

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND  
INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

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SECOND SEMESTER EXAMINATION  
MAY 2017

TITLE OF PAPER: **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY OF  
ENGLISH LITERATURE**

COURSE CODE: **IDE-ENG 104**

TIME ALLOWED: 2 HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. ANSWER ANY TWO (2) QUESTIONS.
2. YOUR ANSWERS SHOULD NOT EXCEED FOUR PAGES  
EACH
3. DO NOT REPEAT MATERIAL, OR WRITE ABOUT THE  
SAME LITERARY TEXT MORE THAN ONCE
4. CORRECT USE OF ENGLISH AND LITERARY  
CONVENTIONS WILL BE REWARDED, AND THE REVERSE  
WILL BE PENALISED

This paper should not be opened until permission has been granted by the invigilator.

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QUESTION 1      *The Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer*

Chaucer makes use of subtle, indirect means to criticize the corruption in some sections of medieval English society. Using his works from The Canterbury Tales, discuss this statement. [30]

QUESTION 2      *Edmund Spenser's Amoretti Sonnets*

Read the sonnet and answer the questions that follow:

Happy ye leaves when as those lily hands,  
Which hold my life in their dead doing might,  
Shall handle you and hold in loves soft bands,  
Lyke captives trembling at the victor's sight.  
5 And happy ye lines, on which with starry light,  
Those laming eyes will deigne sometimes to look  
And reade the sorrowes of my dying spright,  
Written with tears in harts close bleeding book.  
And happy rymes bath'd in the sacred brooke  
10 Of Helicon whence she derived is,  
When ye behold that Angels blessed looke,  
My soules long lacked foode, my heavens blis.  
Leaves, lines, and rymes, seek her to please alone,  
Whom if you please, I care for other none.

- a. At which stage of love between the persona and his lady does this sonnet, appear in Spenser's sonnet cycle? (5)
- b. Analyze the sonnet for meaning. (15)
- c. Discuss the theme of the poem in relation to the poem's period. (10)

[30]

QUESTION 3      *Philip Sidney's Astrophil and Stella*

“Astrophil and Stella” means “star and star-gazer,” and this aptly reflects the hopelessness of the relationship between the persona and his love interest. Discuss this with reference to the poem.

[30]

QUESTION 4      *Hamlet by William Shakespeare*

On his departure from home, Polonius tells his son, Laertes, “to thine own self be true.” To what extent are Laertes and Hamlet true to themselves and to others in the play?

[30]

QUESTION 5      *Paradise Lost by John Milton*

Discuss John Milton’s Paradise Lost as an epic depiction of the struggle between good and evil.

[30]