



**Course Code/ Victorian Literature and Culture
Jindal School of Languages and Literature, Spring 2026**

Course Information:

Programme and Cross Elective Course

Course Duration: 15 weeks

Credits: 4

Location: TBA

Instructor Information:

Instructor: Dr. Niyati Sharma

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Course Description:

The course will introduce and discuss novels, short stories, poetry, and essays from the Victorian period to deeply examine the cultural and political trends of nineteenth-century Britain. It will further broaden our understanding of Victorian literature by focusing on canonical novels as well as popular fiction from the period. The Victorian period witnessed a rich debate on literary genres (realism, sensation fiction, detective fiction, Gothic novels) and the course attempts to introduce students to a range of said genres. In the course of the term, we shall read Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, and Arthur Conan Doyle's detective fiction amongst other writings. The period also witnessed intense debates on ideas of race, gender, and the Empire, which will be thoroughly considered through a study of fictional tropes and non-fiction essays. Finally, the course will examine ways in which the Victorians continue to influence our cultural consciousness today.

Learning Objectives:

- 1) To learn to close-read a range of literary texts and situate them in a larger cultural and political context.
- 2) Develop an understanding of the literary and cultural landscape of the period, including the several literary movements characteristic of the age.
- 3) To learn to draw nuanced links between the nineteenth century and the contemporary moment.

Indicative list of readings:

Novels: Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre* (1847)

Bram Stoker, *Dracula* (1897)

Short Story: Arthur Conan Doyle, 'The Adventure of the Speckled Band' (1892)
 Wilkie Collins, Stories from the Collection 'After Dark' (1856)

Poetry: Elizabeth Barrett Browning, 'How do I Love Thee?' (1850)
 Alfred Tennyson, 'The Lady of Shallot' (1832)

Essays: Harriet Taylor Mill, selections from 'Enfranchisement of Women' (1851)
 Charles Darwin, selections from *The Origins of Species* (1859)
 Max Nordau, selections from *Degeneration* (1892-93)

Schedule

Detailed Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction

Week 2: **Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre***

Week 3: **Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre***

Week 4: **Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre***

First Response Paper

Week 5: Wilkie Collins. Stories from the Collection 'After Dark.'

Week 6: Excerpts from **Bram Stoker's *Dracula***

Week 7: In-Class Midterm Exam

Week 8: Excerpts from **Bram Stoker's *Dracula***

Week 9: **Arthur Conan Doyle's 'Adventure of the Speckled Band'**

Week 10: Poetry: **Elizabeth Barrett Browning. 'How do I Love Thee?'**

Response Paper 2

Week 11: Poetry: **Alfred Tennyson. 'The Lady of Shallot'**

Week 12: Essays from the Victorian period: Harriet Taylor Mill, selections from 'The Enfranchisement of Women' (1851)

Week 13: Non-fiction from the Victorian period: Charles Darwin, selections from *The Origins of Species* (1859)

Week 14: Non-fiction from the Victorian period: Max Nordau, selections from *Degeneration* (1892-93)

Week 15: Final Exam

Prerequisites: None

Assessment Pattern:

Response Paper (2x10): 20%
Midterm Exam: 20%
Presentation: 20%
Final exam: 40%

Academic Integrity

Academic Honesty, Cheating, and Plagiarism

Plagiarism in any form is strictly prohibited across assessments. Academic writing and thinking involve being in conversation with others' works and thus any words and ideas borrowed from others should be properly cited. Direct quotations and even paraphrasing of ideas should be given due credit. Similarly, the use of AI while producing written or presentation related work will not be deemed acceptable.

Participation/Attendance Policy

Students are strongly encouraged to attend most of the classes. Assessment dates will be announced in advance and students are expected to adhere to the schedule of assessments. In keeping with the discussion led-pedagogical model of the classroom, students are expected to do the reading in advance.

Use of phone/ texting/ laptop

While laptops are permitted in the classroom, students are expected to engage with the technology primarily to facilitate classroom learning.