

Lit 444: Medieval Literature

Fall 2013

Section: 1

Units: 3

11:00am-12:15pm -T-R- RLC112

Dr. Blessing

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Catalogue Description:

A study of British Literature from 1100 through 1500, including Chaucer, Langland, the Pearl Poet, Julian of Norwich, and Mallory, and covering medieval drama, poetry, prose, romance, and tale.

Prerequisite: Lit 254.

Required Texts:

Pearsall, Derek, ed. Chaucer to Spenser: An Anthology.

Shepherd, Stephen H. A., ed. Middle English Romances.

Norwich, Julian. Revelations of Divine Love. Penguin USA, 1998.

De France, Marie. Lais of Marie De France. Penguin USA, 1999.

De Pizan, Christine. Book of the City of Ladies. Penguin USA, 1999.

Supplemental sources from the Internet:

See the extensive list of Medieval literary resources at:

<http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Lit/medieval.html>

This is the best Chaucer site:

<http://www.courses.fas.harvard.edu/~chaucer/index.html>



Program Learning Outcomes:

Students who complete the program will be able to:

1. Demonstrate reading practices that make connections between the literature studied and our contemporary world. (DLO 3, 5)
2. Identify and articulate characteristics of literary-historical periods: dates, styles, and authors. (DLO 1, 2)
3. Demonstrate knowledge of major literary-theoretical perspectives and terminology. (DLO 1, 2)
4. Articulate the difference between a traditional pedagogical and a modern linguistics notion of language. (DLO 4)
5. Employ strong rhetorical, literary, and analytical skills in their writing. (DLO 1, 2)
6. Identify and evaluate effective use of higher and lower order thinking and writing skills. (DLO 1, 4)

Course Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to:

1. Closely read (comprehension, analysis) and critically analyze (analysis) texts in their original languages and/or in translation. (PLO 2,3, 5)
2. Recall (knowledge), identify (knowledge), and use (application) fundamental concepts of literary study to read and discuss texts
 - a. Standard literary terminology
 - b. Modes/genres of literature
 - c. Elements of literary genres
 - d. Literary periods (dates, writers, characteristics, and important developments)
 - e. Contemporary critical approaches
 - f. Extra-literary research (PLO 2, 3, 5)
3. Analyze (analysis) the social, cultural, ethnic, gendered, and/or historical contexts of the works and their authors, and connect (synthesis, evaluation) the texts with their own lives. (PLO 1)
4. Create (synthesis, evaluation) detailed and informed textual analysis of literary works employing secondary sources and applying concepts of literary study and literary theory. (PLO 3, 4)

Course Requirements:

- Reading of all assignments by the assigned days (CLO 1)
- Quizzes, both written and oral, class exercises, homework (involving critical sources), and participation—15% (CLO 1, 2, 3, 4)
- Journals—15% (CLO 1, 2, 3)
- Research Paper Prospectus—5% (CLO 4)
- Research Paper—20% (CLO 1, 2, 3, 4)
- Group project (presented in class)—10%—Popular Culture representations of the Middle Ages
- Midterm exam—15% (CLO 1, 2)
- Final exam—20% (CLO 1, 2)

Journals:

You will keep a weekly journal that includes your notes and thoughts on the readings, to be turned in as noted. Each entry is to be typed on an 8½” x 11” page.

The journal entry format is as follows:

DATE:

TITLE:

AUTHOR:

GENRE:

THEME(S):

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXTS:

NEW WORD FROM THE READING AND DEFINITION:

YOUR REACTIONS TO THE READING:

COMPARISON TO OTHER WORKS YOU HAVE READ:

YOUR CRITICAL QUESTION ON THE WORK:

YOUR HYPOTHESIS IN RESPONSE TO YOUR CRITICAL QUESTION:

Group oral presentations—dates are indicated on the syllabus—sign-ups in class

Each oral presentation will be 15 minutes long, and will focus on the representations of the Middle Age in later works and popular culture. How have works in this category influenced other works of literature, art, music, film, and pop culture?

You must do outside research for these projects—the point of the assignment is to bring **new information** to the class (as well as to have you learn more about the middle ages’ effects on later cultures).

Use whatever audio/visual aids you wish. Example: Artwork, music, PowerPoint, film clips, YouTube, etc.

You must have a good handout for the class, summarizing your findings, and including a list of at least three sources you used, documented in MLA format. Do **not** list our textbooks or sources such as Wikipedia. Use top-level resources, including books published by university presses, journal articles, and/or websites connected with universities, as well as the cultural works you locate.

Class Procedures:

We will sometimes have vocabulary quizzes from the “Glossary of Common Hard Words,” contained in the Chaucer to Spenser anthology, pp. 672-675. You also have a typed weekly journal entry due as indicated. The classes will be a combination of lecture and discussion. A number of resources on Medieval culture and literature are available via the web, and I will sometimes assign computer work or readings from our Ryan Library databases.

★ You will need to read many of the assignments in Middle English, but you may use translations or bi-lingual editions to help you. Many translations are available on-line. PLEASE raise in class any questions/problems you have with the readings.

Course Ground Rules:

Attendance: Please read the Class Attendance section of your PLNU Catalog, carefully. If students miss more than 10% of class meetings (approx. 3 for a MWF course), faculty members may file a written report which may result in de-enrollment from the course. If you miss more than 20% of class meetings (approx. 6 for a MWF course), you may be de-enrolled without notice. De-enrollment may have serious consequences on residence, athletic, and scholarship requirements; it may also necessitate a reduction or loss in your financial aid.

LJML Academic Honesty Policy: The LJML Department deems intellectual and academic integrity critical to academic success and personal development; therefore, any unethical practice will be detrimental to the student's academic record and moral character. Students who present the work of others as if it were their own commit plagiarism. Presenting another's work as one's own includes, but is not limited to, borrowing another student's work, buying a paper, and using the thoughts or ideas of others as one's own (using information in a paper without citation). Plagiarized work will result in a failing grade for the assignment and possibly for the course. In either event, a written report will be filed with the department chair and the area dean. The dean will review the report and submit it to the Provost and the Vice President for Student Development. It will then be placed in the student's academic file.

Final Examinations: Final Examinations are the culminating learning event in a course, and they are scheduled to take into account all the different courses and departments across the university. The exam schedule varies from year to year. The final examination schedule is posted on the Class Schedules site. You are expected to arrange your personal affairs to fit the examination schedule.

Class Sessions, Preparation, Assignments, and Technology:

- a. If you wish to use your laptop during class, you may use the laptop only for note-taking, not checking email, Facebook, or other activities. If you are using an electronic reader for the text book (Kindle, Nook, etc.), please let me know and have no other "file" open on your reader other than the class text/reading.
- b. All other electronics must be muted or turned off for the entire class period, including cell phones.**
- c. Completion of all assignments is required, and passing the course will be difficult without doing so. Readings and written responses must be prepared in advance of the date scheduled/due and of sufficient length and quality to meet the assignment's requirements and intents. Missed work (quizzes and written responses) may be made up only in truly extenuating circumstances and only if you and I have had a conversation about your situation. No make-up work will be given for missed work.
- d. Late assignments will not be accepted either in person, by delivery, or in my mailbox (unless you and I have communicated prior to the deadline about extenuating circumstances).
- e. It is your responsibility to see to it that I receive your work.
- f. Always keep electronic copies of your work so that you can provide duplicate copies if you need to.
- g. Handwritten papers are never acceptable (unless so specified).
- h. You may be requested to attend office hours with the professor if a need arises.

Classroom Decorum: Please manage your electronic devices appropriately and with consideration for others—see a&b above.

Email and Canvas: You are responsible for checking your PLNU email account and Canvas regularly for electronic messages from me (and sometimes from your classmates). You are fully accountable for all course material, announcements, communications that are distributed via email and Canvas; and I will send messages only to these sites. Please let me know if you encounter any technical problems with these sites.

Maintaining Class Schedule Via Online Registration: Students must maintain their class schedules. Should a student need arise to drop a course, they are responsible to drop the course (provided the drop date meets the stated calendar deadline established by the university) and to complete all necessary official forms (online or paper). Failing to attend and/or to complete required forms may result in a grade of F on the student's official transcript.

Extenuating Situations and Grades: No "Incomplete" grades will be assigned unless extenuating circumstances (e.g., death in the family, automobile accidents, hospitalization) prevail. If you find yourself in such a situation,

please contact me immediately and submit any necessary and valid documents to help clarify and document your situation (e.g., doctor's letter on letterhead, funeral service program, police report, etc.).

Your oral participation makes the class more interesting for everyone and will positively affect your grade. Ask questions you have from the reading.

No Cliff's Notes, Barron's Notes, Spark Notes or similar guides are to be used for papers, brought to class, or used as a substitute for the reading.

Inclusive Language: Because the Literature, Journalism, and Modern Language department recognizes the power of language, all public language used in this course, including written and spoken discourse, be inclusive. This standard is also outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and is the norm in university-level work.

Additional department and university policies that govern the course are located in an electronic file in the Canvas portion of the course.



Class Schedule - Complete all readings by the assigned day

- Sept. 5 Course Introduction
“Ballade de Bon Conseil”
- Sept. 10 Read—Pearsall “Introduction” pp. xv-xviii, and Shepherd “Reading Middle English” pp. xv-xx
Skim also “Misconceptions about the Middle Ages,” online text,
http://www.the-orb.net/non_spec/missteps/misindex.htm, especially the section on laughter
Class—Historical Backgrounds, pronunciation work
- Chaucer Unit—Pearsall Text**
- Sept. 12 Read—Chaucer: 1-2; Canterbury Tales “General Prologue”—79-99
Class—Journal #1; Chaucer discussion: genre and character; social contexts
Chaucer group presentation
- Sept. 17 Read—“Miller’s Prologue and Tale” pp. 99-115
Class—Chaucer discussion: humor
- Sept. 19 Read—“The Wife of Bath’s Prologue and Tale” pp. 116-143
Class—Journal #2; Discussion of Medieval women and Chaucer
- Sept. 24 Read—“The Franklin’s Prologue and Tale” pp. 144-163
Class—Discussion of “trouthe” and Breton romance
- Sept. 26 Read—“The Pardoner’s Prologue and Tale” pp. 164-177
Class—Journal #3; Discussion of Medieval Church and Chaucer
- Oct. 1 Read—The Parliament of Fowls, pp. 2-20
Class—Discussion of the dream poem
- Oct. 3 Read—“The Knight’s Tale”—Handout
Class—Journal #4; Discussion of Knighthood
- Romance Unit—Shepherd Text**
- Oct. 8 Read essay on Havelok, pp. 315-319 and essays on Romance, pp. 411-456
Class—Introduction to Romance
- Oct. 10 Read Havelok pp. 3-35
Class—Journal #5; Continued discussion of the romance genre
- Oct. 15 Read Havelok pp. 36-74
Class—Discussion of motifs in Havelok
Romance group presentation
- Oct. 17 Read Sir Orfeo pp. 174-190
Class—Journal #6; Discussion of Fairies in the middle ages
- Oct. 22 Read—Marie de France
Class—Female versions of Romance
- Oct. 24 Read—Marie de France
Class—Journal #7; Discussion of marriage and gender in the love stories
- Oct. 29 **Midterm Exam**
- Oct. 31 Read Ywain and Gawain pp. 75
Class—Journal #8; Introduction to the work and fantasy elements
- Nov. 5 Read Ywain and Gawain pp. 173
Class—Discussion of the Lady in Y&G

- Nov. 7 Read Sir Gawain and the Green Knight pp. 234-265
Class—Journal #9; Discussion of religious lessons
- Nov. 12 Read Morte D'Arthure pp. 431-452
Class—Discussion of the Arthurian myth
Bring in/discuss Arthurian resources
- Nov. 14 Read Morte D'Arthure pp. 452-464
Class—Journal #10; Discussion of the waning of knighthood
- Nov. 19 Read “The Alliterative Morte Darthur” pp. 304-307 in Pearsall
Research Paper Prospectus DUE

Religious Writings Unit—Pearsall Text
- Nov. 21 Read The Cloud of Unknowing pp. 292-296 and The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ pp. 313-318
Class—Discussion of Medieval mysticism
- Nov. 26 Read Julian of Norwich The Revelations of Divine Love
Class—Journal #11; Discussion of female Medieval writers
Religious writings group presentation
- Nov. 28 No Class—Thanksgiving
- Dec. 3 Read The Book of Margery Kempe pp. 368-377
Class—Discussion of religious autobiography
- Dec. 5 Christine de Pizan—The Book of the City of Ladies
Class—Journal #12; Contexts for the work
- Dec. 10 Christine de Pizan, continued
Class—Christine’s defense of women
- Dec. 12 **Research Paper DUE**
Final Exam Review
Medieval Feast
- Dec. 19 **Final Exam—Thursday 10:30am-1:00pm**
From the *Schedule of Classes*: “The published time for the final examination is one of the considerations when enrolling for a course. Students are expected to arrange their personal affairs to fit the examination schedule.”