This course offers a general introduction to the literature and culture of early modern England, from Thomas More’s *Utopia* to John Milton’s *Paradise Lost*. We will read several plays, different types of prose (fiction, travel narratives, advice books, political works), and many forms of poetry. Among the readings will be the first English play by a woman, Elizabeth Cary’s *The Tragedy of Mariam*.

The class provides important context for other courses in the early modern period, such as Shakespeare, as well as courses on later literature from England, Ireland, and North America. No prior familiarity with the writers or the historical period is required; secondary materials and criticism will help contextualize the readings.

Writing assignments are designed to enhance close reading skills and literary analysis and to refine students’ abilities to assess critical positions and incorporate them into an argument. There will be short one-page responses throughout the semester, three short papers (5-6 pages), and a creative final exam.

Texts:

*The Broadview Anthology of Renaissance and Early Seventeenth-Century Literature 3rd edition* and the Broadview edition of Elizabeth Cary’s play, *The Tragedy of Mariam* which comes with it separately. Other readings will be on the class D2L website.