

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA, DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
ENGLISH 2080. MEDIEVAL LITERATURE
FALL TERM 2006 THROUGH WINTER TERM 2007 (6 CREDIT HOURS)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Course Number: **ENGL 2080** Section: **A01** Time: **MWF 1030-1120** Room: **235 UC/202 SJ**
Instructors: **Dr D. Watt** Telephone: **474-8945** Email: **David_Watt@UManitoba.ca**
Office: **629 FA Building** Office Hours: **M 1430-1530; W 1130-1300 or by app.**
 Dr. P. Portnoy Telephone: **474-6291** Email: **portnoyp@ms.umanitoba.ca**
Office: **648 FA Building** Office Hours: **MWF 1330-1430 or by appointment**

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND CONTENT

Covering a period of time that is as long as it is distant to our own, this course challenges us in two related ways. On the one hand, it asks us to engage with texts and authors originating in a context that may seem completely foreign. On the other hand, it asks us to acknowledge the variety of voices and languages that proliferated in England from the Saxon migration until the advent of printing. We will respond to these challenges by examining a diverse selection of Medieval texts and by considering numerous critical approaches that communities of scholars have used to interpret them. The aim of this course is to encourage students to experience the complexity of medieval culture in its homogeneity and heterogeneity, its prejudice and tolerance, its religious fervor and apparent humanism—in other words, in its similarity and difference to our own.

REQUIRED TEXTS

The Broadview Anthology of British Literature, Vol. 1. The Medieval Period. (Peterborough: Broadview, 2006)

TEXTS FOR RECOMMENDED READING

Recommended texts are available at the reserve desk at the Elizabeth Dafoe Library. Some copies are available at the bookstore (except *The Cambridge History*, which is very expensive).
Blair, John. *The Anglo-Saxon Age: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*. Trans. Richard H. Green (London: Prentice Hall, 1962).
Dalrymple, Roger, ed. *Middle English Literature: A Guide to Criticism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004).
Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy I. Hell*. Trans. Dorothy Sayers. (London: Penguin, repr. 2005).
Eco, Umberto, *The Name of the Rose* (New York: Harcourt, 2001).
Gillingham, John and Ralph A. Griffiths, *Medieval Britain: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: OUP, 2000).
Shepherd, Stephen H. A., ed. Sir Thomas Malory, *Le Morte Darthur* (New York: Norton, 2004).
Tolkien, J. R. R., *The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays*. Ed. Christopher Tolkien (London: HarperCollins, 1997)
Wallace, David. *The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999).

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

1. **Attendance:** Please make yourself familiar with the University's policy on attendance in the General Calendar (p. 26, Section 6.1). In accordance with the University and Department of English policy, we reserve the right to debar a student from the final examination if s/he has more than three (3) unexcused absences in a single term.
2. **Late Assignments:** We hope not to deduct marks for late papers. We expect you to organize your time in order to submit papers **in class** on or before their due date; alternatively, you may set a new date by writing to us—and having us confirm it with you **in writing**—up to one week before the assignment's original due date. Papers handed up to a week late will be assessed a half-grade penalty (e. g. B + becomes B); papers handed in from one to two weeks late will be assessed a further half-grade penalty (e. g. B + becomes C +) and will receive no comments. No paper may be submitted more than two weeks late or following the final examination. Penalties may be adjusted or waived in the case of emergencies, but you must provide appropriate documentation in such cases (e. g., from a doctor).

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES (CONTINUED)

3. **Plagiarism:** Please make yourself familiar with the University's policy on plagiarism and cheating in the General Calendar (pp. 26-27, Section 7). The common penalty in Arts for plagiarism in a written assignment, test, or examination is F on the paper and F for the course. For the most serious acts of plagiarism, such as the purchase of an essay or cheating on a test or examination, the penalty can also include suspension for a period of up to five years from registration in courses taught in a particular department in Arts or from all courses taught in this Faculty. The Faculty also reserves the right to submit student work that is suspected of being plagiarized to Internet sites designed to detect plagiarism.

4. **Grades:** Please see the description of Letter Grades in the General Calendar (p. 23, Section 3.1)

METHOD OF EVALUATION

Type of Work	Value	Date Due
A. Contribution to Intellectual Community	20 %	
1. Critical Responses (6)	12% (6 X 2%)	Consult Reading Schedule
These six (6) short (2-3 pp.) pieces of writing will provide you with a chance to ponder, digest, and respond to the material we are considering in class. They should provide you with a rich resource for writing papers and preparing for examinations. We will provide comments on them, but will not grade them for style or content. You will receive full credit (2 % of your final grade) for each piece provided that it is handed in on time and responds reasonably to the material at hand. The late policy for papers does not apply to critical responses: late submissions may receive comments if time allows, but they will receive no credit.		
2. Attendance and Participation	8 %	Ongoing
Active participation is vital to the success of our class. We expect you to be prepared by having read and thought about the texts, especially when questions have been set for you. This aspect of your mark not only considers how you contribute to discussions, but also your ability to listen actively. We encourage you to learn from your classmates and to act in a way that enables others to learn.		
B. Graded Writing Assignments	30 %	
1. Paper 1 (1250 words)	10 %	6 December (Draft) / 13 December (Final) 2006
2. Paper 2 (2500 words)	20 %	23 March 2007
Topics and guidelines for Papers 1 and 2 will be available up to one month prior to the due date.		
C. Examinations	50 %	
1. Mid-Term Examination	10 %	23 October 2006
2. Final Examination (3 Hours)	40 %	April Examination Period
Total	100%	

SCHEDULE OF REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED READING

Required reading is indicated on the reading schedule beside the day it is assigned. We expect that you will read and reflect upon all primary texts before coming to class. Recommended reading is listed below the primary reading. We do not expect you to read all of the recommended material: however, we do expect you will read some of it to complete certain assignments and as a starting point for other research. All page references are to the Broadview Anthology unless otherwise noted.

SCHEDULE OF REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED READING

FALL TERM

PART 1. KING ARTHUR AND THE MATTER OF BRITAIN

Week 1 INTRODUCTION

8 September *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* and *King Arthur*

Week 2 ANGLO-NORMAN CULTURE

11 September Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain* (135-142, end of column a)
"The Medieval Period" (xxviii-xlvi); *Medieval Britain*, Chapters 1-2

13 September Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain* (142-157)

15 September Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain* (135-157)

Seminar. Critical Response 1: Paul Strohm, "Middle English Narrative Genres"
(Dalrymple, ed. 59-66) and *OED* or *MED*.

Week 3

18 September Marie de France, *Lais* (158)
Medieval Britain, Chapters 3-4

20 September Marie de France, *Lais* (158)

22 September Marie de France, *Lais* (158)

Week 4

25 September Marie de France, *Lais* (158)

Seminar. Susan Crane, "Anglo-Norman Cultures in England, 1066-1460" (Wallace, ed. 35-60).

FOURTEENTH-CENTURY CULTURE

27 September The Remains of Arthur from 1200-1400: Composition and Decomposition
Medieval Britain, Chapters 5-6; Rosalind Field, "Romance in England, 1066-1400"
(Wallace, ed. 152-176)

29 September *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Part 1, 235)

Seminar. In Context (301-304)

Week 5

2 October *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Part 2, 249)

4 October *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Part 3-4, 265)

6 October *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (235)

Seminar. Critical Response 2: David Aers, "Community, Virtue, and Individual Identity
in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Dalrymple, ed. 212-220)

Week 6 FIFTEENTH-CENTURY CULTURE

9 October Thanksgiving Day

11 October Caxton's Preface (720)

Medieval Britain, Chapters 7-8; D. S. Brewer, "The hoole book" (Dalrymple, ed. 34-42).

13 October Sir Thomas Malory, from *Morte Darthur*, from *Merlin* (679)

Seminar. Terence McCarthy, "On Malory's Style" (Shepherd, ed. 856-864)

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Week 7

- 16 October Sir Thomas Malory, *Slander and Strife* (682)
Terence McCarthy, "On Malory's Style" (Shepherd, ed. 856-864)
18 October The Vengeance of Sir Gawain (691) and The Siege of Benwick (702)
P. J. C. Field, "The Rhetoric of Dialogue" (Shepherd, ed. 830-835)
20 October The Day of Destiny (706) and The Dolorous Death and Departing...(714)
Seminar. Felicity Riddy, "Divisions" (Shepherd, ed. 882-894)

Week 8

23 October Mid-Term Examination (In-class)

PART 2. LANGUAGE, LITERACY, AND POWER

THE MANUSCRIPT BOOK

- 25 October *The Name of the Rose*; Psalter and Antiphonaries
27 October *The Name of the Rose*; Psalter and Antiphonaries
Seminar. Religious and Spiritual Life

Week 9

- 30 October Selections from Middle English Lyrics (188) and BL, MS Harley 978
1 November Selections from Middle English Lyrics (188) and BL, MS Harley 978
3 November Selections from Middle English Lyrics (188) and BL, MS Harley 978
Seminar. Critical Response 3 (Option a): E. Talbot Donaldson, "Patristic exegesis in the Criticism of Medieval Literature: The Opposition" (Dalrymple, ed. 109-114) or Thorlac Turville-Petre, "Three Languages" (Dalrymple, ed. 99-105)

Week 10

- 6 November *Sir Orfeo* (213) and the Auchinleck Manuscript
8 November *Sir Orfeo* (213) and the Auchinleck Manuscript
10 November Remembrance Day

Week 11

THE POWER OF LANGUAGE

- 13 November Chaucer, *The Franklin's Prologue and Tale* (435)
15 November Chaucer, *The Franklin's Prologue and Tale* (435) / *The Wife of Bath's Tale* (408)
17 November Chaucer, *The Wife of Bath's Prologue* (394)
Seminar. Critical Response 3 (Option b): Love and Marriage

Week 12

- 20 November Chaucer, *The Wife of Bath's Prologue* (394)
22 November Margery Kempe, *The Book of Margery Kempe* (523)
24 November Margery Kempe, *The Book of Margery Kempe* (523)

Week 13

- 27 November Margery Kempe, *The Book of Margery Kempe* (523)
29 November Margery Kempe, *The Book of Margery Kempe* (523)
Seminar. Critical Response 3 (Option c): Sheila Delany, "Sexual Economics, Chaucer's Wife of Bath, and *The Book of Margery Kempe*." (Dalrymple, ed. 166-175)
1 December Language, Literacy, and Power

Week 14

REVIEW

- 4 December** Language, Literacy, and Power
6 December Paper 1 (Draft) Due. Writing Workshop. Revised paper due 13 December.

WINTER TERM

PART 1. OLD ENGLISH LITERATURE

Week 1

OLD ENGLISH LYRIC

3 January

Bede (1) / Cædmon's Hymn (11)

5 January

The Wanderer (17)

Seminar. Old English language, diction and imagery

Week 2

8 January

The Wanderer (17)

10 January

The Dream of the Rood (23)

12 January

The Dream of the Rood

Week 3

OLD ENGLISH EPIC

15 January

Exodus (101, excerpts)

17 January

Beowulf (36)

19 January

Beowulf (36)

Seminar. The "digressions" of *Beowulf*

Week 4

22 January

Beowulf (36)

24 January

Beowulf (36)

26 January

Beowulf (36)

Seminar. Critical Response 4: J.R.R. Tolkien, "*Beowulf*: The Monsters and the Critics"

Week 5

ANGLO-SAXON CULTURE

29 January

Beowulf and Sutton Hoo

31 January

Anglo-Saxon Art & Archaeology

2 February

Anglo-Saxon Art & Archaeology

Week 6

5 February

History of English

7 February

History of English

9 February

History of English

Seminar. Bede, The Faith of the East Anglians (6); The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (110)

12-16 February

Mid-Term Break (No Classes)

PART 2: CHAUCER'S *CANTERBURY TALES*

Week 7

MEDIEVAL CHRISTIAN CULTURE

19 February

Carmina Burana, selections

21 February

Dante, *Inferno*, selections

23 February

Dante, *Inferno*, selections; Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy*, selections

Seminar. Critical Response 5: Sacred & secular tensions in medieval literature & culture

Week 8

26 February

General Prologue: The "Chain of Being"

28 February

General Prologue: The Knight, The Prioress, The Monk, The Friar

2 March

General Prologue: The Miller, the Wife of Bath, The Summoner, The Pardoner

Seminar: Chaucerian irony

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Week 9

5 March

Group work: The Tales: The Knight; The Miller; The Pardoner; The Nun's Priest

7 March

The Knight's Tale

9 March

The Knight's Tale

Seminar. Critical Response 6 (grp 1): The Hundred Years' War (202); Boethius; sources/ critical views of *The Knight's Tale*

Week 10

12 March

The Miller's Prologue and Tale

14 March

The Miller's Prologue and Tale

16 March

The Pardoner's Prologue and Tale

Seminar. Critical Response 6 (grp 2): In Context (588); sources/ critical views of *The Miller's Prologue and Tale*

Week 11

19 March

The Pardoner's Prologue and Tale

21 March

The Nun's Priest's Prologue and Tale

23 March

Paper 2 Due (2500 words) *The Nun's Priest's Prologue and Tale*

Seminar. Critical Response 6 (grp 3): sources/ critical views of *The Pardoner's Prologue and Tale*; **Critical Response 6 (grp 4 written portion due March 26):** The Uprising of 1381 (207), Boethius; sources/ critical views of *The Nun's Priest's Prologue and Tale*

Week 12

26 March

Chaucer's *Retraction*

Seminar. Critical Response 6 (grp 5): critical views of the *Retraction*

PART 3: MEDIEVAL DRAMA: THE PAST IN PERFORMANCE

28 March

Introduction to medieval Drama; Noah's Flood (588)

30 March

Noah's Flood (588); critique

Week 13

2 April

Second Shepherd's Play (599); In Context (614)

4 April

Second Shepherd's Play (599); performance & critique

6 April

Good Friday (No Classes)

Week 14

9 April

Review

11 April

Review

Final Examination Period

WHAT DOES AN ESSAY'S GRADE MEAN?

Your essay's grade is subjective: it indicates how well your essay persuades a reader of its argument. It is not arbitrary: it is determined by the way the essay employs matters of **content**, **style**, and **convention** to meet the assignment's requirements. Because these categories overlap, I cannot give you a formula for how much each of them is worth. Unfortunately, problems with style and convention often obscure good ideas. Fortunately, close attention to one area often leads to improvement in others.

Each essay's grade should inform you of how well you have met not only my expectations, but also those of the Department, Faculty, and University. I hope that you will use it to understand your achievement and seek areas for improvement. If you are confused or frustrated about the essay's mark, please see me for clarification, bringing the essay with you.

Letter Grade	Written description
A + (Exceptional) A (Excellent)	This essay's style and content work together to respond to the assignment by presenting a persuasive argument. Its content demonstrates literary insight while engaging the reader through its use of a rhetorically effective or original approach to its topic. It is free of major errors in style (grammar and diction) and convention (mechanics, presentation, and format). It may be improved by integrating more effectively matters of style and content or by handling its evidence slightly differently.
B + (Very Good) B (Good)	This essay's argument responds to the assignment soundly and clearly. Its style and content convey its ideas directly, and it makes effective use of evidence to support its main points. This paper can be improved in one or two of the following in one of three ways: (1) it needs to stress how its content demonstrates a significant literary insight or originality; (2) it needs to use its style (grammar and diction) more effectively to present its argument; (3) it needs to address one or more errors in convention (mechanics, presentation and format).
C+ (Satisfactory) C (Adequate)	This essay's style and content are both generally competent. It presents a thesis that responds to the assignment reasonably, and it uses appropriate evidence to support its main points. This paper could be improved in one or more of the following ways: (1) it needs to present its content (thesis, organization, paragraphs) more clearly or to focus its ideas more effectively; (2) its style (grammar and diction) needs to be refined so that it meets expectations for University-level writing; (3) it needs to address major errors in convention (mechanics, presentation, and format).
C-* (Marginally Adequate) D (Marginal Pass)	This essay likely contains a number of important ideas and it may at times present its points clearly. However, the essay makes it difficult for its reader to determine what these ideas are or the connection between them. It requires improvements in two or more of the following areas: (1) its content (thesis, organization, paragraphs) needs to be presented in a more consistently competent manner or it may need to ensure that its thesis responds to the assignment; (2) its style (grammar and diction) needs to be refined so that it meets expectations for University-level writing; (3) it needs to address major errors in convention (mechanics, presentation, and format).
F (Failure)	This essay is inadequate in its present form. It requires improvements in all of the following areas: (1) its content (thesis, organization, paragraphs) needs to be presented in a more competent manner or in a way that responds to the assignment; (2) its style (grammar and diction) needs to be refined so that it meets expectations for University-level writing; (3) it needs to address major errors in its use of convention (mechanics, presentation, and format).

*C- is not available as a final grade.

RESEARCH TOOLS FOR STUDENTS OF MEDIEVAL LITERATURE

BIBLIOGRAPHIES AND DATABASES:

I suggest that you start with the bibliographies in the recommended and required reading for this class. You may also wish to consult the International Medieval Bibliography (available on CD-ROM), the MLA International Bibliography (available on-line), or the *Manual of the Writings in Middle English* (gen. ed. J. E. Wells).

REFERENCE MATERIALS (DICTIONARIES AND ENCYCLOPAEDIAS):

Dictionary of National Biography (DNB); Middle English Compendium; **Middle English Dictionary**; New Catholic Encyclopædia; **Oxford English Dictionary (OED online through the U of M website)**.

JOURNALS:

Arthurian Literature; *Chaucer Review*; *English Historical Review*; *English Language Notes*; *English Studies*; *Huntington Library Quarterly*; *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*; *Journal of English Literary History*; *Leeds Studies in English*; **Medium Ævum**; *Modern Philology*; *Neophilologus*; **New Medieval Literatures (published annually)**; *Notes and Queries*; *PMLA (Publications of the Modern Languages Association)*; *Philological Quarterly*; *Review of English Studies*; ***Speculum***; ***Studies in the Age of Chaucer (published annually)***; ***Traditio***; ***Viator***. (Bold script indicates specifically medieval content).

BOOK SERIES:

Cambridge Companions to Literature; Cambridge Histories (of Medieval English Literature, the Book in Britain, etc.); Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature; Chaucer Studies.

EDITIONS AND FACSIMILES:

Editions often contain useful introductory information. Begin by consulting those listed on our syllabus. You may also look up digital resources for manuscripts in the library catalogue or on-line through various library websites, including Oxford's Bodleian Library (www.ox.ac.uk/libraries), the British Library (www.bl.uk), and the National Library of Scotland (www.nls.uk). The **Early English Text Society** has produced a series of editions and facsimiles since the late nineteenth century. These are usually (though not always) the most authoritative critical editions of the texts.

STYLE GUIDES:

If you are a student of literature primarily, I suggest that you acquire a style guide or some other book that contains detailed directions regarding style (like the *Little Brown Handbook* or *Quick Access*). Become familiar with one style and stick to it. I suggest following the MLA style, either parenthetical or footnote (but not both). The **MLA handbook (6th edn)** provides detailed information from the earliest stages of writing through to citations and revisions. Other style guides for writing in the humanities, such as Chicago or MHRA are acceptable, but consistent application is necessary.

NB: This handout is not exhaustive.