

**Carleton University
Fall 2019
Department of English**

ENGL 2300C: British Literatures I

Please note: This syllabus gives only Fall-Term assignments and expectations, etc. The Winter Term will be taught by Professor Williams, and he will supply you with a separate syllabus. The Fall Term will account for 50% of your final grade in the course.

Prerequisites: Second-year standing or permission of the department

Preclusions: None

Time TBA: Please confirm on Carleton Central

Location TBA: Please confirm via Carleton Central

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Office Hours: TBA

The Fall Term of ENGL 2300C introduces students to the richness (and, frequently, the sheer strangeness) of the early literary traditions of “British” literature. This section of 2300 emphasizes what scholars call the linguistic “hybridity” of the period. Works studied will range from anonymous poems whose origins and earliest reception histories are murky and likely unknowable, to texts by authors who play foundational roles within the (now global) traditions of literature in English. During the early weeks of the course we will be reliant on modern English translations of works originally written in Old English, Middle Irish, Anglo-Norman (i.e., a dialect of Old Northern French), and Medieval Welsh. By the end of the term we will be working directly with at least two dialects of “Middle English”: that is, reading texts written in a language that is beginning, but only beginning, to be recognizably ours.

Topics for discussion will include (without being limited to) the nature and boundaries of literature, manuscript culture, the uses and limitations of a “canon,” the relationship between the hero and his or her community, free will, gender, love, agency, authority, violence, and the relationship between past and present.

Writing Attentive Guidelines

ENGL 2300 is a writing-attentive course. In ENGL 2300C, “writing-attentive” means that students will spend a significant amount of class time improving and developing university-level forms of thinking and writing about early forms of literature in order to:

- Maintain and improve the ability to write grammatically and syntactically complex

prose

- Build upon and extend skills in written close analysis of texts from a variety of genres in early forms of English
 - Refine skills in generating and supporting argumentative thesis statements across essays
 - Improve the ability to express in writing sophisticated ideas and opinions using proper, correct, and effective academic English practice
 - Use, cite, and interpret primary literary texts in complex ways while following MLA documentation standards
 - Expand fluency in and facility with genre-specific terminology from early periods
- Students will write at least one 3-hour formally scheduled examination. If there is just one exam it must take place at the end of the course. (In this section there will be two exams.)

Required Texts

1. *Beowulf*, ed. and trans. R.M. Liuzza, second edition (Broadview). [9781554811137]
2. *The Tain [Táin Bó Cúailgne]*, trans. Ciaran Carson (Penguin) [9780140455304]
3. *The Four Branches of the Mabinogi*, ed. and trans. Matthieu Boyd (Broadview). [9781554813193]
4. *The Lais of Marie de France*, ed. and trans. Claire M. Waters (Broadview) [9781554810826]
5. Geoffrey Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde*, ed. J. Dean and H. Spiegel (Broadview). [9781554810055]
6. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, ed. Paul Battles (Broadview). [9781554810192]

*Books are at Haven Books 43 Seneca Street, Ottawa, ON, K1S 4X2, (613) 730-9888:
www.havenbooks.ca

Evaluations

- Your grade for the Fall Term of ENGL 2300 will be based on the following:
- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| In-class essay on <i>Beowulf</i> (30 minutes) | 5% of final grade (10% of term) |
| Paper 1 | 10% of final grade (20% of term) |
| Paper 2 | 15% of final grade (30% of term) |
| December Exam | 20% of final grade (40% of term) |

You must complete the in-class essay, along with Papers One and Two, in order to be eligible to write the December examination. You must, in turn, complete all required assignments in order to be eligible to pass the course.

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.

Evaluation Rationale

Your grade for the Fall Term of this course will be based on a combination of one in-class essay of 30 minutes, two formal essays, and a formally scheduled examination of three hours. **This combination derives from two pedagogical goals:**

- First, the course aims to enable you to develop your ability to write persuasive, analytical prose via one short in-class essay and two formal essays (that is, extended pieces of literary analysis and interpretation) on one or more texts. These essays will stretch across numerous pages and will be written to meet the Carleton University English Department's expectations for literary essays.
- Second, the course's December examination will enable you to demonstrate your command of the full range of course readings. For the purposes of this course, command is measured by your ability to write at length on lecture material and on each of the course texts, and by your ability to move from specific passages and thematic prompts to larger arguments about the texts, traditions, and historical periods under examination.

Members of the class are expected to attend all meetings and participate fully in discussion. You are also expected to bring your copy of the day's main text to each class. I do not grade your participation in discussion. However, your engaged presence and participation in class are likely to relate directly to your performance in the course. **If you miss more than five lectures during the Fall Term (i.e., more than 20% of the term's meetings) you will be at significant risk of failing the December examination.**

One in-class essay (30 minutes) will give you an early opportunity to train yourself to write answers of the kind that you will be expected to produce on the December. It also enables me to fulfill the University's "early feedback" requirement, while giving you an opportunity to develop your skills in forging interpretive arguments as you prepare for Paper 1. [5% of final grade]

Two short essays of 6 pages each will be submitted to me at the beginning of class on the assigned deadlines. This page limit should be regarded as both the minimum and maximum length for your argument, but it does not include the list of Works Cited that you must submit along with your essay. The addition of this list will bring each of your essay submissions to a total of 7 pages. Successful papers will engage directly with the central concerns of the course. Deadlines are firm, though I make exceptions (for bereavement, serious illness, heartbreak, etc.). You must submit a hard copy of your paper. **Please note that this syllabus contains the assigned essay prompts for the Fall Term's two formal essays.** Each assignment has its own requirements and expectations. Late submissions will not receive extended comments:

- Paper 1 (6 pages on *Beowulf* [10% of final grade]; late submissions will be penalized 2% per day)
- Paper 2 (6 pages on *Troilus and Criseyde* [15% of final grade]; late submissions will be penalized 2% per day)

You will write a three-hour December exam in which you are responsible for all of the first term's readings. **Expect to write on every text on the reading list.** The exam is to

be administered during the exam period. It will emphasize, without being restricted to, material covered during lectures. [20% of final grade]

One-on-One Meetings

Please note that I require a one-on-one meeting of roughly 10 minutes with you at the beginning of the term. Times will be arranged via a sign-up sheet that will be distributed in class on the first day.

Plagiarism and Instructional Offences

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 form of intellectual theft. It is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct 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, or suspension from a program. For more information please go to: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

The full text of Carleton University’s Academic Integrity Policy can be found here: <https://carleton.ca/secretariat/wp-content/uploads/Academic-Integrity-Policy.pdf>

Academic Accommodations

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

Pregnancy obligation

Please contact your instructor 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, visit the Equity Services website:

carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

Religious obligation

Please contact your instructor 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, visit the Equity Services website:

carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC 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 your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. carleton.ca/pmc

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and its survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support

Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor 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.

<https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

Fall Term

R 5 Sept. **Introduction**, course business, and overview: “Cædmon’s Hymn” (cuLearn);
Context lecture: Past and Present in Anglo-Saxon Literature and Culture (“The Ruin,” cuLearn)

T 10 Sept. *Beowulf* (pages 53-113)

- **Sample essay prompt:** In the introduction to his translation of *Beowulf*, R. M.

Liuzza proposes that “The monsters outside the hall are projections of the evils within the hall” (17). Construct an argument about the poem in which you assess the validity of this statement and explore its implications. **[Please note that you are not being asked to prepare an essay on this topic; I will be presenting you with an essay, prepared by me, on this topic, with the goal of providing you with concrete expectations and advice for the first essay.]**

R 12 Sept. *Beowulf* (pages 114-167)

T 17 Sept. *Beowulf* (pages 167-245)

R 19 Sept. **In-class essay on *Beowulf*** (30 minutes; 5% of Fall Term grade) / lecture on *The Dream of the Rood* (cuLearn), “Wulf and Eadwacer,” “The Wife’s Lament,” and *Judith* (cuLearn)

T 24 Sept. **Context and transition lecture: Ireland and the Middle Ages** (Táin Bó Cúailnge, 3-50)

- **Paper 1 (*Beowulf*) due at the beginning of class**

R 26 Sept. *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (51-100)

T 1 Oct. *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (101-208)

R 3 Oct. **Context and transition lecture: The Norman Conquest, Anglo-Norman Literature, and Welsh Literature** (Marie de France, *Lais*)

T 8 Oct. Marie de France, *Lais*

R 10 Oct. Marie de France, *Lais*

T 15 Oct. *Four Branches of the Mabinogi* (“The First Branch”)

R 17 Oct. *Four Branches of the Mabinogi* (“The Second and Third Branches”)

21-25 October: FALL BREAK (no classes)

T 29 Oct. *Four Branches of the Mabinogi* (“The Fourth Branch”); **Introduction to Middle English** (*Troilus and Criseyde*, 1.1-56)

R 31 Oct. **Context and transition lecture: Anglo-Norman to Middle English and the Later Middle Ages**; Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde* (Book 1, esp. lines 57-1092)

T 5 Nov. Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde* (Book 2, esp. lines 1-931)

R 7 Nov. Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde* (Books 2 and 3, esp. lines 2.932-1757 and 3.1-420)

T 12 Nov. Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde* (Book 3, esp. lines 421-1820)

R 14 Nov. Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde* (Book 4, esp. lines 1-1085)

T 19 Nov. Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde* (Book 4-5, esp. lines 4.1086-1701 and 5.1-686)

R 21 Nov. Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde* (Book 5, esp. lines 687-1869)

- **Mock essay:** Scholars have long been puzzled by the fact that *Troilus and Criseyde* concludes with an elaborate coda (5.1765-1869) that appears to disavow many of the aspirations and desires that seemed dear to the poem and its narrator. Construct an argument about the relationship between the action of *Troilus and Criseyde* and the poem’s conclusion. **[Please note that you are not being asked to prepare an essay on this topic; I will be presenting you with an essay, prepared by me, on this topic, with the goal of providing you with concrete expectations and advice for the first essay.]**

T 26 Nov. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Fitt 1)

- **Paper 2 (Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde*) due at the beginning of class**

R 28 Nov. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Fitts 2 and 3)

T 3 Dec. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Fitt 4)

R 5 Dec. **Concluding Lecture to Fall Term**

- **Expectations for Papers 1-2**

1) Each of the essay prompts for this course is designed to constrain you to a specific text and topic (or problem, term, etc.) while also giving you the freedom to decide how you want to explore it. Ultimately, you will determine the line of argument you will pursue in your essay.

2) **Please note, too, that a literary essay is a formal document in which you must advance and support an argument about the text and concepts under examination.** Depending on the prompt, you may be expected to range out beyond the text under examination in order to consider how that text relates to the circumstances in which it was produced and interpreted. Some assignments may require that you restrict yourself quite narrowly to specific passages. **But whatever the prompt, an essay about literature demands that you proceed in your argument by citing and analyzing the language of the text under examination.** Any English essay will demand that you work closely with the specific language (diction, metaphors, etc.) and conditions in which a given topic (say, human depravity, or the nature of sexual desire, or the seductions and dangers of introspection) is explored by the text you are examining. **As you construct your essay, bear in mind that I am looking for an argument that develops in a complex manner as it cites and analyzes passages from the text or texts under examination.**

3) An “A” paper will:

- meet the expectations established in the required prompt
- persuasively advance an argument that helps explain a significant aspect of the required text or texts
- state and develop the implications of this argument
- cite and analyze the text’s language in order to show that the line of argument pursued in the essay arises directly from the text itself
- be “clean”: that is, free of grammatical errors and typos

Please see the essay rubric (posted on cuLearn) for further information and expectations.

Objectives and Prompts for Papers 1 and 2

Paper 1

Objective: The objective of Paper 1 is to see you accustoming yourself to using scholarly editions of works as resources for critical analysis, and to teach you to recognize that existing criticism can provide you with a sophisticated point of departure from which you can begin to develop your own literary arguments.

Prompt: In the introduction to his Broadview Press translation of *Beowulf*, R. M. Liuzza asserts that “In many respects the poem already contains its own background and foreground, a fictionalized matrix of past and present within the text; our modern efforts to explain Beowulf’s origins or contexts or even to place the hero’s actions into some perspective can only mimic or mirror the poem’s own contextualizing impulses” (16). Establish what you take Liuzza to be saying about the poem and construct an argument about *Beowulf* in which you explore the significance and the implications of this view of the poem’s construction. Your essay should touch on several aspects or episodes of the poem. You must engage closely with both the language of the poem and with Liuzza’s introduction. **[Please note that this is not to be treated as an essay about the poem’s monsters.]**

*6 pages + list of Works Cited; see “Guidelines for Essay Writing” for further details. 10% of your final grade. Late papers will be penalized 2% per day; papers submitted more than two weeks late will be failed. You must submit a hard copy of your paper. Use MLA format.

Paper 2

Objective: The objective of Paper 2 is to teach you to work directly with rhetorical tropes (e.g., metaphor, simile, etc.) and schemes (i.e, features of diction and poetic form) in the course of developing close readings and arguments. To put this another way, the paper expects you to make rhetoric, rather than plot and plot summary, the central focus of your analysis.

Prompt: Construct an argument about how the tropes and schemes that lend complexity to Chaucer’s description of the relationship between Troilus and Criseyde are connected to the preoccupations of the poem as a whole. Be as specific as possible. Your essay should touch on several aspects or episodes of the poem.

*6 pages + list of Works Cited; see “Guidelines for Essay Writing” (below) for further details. 15% of your final grade. Late papers will be penalized 2% per day; papers submitted more than two weeks late will be failed. You must submit a hard copy of your paper. Use MLA format.

Guidelines for Essay Writing

1. Do not include a separate title page. All necessary personal information should appear at the top left of the first page of your essay. This information (along with everything else in your submission) must be double-spaced.
2. Your essay must have a clearly defined thesis—that is, a central idea, introduced in the first paragraph, that unifies the essay and expresses in a clear and forceful manner the case you are arguing. You must advance a specific argument about the topic you have chosen to address. Your argument may take as its point of departure ideas from class, but it must not be a mere summary of lecture material. **It should help to think of your essay prompts not as inviting you to answer a question but rather as inviting you to construct an argument about the texts and problems under examination.**
3. For essays that demand attention to two or more authors or texts, be sure that your essay does not become a catalogue of similarities and differences. Instead, create a structure that will allow you to consider the implications of those similarities and differences that you take to be significant. These comparisons must be integrated into your central argument.
4. Be aware of the implications of your statements; develop those implications over the course of the essay.
5. Always support your arguments with evidence from the text. Quotations must be integrated into proper sentence structure to form a full sentence.
6. Always cite the strongest evidence for your claims. If there are details that might seem to undermine your thesis be sure to explain why they don't disprove your argument.
7. Focus your argument and analysis on the language of the text. Do not base your argument on personal opinions or generalizations not supported by the text. Your arguments need to arise directly from close engagements with the language of the text at hand.
8. Proofread your essay more than once for grammar, sense, and clarity.
9. Do not transform poetry into prose when you quote it in your essay. Indent longer passages of verse (four or more lines) and preserve the form in which they appear in the text from which you are citing. Show line-breaks for shorter passages that will not be indented: "Abashed the Devil stood, / And felt how awful goodness is, and saw / Virtue in her shape how lovely" (4.846-8).
10. Choose a title that will serve as a guide to your reader.
11. Leave time to rewrite and revise your argument. Revision is the key to effective writing.
12. Cite your secondary sources. Plagiarism is a serious offence. Please see the course syllabus and the Undergraduate Calendar for a definition of plagiarism and a discussion of its consequences.

*****Papers must be typewritten, double-spaced, and written in formal English.**

Avoid colloquial language. Avoid contractions (e.g., write "Beowulf could not" instead of "Beowulf couldn't"). Use standard paper (8 1/2 x 11 inches). Use 1-inch margins and a standard font. You should have approximately 20 lines per page. The paper should be stapled—**no folders, no separate title pages**. Be sure to keep a copy of the paper. Please use MLA style for quotations. Handy guides to MLA style are available online.

If you can, please print on both sides of the paper (or use scrap paper).

Fall Term: Timeline for Early and Medieval Britain (circa 55 BCE-circa 1500)

| | |
|------------------|---|
| 55 and 54 BCE | Julius Caesar invades Britain |
| 43 CE-410 | Roman Britain |
| 400s | Germanic Migrations |
| 449 | Bede's date for the arrival of the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes |
| 449-1066 | Anglo-Saxon England |
| 449-1485 | The Middle Ages / Medieval England |
| 597 | Pope Gregory the Great sends Augustine of Canterbury to convert the English |
| circa 658-680 | Supposed date of "Caedmon's Hymn" |
| circa 700-800 | Ruthwell Cross (bears lines similar to a passage in "The Dream of the Rood") |
| 731 | Bede completes the <u>Historia ecclesiasticae gentis Anglorum</u> |
| 793 | Vikings raid Lindisfarne |
| circa 800? | Cynewulf |
| 869 | Death of King Edmund |
| 886 | Treaty of Alfred and Guthrum establishes the Danelaw |
| 899 | King Alfred dies after translating "the texts most necessary for all men to know" |
| 960s | Benedictine Reforms |
| 990s | Ælfric of Eynsham |
| 991 | Battle of Maldon |
| circa 1000 | Approximate date of the four poetic codices: " <u>Beowulf MS</u> ," "Exeter Book," "Junius MS," "Vercelli Book." With the exception of "Caedmon's Hymn" and "The Fight at Finnsburgh," the Anglo-Saxon poems on our reading list are attested only in these manuscripts. |
| 1014 | Wulfstan, <u>Sermo Lupi ad Anglos</u> |
| 1066 | Norman Conquest |
| 1066-1204 | Anglo-Norman |
| 1066-1485 | Middle English |

- circa 1100-1200 Marie de France, Lais (including “Bisclavret”)
- 1277-1282 Edward I of England conquers Wales
- circa 1350-1410 Manuscripts containing the stories brought together and now known as the Mabinogion
- circa 1375 Chaucer, Troilus and Criseyde
- circa 1375-1400 Sir Gawain and the Green Knight
- 1400 Chaucer dies
- circa 1460-1500 Henryson, Testament of Cresseid

“Cædmon’s Hymn”

The following text is cited as it appears in A Choice of Anglo-Saxon Verse, ed. Richard Hamer (London: Faber and Faber, 1970) 121-3. Hamer asserts that “The text here given is from an early MS and is in a Northumbrian dialect, though many MSS are extant, some of them in West Saxon” (121).

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Nu scylun hergan | hefænrices Uard, | Now must we praise the Guardian of heaven, |
| Metudæs mæcti | end His modgidanc, | The power and conception of the Lord, |
| uerc Uuldurfadur, | sue He uundra gihuæs, | And all His works, as He, eternal Lord, |
| eci Dryctin, | or astelidæ. | Father of glory, started every wonder. |
| He ærist scop | ælda barnum | First He created heaven as a roof, |
| Heben til hrofe, | haleg Scepen. | The holy Maker, for the sons of men. |
| Tha middungeard | moncynnæs Uard, | Then the eternal Keeper of mankind |
| Eci Dryctin, | æfter tiadæ | Furnished the earth below, the land of men, |
| Firum foldu, | Frea allmectig. | Almighty God and everlasting Lord. |