



**Postgraduate Program
2023 - 2024**



Semester One	Diploma
Course Title	A Critical Survey of Prose
Lecturer	Dr. Sirwa Barzanji
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Course Coordinator	
Email	
Office Hours	Book an appointment by email

Course Description/ Overview: This intensive postgraduate diploma course offers an in-depth exploration of English prose from its historical origins to contemporary developments. Through a critical lens, students will examine various genres, styles, and themes, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the evolution and development of English prose. Engaging with seminal works and prominent authors, participants will develop advanced analytical skills and gain insights into the socio-cultural contexts that shaped the prose tradition. This course invites students to embark on a dynamic intellectual journey, providing them with the tools to critically analyse, appreciate, and contextualize prose literature within the broader scope of literary studies

Course Objectives:

- To familiarize students with key works and authors in the English prose tradition.

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- To cultivate critical thinking and analytical skills in the evaluation of prose literature.
- To provide historical and cultural contexts for the development of English prose.
- To encourage independent research and critical writing on selected topics in English prose.
- To provide historical and cultural contexts for the evolution of English prose in literature.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Familiarize students with significant works of English prose from various historical periods.
2. Develop students' critical thinking and analytical skills in evaluating prose literature.
3. Examine the evolution of prose styles and techniques.
4. Explore the cultural, historical, and philosophical contexts that influenced English prose.
5. Enhance students' ability to articulate and defend interpretations of prose texts.
6. Examine the evolution of prose genres and features.
7. The exploration of the evolution of English prose in Literature throughout history.

Course Outline:

- o **Week 1: Introduction to English Prose**
- o Definitions and characteristics of prose
- o Historical overview of English prose development
- o The origin of English prose

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- Week 2: The outstanding features of English prose
 - The different types of prose
 - The differences between prose and poetry

- Week 3: Purpose and function of prose in English literature
 - Direct communication through prose
 - Curate a voice
 - Build rapport with the reader
 - The Major elements of prose

- Week 4: Prose Genres Exploration in Literature
 - The course will cover a diverse range of prose genres, including novels, short stories, and other narratives. Students will analyse the distinct characteristics of each genre and how they contribute to the broader literary landscape.
 - Novel
 - Short story
 - Novella
 - Science fiction and fantasy
 - Mystery and detective fiction
 - Fable
 - Romance

- Week 5: The history of English prose is a rich and diverse journey that spans over a millennium. It has undergone significant changes in style, vocabulary, and structure, reflecting the cultural, social, and historical developments of the English-speaking world. Here's a brief overview of the major periods in the history of English prose:
 - **Old English Prose (c. 450-1100):**
 - The earliest English prose writings are found in manuscripts from the Anglo-Saxon period.
 - Alfred and the beginning of English prose
 - Works such as "The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle" and "Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People" were written in a West Germanic dialect that is quite different from modern English.

- o **Week 6: Middle English Prose (c. 1100-1500):**
 - o The Norman Conquest in 1066 had a profound impact on the English language, introducing French influences.
 - o During this period, religious texts and chronicles continued to be significant, but there was also an emergence of secular prose.
 - o Notable works include Geoffrey Chaucer's "The Canterbury Tales" and Sir Thomas Malory's "Le Morte d'Arthur."

- o **Week 7: Midterm Exam 20%**

- o **Week 8: Early Modern English (Elizabethan) Prose (c. 1500-1650):**
 - o The Renaissance brought about a revival of classical learning and a shift in writing style.
 - o The translation of the Bible into English, particularly the King James Version (1611), had a profound influence on the development of prose.
 - o Essayists like Sir Francis Bacon ("Essays") and the works of the polymath Sir Thomas More ("Utopia") mark this period.

- o **Week 9: 17th-Century (Restoration) Prose (c. 1600-1700):**
 - o The 17th century saw the rise of the scientific revolution and political upheavals, influencing prose writing.
 - o the King James Bible
 - o The prose of this period includes the sermons of John Donne, philosophical works like Thomas Hobbes's "Leviathan," and the essays of John Milton.

- o **Week 10: 18th-Century Prose (c. 1700-1800):**
 - o The Enlightenment brought a focus on reason, science, and human rights, shaping prose literature.
 - o The essays of Addison and Steele
 - o Satirical prose, periodicals, and the development of the novel became prominent during this era.
 - o Influential figures include Jonathan Swift, Samuel Johnson, and Daniel Defoe.

- o **Week 11: 19th-Century (Victorian) Prose (c. 1800-1900):**

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- The 19th century witnessed the rise of the novel as a dominant form of prose.
- Romanticism and the Victorian era produced iconic works such as Jane Austen's novels, Charles Dickens's novels, and the essays of Thomas Carlyle.

- **Week 12: 20th-Century Prose (c. 1900-2000):**
 - The 20th century brought diverse styles and experimentation in prose writing.
 - Modernist authors like Virginia Woolf and James Joyce challenged traditional narrative forms, while others like George Orwell and Aldous Huxley engaged with political and social issues.
 - Post-modernist writers, such as Salman Rushdie and Margaret Atwood, continued to push the boundaries of prose.

- **Week 13: Contemporary Prose (c. 2000-Present):**
 - The 21st century has seen a continuation of diverse styles and themes in English prose.
 - Globalization and technological advancements have influenced the way literature is created and consumed.

- **Week 14: A critical appreciation of some Examples of Prose**

Methods of Teaching: Lectures, group discussions, Presentations and seminar sessions. Various equipment will be utilised to deliver the lectures such as a data show projector to show slides, and some handouts might also be circulated.

Student's obligation: Class participation and discussion

Students are expected to attend the classes and participate actively in the group discussions. They are also required to be prepared for any quizzes they would have in the class. They are also demanded to present materials to expand their knowledge of the module, through a critical analysis.

Assessment Scheme:

1) Final Exam 50%

2) Midterm Exam 20% (Out of 100 but weighted 20%)

3)Coursework Activities 30% include:

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1- Written Assignment 1500 – 2000 words 10%

2- Presenting the written assignment 5%

3- Presenting a seminar 10%

4- Quiz/Daily participation 5%

Reading List:

- "A History of English Prose Rhythm" by George Saintsbury
- "English Literature" by Benjamin Griffith
- "English Prose: A Literary Exploration" by Kenneth Millard
- "The Cambridge History of Early Modern English Literature" edited by David Loewenstein and Janel Mueller
- "The Oxford Handbook of English Prose 1500-1640" edited by Andrew Hadfield
- "The Development of English Prose Style" by Ian Robinson
- "The Making of English Literature: Alexander Pope, Shakespeare, Defoe, Swift, Dickens, Milton" by Michael Schmidt
- "The English Prose Style" by Herbert Read
- "The Prose Style of Jonathan Swift" by Louis A. Landa
- "The Cambridge Companion to English Prose Style" edited by Ian Robinson
- "A Companion to English Renaissance Literature and Culture" edited by Michael Hattaway
- "English Prose Fiction, 1558-1700: A Critical History" by Richard Harp.
- "The Norton Anthology of English Literature" by M.H. Abrams and Stephen Greenblatt

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- "A Short History of English Literature" by Harry Blamires
- "The Cambridge Introduction to English Literature" by Michael Schmidt
- "The Oxford Companion to English Literature" by Margaret Drabble and Jenny Stringer
- "A Handbook of English Literature" by Michael Schmidt
- "The Norton Anthology of English Literature: Volume 1" edited by Stephen Greenblatt
- "English Literature: A Very Short Introduction" by Jonathan Bate
- "An Introduction to English Literature" by Rex Gibson.

Reviewed by: