

**Carleton University
Winter 2014
Department of English**

**ENGL 4208A: *Studies in Medieval Literature*
Topic: *King Arthur***

**Tuesdays, 11:35am-2:25pm
Location: 1816 DT
*Please confirm location on Carleton Central***

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 1-2:30pm, or by appointment**

Course Description:

Arthur, Guinevere, Lancelot, Gawain—the names of these medieval characters live on today in a variety of films, novels, and games. But what were their literary origins? This course introduces students to the Arthurian literature circulating in Britain between 1100 and 1500. We will study the central texts of the medieval Arthurian tradition in Britain, and examine the ways in which different writers took up this varied and disparate tradition. We will read both chronicles and romances about Arthur, and explore the ways in which these genres use the same characters, plots, and motifs to explore a wide range of issues. Specifically, we will consider the different ways in which Arthurian texts envision kingship, queenship, violence, and knighthood. We will also examine the literary models of love and loyalty presented in various texts, as well as the ideals of masculinity and femininity promulgated therein. We will strive to set these literary texts and models in their historical contexts, and consider how medieval Arthurian texts spoke to central issues of their day and why they still speak to audiences today.

Course Objectives:

Students in this course will:

- Read a variety of medieval Arthurian texts
- Explore how medieval Arthurian texts engage the issues of gender, violence, history, polity, and religion
- Develop a historical and historicized understanding of the depictions of masculinity, femininity, love, kingship, knighthood, and vassalage in late medieval England
- Develop an appreciation and understanding of the Middle English language as well as a facility with reading and quoting it
- Become familiar with current critical discussion about medieval Arthurian texts
- Consider what constitutes the medieval Arthurian Tradition, and what explains its enduring appeal

Required Texts:

French, Latin and Welsh texts will be read in modern English translation. All other texts will be read in Middle English. Assistance with reading Middle English will be provided as needed.

- Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*. Trans. Michael A. Faletra. Peterborough: Broadview, 2008. Print.
- Chrétien de Troyes, *Arthurian Romances*. Trans. William W. Kibler. London: Penguin, 1991. Print.
- *Arthurian Chronicles*. Trans. Eugene Mason. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1996. Print.
- *The Mabinogion*. Trans. Sioned Davies. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008. Print.
- Marie de France, *Lanval* (available in both the Norton and Broadview Anthologies often used for ENGL2300; if you do not have either of those, then this reading is available **online** in a translation by Judith Shoaf at www.clas.ufl.edu/users/jshoaf/Marie/)
- *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. Ed. Paul Battles. Peterborough: Broadview, 2012. Print.
- *King Arthur's Death: The Middle English Stanzaic Morte Arthur and Alliterative Morte Arthure*. Ed. Larry D. Benson. Rev. Edward E. Foster. TEAMS Middle English Text Series. Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications Western Michigan University, 1994. Print.
- Sir Thomas Malory. *Le Morte Darthur*. Ed. Stephen H. A. Shepherd. New York: Norton, 2004. Print.

*** Books will be available at Haven Books, 43 Seneca Street (Seneca at Sunnyside)**

Telephone: 613-730-9888; E-mail info@havenbooks.ca;

Web: www.havenbooks.ca/carletonsite/carletonhome-e.php

Materials have also been placed on Reserve at the Library to assist with your article summary assignment as well as with research for your seminar and paper.

Evaluation:

As stated in the Academic Regulations of the University, Section 2.1, students must complete all term work to obtain credit for this course.

Short article summary 5%

A 5-minute oral summary of an article that relates to our reading for the day. Articles may be chosen from the list provided or from your own research, in which case you must submit a copy of the article to me one week before your summary presentation.

Seminar Presentation 25%

A 30-minute presentation consisting of a 20-minute oral presentation of research and ideas about a topic associated with our reading for the day, followed by a 10-minute class discussion, which you will lead. A one-page outline with references should be distributed to the class at the presentation. Please make sure to discuss your seminar with me at least 1 week before your presentation so that I may organize the class so as to avoid overlap.

Term Paper 35%

*A paper of 10-15 pages (typed, double-spaced) on a medieval text or issue studied in class is due at the last class meeting on **Tuesday, April 8th, 2014**. MLA format is required for your essay, as is secondary research. Your essay should display a fourth-year level mastery of spelling, grammar, syntax, paragraphing and argumentation. I strongly encourage you to come and discuss your ideas and essay outlines with me during my office hours.*

Journal of Reading Responses 25%

*A journal of responses to **8 (eight)** of the primary readings covered in this class. Each response should be 1-2 pages long, typed, double-spaced, written in sentences and paragraphs, and should discuss the text's presentation of 1 or 2 issues of interest to you. **4 (four) responses are due February 11th, 2014; the remaining 4 (four), 1 (one) of which must be on Malory, are due April 8th, 2014.** Please note that responses may, of course, be handed in ahead of these deadlines.*

Attendance and Participation 10%

Because this is a seminar, much of the discussion will be shaped and initiated by you, the students. I expect you to come to all classes with 1-3 questions or passages earmarked for discussion, and to participate in lively and civil discussion. I also expect you to engage with other students' seminar presentations. Attendance will be taken at each class, including the first meeting. Please note that surfing the web, e-mailing, texting, facebooking, etc while in class does not constitute either attendance or participation and will substantially lower your grade for this portion of the course. Please see separate sheet distributed at the first class for a more explicit outline of grading criteria.

Plagiarism:

The University Senate defines **plagiarism as presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas, or the 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, direct quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts or ideas without appropriate acknowledgement in an essay or assignment
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work, 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 form of intellectual theft. It is a serious offence which 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 failure of the assignment, failure of the entire course, suspension from a program, suspension from the university, or even expulsion from the university. See the Section on Academic Integrity in the Student Conduct Portion of the Undergraduate Calendar

Please Note: 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.

Late Paper Policy:

Your paper is due at class on the date specified. Extensions will only be considered if negotiated well in advance of the due date. Late papers will be graded, but will not necessarily receive written comments. Please note that University Regulations specify April 8th, 2014 as the last day for a professor to accept any term work in the Winter 2014 term.

Please Note: If one of your assignments is lost, misplaced, or not received by the instructor, you are responsible for having a backup copy that can be submitted immediately upon request.

Academic Accommodations:

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of disability, pregnancy or religious obligations. Please review the course outline promptly and 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.

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but are not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that I receive your Letter of Accommodation no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due.

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation>

Other Carleton Services:

Please note that the following services are available to you: the Writing Tutorial Service, MacOdrum Library, 613-520-6632, www2.carleton.ca/sasc/writing-tutorial-service/ (offers assistance developing writing skills); the Student Academic Success Centre (SASC), 302 Tory Building, 613-520-7850, www2.carleton.ca/sasc/ (offers a variety of programs to assist with understanding academic rules and regulations, choosing or changing a major, finding a tutor, planning your academic progress at Carleton, and polishing study skills); the staff at MacOdrum Library, reference services desk, 613-520-

2735, www.library.carleton.ca/ (offer assistance with research, using the library, learning, and IT); the Office of Student Affairs or Health and Counselling Services, 613-520-2600 x2573; www.carleton.ca/studentaffairs or www.carleton.ca/health (offers assistance coping with stress/crisis).

Other resources you may wish to utilize include the Career Centre, 401 Tory Building, 613-520-6611, www.carleton.ca/career (useful ideas about employment and career paths), and Departmental Academic Advising (offers advice about your program of study as an English Major or Minor, and checks your fulfillment of program requirements for graduation). To make an appointment for academic advising, contact Professor Whiting at pwhiting@connect.carleton.ca.

Schedule of Classes and Readings:

Please check Carleton Central for the class location as it has not been finalized as of yet. Readings are to be completed for class by the date under which they are listed. Please note that I reserve the right to adjust this syllabus to meet the needs of the class; however, major changes will be announced in advance.

- T. Jan. 7: Overview of Course and Requirements
Introduction to Course's historical contexts, key terms, and issues
- T. Jan. 14: Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*
—pp. 41-58 (Brutus); 112-217 (Arthur and brief aftermath)
- T. Jan. 21: Chretien de Troyes, *Arthurian Romances*
—*Knight of the Cart (Lancelot)*
Sarah Kay, "Courts, Clerks and Courtly Love," pp. 81-96 of *Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance (On Reserve)*
- T. Jan. 28: Chretien de Troyes, *Arthurian Romances*
—*Story of the Grail (Perceval)*
- T. Feb. 4: Marie de France, *Lanval* (available in both the Norton and Broadview Anthologies often used for ENGL2300; if you do not have either of those, then this reading is available **online** in a translation by Judith Shoaf at www.clas.ufl.edu/users/jshoaf/Marie/)
Wace, *Roman de Brut* in *Arthurian Chronicles* (selections)
—pp.15-19, 27-33, 36-40, 43-86, 89, 102-4, 108 bottom line-114
(these selections focus on the depictions of Merlin and Arthur as well as on Wace's distinctive handling of feasting, slaughter and prophecy)
- T. Feb. 11: **4 (four) Journal Entries Due**

Layamon, *Brut* in *Arthurian Chronicles*
—pp. 170-264

T. Feb. 18: **No Class; Reading Week**

T. Feb. 25: *The Mabinogion*
—pp. 65-138, 179-226

T. Mar. 4: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*

T. Mar. 11: *Stanzaic Morte Arthur* (in *King Arthur's Death*)

T. Mar. 18: *Alliterative Morte Arthure* (in *King Arthur's Death*)

T. Mar. 25: Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*
—pp. 3-112 (Beginnings), 151-77 (Lancelot)

T. Apr. 1: Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*
—pp. 496-587 (Sankgreal)

T. Apr. 8: **Term Paper Due**
Last 4 (four) Journal Entries Due (1 must be on Malory)
Finish Malory
Closing Discussion