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**JOHN CABOT UNIVERSITY**

COURSE CODE: "EN/GDR 350"  
 COURSE NAME: "Jane Austen: In Her World and Ours"  
 SEMESTER & YEAR: Fall 2023

**SYLLABUS****INSTRUCTOR:** Shannon Russell**EMAIL:** srussell@johncabot.edu**HOURS:** TTH 11:30 AM 12:45 PM**TOTAL NO. OF CONTACT HOURS:** 45**CREDITS:** 3**PREREQUISITES:** Prerequisite: EN 110 with a grade of C or above and one previous English literature class**OFFICE HOURS:** By appointment**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

What is it about Jane Austen's fictional world that makes her novels so popular, and why do we continue to adapt her work on screen? This course considers the enduring appeal of Austen's novels from within and beyond their historical contexts. A particular focus of the course is her engagement with gender, but students will also consider how her novels respond to contemporary debates about emotion and mental health, the slave trade, war and empire, new money and class mobility, education, imagination, and the dangers of reading. Students will understand both Jane Austen's debt to previous writers and her own significant contributions to the genre of the novel. They will read all of Austen's major novels and selections from the Juvenilia and letters. They will also work in groups to critique a film version of a novel, analyzing what contemporary adaptations do with Austen and why. By the end of the course, students will appreciate the cultural and literary contexts from which these novels emerge, and will possess the critical capacities to address why they continue to speak to us today.

**SUMMARY OF COURSE CONTENT:****JANE AUSTEN: In Her World and Ours**

Students will read all of Austen's major novels and selections from the Juvenilia and letters, and will be expected to critique film adaptations of these books, as well. They will be exposed to a variety of critical approaches to Austen's work and will engage with these in class and in their research papers. Students will also have the opportunity to work with a Digital Humanities tool, Voyant, to explore and analyze Austen's linguistic universe.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

The course aims to have students understand both Austen's debt to previous writers and her own significant contributions to the genre of the novel. By the end of the course, students should be able to appreciate the cultural and literary contexts from which these novels emerge and should have developed critical capacities to understand why they speak so enduringly to us today. Students should also become aware of the act of reading and the process of translation of Austen's work from the page to film in their critique of a number of adaptations of these novels.

**HONORS OPTION:** Students have the option to take this course for Honors credit, providing they meet the required GPA.

**TEXTBOOK:**

| Book Title          | Author      | Publisher       | ISBN number                          | Library Call Number | Comments | Format | Local Bookstore        | Online Purchase |
|---------------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|----------|--------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Mansfield Park      | Jane Austen | Broadview Press | 139781-55111-098-1 or latest edition |                     |          |        | Almost Corner Bookshop |                 |
| Pride and Prejudice | Jane Austen | Broadview Press | 1-5511-028-8                         |                     |          |        | Almost Corner Bookshop |                 |
| Northanger Abbey    | Jane Austen | Broadview Press | 13.978-1-55111-479-8                 |                     |          |        | Almost Corner Bookshop |                 |
| Persuasion          | Jane Austen | Broadview Press | 13.978-1-551110131-5                 |                     |          |        | Almost Corner Bookshop |                 |
| Emma                | Jane Austen | Broadview Press | 1-5511-321-X                         |                     |          |        | Almost Corner Bookshop |                 |

|                       |             |                 |                                  |  |  |  |                        |  |
|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|--|--|--|------------------------|--|
| Sense and Sensibility | Jane Austen | Broadview Press | ISBN: 9781551111254 / 155111125X |  |  |  | Almost Corner Bookshop |  |
|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|--|--|--|------------------------|--|

**REQUIRED RESERVED READING:**

NONE

**RECOMMENDED RESERVED READING:**

NONE

**GRADING POLICY****-ASSESSMENT METHODS:**

| Assignment  | Guidelines   | Weight                   |
|---|--|--------------------------|
| 3 Essays  | Essays should be 1,500 word research papers and follow MLA style guidelines. Use no more than 2-3 peer-reviewed sources. At least one of these essays will involve the use of the Digital Humanities text mining tool, Voyant. | 60% (20% for each essay) |
| Group Seminar Presentation involving a film critique of an adaptation of one of the novels. | A rubric for this assignment will be provided on the Moodle.   | 10%                      |
| Participation   |  | 10%                      |
| Final Exam  |  | 20%                      |
| Honors Component Assignment for those who are registered as Honors students only            | Honors students will do an extra project or assignment, to be devised together with the professor by week 3 of the course.   | Pass/Fail                |

**-ASSESSMENT CRITERIA:**

**A** Work of this quality directly addresses the question or problem raised and provides a coherent argument displaying an extensive knowledge of relevant information or content. This type of work demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate concepts and theory and has an element of novelty and originality. There is clear evidence of a significant amount of reading beyond that required for the

**B** This is highly competent level of performance and directly addresses the question or problem raised. There is a demonstration of some ability to critically evaluate theory and concepts and relate them to practice. Discussions reflect the student's own arguments and are not simply a repetition of standard lecture and reference material. The work does not suffer from any major errors or omissions and provides evidence of reading beyond the required assignments.

**C** This is an acceptable level of performance and provides answers that are clear but limited, reflecting the information offered in the lectures and reference readings.

**D** This level of performance demonstrates that the student lacks a coherent grasp of the material. Important information is omitted and irrelevant points included. In effect, the student has barely done enough to persuade the instructor that s/he should not fail.

**F** This work fails to show any knowledge or understanding of the issues raised in the question. Most of the material in the answer is irrelevant.

**-ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS:**

Attendance is mandatory. Students who miss more than three classes will receive an overall reduction of the grade by 5% for each additional absence. Where a third absence involves a meaningful conflict (see below) students will be required to produce makeup work. Should absences exceed six, students will receive a failing grade for the class. Students must notify the professor by the beginning of the second week of classes if they know they will be absent from class for religious or other excusable reasons. Two late arrivals count as one absence. Absences from class due to the observance of a religious holiday will normally be excused. Individual students who will have to miss class to observe a religious holiday must notify the instructor in writing by the end of the Add/Drop period to make prior arrangements for making up any work that will be missed.

Exam absences: You cannot make up a major exam (midterm or final) without the permission of the Dean's Office. The Dean's Office will grant such permission only when the absence was caused by a serious impediment, such as a documented illness, hospitalization or death in the immediate family (in which you must attend the funeral) or other situations of similar gravity. Students who will be absent from a major exam must notify the Dean's Office prior to that exam. Absences due to other meaningful conflicts such as job interviews, family celebrations, travel difficulties, student misunderstandings or personal convenience, will not be excused.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY**

As stated in the university catalog, any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty will receive a failing grade on the work in which the dishonesty occurred. In addition, acts of academic dishonesty, irrespective of the weight of the assignment, may result in the student receiving a failing grade in the course. Instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Academic Affairs. A student who is reported twice for academic dishonesty is subject to summary dismissal from the University. In such a case, the Academic Council will then make a recommendation to the President, who will make the final decision.

**STUDENTS WITH LEARNING OR OTHER DISABILITIES**

John Cabot University does not discriminate on the basis of disability or handicap. Students with approved accommodations must inform their professors at the beginning of the term. Please see the website for the complete policy.

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**SCHEDULE**

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**JANE AUSTEN: IN HER WORLD AND OURS**

NOTE: There is NO mid-term exam in this course.

HONORS STUDENTS: Those who take this course for Honors will have extra work, typically involving 5,000 more words of critical writing and a presentation. The nature of those assignments are to be devised and agreed between student and professor by the third week of class.

**WEEK 1****Tues.**

Introduction to course and its requirements: Who was Jane Austen and who is she now?

**Thurs.**

Read *Lady Susan* and selections from the *Juvenilia* on the website, particularly those writings Austen compiled in Volumes 1, 2 and 3:

<http://www.pemberley.com/janeinfo/juviscrp.html>

**WEEK 2****Tues.**

Playing with the gothic novel and the novel of sensibility

Read: Chapters 1-10 of *Northanger Abbey*

Appendix C: Examples of Jane Austen's reading

Appendix D: Catherine Morland's reading

**Thurs.**

Read: *Northanger Abbey* Chapters 11-20

**Fri.**

Read: *Northanger Abbey* Chapter 21-end

**WEEK 3****Tues.**

Read: Volume I of *Sense and Sensibility*

**Thurs.**

Read: Volume II of *Sense and Sensibility*

**WEEK 4****Tues.**

Read: Volume II-III of *Sense and Sensibility*

**Thurs.**

Read: Volume III of *Sense and Sensibility*

**WEEK 5**

**Tues. First Essay Due today**View film version of *Sense and Sensibility*Seminar Group 1: Critique of film version of *Sense and Sensibility***Thurs.**Read: Volume I of *Pride and Prejudice*

Appendix B: From the Conduct Books

Appendix C: Burke on the French Revolution

Appendix D: Discussion of Women's Role after the French Revolution

**WEEK 6****Tues.**Read: Volume II *Pride and Prejudice***Thurs.**Read: Volume II-III of *Pride and Prejudice***WEEK 7****Tues.**Read: Volume III of *Pride and Prejudice***Thurs.**View film version of *Pride and Prejudice*

Seminar Group 2: Critique of film version of the novel.

**WEEK 8****Tues.**Read: Volume 1 of *Mansfield Park*

Appendix A: The Theatricals at Mansfield Park

Appendix B: Religion

**Thurs.**Read: Volume 2 of *Mansfield Park*

Appendix C: Ideals of Femininity

Appendix F: A Woman's Education

Appendix D: "The Improvement of the Estate"

**WEEK 9****Tues. Second Essay Due**Read: Volume 3 *Mansfield Park*

Appendix E: The West Indian Connection

**Thurs.**Volume 3 *Mansfield Park***WEEK 10****Tues.**Group 3: Film critique of *Mansfield Park***Thurs.**Read: Volume I of *Emma*

Appendix A: The Composition and Reception of the Novel  
 Appendix B: Social Class and Landed Society  
 Appendix C: The Landless: Gypsies and Bastards

### **WEEK 11**

**Tues. (possible online class or makeup scheduled)**

Read: Volume II of *Emma*

**Thurs.**

Read: Volume II-III of *Emma*

### **WEEK 12**

**Tues.**

*Read: Volume III Emma*

**Thurs.**

NO CLASS Thanksgiving Holiday

### **WEEK 13**

**Tues. Third essay due today**

View films *Emma* and *Clueless*

Seminar Group 4: Critique of film versions of the novel.

**Thurs.**

Read: Volume I *Persuasion*

Appendix G From Thomson's *The Seasons*  
 Appendix H From Walter Scott's *Marmion*  
 Appendix I From Byron's "The Gaiour"

### **WEEK 14**

**Tues.**

Read Volume 2 of *Persuasion*

**Thurs.**

*Persuasion* Volume 3 and Summing up

View film version of *Persuasion*

**Final Exams**