Course Description:
The age of Milton was also the age of Bacon, of Descartes, of Galileo (Galileo is the only contemporary of Milton referred to in *Paradise Lost*); the age of the New Science.

As opposed to older critical views about *Paradise Lost*, the current critical consensus is that Milton engaged deeply and carefully in his biblical epic with the scientific ideas of his time; early modern ideas about empiricism, space, matter, and cosmology. Milton superimposed the biblical and ancient Greek material of his epic poem on the early modern cosmological science of his day—just as I've superimposed this depiction of his epic poem's theological landscape (complete with Heaven, Hell and Paradise) on a modern Hubble image of the Eagle Nebula.

In this course, we'll read *Paradise Lost* with an eye to its relevance to what science was in Milton's time, and by extension, to what science means in our time, with some specific discussion of how the poem still speaks to theories and questions posed on the cutting edge of current cosmological physics; theories about the possibility of a multiverse of different universes, about the expansion or inflation of the universe and about the symmetry of space. In other words, we'll explore how *Paradise Lost* brings together the discourses of science and of imaginative literature, making this epic poem the granddaddy of all science fiction.
Required Text:


Grading and Assignments:

100-93% – A  
92-90% – A- 
89-88% – B+  
87-83% – B  
79-78% – C+  
77-73% – C  
69-68% – D+  
67-63% – D  
59-0% – E  
92-90% – A-  
87-83% – B  
72-70% – C-  
62-60% – D-  
75% of total course grade (15% each)  

reading response papers (5 total) 
reading quizzes and participation 
New Science research project 

Close engagement with and discussion of the text of Paradise Lost will be our primary aim in this course, with particular (but not exclusive) attention to scientific ideas and themes in the poem. I will track and evaluate your engagement with the text using two tools: reading response papers and reading quizzes.

Each week, you will write a paper by Friday in response to a choice of prompts that I will assign on Monday. The papers will be short (1-2 pages), and I will be looking for close analysis of specific passages from the poem, as well as a narrowly defined critical argument about how to read those passages. The quizzes will track broader reading comprehension. They will typically be unannounced and open book, and I will grade them by completion—I will mark successfully completed quizzes with a ✔ and partially completed quizzes with ½. Together, all of your quizzes will be worth 15% of your total course grade; and I will also consider other forms of positive engagement with the course when I determine your grade for quizzes and participation.

In addition to your work on Paradise Lost, you will each research a topic of your choice related to the science of John Milton’s time and write up a brief report (1-2 pages) on the topic, due the last day of class. We will discuss this assignment further in class.

Late Work:

I will give short deadline extensions on the papers and research project if you talk to me about this possibility in advance of the assigned due dates. If you do not arrange an extension with me in advance, I will accept late papers only for three fourths credit.

I will not allow you to make up quizzes and participation assignments, as their purpose is to insure and track your regular attendance and engagement with the course and material. However, emergencies do come up, so I will drop every student’s lowest quiz grade.

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Course Policies:

Plagiarism:
The University of Utah Student Code classifies plagiarism as “academic misconduct.” Plagiarism is defined in Part I.B.2.c of the Code as “the intentional unacknowledged use or incorporation of any other person's work in, or as a basis for, one's own work offered for academic consideration or credit or for public presentation. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, representing as one’s own, without attribution, any other individual’s words, phrasing, ideas, sequence of ideas, information or any other mode or content of expression.” Part V.B of the Code stipulates that students guilty of plagiarism “may be subject to academic sanctions including but not limited to a grade reduction, failing grade, probation, suspension or dismissal from the program or the University, or revocation of the student’s degree or certificate. Sanctions may also include community service, a written reprimand, and/or a written statement of misconduct that can be put into an appropriate record maintained for purposes of the profession or discipline for which the student is preparing.”
(www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html)
If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, talk to me. Simply put, don’t cheat. It’s not worth it.

ADA Notice:
The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations.

Content Accommodation Policy
“It is the student's obligation to determine, before the last day to drop courses without penalty, when course requirements conflict with the student's sincerely-held core beliefs. If there is such a conflict, the student should consider dropping the class.” (http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-100.html)
For more information, please consult the University of Utah Regulations web site.
Course Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction
F 6/21   Introduction: medieval and modern space in early modern poetry

Week 2: “Space may produce new worlds”
M 6/24   “The Universe and the Bucket,” by physicist Brian Greene (Canvas)
W 6/26   *Paradise Lost* Book I
F 6/28   *Paradise Lost* Books I, II
          PAPER #1 DUE

Week 3: Eternity as the Outside of Infinity
M 7/1    *Paradise Lost* Book II
W 7/3    *Paradise Lost* Book III
F 7/5    *Paradise Lost* Book IV
          PAPER #2 DUE

Week 4: Creation, Matter, Meter
M 7/8    *Paradise Lost* Book V
W 7/10   *Paradise Lost* Book VI
F 7/12   *Paradise Lost* Book VII
          PAPER #3 DUE

Week 5: Copernican and Anthropic Reasoning
M 7/15   *Paradise Lost* Book VIII
W 7/17   *Paradise Lost* Books VIII, IX
F 7/19   *Paradise Lost* Book IX
          PAPER #4 DUE

Week 6: Entropy and Symmetry, Fall and Redemption
M 7/22   *Paradise Lost* Book X
W 7/24   PIONEER DAY – NO CLASS
F 7/26   *Paradise Lost* Books XI, XII
          PAPER #5 DUE

Week 7: Conclusion
M 7/29   *Paradise Lost* Book XII
W 7/31   *Areopagitica*
          RESEARCH PROJECT DUE