

**Carleton University
Winter 2021
Department of English**

ENGL 2301B: Literatures and Cultures 500-1500

Prerequisites: Second-year standing or permission of the department
Precludes additional credit for ENGL 2300 (no longer offered)

Format: Blended (see below for details)

Days: Monday and Wednesday

Time: 1:05 pm - 2:25 pm

Professor Wallace

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Office: 1922 Dunton Tower

Phone: 520-2600 ext. 1039

Office Hour: **Please contact me via email for an appointment.**

ENGL 2301 introduces students to the richness (and, frequently, the sheer strangeness) of the literatures of the Middle Ages. This section of 2301 emphasizes the linguistic “hybridity” of the period within which what we call English literature was born. Our reading list will range from works by internationally influential writers to anonymous texts whose origins and earliest reception histories are murky and, ultimately, unknowable. Charting a path up through the middle of this range, we will place increasing emphasis on texts that make visible some of the processes by which the multifaceted traditions of “English” literature are formed.

During the early weeks of the course, we will be reliant on modern English translations of works originally written in Latin, 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 the past and the present.

Format: This will be a “blended” course. Lectures delivered via Zoom will be recorded and posted on cuLearn for the benefit of those who are unable to attend live sessions. These live sessions will be held at the officially scheduled time and date for the course. Should scheduling conflicts or exceptional circumstances arise, I may have to record one or more asynchronous Zoom lectures in place of the usual synchronous sessions. In such

cases, the asynchronous Zoom recordings will still be posted on cuLearn.

Required Texts

1. *Beowulf*, ed. and trans. R.M. Liuzza, second edition (Broadview). [9781554811137]
2. *The Táin [Táin Bó Cúailgne]*, trans. Thomas Kinsella (Oxford) [9780192803733]
3. *The Mabinogion*, ed. and trans. Sioned Davies (Oxford) [9780199218783].
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 available at Haven Books 43 Seneca Street, Ottawa, ON, K1S 4X2, (613) 730-9888: www.havenbooks.ca. These required books are also available at the university bookstore.

Other editions of these texts are perfectly acceptable, but it is essential for you to be using the Middle English texts of *Beowulf* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.

Please note that all these texts are available in free online editions. If you prefer, however, to have a hard copy or Kindle edition of any or all of these texts you can order them by entering the ISBN (i.e., the number in square brackets) into the “search” field of your preferred online bookstore.

Evaluations

- 5% Early feedback assignment (online via cuLearn)
- 30% Commentary assignment
- 30% Essay
- 35% Final Exam (3 hours: it will be held during the formally schedule exam period)

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.

You must complete all required assignments in order to be eligible to pass this course.

Evaluation Rationale

Your grade in this course will be based on a combination of an early feedback assignment, one commentary exercise, one formal essay, and one formally scheduled examinations of three hours. This combination is based on three related considerations.

- The early feedback assignment will give you a clear sense of your standing in the course before the larger assignments are due.

- The commentary assignment and the formal essay will give you a pair of opportunities to hone your interpretive skills and develop your ability to write persuasive, analytical prose.
- A three-hour final 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 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 will benefit from attending all meetings and participating fully in discussion. I recognize, however, that the 2021 Winter Term is taking place under extraordinary circumstances, and that you may find yourself overwhelmed and unable to attend scheduled classes. Because of this, recordings of classes will be stored on the course page in cuLearn. I do not grade attendance or participation in discussion. You will find, however, that your engagement in the course will be reflected in your ability to meet expectations for assignments, etc. A copy of the day's main text should be with you at every online meeting. I will direct you to individual passages of the texts we are studying, and will frequently offer close commentary on those passages, but will not necessarily display the passages onscreen as I lecture. Following along in your own copy will help you a good deal.

One early feedback assignment will give you an opportunity to gauge your standing in the course. This is a requirement of Carleton University's teaching regulations. [5%]

One commentary assignment will be submitted via cuLearn on the assigned deadline. This assignment will give you an opportunity to familiarize yourself with some of the more sophisticated and nuanced aspects of the circumstances in which early modern readers encountered certain kinds of literary texts. **Further details regarding this assignment will be given during the third meeting of the class.** Deadlines are firm. I recognize, however, that this term is unrolling under very complex circumstances, and I generally make exceptions for a variety of circumstances: bereavement, serious illness, heartbreak, etc. Late submissions will not receive extended comments. Late submissions will be penalized 2% per day. Assignments will be graded and returned to students via cuLearn. [30%]

One essay of 6 pages will be submitted via cuLearn on the assigned deadline. 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. I recognize, however, that this term is unrolling under very complex circumstances, and I generally make exceptions for a variety of circumstances: bereavement, serious illness, heartbreak, etc. **The required prompts for this essay will be distributed once the course begins.** Late submissions will not receive extended comments. Late submissions will be penalized 2% per day. Assignments will be graded and returned to students via cuLearn. [30%]

A final exam of three hours will take place during the formally scheduled exam period. **Expect to write on every text on the reading list.** The exam will emphasize, without being restricted to, material covered during lectures. Grades on the final exam will be made available via cuLearn. [35%]

One-on-One Meetings

Please note that I require a one-on-one meeting of roughly 10 minutes each with you during scheduled appointments via. Meeting times will be arranged via the “Scheduler” function in cuLearn.

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/>

Requests for 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: 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 click [here](#).

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 click [here](#).

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).

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 where 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:

<https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>

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

Reading Schedule and Due Dates

INTRODUCTORY ZOOM RECORDING POSTED JANUARY 1: **Introduction**, course business, and overview

- M11 January: **Context lecture: “After Rome: The Intellectual Cultures of the European Middle Ages”**; “Cædmon’s Hymn” (cuLearn); “The Ruin” (cuLearn)
 W13 January: Augustine and Boethius: extracts from *Confessiones* and *De consolatione philosophiae* (cuLearn)
 M18 January: *Beowulf* (pages 53-113)
 W20 January: *Beowulf* (pages 114-167)

M25 January: *Beowulf* (pages 167-245) **Early Feedback Quiz (15 minutes / 10 multiple-choice questions: to be completed on cuLearn outside of class hours)**

M27 January: *The Dream of the Rood* (cuLearn), “Wulf and Eadwacer,” “The Wife’s Lament,” and *Judith* (cuLearn)

M1 February: **Context and transition lecture: Ireland and the Middle Ages: *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (1)**

W3 February: *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (2)

M8 February: *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (3)

W10 February: **Context and transition lecture: Al-Andalus, Troubadour Poetry, *Fin amors***

- **Commentary Assignment on *Beowulf* due before 11:59 pm; please submit it directly to the upload module for this date on cuLearn**

M15-F19 February: Winter Break. No classes.

M22 February: **Context and transition lecture: The Norman Conquest, Anglo-Norman Literature:** Marie de France, *Lais*: Prologue, “Chevrefoil,” “Bisclavret,” “Equitan,” “Le Fresne,” “Deus Amanz,” “Guigemar,” “Laustic,” “Yonec”

W24 February: **Context and transition lecture: Wales, Ireland, and England: *The Mabinogion* (“The First and Second Branch of the Mabinogi”)**

M1 March: *The Mabinogion* (“The Second and Third Branches of the Mabinogi”)

W3 March: **Introduction to Middle English** (*Troilus and Criseyde*, 1.1-56)

M8 March: **Context and transition lecture: Anglo-Norman to Middle English and the Later Middle Ages;** Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde* (Book 1, esp. lines 57-1092)

W10 March: Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde* (Book 2, esp. lines 1-931)

M15 March: Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde* (Books 2 and 3, esp. lines 2.932-1757 and 3.1-420)

W17 March: Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde* (Book 3, esp. lines 421-1820)

M22 March: Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde* (Book 4, esp. lines 1-1085)

W24 March: Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde* (Book 4-5, esp. lines 4.1086-1701 and 5.1-686)

M29 March: Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde* (Book 5, esp. lines 687-1869)

W31 March: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Fitt 1)

- **Essay (Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde*) due before 11:59 pm; please submit it directly to cuLearn**

M5 April: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Fitts 2 and 3)

W7 April: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Fitt 4)

M12 April: **Concluding Lecture to Fall Term**

Expectations for course essay

1) The essay prompt 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.

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 (above, page 4, "**Plagiarism and Instructional Offences**") 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 approximate 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</u> MS," "Exeter Book," "Junius MS," "Vercelli Book." With the exception of "Cædmon's Hymn" and "The Fight at Finnsburgh," the Old English 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.