CONTENT: This course will focus on British prose and poetry of the Nineteenth Century, which for our purposes can be divided into two major periods—the Romantic and the Victorian. The Romantic Movement itself—in all of the arts—was a broad one, dramatically affecting most of Europe in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; the English Romantic poets in particular reacted against what they regarded to be an excessive reliance on human reason. Their values and attitudes determined to a great extent the specific directions of American poetry to this day, as well as the direction of American literature in general. Much of what has come to be called the Counter Culture in contemporary America traces its lineage to the Romantics. American music, most certainly Rock n' Roll, reveals this influence, especially in the works of major figures like Bob Dylan and Jim Morrison. The Victorian movement was in some key ways a reaction against Romantics assumptions, and in other ways an extension of it. Most of the great Victorian poets were, in certain essential respects, failures at divesting themselves of the Romantic spirit. Our main focus will be on the central themes and concerns of the Romantics and Victorians. Through representative poems you will become familiar with most of the two periods' major poets: Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, and Keats for the Romantics; Tennyson, Browning, Arnold, and Hopkins for the Victorians. In addition, we will read selected prose, including two relatively short but famous novels, Emily Bronte’s *Wuthering Heights* and Charles Dickens’ *Hard Times*.

APPROACH: This class will combine informal lecture, discussion, and group work. I like to do collaborative work in my classes and will put you into one or more discussion groups soon. I also take what some people call a reader-response approach to the class, or at least something approaching that kind of pedagogy. Basically, that means that I stress your personal connections to the reading and discussion rather than some so-called "Objective" way of treating a literary text. We will talk more about this soon.

COURSE GOALS: Our primary goal this term will be, through the reading, writing, and class activities, to become demonstrably familiar with the intellectual and artistic issues of the Romantic and Victorian periods, to develop some basic broader context of literary history, and to develop your own ability to make sense of literary texts.

READING ASSIGNMENTS: I am providing no specific calendar of reading assignments; instead, I will make assignments in class as we go from day to day. You need to complete this reading prior to class, and with some degree of aesthetic attention. *Wuthering Heights* should be completed by about the 5th week; *Hard Times* by the end of the 9th. Start on them now if at all possible. If you miss a class session, you are responsible for finding out what the next day's reading assignment is. Get to know others in the class who can give you a reliable summary of what went on in class during the day you missed.

MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS: 1) Required of everyone is a class journal (see below), the final entry of which will be a short retrospective review of your experience in the class (300 points); 2) Option (100 points): either a formal essay of about 5-6 typed pages on Bronte and/or Dickens (due somewhere around Week 11, or a small group presentation during the last few weeks of the semester. **You will have to decide which option you want to take by end of the 6th week.** We’ll talk more about each option later.

JOURNAL: See Separate Handout
FINAL GRADE: Pretty standard. 400 points—90% or higher=A, 87-89%=AB, 80-86%=B, etc. I may raise or lower this scale once I have looked at the overall class performance. I will also add or subtract points for those whose attendance and participation merit it.

ATTENDANCE: I expect you to be in class with your personal copy of the texts and well-prepared all of the time. This looks as if it will be a very small class, so your presence or absence (as well as your silence) will be easy enough to keep track of. Anything beyond two absences (unless they are officially University-excused) will cost you half of a grade for each additional miss. You are always responsible for missed work and assignments.

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).