

## Department of English &amp; Writing Studies

**Disenchanted Chaucer: Authority and Literature in Medieval England**  
**English 3315E (001)**  
Fall/Winter 2017-18

**Instructor:** Richard Moll  
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**Course Location:** AHB 2R21

**Course Date/Time:** Tuesday 12:30-2:30 pm,  
Thursday 12:30-1:30 pm

Office hours: Wed. 1:00-3:30 pm (and by appointment. I'm around a lot.)

**Antirequisite(s):** English 3116E.

**Prerequisite(s):** At least 60% in 1.0 of English 1020E or 1022E or 1024E or 1035E or 1036E or 1042E or 1042E or both of English 1027F/G and 1028F/G, or permission of the Department.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

**Course Objectives:**

Upon successful completion of the course students will be able to:

- Read and pronounce Middle English with sufficient competency that they can examine the content, themes, rhetoric and prosody of Middle English literature;
- Describe and explain the literary and aesthetic expectations of a variety of medieval genres, including (but not limited to) romance, fabliaux, hagiography, and dream vision;
- Construct and present a complex argument about one or more Middle English texts which demonstrates mastery of the points above, and is firmly placed within existing theoretical and critical debates about the literature.

Course Materials**Texts:**

Chaucer, Geoffrey. *The Canterbury Tales: Fifteen Tales and the General Prologue*. Ed. V.A. Kolve and Glending Olson. New York: Norton, 2005.  
(CT)

Chaucer, Geoffrey. *Dream Visions and Other Poems*. Ed. Kathryn L. Lynch. New York: Norton, 2007.  
(DV)

*Chaucer: Sources and Backgrounds*. Ed. Robert P. Miller. New York: Oxford UP, 1977.  
(CS&B)

*Early English Drama: An Anthology*. Ed. John C. Coldewey. New York: Garland, 1993.  
(EED)

*Middle English Verse Romances*. Ed. Donald B. Sands. Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 1986.  
(MEVR) [This may not be available for a while, but you can get used copies from [abe.com](http://abe.com).]

\*\*\*\*Middle English texts can vary widely between different editions, so please obtain *these editions*\*\*\*\*

Recommended: Hacker, Diana. *A Canadian Writer's Reference*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Boston/New York: Bedford, 2004. You probably have a writing handbook from first year. Any will do, but you will find it useful as you read about/discuss Middle English grammar.

#### Methods of Evaluation

Paper 1 (9-10 pages)	17%
Paper 2 (16-18 pages)	27%
Recitation & participation	10%
Translation tests	11% (best 11 of 13)
Final exam	35%

STUDENTS MUST PASS BOTH TERM WORK AND THE FINAL EXAMINATION (IN COURSES WITH FINAL EXAMINATIONS) IN ORDER TO PASS THE COURSE. STUDENTS WHO FAIL THE FINAL EXAMINATION (REGARDLESS OF THEIR TERM MARK) AUTOMATICALLY FAIL THE COURSE.

#### **Papers:**

Essays must be presented in MLA style. Essays are due by the end of class on the date assigned. Late essays will lose 3% per day (including weekends). Extensions will only be granted in the case of serious, documented illness or emergency and must be accompanied by documentation processed through Academic Counseling. In other words, I do not (indeed, University policy states that I cannot) grant extensions. If Academic Counseling determines that you should have an extension, I will comply. **Come see me BEFORE you are frantic in the week before a paper is due.**

#### **Recitation:**

Memorize, recite and be prepared to translate the first 18 lines of Chaucer's General Prologue. Every student will make an individual appointment with me to do this before Oct. 19<sup>th</sup>. Unexpected emergencies can be accommodated on Oct. 20<sup>th</sup>, but no further recitations will be permitted after Oct. 20<sup>th</sup>. This assignment helps you get used to the strangeness of Middle English and gives me a chance to meet everyone. Use the pronunciation guides in your various texts for guidance. Online recordings are available on the Chaucer metapage: [http://academics.vmi.edu/english/audio/audio\\_index.html](http://academics.vmi.edu/english/audio/audio_index.html) (link in WebCT). We will talk about pronunciation in class, but come and see me in advance if you want some help.

#### **Class participation:**

Woody Allen might have said that "90% of life is just showing up", but he never tried to learn Middle English. Being in class is not very useful if we are discussing texts that you haven't read and with which you can not engage. Students will periodically be responsible for directing small-group discussion and this will weigh heavily as "Class Participation."

**Translation Tests:**

You must be able to read Middle English to pass the course, and you must read it well to do well in the course. Translation tests will therefore be a regular part of the course.

The two lowest test scores will be discarded. An excuse for a missed test must meet the same standards as a late paper (i.e. documentation from your dean's office for *each* missed test).

Tests will be done at random throughout the year.

They will be held at any time within the class time (beginning, middle or end of class).

They will be short (6-8 lines or 15 minutes).

They will be drawn from the readings assigned for that day.

**IF YOU MISS FIVE TESTS (UNEXCUSED) YOU WILL  
NOT BE ALLOWED TO WRITE THE EXAM.**

**Exams:**

Exams are scheduled by the University. **DO NOT MAKE TRAVEL PLANS UNTIL YOU KNOW YOUR EXAM SCHEDULE.**

**Information for students:**

Departmental and university policies related to course work, grades, plagiarism, appeals, etc. are available on the English Department website. Please see:

<http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/Student%20Information.html>

**Timetable:**

Read all assigned texts before class and *bring the book(s) with you*. We WILL be reading and talking about specific passages from the texts. Secondary sources are available from online databases through the Library. Heed the page or line numbers assigned.

Thurs. Sept. 7	First day of class: Intros and wotnots Read: "The Complaint of Chaucer to His Purse" (given out in class)
Tues. Sept. 12	Read: Chaucer, General Prologue (CT ll. 1-100, 118-162) Nolan, "A Poet Ther Was" (CT, 511-33)
Thurs. Sept. 14	Read: "The Three Estates," CS&B (153-7) Gower, <i>Vox clamantis</i> , CS&B (192-206, 215-228, 231-3) Geoffroi de Charny, CS&B (166-8, 207-9) Hugh of St. Victor, CS&B (210-214)
Tues. Sept. 19	Read: Chaucer, General Prologue (ll. 285-308, 45-476, 542-566, 715-859)
Thurs. Sept. 21	Read: Boccaccio, <i>Decameron</i> (CT, 312-26) Augustine, "Human Life as a Pilgrimage" (CT, 326-7) Thorpe, "On Pilgrimage" (CT, 327-32) Hoffman, "Chaucer's Prologue to Pilgrimage" (CT, 492-502)

**Upon whose authority do we act?**

- Tues. Sept. 26      Read: Chaucer, Knight's Tale (ll. 859-1880)  
Ovid, *Amores*, CS&B (269-288)  
Andreas Capellanus, *The Treatise on Love*, CS&B (291-9)
- Thurs. Sept. 28      Read: Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, CS&B (289-90)
- Tues. Oct. 3          Read: Chaucer, Knight's Tale (ll. 1881-3108, ie. a LOT)
- Thurs. Oct. 5          Read: Boccaccio, *Teseide*, CS&B (322-43)  
Muscatine, Charles. "Form, Texture, and Meaning in Chaucer's Knight's Tale." *PMLA* 65 (1950): 911-29.  
Aers, David. "Imagination, Order and Ideology: The Knight's Tale." From: *Chaucer, Langland, and the creative imagination* (London: Routledge, 1980). Available at: <http://sites.fas.harvard.edu/~chaucer/bibliog/kt-aers.htm>
- Tues. Oct. 10          Fall Reading Week  
Thurs. Oct. 12          Fall Reading Week
- Tues. Oct. 17          Read: Chaucer, Miller's Tale (ll. 3110-3850)
- Thurs. Oct. 19          Finish up with the Miller's Tale.  
**Last day for recitations (Oct. 19)**

**Upon what authority does truth reside?**

- Tues. Oct. 24          Read: Chaucer, Truth (*DV*, 219-20)  
Chaucer, Chaucer's Words to Adam, His Own Scribe (*DV*, 216-17)
- Thurs. Oct. 26          Read: Chaucer, *House of Fame* (Intro, & Book 1, *DV*, 39-55)
- Tues. Oct. 31          Read: Chaucer, *House of Fame* (Finish, *DV*, 55-92)  
Ruffolo, Lara. "Literary Authority and the Lists of Chaucer's 'House of Fame': Destruction and Definition through Proloferation." *The Chaucer Review* 27 (1993): 325-41.
- Thurs. Nov. 2          Read: Ruth Evans, "Chaucer in Cyberspace" (*DV*, 229-31).
- Tues.. Nov. 7          Read: "The Anti-Feminist Tradition," CS&B (397-402)  
Theophrastus, *The Golden Book*, CS&B (411-414)  
Saint Jerome, *Epistle against Jovinian*, CS&B (415-436)  
Walter Map, *Courtiers' Trifles*, CS&B (437-46)  
After you have read the above material, then read:  
Chaucer, Wife of Bath's Prologue (*CT* ll. 1-856, pp. 102-121)  
Note where the Wife has used the anti-feminist tradition.  
Jean de Meun, *Romance of the Rose*, CS&B (452-74)
- Thurs.. Nov. 9          Read: As above. We'll keep talking about the prologue.  
Parker, David. "Can We Trust the Wife of bath?" *The Chaucer Review* 4.2 (1970): 90-98.

Tues. Nov. 14 Read: Chaucer, The Wife of Bath's Tale (*CT*, ll. 856-1264)

Thurs. Nov. 16 Read: Petrarch, "The Story of Griselda," *CS&B* (136-152)  
Chaucer, Clerk's Tale (*CT*, ll. 1-196)

Tues. Nov. 21 Read: Chaucer, Clerk's Tale (*CT*, ll. 197-1212g)

**By what authority is the household ruled?**

Thurs. Nov. 23 Read: The last two weeks (Wife of Bath and Clerk)  
Linda Georgianna, "The Clerk's Tale and the Grammar of Assent,"  
*Speculum* 70 (1995): 793-821.

Tues. Nov. 28 Read: Gottfried, Barbara. "Conflict and Relationship, Sovereignty and  
Survival: Parables of Power in the *Wife of Bath's*  
*Prologue*." *The Chaucer Review* 19 (1985): 202-24.  
George Lyman Kitteredge, "The Marriage Group" (*CT*, pp. 539-46)

Thurs. Nov. 30 Read: Gower, *Tale of Florent* (*CT*, pp. 386-97)  
**Paper 1 due.**

Tues. Dec. 5 Read: "Noah" (*EED*, 306-323)

Thurs. Dec. 7 Finish up with Noah

**Exam Period: We won't have a mid-year exam.**

**Upon what authority does the Church rest?**

Tues. Jan. 9 Read: Pardoner's Prologue (ll. 314-462, pp. 233-236)  
"A Pardoner's License," *CS&B* (229-30)  
Jean de Meun, *Romance of the Rose*, *CS&B* (251-4)

Thurs. Jan. 11 Read: Pardoner's Tale (ll. 463-969)

Tues. Jan. 16 Read: "Introduction" (*EED*, 1-8)  
*Everyman* (*EED*, 43-67)  
Lawrence V. Ryan, "Doctrine and Dramatic Structure in  
*Everyman*," *Speculum* 32 (1957): 722-35. (In JStor)

Thurs. Jan. 18 Finish *Everyman*

Tues. Jan. 23 Read: Prioress's Prologue & tale (ll. 435-690)  
Listen: The Alma Redemptoris, which is in WebCT

Thurs. Jan. 25 Finish Prioress  
Read: Besserman, Lawrence, "Ideology, Antisemitism, and Chaucer's  
*Prioress's Tale*." *The Chaucer Review* 36.1 (2001): 48-72.

- Tues. Jan. 30      Read: *St. Erkenwald* (*I'll get this to you at the beginning of term*)  
This is more difficult than anything you will have read thus far.
- Thurs. Feb. 1      Read: Sisk, Jennifer L. "The Uneasy Orthodoxy of *St. Erkenwald*." *ELH*  
74.1 (2007): 89-115.
- Tues. Feb. 6      Read: *Three Dead Kings*. Available online at:  
<http://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/text/fein-audelay-poems-and-carols-meditative-close#3dk>  
This is more difficult than *Erkenwald*. Give yourself time.
- Thurs. Feb. 8      Read: *Patience*. We'll use the edition in preparation at the Calgary  
"Cotton Nero A.x. Project," available at:  
<http://people.ucalgary.ca/~scriptor/cotton/projectnew.html>
- Tues. Feb. 13      Read: The Book of Jonah (any Bible will do)  
Davis, Adam Brooke. "What the Poet of *Patience* Really Did to  
the Book of Jonah." *Viator* 22 (1991): 267-78.
- Thurs. Feb. 15      We'll spend some time looking at the manuscript of this text.  
Explore the "Cotton Nero A.x. Project" (the manuscript also  
has *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*).
- Tues. Feb. 20      Reading Week  
Thurs. Feb. 22      Reading Week
- Tues. Feb. 27      Read: "The Second Shepherd's Play" (*EED*, 343-363)  
Kathleen Irace, "Mak's Sothren Tothe: A Philological and  
Critical Study of the Dialect Joke in the *Second Shepherd's Play*,"  
*Comitatus: A Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 21  
(1990): 38-51. (<http://escholarship.org/uc/item/0tb597k2>)
- Thurs. Mar. 1      Finish up Ecclesiastical Authority

**By what authority does the crown rule?**

- Tues. Mar. 6      Read: *Havelok the Dane* (*MEVR*, 56-129, ll. 1-985)
- Thurs. Mar. 8      Read: *Havelok the Dane* (continued)
- Tues. Mar. 13      Read: *Havelok the Dane* (*MEVR*, ll. 986-3001)  
Staines, David. "Havelok the Dane: A Thirteenth-Century  
Handbook for Princes." *Speculum* 51 (1976): 602-23.
- Thurs. Mar. 15      Read: Faletra, Michael. "The Ends of Romance: Dreaming the Nation in  
the Middle English *Havelok*." *Exemplaria* 17.2 (2005): 347-80.
- Tues. Mar. 20      Read: *Athelston* (*MEVR*, 130-154)
- Thurs. Mar. 22      Read: Treharne, Elaine M. "Romancing the Past in the Middle English  
*Athelston*." *Review of English Studies* 50 (1999): 1-21.

Tues. Mar. 27            Read: Chaucer, "Gentillesse" (*DV*, pp. 220-21)  
                                  *The Tournament of Tottenham* (*MEVR*, pp. 313-22)  
**Paper 2 due.**

Thurs. Mar. 29            Finish up with secular authority.

**Kind of related to authority, but mostly because it's my favourite text:**

Tues. April 3            Read: Chaucer, Nun's Priest's Prologue & Tale (*CT*, ll. 2766-3460,  
                                  pp. 269-85)  
                                  Macrobius, *CS&B* (44-52)  
                                  Geoffrey of Vinsauf, *CS&B* (66-8, and handout)

Thurs. April 5            Read: Chaucer's Retraction (ll. 956-1092, pp. 306-307)

Tues. April 10            Catch up, review, what-have-yous.

**Exams: We WILL have a final exam. Don't book flights.**

Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at [http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf).

**Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):**

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf)

Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

**Plagiarism:**

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

**Plagiarism Checking:**

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western:  
<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.