

Carleton University
Winter 2016
Department of English

ENGL 4105/5207: Old English: *Beowulf* in Contexts

*Prerequisite: fourth-year standing in Honours English
or permission of the Department.
Precludes additional credit for ENGL 3102.*

Time: Tuesday, Thursday/ 10:05-11:25am
Location: Please confirm location on Carleton Central

Instructor: Prof. Robin Norris
Email: robin.norris@carleton.ca
Office: 1806 Dunton Tower
Telephone: 613-520-2600, ext. 4195
Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 11:30-12:30 and by appointment

COURSE OUTLINE

Course description

The primary purpose of this course is to learn to read Old English, the oldest form of the English language. After 1000 years of language change, the language of the Anglo-Saxons can seem quite foreign. At the same time, 76% of the most common Old English words are still in use today, and 83% of our most common words are from Old English.

In this new version of the Introduction to Old English course, we will read the five texts of the *Beowulf* manuscript. The creators of London, BL, Cotton Vitellius A.xv compiled a codex that reflects their interest in the monstrous, featuring the passion of the dog-headed saint Christopher; the so-called “wonders of the east,” a catalogue of foreign peoples, monsters, and marvels; the orientalism of Alexander the Great’s letter to his teacher Aristotle; the beheading of the heathen hound Holofernes by the Hebrew maiden Judith; and, of course, *Beowulf*, the most famous Anglo-Saxon text, with its dragon, Grendelkin, and monstrous humans.

Reading knowledge of Old English is the primary objective of the course, but we will accomplish several additional **course objectives** along the way:

- Introduction to the extant Old English corpus
- Mastery of fundamental Old English grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation
- Understanding of the cultural and historical contexts of Anglo-Saxon literature
- Introduction to Anglo-Saxon material culture, including art, archaeology, and manuscripts

Texts (Available at Octopus Books, 116 Third Avenue, 613-233-2589, octopusbooks.ca)

R. D. Fulk, *The Beowulf Manuscript* (Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library, 2010). Required.

Richard Hogg, *An Introduction to Old English*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh UP, 2012). Required.

J. R. Clark Hall, *A Concise Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*, 4th ed. (MART 1984). Recommended.

Students may also be required to read, photocopy, and/or print websites and handouts available online or in hard copy.

Evaluation

Preparation, participation, homework, quizzes, and in-class activities 33%

Translation exam* 33%

Final project (including recitation, presentation, and participation)* 33%

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Th 1/7	Welcome and introductions.
T 1/12	Read Hogg Chapter 1 and Chapter 8. Read <i>The Passion of St. Christopher</i> (PDE).
Th 1/14	Read Hogg Chapter 2 and Chapter 6.1–6.3. Analyze OE <i>Christopher</i> #18–21 (p. 6, The paragraph beginning ‘Se cyningc pyder’).
T 1/19	Read Hogg Chapter 3 and Chapter 7. Read <i>The Wonders of the East</i> (PDE). Analyze OE <i>Wonders</i> #63–68 (p. 22–24: lakes of sun and moon).
Th 1/21	Read Hogg Chapters 4 and 6.4–6.7. Analyze three additional OE sentences from <i>Wonders</i> .
T 1/26	Read Hogg Chapter 5. <i>NB: the discussion of ablaut on pp. 60–62 goes into too much detail.</i> Translate Exercise 4: Cædmon. Read <i>Alexander’s Letter to Aristotle</i> (PDE).
Th 1/28	Read Hogg Chapter 10. Translate OE <i>Alexander</i> #27–35, 104–113, 195–202.
T 2/2	Read Hogg Chapter 9. Translate Exercise 9: Cædmon’s Hymn. Read <i>Judith</i> (PDE).
2/4, 2/9, 2/11	Over three classes we will translate <i>Judith</i> ll. 7–121 and 246–300, about 60 lines/day.

READING WEEK

T 2/23	Read <i>Beowulf</i> (PDE) and come prepared for discussion.
2/25, 3/1, 3/3	Over three classes we will translate <i>Beowulf</i> ll. 2177–2353, about 60 lines/day.
T 3/8	Practice exam.
Th 3/10	Translation exam.
T 3/15–Th 3/17	Preparation for presentations.
3/22–4/7	Over the last six classes, students will present their final projects.
Friday 4/8	Final projects due to the department drop box by 3:00 PM.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance, participation, and missed appointments

You must complete all reading and translation assignments before coming to class and bring all assigned reading and homework materials to each class. Faithful attendance, advance preparation, and informed participation will be necessary to pass the class. For every unexcused absence from class, for lack of preparation in class, and for each missed appointment, I reserve the right to deduct two points from a student's final course mark. I also reserve the right to refuse future appointments to students who miss appointments scheduled with me.

Essay protocols

All assignments must be written in standard academic English using MLA format. The final essay assignment will be discussed in class at least one week prior to the deadline. Marks and/or feedback on essays will be available approximately two weeks after all students submit the assignment. If a student wishes to receive detailed feedback on an essay assignment, s/he must submit two hard copies of the paper by the deadline (one of which will be returned), and two weeks after essays have been submitted, s/he must request an appointment to discuss the assignment. I reserve the right to request a backup electronic copy of all assignments; you are responsible for keeping these backups and submitting them immediately upon request.

Late assignments

A grade of zero will be recorded for all late or missing assignments. No late homework assignments, exercises, or quizzes will be accepted except in cases where students present documentation of accommodation, illness, bereavement, etc., *and* take responsibility for making appropriate arrangements to make up the missing work. No late essays will be accepted. A student may request an extension to a deadline, but a deadline to request extensions will be listed on the assignment (e.g., at the last class prior to the deadline).

Rewrite policy

Under no circumstances will a student be allowed to rewrite an essay or exam, or to resubmit an assignment in this course.

Status of split-level course

*Students enrolled in ENGL 5207 will complete a longer version of the translation exam and submit a longer final project. Otherwise, no distinction will be made between undergraduate and graduate students. Behavior detrimental to a spirit of collaboration and community will be detrimental to the class participation component of the mark.

FASS POLICIES

Academic accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the Student Guide. <http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/academic/students/>

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the Student Guide.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation.

If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

Deferred final exams

Deferred final exams must be applied for at the registrar's office and are available only if the student is in good standing in the course. In order to qualify for a deferred final exam for this course, all prior assignments must have been submitted on or before their respective deadlines, and the student may not have more than one unexcused absence.

Final grades

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Statement on plagiarism

Before completing any assignment, it is your responsibility to ensure that you understand what academic integrity means, what plagiarism is, how to complete your work honestly, and how to cite sources properly. All work must be completed independently unless otherwise instructed. No piece of work written for another course, however modified, may be submitted for credit in this one. Academic integrity violations will not be tolerated. All suspected cases will be reported to the dean's office at once and prosecuted to the fullest extent possible. All existing means of plagiarism detection will be utilized, including internet search engines and services such as turnitin.com.

The University Senate defines plagiarism as "presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own." This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works

- and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly with the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of F for the course. For more information please go to: <http://www2.carleton.ca/studentaffairs/academic-integrity>