



**EN 4/6533 Milton**  
**Dr. Lara Dodds**  
**Fall 2011, MWF 11:00**

In this course we will read Milton's major poetry and selected prose. We will begin the course with readings of Milton's autobiographical writings and his early poetry (primarily Lycidas, Comus, and the sonnets) in order to establish the context of Milton's notion of a poetic vocation and to examine his self-presentation as a writer. We will spend a good part of the semester on a slow and careful reading of Paradise Lost that engages the theological, political, literary, and philosophical contexts of Milton's epic. Selections from the prose (Areopagitica, "Of Education," the divorce tracts) will supplement our reading of Paradise Lost by presenting the range of Milton's thought on problems of individual choice and agency; marriage and women's roles; style, rhetoric, and the nature of literature. We conclude the semester by reading Paradise Regained and Samson Agonistes: in what ways is each work a culmination of Milton's career as poet and author?

**Text:** *The Complete Poetry and Essential Prose of John Milton*. Ed. William Kerrigan, John Rumrich, and Stephen M. Fallon. Random House: New York, 2007. (Modern Library Edition).

Assignments in this course may include:

- 4 brief (1-2 page) writing and research exercises
- One 3-5 page essay
- Mid-term and final exams
- 10-12 page research essay
- A reading journal and/or occasional quizzes

In addition, graduate students will complete a research journal and prepare a brief presentation on a topic in Milton scholarship. For graduate students the research essay will be 15 pages in length.