TEXT: Trilling and Bloom, eds., VICTORIAN PROSE AND POETRY (Oxford University Press). You are to obtain your own copy of the text and bring it to class each period.

APPROACH: Lecture, discussion, groups (this last approach of particular importance)

CONTENT: A study of Victorian literature and culture focusing on a sampler of key poems by four of the major poets of the period and a few selected essays. You will be expected to become conversant with the main issues of the Victorian era and familiar with its historical context, i.e., the literary and cultural movements that preceded it and the legacy it passed on to the Twentieth Century. You will be required to read literary texts carefully and closely, and explore the implications of these texts in a variety of formats—oral, written, and visual.

ASSIGNMENTS: You will be required to submit three major assignments: A group visual project plus explanatory response, a research-based essay, and a final exam. The visual project and the final exam are worth 100 points each. The paper is worth 200 points.

READINGS: Reading a literary text is in key ways different from reading textbook prose or other daily reading material. You must read carefully (and often more than once), and you must use a dictionary. You may also make allowances for the conventions of both time period and genre, for often the language will differ from contemporary conversational or written American English. It is crucial for you to complete the assigned reading prior to the class period during which it is to be discussed. I will reserve the right to give pop quizzes if I determine that you are not keeping up with the assigned reading.

ATTENDANCE: You are entitled to no more than three unexcused absences. More than three absences will result in a reduction of your point total, ten points per miss beyond the allotted three.

PARTICIPATION: I will expect you to participate in class discussion and will feel free to call on you for interpretation, opinion, etc. Be prepared for such impromptu recitations.

THE VISUAL PROJECT: A group-created collage depicting Victorianism, accompanied by a full 1-page single-spaced explanation of the collage’s contents and arrangement. Your group will also make a short, informal presentation to the class regarding the design and content of your collage. More details later.

RESEARCH PAPER: A research-based paper of 6-8 pages (typed and double-spaced) for a general audience. I will soon provide a list of possible topics and specific guidelines for writing the essay.

THE FINAL EXAM: Your final exam will be a take-home test due early in final exam week. You should make every effort to avoid travel during that period between the last Friday of the term and the Tuesday of exam week. We will talk more about the exam as the term nears completion.

GRADE: The grade will be based pretty much on a percentage of the total points for the class: 92% or above for an A, 88%–91% for an AB, 82%-87% for a B, 78%-81% for a C, etc.

Tentative Schedule of Readings & Assignments: The following is a best-guess schedule under ideal circumstances. In all probability, we will not complete this schedule. Because my teaching style is somewhat existential, I prefer to go at the pace of a specific class rather than at the pace of an abstract syllabus. So we will certainly not discuss in class all of the readings listed below. Nevertheless, I will expect you to read them and consider all of the readings as contextual material for the course.

Week 1
Background: Victorian Prose and Poetry (VPP), pp. 3-13 and pp. 391-393; Lord Tennyson: Intro pp. 394-396 and “Mariana,” “The Kraken,” “The Lady of Shalott,”

Week 2  
“ The Lotos Eaters,” “Ulysses,” “Morte d’Arthur” IN (VPP) MORIAM (all selections)

Week 3
“ Locksley Hall,” “ Crossing the Bar,” conclude Tennyson.
CHRISTMAS BREAK

Week 4
"Victorian Prose," pp. 3-13; John Stuart Mill "A Crisis in My Mental History"
Robert Browning: Intro; "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister," "My Last Duchess"
"The Bishop Orders His Tomb At Saint Praxed's Church," "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came"

Week 5
"Fra Lippo Lippi" "Andrea del Sarto": Conclude Browning; Matthew Arnold: Intro; "The Strayed Reveler"

Week 6
from Empedocles on Etna, "To Marguerite--Continued," "Dover Beach," "The Buried Life," "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse"

Week 7
"Preface to First Edition of Poems" (pp. 205ff) "Literature and Science" (pp. 254ff); Gerard Manley Hopkins: Intro; "God's Grandeur," "Spring"

Week 8
Visual Project Show and Tell

WINTER CARNIVAL BREAK

Week 9
"The Windhover," "Red Beauty" "Carion Comfort," "Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves," "No Worst, There is None"

Week 10
"I Wake and Feel the Felt of Dark," "That Nature Is a Heraclitean Fire," "Thou Art Indeed Just, Lord..." "To R.B." Walter Pater: Intro; from The Renaissance, pp. 3-31; Exam assigned; Class Evaluation

NOTE: MTU's Affirmative Action Officer has asked that all faculty include the following statement on each course syllabus:

MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disability Act of 1990 (ADA). If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at MTU, please call Dr. Gloria Melton, Associate Dean of Students, (2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department head, or the Affirmative Action Office (3310).