

**A guide to
*1st year English classes at
the University of Toronto***

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**Featuring student
testimonials from
*Ella Zhang and
Nghì Nguyen***

Overview

ENG140 and **ENG150** are the year-long first-year English courses that can be completed to enter into the English Specialist and the Creative Writing Minor programs.

For the English Specialist, you'll need to achieve a final grade of 73% in either course. For the Creative Writing Minor, you'll need to achieve at least a final grade of 77% in either course.

Very generally, ENG140 focuses on late-nineteenth and twentieth-century literature, while ENG150 tracks literary traditions all the way back to the Bible.

Not sure which one to take in first-year? This guide is for you! Of course, if you cannot choose a preference, you may also take both, and many students do.

For more inquiries around program requirements, contact our Undergraduate Advisor at english.undergraduate@utoronto.ca.

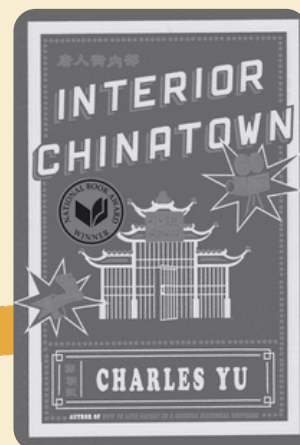
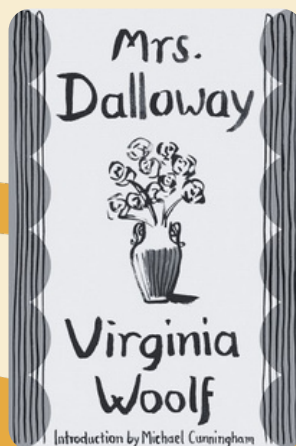
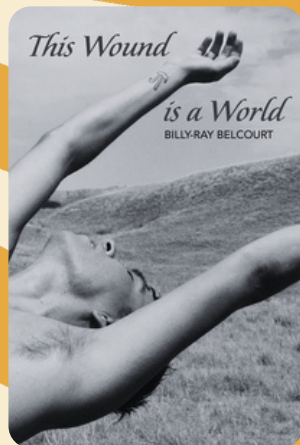
ENG140 - *Literature* *For Our Time*

Taught by *Prof. Adam Hammond* in the
2025-26 year

Course description

This course explores how recent literature in English responds to our world in poetry, prose, and drama. In the fall term we'll visit some famous and not-so-famous landmarks of late-nineteenth and twentieth-century literature: a dusty laboratory in a side-street in London, a sunny beach in Italy, a smoke-filled apartment in Harlem, and a hotel bar in Chicago. In the spring term, our guides will be closer to our own time, living writers and more recent books. In both terms, emphases will include literature's reasons for being, its formal qualities, historical context, relation to other media, and relevance to our moment in time. In addition to reading, discussing, and writing about literature, this course offers significant extracurricular opportunities for making, performing, and publishing it: we will mount a class performance, host open mic nights and zine fairs, and produce a literary journal composed entirely of work by students in the class.

Example readings:*



*Readings are subject to change slightly each year. Use these examples to catch a vibe!

Student Reflection - Ella

ENG140 was the first time I found myself surrounded by so many others who shared a genuine passion for English. It felt like stepping into the literary world I had always dreamed of in high school. My classmates were incredibly talented—ranging from visual artists to zine makers to composers—and the environment naturally pushed me to challenge myself and experiment with new forms of expression. We explored everything from Free Indirect Discourse and stream of consciousness to poetry and screenwriting. Whatever your interests coming in, there's something for you—and even more to discover. This course solidified my decision to pursue English in university, inspired me to write more creative pieces than ever before, and evoked epiphanies that changed how I perceive myself and the world. Many of my favorite first-year memories came from the ENG140 community. This course is truly what you make of it— the more you put in, the more rewarding it becomes.

What is LOAD?

LOAD is....



A **collection of works** by young writers, editors, and artists from ENG140.

A **recreation of the DIY ethic** taught by Virginia Woolf—doing everything by ourselves (writing, editing, cover art, fundraising, printing) so we have complete freedom over what's published (not a single dollar from the university!).

A way for the students to have **a taste of the literary world**.

A **community** that was created through our love for writing.

A **proclamation of literature's mellow breathing**, with our passion as its kindling.

A **140 experience**.

LOAD is not something that can be defined by one person—not even Prof. Hammond, who is the reason LOAD exists. The idea of LOAD is simple: sharing young artists’ voices through the DIY ethic. But **the reality of LOAD is redefined each year by the community it grows in.** Each of our experiences of this journal is different. For me, when I reflect on the past six months, it’s not just the success of the two open mics, the zine fair, and the editorial team—it’s the weeks of rushing to meet the deadline, the days of stressing over venue bookings, the hours of emails for communications, and the countless little things that uplifted LOAD into what it is today. As Editor-in-Chief, I couldn’t be more proud of what we’ve accomplished, and I’m immensely grateful for the class that allowed this to happen. Our theme this year was to speak Torontonians—not just about the physical location, but about how the creative pieces can relate to or remind us of the idea of Toronto. I’m beyond excited to see LOAD 3, handcrafted by another class of talented and inspirational 140ers. Don’t feel burdened to follow in our footsteps. Do it different. Do it better.

Of course, I would love to share more or answer questions. Feel free to DM me or email me (ezyu.zhang@mail.utoronto.ca). I am way too attached to this journal anyways... you can also drop by Prof. Hammond’s office to pick up a copy in September to get a real taste of LOAD.

~ Ella

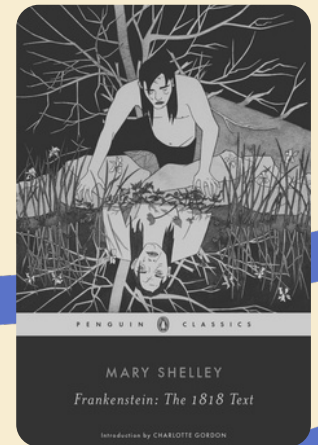
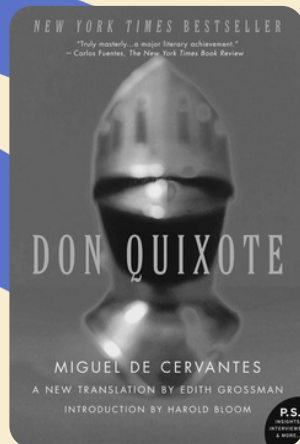
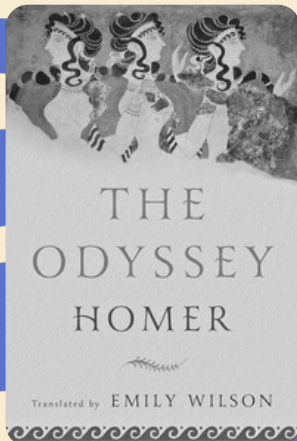
ENG150 - **Literary Traditions**

Taught by **Prof. John Rogers** in the 2025-26 year

Course description

ENG150 is an exploration of some of the greatest works of literature composed over the course of three thousand years. We begin in the Fall term with the creation stories of the Hebrew Bible; the *Odyssey* of Homer; and the lyrics of Sappho. For the remainder of the course, we trace the undeniable but controversial influence of those ancient works on our understanding of story-telling, nation building, the origin of the cosmos, and the meaning of the human. The fall term ends with Dante's *Inferno*, the poetry of Rumi, Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, and Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. In the Winter term, we extend our investigation through a study of four masterpieces of modernity, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, and Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*. The course concludes with a recent work of science fiction by Ling Ma, *Severance*. Over the course of both terms, we will be dipping into the commentaries on literature implicit in some of the mind-bending stories of the post-modern Argentinian writer Borges. A few of the many aims of this course are to help students understand some of the cultural and social energies motivating these works, to become conversant in some of the literary controversies through which these works are generally understood and fought over, and to help students develop and hone skills of critical reading and argumentative writing.

Example readings:*



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Student Reflection - Nghi

ENG150 was my first English course at U of T, and was without doubt my favourite class in first year. We began in the beginning, with the Bible and *The Odyssey*, then tracked how themes, motifs, and characters are carried forward in texts like Dante's *Inferno*. The class's books and poems were challenging, but pushing myself to read each text carefully and thoroughly built a strong foundation of skills for me: close-reading, analysis, and essay writing and revision. Examining difficult texts prepared me well for ENG202 and 203. In first year, I wasn't yet sure if I wanted to pursue English, but ENG150 (and Professor Rogers and my wonderful TA) assured me of two facts: that English literature was delightfully interesting and intellectually stimulating; and that I was entirely capable of acquiring and refining the skills needed to pursue the field. The highlight of the class for me was certainly Prof. Rogers's very hilarious and very charming enthusiasm for Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO DEPARTMENT ENGLISH

Credits

This guide was designed by Nghi Nguyen. Nghi is a fourth-year English Specialist and Creative Writing Minor. He is also the Marketing Director for the English Student Union in the 25-26 year. The section “What is LOAD?” was written by Ella Zhang. Ella is an English Specialist who was the Editor-in-Chief of LOAD in the 24-25 year. She is the Second-year Representative for the English Student Union in the 25-26 year.