

JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE
The City University of New York
Undergraduate Curriculum and Academic Standards Committee

New Course Proposal Form

Date Submitted__October 12, 2014

When completed, email the proposal form *in one file attachment* for UCASC consideration and scheduling to kkilloran@jjay.cuny.edu .

1. a. **Department(s) or program(s)** proposing this course: English

b. **Name** and contact information of proposer(s): Jay Gates

Email address: jgates@jjay.cuny.edu

Phone number: (646) 557-4406

a. **Title of the course:** King Arthur: Culture, Society, and Tradition

b. **Abbreviated title** (not more than 20 characters including spaces to appear on student transcripts and in SIMS):
King Arthur

c. **Level** of this course X 100 Level 200 Level 300 Level 400 Level

Please provide a brief rationale for why the course is at the level:

Students can take this course at the same time as ENG 101 and so the course assumes no prior foundation for the study of literature at the college level. The course is aimed at moving students beyond high school-level summary and getting them to think critically about what texts do, how they do those things, why, and their effects on contemporary audiences. To this end, the course puts emphasis on the distinction between description and analysis and poses a number of critical themes for students to focus on in their reading. Moreover, these themes are repeated throughout the course in order to give students the opportunity to revisit topics and through repetition become comfortable looking for and thinking about those themes analytically. Although there is a good deal of writing for the course, the assignments are overwhelmingly low stakes and are intended mostly to give students chances to practice. Thus this is an introductory-level course and is appropriate for the 100 level.

d. **Course prefix** to be used (i.e. ENG, SOC, HIS, etc.): LIT

2. **Rationale** for the course (will be submitted to CUNY in the Chancellor's Report). Why should John Jay College offer this course? (Explain briefly, 1-3 paragraphs.)

This course follows a practical approach to teaching students to transition from high school-level reading practices to college-level reading practices. It is an innovative approach to studying the relationship between individual and society because it takes King Arthur, an iconic figure that all students are familiar with to some extent, and gives them an opportunity to explore how different societies have treated the character. By giving

students the opportunity to explore different representations of Arthur by each of these societies, students can deal with issues of tradition and innovation, can learn to read for the concerns of texts that are expressed for societies not their own, and can then reflect on how the concerns of the Arthur story they know fits into the larger tradition and what their relationship to the tradition is. Moreover, this course can be adapted to suit the interests of various instructors. Examples of Arthurs not dealt with in the appended syllabus include Medieval examples such as the German and Norse Arthurs, Early Modern examples such as Edmund Spenser's Arthur, and modern examples such as those of Mark Twain and T.H. White, as well as a plethora of Arthurs that have appeared in children's literature.

3. **Course description** as it is to appear in the College Bulletin. (Keep in mind that this is for a student audience and so should be clear and informative; please write in complete sentences; we suggest not more than 75 words.)

Most people know the King Arthur story—the sword in the stone, the knights of the Round Table, Merlin the magician, Lancelot, Guinevere—or we think we know it. Different times have needed different Arthurs and have refashioned him to address the needs of the society. Did you know Arthur was a Roman general? Did you know that Merlin was the child of a nun and an incubus? How about that the Lancelot and Guinevere affair was made up and introduced for a very important female audience? In this course we will explore several different Arthurs, what they represent about the values of a society, the expectations they present for the individual living in it, and how to read stories within a larger tradition.

4. **Course Prerequisites or co-requisites** (Please note: All 200-level courses must have ENG 101 and all 300 & 400-level courses must have ENG 102/201 as prerequisites):

ENG 101 is pre- or co-requisite

5. Number of:

- a. Class hours __3__
 b. Lab hours _____
 c. Credits __3__

6. Has this course been taught on an **experimental basis**?

No ___ Yes. If yes, then please provide:

- a. Semester(s) and year(s):
 b. Teacher(s):
 c. Enrollment(s):
 d. Prerequisites(s):

8. **Learning Outcomes** (approximately 3-5 or whatever is required for mapping to the Gen Ed outcomes). What will the student know or be able to do by the end of the course? How do the outcomes relate to the program's (major; minor) outcomes?

- Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.
- Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.

- Identify and concepts and methods of literary study to exploring the relationship between individual and society.
- Examine how an individual's place in society affects experiences, values, or choices.
- Articulate and assess ethical views and their underlying premises.

9. Will this course be part of any **major(s), minor(s) or program(s)**?

No Yes

If yes, Indicate major(s), minor(s), or program(s) and indicate the part, category, etc. (Please be specific)

10a. Will this course be part of JJ's **general education program**? (remember to fill out the CUNY Common Core Form if part of Required or Flexible Core)

No Yes If yes, please indicate the area:

Flexible Core:

A. World Cultures and Global Issues	
B. U.S Experience in Its Diversity	
C. Creative Expression	
D. Individual and Society	X
E. Scientific World	

10b. Please explain why this course should be part of the selected area.

This course takes an innovative approach to studying the relationship between individual and society because it takes King Arthur, an iconic figure that many students are familiar with to some extent, and gives them an opportunity to explore how different societies have treated the character. By giving students the opportunity to explore different representations of Arthur by each of these societies, students can deal with issues of tradition and innovation, can learn to read for the concerns of texts that are expressed for societies not their own, and can then reflect on how the concerns of the Arthur story they know fits into the larger tradition and what their relationship to the tradition is.

10c. If yes, frequency and number of sections to be offered for General Education:

Every semester Number of sections: 1
 Fall semesters only Number of sections:
 Spring semesters only Number of sections:

11. How will you **assess student learning**?

Periodic low-stakes writing assignments in response to course readings; analytical essays; exams

12. Did you meet with a librarian to discuss **library resources** for the course?

Yes No

But a brief subject search of the CUNY+ catalogue for John Jay shows more than adequate sources for a course at this level.

If yes, please state the librarian's name Marta Bladek

Are there adequate resources in the library to support students' work in the course Yes

No

Will your students be expected to use any of the following library resources? Check all that apply.

N/A

13. **Syllabus – see attached**

14. Date of **Department curriculum committee** approval: 12/10/15

15. **Faculty** - Who will be assigned to teach this course? Jay Gates, Toy Tung, Margaret Escher, Valerie Allen

16. Is this proposed course **similar to or related to** any course, major, or program offered by any **other department(s)**? How does this course **differ**?

No

Yes. If yes, what course(s), major(s), or program(s) is this course similar or related to? With whom did you meet? Provide a brief description.

17. Did you **consult** with department(s) or program(s) offering similar or related courses or majors?

Not applicable

No

Yes. If yes, give a short summary of the consultation process and results.

18. Will any course be **withdrawn**, if this course is approved?

No

Yes. If yes, number and name of course(s) to be withdrawn.

19. Approvals: English Department Curriculum Committee 12/10/15

English Department Chair, Valerie Allen, 12/15/15

**CUNY Common Core
Course Submission Form**

Instructions: All courses submitted for the Common Core must be liberal arts courses. Courses may be submitted for only one area of the Common Core. All courses must be 3 credits/3 hours unless the college is seeking a waiver for a 4-credit Math or Science course (after having secured approval for sufficient 3-credit/3-hour Math and Science courses). All standard governance procedures for course approval remain in place.

College	John Jay College of Criminal Justice
Course Number	LIT 1XX
Course Title	King Arthur: Culture, Society, and Tradition
Department(s)	English
Discipline	Literature
Subject Area	Literature
Credits	3
Contact Hours	3
Pre-requisites	ENG 101 (pre- or co-requisite)
Mode of Instruction	Select only one: x <input type="checkbox"/> In-person <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid <input type="checkbox"/> Fully on-line
Catalogue Description	Most people know the King Arthur story—the sword in the stone, the knights of the Round Table, Merlin the magician, Lancelot, Guinevere—or we think we know it. Different times have needed different Arthurs and have refashioned him to address the needs of the society. Did you know Arthur was a Roman general? Did you know that Merlin was the child of a nun and an incubus? How about that the Lancelot and Guinevere affair was made up and introduced for a very important female audience? In this course we will explore several different Arthurs, what they represent about the values of a society, the expectations they present for the individual living in it, and how to read stories within a larger tradition.
Syllabus	Syllabus must be included with submission, 5 pages max

Indicate the status of this course being nominated:

current course revision of current course X a new course being proposed

CUNY COMMON CORE Location

Please check below the area of the Common Core for which the course is being submitted. (Select only one.)

Required

- English Composition
 Mathematical and Quantitative

Flexible

- World Cultures and Global Issues x Individual and Society
 US Experience in its Diversity Scientific World

Reasoning <input type="checkbox"/> Life and Physical Sciences	<input type="checkbox"/> Creative Expression
Learning Outcomes In the left column explain the assignments and course attributes that will address the learning outcomes in the right column.	
D. Individual and Society A Flexible Core course <u>must meet the three learning outcomes</u> in the right column.	
Students will analyze a range of narratives from within a common tradition. They will engage with perspectives of characters such as the king, knight, lady, authorities, and villains. This will allow them to think about the different perspectives individuals may have held within their society. Students will also have to think about how stories and traditions are modified to address social concerns in cultural, historical, or other contexts. For an example of a progression from description to analysis that does this, see the preparatory assignments for days 7 and 8 in the appended syllabus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.
Students will describe the differences between texts within a common tradition and then examine how those divergences highlight what the text does, comment on earlier portions of the tradition, or modify the tradition going forward. They will also posit how such changes may indicate the social concerns that texts were addressing themselves to. For an example of a progression from description to analysis that does this, see the preparatory assignment for day 10 and the full paper assigned for day 11 in the appended syllabus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.
Students will make textually based arguments and support them with critical literary analysis. For examples, see the paper assignments for days 11 and 28 in the appended syllabus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.
A course in this area (II.D) <u>must meet at least three of the additional learning outcomes</u> in the right column. A student will:	
Students will apply the methods of literary studies,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of

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<p>cultural studies, and narrative theory to analysis of texts. They will use these approaches to understand how narrative addresses social concerns in context and how to examine texts for their social concerns.</p>	<p>a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring the relationship between the individual and society, including, but not limited to, anthropology, communications, cultural studies, history, journalism, philosophy, political science, psychology, public affairs, religion, and sociology.</p>
<p>Students will engage with the place of the individual in society through the figure of Arthur and other related characters. Looking at the representations of Arthur in different roles and in different cultural and historical moments from a range of perspectives will require students to examine the effects of story and story-telling on the relationship of individual to society in periods of social change. Through consideration of related characters, students will engage with how individuals' perspectives are affected by their social roles. For an example of a progression from description to analysis that does this, see the preparatory assignments for days 2 and 4 in the appended syllabus.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine how an individual's place in society affects experiences, values, or choices.
<p>Students will engage with ethical claims made by narratives in how they represent Arthur and his court. Students will engage with ethical decisions made by characters and the foundational logic of those decisions. Students will, in turn, have to examine their own responses and assumptions to those representations. For an example of a progression from description to analysis that does this, see the preparatory assignments for days 20–24. For students' responses to their own ethical decisions in relation to a text and the Arthurian tradition, see the preparatory assignment for day 27 in the appended syllabus.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate and assess ethical views and their underlying premises.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate ethical uses of data and other information resources to respond to problems and questions.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and engage with local, national, or global trends or ideologies, and analyze their impact on individual or collective decision-making.

Preparatory assignments	20%
Paper 1	20%
Paper 2	20%
Midterm exam	10%
Final Exam	10%

Attendance:

Because I value participation, I expect you to be present and punctual. Attendance is your responsibility and there is no such thing as an 'excused absence'. You may miss up to 4 classes without penalty beyond losing participation points.

Students with Disabilities

Qualified students with disabilities will be provided reasonable academic accommodations if determined eligible by the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS). Prior to granting disability accommodations in this course, the instructor must receive written verification of a student's eligibility from the OAS which is located at L.66.00 NB (212-237-8041). It is the student's responsibility to initiate contact with the office and to follow the established procedures for having the accommodation notice sent to the instructor.

Source: *Reasonable Accommodations: A Faculty Guide to Teaching College Students with Disabilities*, 4th ed., City University of New York, p.3.

(http://www.jjay.cuny.edu/studentlife/Reasonable_Accommodations.pdf)

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism and cheating are violations of CUNY's policy on academic integrity:

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's ideas, words, or artistic, scientific, or technical work as one's own creation. Using the ideas or work of another is permissible only when the original author is identified.

Paraphrasing and summarizing, as well as direct quotations, require citations to the original source.

Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional. *Lack of dishonest intent does not necessarily absolve a student of responsibility for plagiarism.*

It is the student's responsibility to recognize the difference between statements that are common knowledge (which do not require documentation) and restatements of the ideas of others. Paraphrasing, summarizing, and direct quotation are acceptable forms of restatement, as long as the source is cited. Students who are unsure how and when to provide documentation are advised to consult with their instructors. The Library has free guides designed to help students with problems of documentation.

(http://www1.cuny.edu/portal_ur/content/2004/policies/image/policy.pdf)

By registering in this course, you are promising to abide by all the requirements stated in this policy. Students in breach of this policy are liable to severe penalty, including disciplinary action. See also pp. 44–5 of the JJC Undergraduate Bulletin for further explanation. See also *MLA Handbook*, 7th ed., 2.

1) Introduction: Text, Tradition, Interrogation

The Welsh Arthur

2) Arthurian Deeds

Reading: Culhwch and Olwen in RA, pp. 28–57

Due: Prep paper

Description: Character. Choose one character from the reading and, in no more than 2 pages, describe him or her. Describe the character's attributes including appearance, social status, concerns, goals, attitude (how does the character treat others?). Give concrete examples and quote from the text where it will help make clear your description.

3) Arthur in Latin

Reading: Arthur in Geoffrey of Monmouth in RA, pp. 58–87

Due: Prep paper

Description: Context. In no more than 2 pages, describe the context for the events of the reading. Where do the events take place geographically? When do the events narrated take place? Who is involved in events (individuals or whole peoples)? Is there a dominant culture? Are there peoples or cultures in conflict? Are there notable features to the context, e.g. is this a fictional world or a real and recognizable one? Give concrete examples and quote from the text where it will help make clear your description.

4) Arthur the Destroyer of Saxons

Reading: Arthur in Geoffrey of Monmouth in RA, pp. 58–87

Due: Prep paper

Analysis: Character motivation. Up to this point you have simply identified features of texts and described them. However, to move toward analysis—reading the text for meaning—we need to think about *why* things are happening, *why* characters do the things they do. Select one or two characters and, in no more than 2 pages, explain their motivation for a particular action or set of actions. Try not to read too much into the character's back-story. Instead, focus on the evidence the text provides and extrapolate from textual clues, e.g. what is the the cultural context, what conflicts does a character face, what does a character have to gain or lose from their actions? How do you know what has motivated the character to these actions? Give concrete examples and quote from the text. Then be sure to explain how the quotations act as evidence of the motivations you see.

The French Arthur

5) Arthur's origins

Reading: Wace, Roman de Brut (Merlin Episodes) in RA, pp. 88–99

Due: Prep paper

Description: Context. In no more than 2 pages, describe the context for the events of the reading. Where do the events take place geographically? When do the events narrated take place? Who is involved in events (individuals or whole peoples)? Is there a dominant culture? Are there peoples or cultures in conflict? Are there notable features to the context,

e.g. is this a fictional world or a real and recognizable one? Give concrete examples and quote from the text where it will help make clear your description.

6) Arthur's Origins

Reading: Wace, *Roman de Brut* (The Birth and Rise of Arthur) in RA, pp. 88–99

Due: Prep paper

Description: Tradition and novelty. With this text, we can see a tradition developing around Arthurian narratives. On the one hand, tradition implies consistency and conservation. On the other, with the move to a new culture and a new language, the narratives focus on new things, emphasize different elements, concern themselves with different matters. In no more than 2 pages, describe what is new and what seems to be retained from the earlier stories you have read. Give concrete examples of both by quoting passages from the text.

7) Arthur Acquires Chivalry

Reading: Marie de France, *Lanval* in RA, pp. 294–95 and 298–314

Due: Prep paper

Description: Social values. Moving from one culture and language to another also implies that new social values will be inserted into the Arthurian tradition. In no more than 2 pages, describe which social values you see in the text. These may include matters such as gender expectations on individuals, gender relations, social class, religion. Give concrete examples and quote from the text where it will help make clear your description.

8) Enter Lancelot

Reading: Chrétien de Troyes, *Lancelot or The Knight of the Cart* in RA, pp. 112–45

Due: Prep paper

Analysis: Values and motivation. What were the benefits and costs of the values the text presented for the characters? What lesson should a contemporary audience take away from the narrative (contemporary means the audience that the narrative was written for, not a modern audience)? Give concrete examples and quote from the text. Then be sure to explain how the quotations act as evidence of the motivations you see.

9) Questing for the Queen

Reading: Chrétien de Troyes, *Lancelot or The Knight of the Cart* in RA, pp. 145–80

10) A Different Kind of Quest

Reading: *The Quest for the Holy Grail* in RA, pp. 207–14

Due: Prep paper

Description: Tradition and novelty. With this text, we can see a tradition developing around Arthurian narratives. On the one hand, tradition implies consistency and conservation. On the other, with the move to a new culture and a new language, the narratives focus on new things, emphasize different elements, concern themselves with different matters. In no more than 2 pages, describe what is new and what seems to be retained from the earlier stories you have read. How does the tradition seem to be shifting? Give concrete examples of both by quoting passages from the text.

11) The Collapse of the Court

Reading: Chrétien de Troyes, *Perceval*, or *The Story of the Grail* in RA, pp. 181–92

Due: Paper 1

Analytical Paper: As we have read a number of texts in a developing Arthurian tradition, we have seen the introduction of new social values and social concerns. Characters have responded to different motivations across the texts. Choose one main text and focus on no more than 2 characters. In 5 pages (~1,500 words) make an argument about how the characters respond to social/cultural motivations and whether their responses are fundamentally driven by adherence to the narrative Arthurian tradition or if the Arthurian tradition is being adapted to suit the concerns of the contemporary audience. Give concrete examples by quoting passages and explaining how those passages support your argument.

12) In-class midterm exam

English Arthur

13) Enter Gawain

Reading: *The Rise of Gawain, Nephew of Arthur* in RA, pp. 377–408

Description: Character. Choose one character from the reading and, in no more than 2 pages, describe him or her. Describe the character's attributes including appearance, social status, concerns, goals, attitude (how does the character treat others?). Give concrete examples and quote from the text where it will help make clear your description.

14) Heads Will Roll

Reading: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, fitt 1 in RA

Due: Prep paper

Description: Character. Does this Gawain agree with the other Gawain we encountered in *The Rise of Gawain*? Identify attributes that they share in common and those that they do not. Give concrete examples and quote from the text where it will help make clear your description.

15) Bulls, Boars, and Wodewos

Reading: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, fitts 2–3 in RA

Due: Prep paper

Description: Character and symbolism—reading for foreshadowing. Often, we can anticipate later events by recognizing character attributes and symbols that are supposed to be descriptive of a character's state. Describe the symbols that are attached to Gawain and make some guesses about the kinds of things that could happen in relation to them later in the text. Give concrete examples and quote from the text where it will help make clear your description.

16) The Green Chapel

Reading: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, fitt 4 in RA

Analysis: Reliability of symbolism and ambiguity of interpretation. Having read the whole of the text now, how accurate were your guesses about how events would play out? Did you find that the symbolism surrounding Gawain was reliable? Explain how it was or was not. What effects did the symbolism early in the text have on your interpretation at the end? Give concrete examples, quote from the text, and explain how the quotations support your interpretation of the text.

17) Arthur the Giant Killer

Reading: The Alliterative Morte Arthure in RA, pp. 501–41

Description: Character anticipation—reading for foreshadowing. Describe elements that you think suggest how things might play out later in the narrative. Obvious examples of these might include prophecies or dreams. Less obvious examples may involve crimes that must be punished, characters’ statements about their intent, and various kinds of symbolism or metaphor. Although you do not need to identify all of the possible foreshadowing you may see, try to explain why you recognize at least one or two examples as foreshadowing and what you think they indicate.

18) Arthur’s Beginnings

Reading: Sir Thomas Malory, Le Morte Darthur (The Sword in the Stone) in RA, pp. 542–52

Description: Reading within/against traditions. With this text, we can again see a tradition developing around Arthurian narratives and the active use of and engagement with earlier texts. In no more than 2 pages, describe what is new and what seems to be retained from the earlier stories you have read. How does the tradition seem to be shifting? Does Malory’s Arthur agree more with that of the French material or the English material? Give concrete examples of both by quoting passages from the text.

19) Arthur’s End

Reading: Sir Thomas Malory, Le Morte Darthur (The Death of Arthur) in RA, pp. 542–52

Analysis: Which tradition should we read Malory as participating in? Why? How does that affect how we interpret Malory’s Arthur? In no more than 2 pages, discuss which tradition Malory relies on or borrows from more and what the effects of that are on interpreting the text. Give concrete examples by quoting the text and explain how they support your claims.

Victorian Arthur

20) A Victorian Obsession

Reading: Tennyson, ‘Dedication’ and ‘The Coming of Arthur’, pp. 19–35

Description: What does Tennyson tell us his goals are?

21) Love Interests

Reading: Tennyson, ‘Merlin and Vivien’, pp. 142–68

Description: Character. Choose one or two characters from the reading and, in no more than 2 pages, describe him or her. Describe the character’s attributes including appearance, social status, concerns, goals, attitude (how does the character

treat others?). Give concrete examples and quote from the text where it will help make clear your description. N.b. Tennyson pairs male and female characters.

22) What Would the Victorians Say?

Reading: Tennyson, ‘Lancelot and Elaine’, pp. 168–206

Analysis: Character pairs and individual character motivation. Since Tennyson pairs his male and female characters, it is reasonable to assume that their characteristics complement or contradict one another. Taking into account the characteristics of Lancelot and Elaine, discuss in no more than 2 pages how pairing them affects our interpretation of the circumstances of their narrative.

23) Redirected Efforts

Reading: Tennyson, ‘The Holy Grail’, pp. 206–30

Description: Tennyson’s values. Moving from one culture and language to another also implies that new social values will be inserted into the Arthurian tradition. In no more than 2 pages, describe which social values you see as new or particular to Tennyson in the text. These may include matters such as gender expectations on individuals, gender relations, social class, religion. Give concrete examples and quote from the text where it will help make clear your description.

24) The Queen Stands Alone

Reading: Tennyson, ‘Guinevere’ and ‘The Passing of Arthur’, pp. 269–300

Analysis: Is there a Victorian Arthur with Victorian values? What were the benefits and costs of the values the text presented for the characters? What lesson should a contemporary audience take away from the narrative (contemporary means the audience that the narrative was written for, not a modern audience)? Give concrete examples and quote from the text. Then be sure to explain how the quotations act as evidence of the motivations you see.

Modern Arthur

25) Screening: *King Arthur*

26) Screening: *King Arthur*

27) The ‘Archeology’ of Arthur

Description: Modern Arthur. What are the concerns of the Arthur of the film? Are his concerns reminiscent of our modern concerns in some way? Is he especially historical in some sense? Is he romanticized in some sense? In no more than 2 pages, describe the character and any characteristics that you think speak to modern concerns. Do you find yourself addressed in this text? What lessons do you take away from the text about your own role and ethical decisions in society? Be sure to quote the text in support of your claims.

28) Conclusions: The end of ‘The Once and Future King’?

Final Paper

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We have seen many different Arthurs in very different worlds. We have seen Arthur as general, as giant-killer, as host to the chivalric ideal, as degenerate. We have seen him defending against invaders and conquering abroad, existing in magical and natural worlds. Choose at least two of the types of Arthur that we have discussed over the course of the semester and, in 5 pages (~1,500 words), make an argument about how those particularly mark out the concerns of the societies that produced them. Consider how those two Arthurs speak to one another across the tradition and how we can better understand each by reading against the other. Try to avoid writing a compare/contrast essay and think, instead, about how the two are in dialogue.

Final exam TBA