

Religion, Literature, and Politics in Early Modern Britain
REL 725/ENGL 670

Spring 2019
Mondays, 3:30-5:20pm

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Course overview

This course explores the protean expressions of religious belief, satire, and polemic in the literary cultures of early modern Britain by attending to the contested political and physical cultures in which they flourished. Through engagement with prose, theatre, and music, students will explore the diverse interrelationships of texts, images, and sacred architecture. On our visits to significant sites we shall be thinking of the ways in which literary and religious imaginations were woven together. We shall engage with and learn from some of the most creative and thoughtful literary, historical and cultural scholars working on early modern Britain, who will help us to think in expansive and interdisciplinary ways about language, faith, and authority.

Integral to the course is a seven-day visit to England and Scotland during Spring Break, leaving late on March 8 and returning March 16. We shall spend time in London, Cambridge and Edinburgh in seminars led by expert scholars, visiting exhibitions and Reformation churches and attending plays. Travel, accommodations, breakfasts, a group dinner, and program costs are funded by the Institute of Sacred Music. Students are responsible for all other meals, incidental expenses, and any visa fees (if needed).

Registration is open to all and will be limited to 12 students. We seek a balance of students from all disciplines, including (but not limited to) Divinity, English, History and Renaissance Studies. While no specific background in Reformation British history or literature is required, students should demonstrate an interest in the relationship between literature and religious cultures of the early modern period.

How to apply

Please submit a one- or two-page essay (double-spaced) explaining why enrolling in this course will benefit your long-range career goals.

Submit materials and any questions to Kristen Forman, executive assistant to the Director of the ISM, at kristen.forman@yale.edu. Reading of applications will begin on **November 30, 2018** and will close when the course is filled.

Tentative Course Outline

1. Introduction
2. Erasmus, *Praise of Folly*
3. Thomas More, *Utopia*
4. The Thirty-Nine Articles and the English Reformation
5. George Buchanan, *Jephthah's Daughter* and *Dialogue on the Kingship Among the Scots*
6. Richard Hooker, *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*
7. George Herbert, *The Temple* and *The Country Parson*
8. Shakespeare, *Richard II*
9. Radical Leveller and Shaker Tracts
10. John Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress*
11. George Fox and Early Female Quaker Writings
12. Student Presentations: Final Projects

Spring Break Travel: London, Cambridge and Edinburgh: Plans include performance at Globe Theatre, and sessions with experts. Seminars include Shakespeare, Seventeenth-Century Divines, John Knox and George Buchanan.

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