

Department of English & Writing Studies

[DRAFT SYLLABUS: THIS MIGHT CHANGE, BUT NOT IN ANY MAJOR WAY]

English 3316E (001)
Love in the Middle Ages
Fall/Winter 2025-26

Instructor: Richard Moll
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x85803

Prerequisites: At least 60% in 1.0 of English 1020-1999 or 1.0 of Medieval Studies 1000-1999 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 Description

Love may seem like a universal emotion, but as Chaucer notes:

Ek for to wynnyn love in sondry ages,
In sondry londes, sondry ben usages.

If people express their love differently in different ages and lands, does it follow that they also feel love differently? This course will explore the different expressions and experiences of love in the medieval period. We will focus on the literature of late-medieval England, but we will place the English within a broader European context. We will also look at a variety of manifestations of love: the familial, divine and platonic in addition to the more obvious romantic and erotic. While exploring this most fundamental of emotional states, we will learn to read and enjoy Middle English literature. We will begin with Chaucer's short lyric poems which are relatively easy, and work our way to more challenging genres and dialects of the language.

Objectives:

By the end of the course, successful 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.
- read the full departmental outcomes for a 3000-lvl course here:
https://www.uwo.ca/english/english_studies/courses/english_learning_outcomes.html#threethousand

Course Materials

Capellanus, Andreas. *The Art of Courtly Love*. Tr. John Jay Parry. New York: Columbia University Press, 1960. (\$35)

Chaucer, Geoffrey. *The Norton Chaucer*. Ed. David Lawton. New York: Norton, 2019. (\$94.55)

The Floure and the Leafe, The Assembly of Ladies, The Isle of Ladies. Ed. Derek Pearsall. Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1990.

[This volume, and *Pearl* (below) can be accessed online for free or purchased for about \$15 (US) each: <http://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams>, or search TEAMS + title]

Julian of Norwich. *Showings*. Ed. Denise N. Baker. New York: Norton, 2005. (\$38.84)

Middle English Romances. Ed. Stephen H.A. Shepherd. New York: Norton, 1995. (MER) (\$44.12)

[The three Norton volumes will be bundled at a discount in the Bookstore]

Pearl. Ed. Sarah Stanbury. Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2001
[See *Floure and Leafe*, above]

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

Methods of Evaluation

The grade for the course will be arrived at as follows:

Paper 1 (9-10 pages)	17%
Paper 2 outline	5%
Paper 2 (15-17 pages)	27%
Recitation	10%
Translation tests	9% (best 9 of 11)
Participation	7%
Final exam	25%

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/Student%20Information.html>.

Additional Information

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. See below. **Come see me BEFORE you are frantic in the week before a paper is due.**

Recitation

Memorize, recite and be prepared to translate a short piece of Middle English (about 16 lines). Every student will make an individual appointment with me to do this before Oct. 25th. Unexpected emergencies can be accommodated on Oct. 26th, but no further recitations will be

permitted after Oct. 26th. 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 (link in WebCT) and through the supplemental material included with *The Norton Chaucer*. 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 FAIL THE COURSE.**

Exams

Exams are scheduled by the University.

DO NOT MAKE TRAVEL PLANS UNTIL YOU KNOW YOUR EXAM SCHEDULE.

Departmental Statements

Academic Consideration

Students may request academic consideration in cases of extenuating circumstances – that is, personal circumstances beyond the student’s control that have a substantial but temporary impact on the student’s ability to meet essential academic requirements.

Requests for academic consideration are made to the Academic Advising office of the student’s Faculty of Registration.

1. Requests for academic consideration include the following components:
 - a. Self-attestation signed by the student;
 - b. Indication of the course(s) and assessment(s) relevant to the request;
 - c. Supporting documentation as relevant.

Requests without supporting documentation are limited to one per term per course.

Assignments with flexible deadlines and any term work that does not count towards the course grade are not eligible for additional consideration. Every assignment in the course falls under these provisos.

Documentation for medical illness, when required, includes the completion of a [Western Student Medical Certificate \(SMC\)](#) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation, by a health care practitioner.

Requests linked to examinations scheduled by the Office of the Registrar during official examination periods as well as practice laboratory and performance tests typically scheduled in the last week of term always require formal supporting documentation.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory in all classes and tutorials. In cases of excessive absenteeism (e.g. more than 9 unexcused hours for a half course, 18 for a full course), which are not accounted for by either academic consideration or accommodation, students may be debarred from taking the final examination, and will receive an official warning to this effect by or before the course drop date (see Senate policy). In classes with or without final exams, students who do not attend class will receive 0% for course participation grades. Unless other policies dictate a different set of penalties in specific English and Writing Studies programs, this will apply to all department programs.

Gender-Based and Sexual Violence

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website:

https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Intellectual Property/Copyright

All instructor-written materials (e.g. PowerPoints, lecture notes, oral lectures) for this course are created solely for students' personal use within the course, and remain the instructor's intellectual property. Further reproduction, fixation, distribution, transmission, dissemination, communication, or any other uses, without securing the consent of the copyright owner (the course instructor) may be an infringement of copyright. You may not distribute, email, or otherwise communicate these materials to any other person. These limitations extend to recording, photographing, or sharing lectures (online or in-person) and lecture material without permission. Posting the instructor's content from this course to online course sharing sites like OneClass or Course Hero without permission is both an infringement of intellectual property law and a violation of academic integrity guidelines. The instructor will pass these cases on to the Western University Ombudsperson or their Department Chair as appropriate.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar.

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/>

Academic Support & Engagement <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.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence

Use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools/software/apps is not permitted in any context. This course asks you to engage with the literature, aesthetics and assumptions of a very foreign culture. Studying medieval literature teaches you to combine your understanding of different academic disciplines to understand how an unusual literature made sense to its authors and original audience. In its current state, AI helps users bypass learning the methods of research and communication that are at the heart of this kind of advanced philological scholarship. Rather than producing original scholarship, AI artlessly reproduces the mean of the texts upon which it was trained. It robs its users of the ability to grapple with a challenging subject and develop the intellectual and disciplinary tools necessary to engage with that subject with empathy and scholarly rigor. Don't settle for that.

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

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.

Schedule of Classes and Assignments

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.

Mon.	Sept. 8	Hellos and how are yous Romantic / Erotic Love
Wed.	Sept. 10	Read: Lyrics, 24, 25, 38, 43 (I have to find an edition of these, as the one I planned to use is out of print, alas) Mannyng, Stephen, "Game and Earnest in Middle English and Provençal Love Lyrics" (in <i>MEL</i> , 266-280).
Mon.	Sept. 15	Read: <i>MEL</i> , 44 Andreas Capellanus, <i>The Art of Courtly Love</i> , 1-53
Wed.	Sept. 17	Read: Lyrics, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52
Mon.	Sept. 22	Read: Chaucer, "Merciless Beauty" (1169-70) Capellanus, <i>Art of Courtly Love</i> , 142-150
Wed.	Sept. 24	Read: <i>The Parliament of Fowls</i> , 1-294 (Chaucer, 979-990)
Mon.	Sept. 29	Read: <i>The Parliament of Fowls</i> , 295-699 (Chaucer, 990-1000) Spearing, A.C. "Al This Mene I Be Love." <i>Studies in the Age of Chaucer, Proceedings 2</i> (1986): 169-77.
Wed.	Oct. 1	Read: Marie de France, <i>Sir Lanval</i> (I'll put this in OWL) <i>Sir Launfal</i> , 1-336 (<i>MER</i> 190-200)
Mon.	Oct. 6	Read: <i>Sir Launfal</i> , 337-828 (<i>MER</i> 200-212)
Wed.	Oct. 8	Read: <i>Sir Launfal</i> , 829-1046 (<i>MER</i> 212-18) Anderson, Earl R. "The Structure of <i>Sir Launfal</i> ." <i>Papers on Language and Literature</i> 13 (1977): 115-24. <i>Sir Landevale</i> , 1-540 (<i>MER</i> 351-64)
Mon.	Oct. 13	Thanksgiving
Wed.	Oct. 15	Read: <i>The Floure and the Leafe</i> . Complete
Mon.	Oct. 20	Read: <i>MEL</i> 59 (Nightingale and Thrush) Withaus, Carl. "'Wrethen in fere': Narrative Voice, Gender and Chastity in <i>The Floure and the Leafe</i> ." <i>Women and Literature</i> 22.1 (1999): 37-43.
Wed.	Oct. 22	Read: <i>The Legend of Good Women</i> , 1-579 (Chaucer, 1053-69) Last Day for Recitations
Mon.	Oct. 27	Read: <i>The Legend of Good Women</i> , G version of prologue (i.e. read the footnotes to <i>LGW</i> , 1-579 and Chaucer 1116-8)
Wed.	Oct. 29	Read: <i>LGW</i> , 580-1679 (Chaucer, 1069-1093)
Mon.	Nov. 3	Reading Week
Wed.	Nov. 5	Reading Week
Mon.	Nov. 10	Read: Caxton, "Pyramus and Thysbe" (in <i>The Booke of Ovyde</i> , 4.70-259) Caxton, "Adryane" (in <i>The Booke of Ovyde</i> , 8.216-336; I'll put the Caxton in OWL)

- Wed. Nov. 12 Read: *LGW*, 1680-2723 (Chaucer, 1093-1116)
 Schuurman, Anne. "Pity and Poetics in Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women*." *PMLA* 130.5 (2015): 1302-17.
- Love and Marriage**
- Mon. Nov. 17 Read: *Sir Orfeo*, 1-604 (*MER* 174-190)
- Wed. Nov. 209 Read: Caxton, "Orpheus" (in *The Booke of Ovyde*, 10.1-98)
- Mon. Nov. 24 Read: Chaucer, *The Book of the Duchess*, 1-758 (Chaucer, 947-65)
- Wed. Nov. 26 Read: Caxton, "Ceyx and Alcyone" (in *Booke of Ovyde*, 11.855-1152)
- Mon. Dec. 1 Read: Chaucer, *The Book of the Duchess*, 758-1334 (Chaucer 965-78)
- Paper 1 Due**
- Wed. Dec. 3 Read: Finish up *The Book of the Duchess*
Last day to submit Paper 1 without penalty.
- Mon. Dec. 8 Read: Lyric 26 (a tough one to end on!)
- Exam period. We will NOT have a December exam.**
- Love and Marriage (continued, but with less of the romance)**
- Mon. Jan. 5 Read: St. Jerome, *Against Jovinian* (in *OWL*)
 Theophrastus (in *OWL*)
 St. Paul to the Corinthians (in *OWL*)
 Chaucer, *The Wife of Bath's Prologue*, 1-856 (pp. 201-222)
- Wed. Jan. 10 Finish: Chaucer *The Wife of Bath's Prologue*
- Mon. Jan. 12 Read: Chaucer *The Wife of Bath's Tale*, 857-1264 (pp. 222-30)
- Wed. Jan. 14 Finish: Chaucer, *The Wife of Bath's Tale*
 MEL, 72 & 73 (in *MEL*)
- Mon. Jan. 19 Read: *The Weddyng of Syr Gawen and Dame Ragnell* (*MER* 243-67)
 Davis, Rebecca A. "More Evidence for Intertextuality and Humorous Intent in *The Weddyng of Syr Gawen and Dame Regnell*." *Chaucer Review* 35.4 (2001): 430-9.
- Wed. Jan. 21 Read: *The Marriage of Sir Gawaine* (*MER* 378-87)
- Mon. Jan. 26 Read: Petrarch, "The Story of Griselda" (in *OWL*; read in THIS order:
 pp. 453-4, 443-53, 454-6)
 Chaucer, *The Clerk's Prologue*, 1-56 (pp. 253-6)
- Wed. Jan. 28 Read: Chaucer, *The Clerk's Tale*, 57-1212g (pp. 256-82)
- Mon. Feb. 2 Read: Finish up *The Clerk's Tale*
 MEL 62 (*MEL* 63-4)
 Normandin, Shawn. "From Error to Anacoluthon: The Moral of the 'Clerk's Tale'." *Notes and Queries* 62(2) (2015): 218-19.
- Wed. Feb. 4 Read: Chaucer, *The Merchant's Prologue and Tale*, 1213-1576
 Lyrics 64 & 71
- Mon. Feb. 9 Read: Chaucer, *The Merchant's Prologue and Tale*, 1577-2440 (pp. 283-309)
- Wed. Feb. 14 Read: Finish *The Merchant's Prologue and Tale*

Schlauch, Margaret. "Chaucer's *Merchant's Tale* and Courtly Love." *ELH* 4.3 (1937): 201-12.

Mon. Feb. 16
Wed. Feb. 18

Reading week
Reading week

Mon. Feb. 23
Wed. Feb. 28

Read: Chaucer, The Franklin's Prologue and Tale, 673-1624 (pp. 327-48)
Paper 2 Outline Due
Finish: Chaucer, The Franklin's Prologue and Tale
Kitteridge, George Lyman. "[The Marriage Group]"
(<http://sites.fas.harvard.edu/~chaucer/canttales/franklin/marriage.html>)
Last day to submit Paper 2 Outline without penalty

Mon. Mar. 2
Wed. Mar. 4

Love of Family

Read: *Pearl*, 1-360
Read: *Pearl*, 361-720
The Parable of the Vineyard (Matt. 20:1-16, any online Bible will do)

Mon. Mar. 9
Wed. Mar. 11

Read: *Pearl*, 721-1212
Read: *Pearl*, keep at it
Bullón- Fernández, María. "'Bezone þe water': Courtly and Religious Desire in *Pearl*." *Studies in Philology* 91 (1994): 35-49

Mon. Mar. 16
Wed. Mar. 18

Read: *Pearl*, finish up
Read: *Pearl*, finish up

Mon. Mar. 23
Wed. Mar. 25

Love of God

Read: Julian of Norwich, pp. ix-30
Read: Julian of Norwich, pp. 30-99
"Context" (*Showings*, 129-34)

Mon. Mar. 30

Read: Julian of Norwich, pp. 99-125
Windeatt, B.A. "The Art of Mystical Loving: Julian of Norwich."
(*Showings*, 196-209).

Wed. Apr. 1

Paper 2 Due
Finish: Julian of Norwich
Last day to submit Paper 2 without penalty.

Mon. Apr. 6
Wed. Apr. 8

What Have We Learned?

Reread: *The Parliament of Fowls*
Read: Lyrics (TBA)

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