

King's University College
ENG3348 (570)
Topics in 18C British Literature:
Affected/Affecting: Moral Sentiment, Social Action,
Public Concern
Fall 2026

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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 9:00am-12:00pm via Zoom.

Course Prerequisites

At least 60% in 1.0 of English 1000-1999, or Writing 1020F/G or Writing 2101F/G or permission of the Department. There are no anti-requisites for this course. Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Mode of Instruction

In-person.

Course Description

This course examines the impact of sentimentalism on the eighteenth-century British novel, in particular the relationship between affect, ethics, and action. Attention will be paid to the difference(s) between the body and the mind, between benevolence and empathy, between self-interest and selflessness, and between sentiment and sensibility. Through a combination of oral and written assignments, we will apply an intersectional lens to topics such as coquetry and female consent, seduction (gender-based violence) and libertine masculinity; female piety and bluestocking feminism; gender norms and sexual orientations; abolitionism, imperialism, and xenophobia; courtship, the middle-class family, and the companionate marriage.

More specifically, we will frame the Age of Sensibility (1744-1785) through contemporary affect theory as a way of focussing our attention on the period's fascination with the physical body's capacity to speak emotional truth. The eighteenth century's fascination with performance and performativity, masking and masquerading, excessive passion and rational affect, will be of especial

interest as we examine texts by Eliza Haywood, Samuel Richardson, Jane Collier, Henry Fielding, Laurence Sterne, Olaudah Equiano, Ignatius Sancho, and Horace Walpole.

Methodologically speaking, this course takes a **critical presentist** approach to consider the relevance of studying eighteenth-century literature in 2026. Whether we are talking about the twenty-first or the eighteenth century, we must be cautious of celebrating affect as a panacea for inequity and discrimination or as an excuse for shirking our ethical responsibility to actively forge a more just world (e.g., virtue signalling, etc.). Framing affective connection intersectionally will help us to critically interrogate both affect's potential to transcend social inequities as well as its potential to reinforce existing social hierarchies by deploying an uncritical humanism, which papers over racism, misogyny, homo/transphobia, classism, and ableism. With the benefit of historical hindsight, our task will be to draw out the exploitative dynamics of affect *alongside* the emancipatory potential of creating new intersubjective affective alliances. Our larger goal is two-fold: (i) we will compare the eighteenth century with the twenty-first century to assess the value of contemporary affective politics; (ii) we will assess whether studying historical literatures in 2026 has any impact on our willingness or capacity to foster meaningful social change.

Course-Level Learning Outcomes

1. To identify and analyze the fundamental assumptions and tropes of eighteenth-century sentimentalism by engaging critically, creatively, and emotionally with a variety of canonical and non-canonical examples of British literature from the period.
2. To approach critical thinking as both an academic and personal/experiential practice, establishing an original voice in dialogue both with a larger community of thinkers and with their own lived experience.
3. To evaluate the literature of the period in relation to the larger ethical values and cultural issues of the time.
4. To create an infrastructure for actively dismantling racism, homo/transphobia, misogyny, gender-based discrimination/violence, linguisticism, and ableism through the questions we ask, the answers we pose, and the work we do as scholars and academics.
5. To further develop our critical thinking and writing skills, gaining practical experience in essay writing relevant to the discipline of English. We will focus on (i) linking individual textual passages to larger themes and ideas; (ii) creating complex arguments or sustained claims; (iii) developing our research skills and information literacy, with attention to the politics of citation practices; (iv) forging an academic style; (v) and learning to revise and edit our work.

Required Books

- Jane Collier. *An Essay on the Art of Ingeniously Tormenting*. Ed. Bilger (Broadview) \$31.75
- Samuel Richardson. *Pamela; Or, Virtue Rewarded*. Ed. Keymer (Oxford World's Classics) \$9.95
- Sarah Scott. *Millenium Hall*. Ed. Kelly (Broadview) \$29.25
- Laurence Sterne. *A Sentimental Journey Through France and Italy*. Ed. Turner (Broadview) \$21.50

- Horace Walpole *The Castle of Otranto and the Mysterious Mother*. Ed. Frederick S. Frank (Broadview). \$20.25

N.B. While students are welcome to purchase second-hand or alternate editions of the required texts, please be mindful that all discussions, assignments, lectures, and presentations must reference the page numbers from the assigned editions.

Method of Evaluation

ASSIGNMENT	SCALE	WEIGHT	DUE DATES
Reading Presentation (group)	100	20%	Weeks 2-12 (student's choice)
Affective Posts (500-750 words each)	3	3 x 10= 30%	Ongoing, Weeks 2-12
Critical Presentist Essay (1500-2000 words)	100	25%	Friday, December 5th
Final Exam	100	25%	TBA

Late Policy

- All assignments will be graded and returned electronically via OWL.
- Students will have seven (7) days from the scheduled due date to submit their assignments without penalty.
- No assignments will be accepted after the 7th day.
- All requests for accommodations, processed through either the ADO and/or Accessibility Services, will be accepted without question. Students who have received special accommodation must contact me to email me to discuss alternate deadlines and/or means of submission.
- Out of respect for my own schedule, I cannot guarantee that assignments after the due date will receive the same degree of substantive commentary. I will, however, do my best, and you are always free to discuss your assignments with me in person.

A Note on Self-Plagiarism

Self-plagiarism refers to the practice of using material from one assignment you have written in order to write another. In most academic contexts, this practice is not permitted. In this course, however, you are welcome (and, indeed, encouraged) to use your own materials cumulatively, integrating your focus presentation and weekly affective responses into your final paper.

Policy on Generative AI

King's is committed to fostering a culture of professionalism, honesty, and academic integrity, and all members of our community—faculty, staff, and students—have a role to play in promoting an ethical learning environment. Furthermore, through the work they submit for academic evaluation, students develop important habits of critical thinking, independent inquiry, and creativity. Thus, it is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor.

Within this course AI tools [such as Chat GPT/Gemini/Copilot, etc.] are permitted exclusively for: e.g., information-gathering and preliminary research purposes. If AI tools are used, students must acknowledge use and state how the tool was used. Use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools is NOT permitted for written work submitted for evaluation. If you are unsure of AI use in this class, please consult with your instructor.

Expectations for Grammar, Typography, and Documentation Style

Effective proofreading is a crucial part of the writing process and contributes significantly to the overall quality of your assignments. Sloppy writing and careless errors distract your reader and undermine the credibility of your analysis. Students are expected to thoroughly proofread their assignments before submission.

Assignments with more than FIVE (5) typographical errors and/or grammatical errors, which impede the clarity of your thought, will automatically receive a grade of 1/3 on assignments graded out of 3, and a reduction of 10% on assignments graded out of 100. Grammatical and documentation expectations will clearly laid out in class, but I will NOT be covering this material in class.

**KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
GENERAL COURSE POLICIES
2026-27**

1. Academic Accommodations (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

2. Academic Consideration for Student Absences

Students must be approved to write a makeup exam or for an extension of the assignment deadline. If you need to miss an exam or the deadline for the assignment, please follow these instructions.

There are two ways to seek academic consideration:

(i) Academic consideration based on medical or compassionate grounds

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate grounds), they should contact the Academic Advising Office. As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration.

For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is the appropriate documentation. The SMC is available at <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical-certificate.pdf>

- King's students: The Academic Advising Office website is located in DLH 104. The Academic Advising website is <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>.
- If your home faculty is Huron or at Western, please submit your documentation to your faculty's academic counselling office.
- Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

You may submit requests for academic consideration through the **Student Absence Portal**, linked on this website: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>

(ii) Academic consideration through an undocumented absence

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per half-course (0.5) weight.

- Note that instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline to confirm this assessment.
- If instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs. (For example, if students need to submit X of Y assignments, this flexibility already provides consideration.)
- Undocumented absences can not be used as the basis for academic consideration for December or April exams.

For further information on the academic consideration policy, please see https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

c) Absences from Final Exams

If you miss the Final Exam, **contact your Academic Advising Office** as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the “Special Examination” (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a multiple exam situation (i.e., you are scheduled to write more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

d) Religious Accommodations

Students should consult the University’s list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and their Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

3. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King’s University College:
<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/accessibility-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King’s University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/campus-life/student-supports/>

Good2talk is an online and phone resource for students, available 24/7, with services in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

Western’s Mental Health Services site provides a complete list of options on how to obtain help: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental-health/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King's University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/academics/academic-supports/>

4. Statement on Gender-Based Sexual Violence

King's and Western are committed to reducing incidents of gender-based sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: [Mental Health and Wellness at King's](#).

You can reach supports at King's by emailing care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a Social Worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by email (health@uwo.ca) or by calling 519-661-3568. Additional support services can be found <https://www.uwo.ca/health/gbsv/support/index.html>

5. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see https://kings.uwo.ca/sites/2025/assets/files/campus/Kings_Code_of_Student_Conduct.pdf

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

6. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. **Check with you instructor to check which tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in each course.** Note that although some courses may permit the use of such tools, it does not mean use of such tools is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality Reports - TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

7. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

8. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

9. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.