission process as well as details pertaining to the Paper 1 exam will be provided in due course.

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## Medieval Literature – Preliminary Reading List

Please read the two set texts we will study next term: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and *Troilus and Criseyde*. Below are the set Middle English editions, but there are also reasonably decent translations available if you would like to start in modern English and progress to the original versions. Read slowly. Use the glossaries and explanatory notes. The Book of Middle English (noted below) will help if you need it, which you probably will.

*The Works of the Gawain Poet*, ed. Ad Putter and Myra Stokes (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2014),

Geoffrey Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde*, ed. B.A. Windeatt (Harmondsworth, 2004), or in *The Riverside Chaucer*, gen. ed. Larry D. Benson (Oxford, 1987) [all being equal, I recommend the Riverside edition, since we may look at some Canterbury Tales too.]

You also may be interested in the following contextual material. In particular, *A Book of Middle English* will be a good port of call throughout the term.

J.A. Burrow and Thorlac Turville-Petre, ed., *A Book of Middle English*, 3rd edn, (Oxford, 2005).

**A very useful reference, and the introduction should help with most linguistic questions.**

CS Lewis, *The Discarded Image* (Cambridge, 1964)

**A breezy and readable introduction to the Middle Ages.**

Derek Pearsall, *The Life of Geoffrey Chaucer: A Critical Biography* (Oxford, 1992).

**A good read, and an example of good scholarship.**

Try to also read at least one of the following historical/cultural overviews:

Burrow, J. A., *Medieval Writers and Their Work: Middle English Literature and Its Background 1100-1500* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982)

Harriss, G. L., *Shaping the nation: England, 1360-1461* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2005)

Rubin, Miri, *The hollow crown: a history of Britain in the late Middle Ages* (London: Allen Lane, 2005)

Simpson, James, *Reform and Cultural Revolution: 1350-1547* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002)

### TEAMS Medieval Texts

<http://www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/teams/tmsmenu.htm>

**Huge range of medieval texts online, with introductions. Have a look around! You will have some flexibility to pursue your interests during term.**

Dr James Wade