

Engl 405

Middle English Literature: Chaucer

INSTRUCTOR: M. Addison Amos

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Course narrative

As the greatest author to write in Middle English, and as the earliest of the traditional triumvirate of greatest English authors of all time, Chaucer offers us a unique view of the inception and early development of English literature. At the same time, his complex and delightful texts invite and reward investigation of a variety of topics of particular concern in our postmodern world: the construction and transmission of historical and cultural definitions of class, gender, and identity.

Our examination of Chaucer's poetry will be trifocal: we will explore 1) those universal aspects of his poetry that have intrigued and irritated his readers for centuries, critiquing the processes that led to Chaucer becoming canonized as the "father of English literature"; 2) Chaucer's place within the context of 14th and 15th century English letters by reading his works alongside those of his contemporaries; and 3) the intersection of his writing with the major cultural, social, political, and religious events of his own time.

Course Questions

Some of our organizing, central questions will be the following:

if Chaucer was not the first poet to write in English, how (and why) has he come to be called the Father of English Literature?

what were his models and sources? how did he deploy, adapt, and modify them? to what ends?

what literary legacy has this father left us? for whom did he serve as a source or model?

what is his relationship to his contemporary medieval authors?

what are his predominant themes and how do they relate to his development?

what is his relationship to religious and civic institutions and practices?

what is his relationship to power and auctoritee, "both institutional and literary?"

how does he conceive of and construct subjectivity?

how does he construct and stage gender relations?

what meanings do his texts have for us as late twentieth-century multi-cultural readers?

in what ways does his poetry invite us to construct and analyze a unified, coherent, stable personality behind its composition? how is his role of "author" important to our reading of the poetry?

in what ways might he prove to be more relevant to us than certain Renaissance writers (including those whose names begin with "S") who invite similar re-constructions and conceptualization of them as real, historical figures?

Middle English

This course assumes no knowledge of late medieval literature or of Middle English. Non-medievalists are strongly encouraged to enroll, especially as discussions and written assignments will be matched to the interests of class members. We'll read as much of Chaucer's writings in the original Middle English as we can – deploying and critiquing modernizations where necessary – starting slowly with an introduction to Middle English and gathering speed and expanding our interests as everyone gets comfortable with the language. For the work of other medieval authors we'll use modern-English versions.

Course goals

Our goals in studying Chaucer are varied, and include the following:
to gain a proficiency in reading and pronouncing Chaucer's Middle English
to call into question transmitted stereotypes and replace them with a working knowledge of the historical and cultural contexts of the Middle Ages in England and on the Continent
to develop interpretive reading skills and a critical vocabulary for analyzing literature, especially those critical approaches sensitive to gender, class, and subjectivity
to practice formal and stylistic conventions of literary criticism and analysis
to sharpen writing skills, including formal and stylistic conventions of literary criticism and analysis
to promote the ability to use writing as a means of participating in academic and public life
to strengthen the ability to articulate analyses and arguments orally and extemporaneously.

Note:

No familiarity with medieval English or medieval England is assumed.
No familiarity with the medieval-y worlds of Lord of the Rings or Game of Thrones is assumed.
Come prepared to enter an exciting and alien world – with a bit more clothing, less violence, and a lot less incest.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Undergraduate course requirements include analyses (midterm and final), interpretation (short responses and mid-length papers), and a student-selected mix of class contributions (discussion and web responses). Graduate course requirements include a seminar-length research paper or two shorter research papers matched to their research interests, and a student-selected mix of graduate-level class contributions. Students not majoring in things medieval will be encouraged to match their assignments to their non-medieval interests.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Required

Cawley, A.C., ed. *The Canterbury Tales*. Everyman Paperback Classics ISBN-13: 978-0460870276

OR Benson, Jr., ed. *The Riverside Chaucer*. 3rd ed. Houghton Mifflin. ISBN-13: 978-0395290316

Recommended

Hieatt & Hieatt. *The Canterbury Tales*. Bantam ISBN-13: 978-0553210828 (face-page edition)

Beidler, ed. *The Wife of Bath*. St. Martin's Critical. St. Martin's Press. ISBN-13: 978-0312111281

Blamires. *Woman Defamed, Woman Defended*. Clarendon Press. ISBN-13: 978-0198710394

Davis, et al. *A Chaucer Glossary*. Clarendon Press ISBN-13: 978-0198111719

Audio recording from Chaucer Studio

ENGL 455

The Continental Novel

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Robert E. Fox

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course we will undertake a detailed study of some exemplary works of modern European fiction.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Two essays (60% of grade); midterm and final examinations (40%).

REQUIRED TEXTS

:Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Notes from Underground* (1864); Franz Kafka, *The Trial* (1925); Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus* (1947); Boris Pasternak, *Doctor Zhivago* (1957); Milan Kundera, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting* (1978); Laszlo Krasznahorkai, *Satantango* (1985); Thomas Bernhard, *Wittgenstein's Nephew* (1988).

Engl 462

Restoration and Eighteenth-Century British Drama

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. A. Chandler

COURSE DESCRIPTION

English 462 is a specialized survey of British drama for the period 1660-1780. Though "Restoration comedies" famously portray sexual intrigue among the privileged, they also question class and gender norms, and their humor is often complex. They reflect an era in which authority of all kinds – monarchic, patriarchal, economic, national, cultural – was being actively re-conceptualized. We will examine how stage humor and pathos evolved over the course of a century, with implications for the stage- and screen-writing of our own time. To take just a few examples: if you see something you'd call slapstick or farce, or if you hear someone being labeled a "Lothario," or if it seems natural to you that stage tragedy should involve people of all classes, then you're already in touch with dramatic conventions that developed in this period, alongside other innovations such as the novel and the magazine essay.

Course format will be lecture-and-discussion. Students are expected to purchase the required textbook in print form and to bring it to each class for reference during discussion.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

For undergraduate students:

Two critical essays; midterm and final exams; eight brief response papers

For graduate students:

Two conference-length papers; midterm and final exams; eight brief response papers

REQUIRED TEXT

The Broadview Anthology of Restoration and Early Eighteenth-Century Drama, Concise Edition. Ed. J. Douglas Canfield and Maja-Lisa von Sneidern. \$62.95 (paper). ISBN 9781551115818.

English 464

Modern British Drama

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Bogumil

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Our objective in this course is to read contemporary British, Irish, and Scottish drama. Through our detailed discussions of major dramatists and plays, we will trace the evolution of modernism

to the present as well as theatrical developments in order to explore the social and political environment surrounding the plays. We will address the trajectory of the critical reception to first productions and current productions. In doing so, we then will situate those plays, various theater companies, and playwrights within their cultural, political, and social contexts, tracking the role of the playwright and dramatic literature in an ever-changing theatrical landscape and thereby linking the practical implications of creating dramatic literature to the form and aesthetics of performance.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

8 analyses (three pages plus/ 15 pts. each/ total 120 points). Three or more secondary sources are expected for graduate students and at least two for undergrads.

Undergraduates: One final paper, a modified version of an analysis, including at least five secondary sources, eight pages minimum in length (100 points).

Graduate Students: One mid-length annotated bibliography, one 30 minute presentation on the play of your choice replete with class outline and an abridged version of the annotated bibliography to be revised later (100 points); one conference paper based upon that material 12-15 pages in length (100 points total).

Attendance: One absence is permitted. Further absences require proper documentation. More than two absences will result in your grade being lowered.

Assignments: All readings, analyses, annotated bibliographies and papers must be completed by the designated due dates. Only typed material is graded. If you are absent, have someone place the assignment under my door or turn it into the English office. No late work is accepted, and will be given a "0." Computer problems are not an acceptable reason for late work. You may email your work, but a hard copy must be given to me. Class participation is encouraged!

REQUIRED TEXTS

Martin McDonagh, *Hangman* Faber & Faber 0571328873

Tanika Gupta, *Sugar Mummies* Oberon 18040026553

Nina Raine, *Tiger Country* Arete LTD 0956273947

David Harrower, *Blackbird*, Dramatist's Play Service 0822222515

Enda Walsh, *The Small Things*, Nick Hern Books, 1854598430

Jez Butterworth, *The River* Nick Hern Books 978-1848422896

Debbie Tucker Green, *Random* Nick Hern Books 1848421052

Marina Carr, *Marble* Dramatists Play Service 9780822224174

English 473

Milton

INSTRUCTOR: Professor Ryan Netzley

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Do John Milton's major poems advocate violent political revolution? Or are they the work of a poet who turns away from politics to the solace of art? Milton's contention, in his theological treatise, *The Christian Doctrine*, that hatred of God's enemies is a religious duty has frequently unnerved readers. In fact, several critics have worried that Milton's last major poem, *Samson Agonistes*, advocates terrorism and exonerates its violent protagonist. In contrast to these claims about the fundamentally political nature of Milton's work, *Samson Agonistes*, *Paradise Regained*, and *Paradise Lost* have all, at one time or another, been interpreted as retreats from the world of politics and affairs of state. As a result of these widely disparate tendencies within Milton's oeuvre, his poems are a particularly fruitful site for exploring the relationship between

literature and politics. Does art serve a political or ethical function? Should it? Should we even expect literature to have a function? In the course of answering these broad questions, we'll examine Milton's conceptions of freedom, ethical action, religious devotion, and gender relationships, as well as his understanding of the function of poetry. In the first half of the class, we will read *Samson Agonistes*, *Paradise Regained*, some of the shorter poetry, and two important prose treatises, on freedom of the press and companionate marriage and divorce. We'll devote the entire second half of the course to *Paradise Lost*. In addition, we'll spend some class time discussing, in considerable detail, important literary critical arguments about Milton's work and its place in literary history. The goal of exploring these arguments, and of a 400-level course more generally, is to give you the interpretive and critical tools to be not just a reader of, but also a sophisticated and engaged respondent to Milton's work.

Readings

Samson Agonistes

Areopagitica

Paradise Regained

A Masque Presented at Ludlow Castle

selections from the shorter poetry

The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce

Paradise Lost

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Undergraduates: five analysis papers, one literary concept report, and a final research paper.

Graduate students: five analysis papers, one oral presentation, one seminar paper.

REQUIRED TEXTS

John Milton: *The Major Works*, ed. Jonathan Goldberg and Stephen Orgel, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford University Press, 1990).

ISBN: 978-0199539185.

ENGL 485B

Teaching Reading and Literature in the Secondary School (3 CR)

INSTRUCTOR: Jackson

PREREQUISITES Admittance to Teacher Education Program through CoEHS.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will explore various approaches to teaching literature and critical reading skills at the secondary level, with special attention to strategies for motivating and supporting reluctant readers.

Course topics will include:

- 1) principles of curriculum design, including the selection of appropriate literary works;
- 2) suggestions for devising and implementing a response--based literature program;
- 3) approaches to teaching young adult literature;
- 4) overview of professional resources concerning the teaching of literature in the secondary school.

Students will

work toward developing a philosophy of integrated secondary Language Arts instruction that is consistent with various national, state, and district standards and guidelines.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Tovani, Chris. *I Read It, but I Don't Get It: Comprehension Strategies for Adolescent Readers*. Stenhouse Publishers. ISBN: 978 1571100894

Ericson, Bonnie. *Teaching Reading in High School English Classes*, 2nd ed. NCTE. ISBN: 978 0814151860

Kaywell, Joan F. *Adolescent Literature as a Complement to the Classics*, Vol. 4. Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc. ISBN: 978 1929024049

ENGL 491

Advanced Technical Communication

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Lisa J. McClure

COURSE DESCRIPTION

For those interested in developing technical communication as an area of expertise, English 491 (Advanced Technical Writing), will introduce the processes, genres, and conventions of writing for the workplace. Students will produce a variety of written documents, including memos, reports, proposals, etc. and will reflect critically on the processes and conventions used to produce such texts. We will also address issues of collaboration, ethics, technology as they relate to technical communications. **ENGL 491 counts for the English Undergraduate Major in Pre-Professional Specialization and is important for those wanting to teach technical writing.**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Assignments will vary depending on the individual student's needs and interests; the first task will be to prepare, in negotiation with the professor, a contract of work to be completed during the semester. Requirements: 5 or 6 contract assignments, 3 or 4 in-class impromptu writings, and a course portfolio (consisting of a corpus of work completed throughout the semester). Typical topics include: teaching technical communication; writing on the job (individualized to students' respective majors); writing for the web/in the digital age; etc. There is also a common track for those interested in developing their basic technical communication skills. For more information and/or a copy of this description, please contact Dr. McClure (drljm1@siu.edu).

REQUIRED TEXTS

Required Texts for All Students

Markel, Mark. *Technical Communication*, 11th ed. ISBN-13: 978-1-319-08808-8

Hicks, Troy. *The Digital Writing Workshop*. Heinemann, 2009. ISBN-13: 978-0325026749

Recommended for Those Interested in Teaching Digital Writing or Teaching Technical Writing Online:

Hicks, Troy. *Crafting Digital Writing*. Heinemann, 2013. ISBN-13: 978-0325046969

Warnock, Scott. *Teaching Writing Online*. NCTE, 2009. ISBN-13: 978-0814152539

ENGL 492A

Advanced Fiction Workshop

Instructor: Prof. Pinckney Benedict

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A workshop designed to equip advanced fiction students with the critical tools necessary for the creation and revision of original prose fiction. Students will create new work and critique one another's work as well as taking part in in- and out-of-class writing exercises, readings, and criticism (from a writer's point of view) of the work of published contemporary writers.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students will submit for workshop appraisal a minimum of three original (created specifically for this class) writing packets (short story sections, novel chapters, vignettes, prose experiments) of approximately 2500 words each. At least one of these packets will, in the course of the semester, be substantially revised and resubmitted for workshop appraisal, for a total of four major submissions. Students will engage actively in the critique of fellow students' work and in the conversational business of the class. They will also provide a succinct paragraph of criticism of each submitted piece to both the writer of the piece and the instructor.

General class participation plays a large part in the calculation of the final grade. Participation includes but is not limited to a lively interest in and constructive contribution to critical discussion of other students' work and successful completion of all writing exercises and other curricular activities.