

**Carleton University  
Winter 2017  
Department of English**

**ENGL 3200A: *Medieval Literature (King Arthur)***  
*Prerequisite(s): ENGL 2300 or permission of the department.*

**Mondays and Wednesdays / 2:35pm-3: 55pm**  
**Location: *Please confirm location on Carleton Central***

**Professor: Dr. S. B. Calkin**  
**Email: *siobhain.calkin@carleton.ca***  
**Office: 1809 DT**  
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**Office Hours: Mondays 10:45am-12noon, Wednesdays 4-4:45pm, 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 England between 1100 and 1500. We will study the central texts of the medieval Arthurian tradition in England, 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 provided 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(s) and why they still speak to audiences today.

**Course Objectives:**

Students in this course will:

- Read a variety of medieval Arthurian texts
- Explore how these texts engage issues of gender, violence, history, polity, and religion
- Develop a historical and historicized understanding of the depictions of masculinity, femininity, love, kingship, queenship, 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
- Consider what constitutes the Arthurian Tradition, and what explains its enduring appeal
- Develop the research skills required to position medieval literature in relation to some of its secondary scholarship

## Reading List:

**French and Latin texts will be read in modern English translation. All other medieval 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. and ed. Michael A. Faletra. Peterborough: Broadview, 2008.
- Chrétien de Troyes, *Arthurian Romances*. Trans. and ed. William W. Kibler. London: Penguin, 1991.
- Marie de France, *Lanval* (available in both the Norton and Broadview Anthologies often used for ENGL 2300; if you do not have either of those, then this reading is available **online** in a translation by Judith Shoaf at <http://people.clas.ufl.edu/jshoaf/files/lanval.pdf>)
- *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.
- *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. Ed. Paul Battles. Peterborough: Broadview, 2012.
- Sir Thomas Malory. *Le Morte Darthur*. Ed. Stephen H. A. Shepherd. New York: Norton, 2004.

**Books available at Haven Books, 43 Seneca Street, tel: 613-730-9888 /e-mail: [info@havenbooks.ca](mailto:info@havenbooks.ca); [www.havenbooks.ca](http://www.havenbooks.ca)**

## Evaluation:

### Discussion Leading

**5%**

(On your chosen day, you are expected to come to class and start off our discussion of that day's text with a 2-3 minute oral presentation in which you identify 1-2 issues for our attention and direct our attention to 2-3 passages that engage those issues. Presentations will be assessed on clarity of organization and presentation, timely completion of specified tasks, and quality of textual analysis)

### Oral Presentation OR CULearn Post on Arthur Text/Website not covered in class

**5%**

(On your chosen day, you are expected to either post a 1-page (double-spaced) presentation to CULearn by 9am **OR** speak to us in class for 2-5 minutes about an Arthurian text or website **NOT** on our assigned readings (these may include primary texts from any period or medium, popular or scholarly websites, or scholarly articles you have read about an Arthurian text we study). Give us a very brief overview of your chosen resource and identify 1-2 points of connection, comparison and/or contrast with the medieval Arthurian texts we are studying. Posted assignments will be assessed on timely completion of specified tasks, clarity and correctness of writing, and effectiveness of organization/presentation; oral presentations will be assessed on timely completion of specified tasks, clarity of communication, and effectiveness of organization/presentation)

**Mid-Term Examination** **20%**  
*(Short answer and/or short translation passage, passage identification and analysis, essay question; will be scheduled during class time)*

**Paper:**

**Annotated Bibliography and Draft Thesis Statement (Due: Week of March 27, 2017)** **5%**

**Final Paper (Due: April 5, 2017)** **25%**

*(A paper of 10-12 pages, double-spaced, on one of the medieval texts studied in class; MLA format and secondary research are required. Possible topics and a detailed outline of my expectations will be distributed in class, and I encourage you to come and discuss your ideas and essay outlines with me during my office hours.)*

**Final Examination** **30%**

*(cumulative; short answer and/or short translation passage, in-depth passage identification and analysis, essay questions; will be scheduled during Formal Examination Period)*

**Class Participation and Attendance** **10%**

*(You are expected to come to class with the assigned readings completed, with the text in hand, and with 1-2 questions or comments on the assigned readings to contribute to our lecture/discussions either orally in class or through CULearn. Attendance will be taken regularly. You are expected to meet your in-class presentation or posting commitments (barring illness, bereavement etc.). You are also expected to pay attention to lectures and to your fellow students' presentations. Please note that surfing the web, e-mailing, texting, facebooking, sleeping etc. while in class does not constitute an active presence; you may be here physically but are elsewhere mentally, and your mark will reflect that absence.)*

**Mid-Term Examinations will be returned to students in a class meeting. Final Examinations remain the property of the university and may be consulted by scheduling an appointment with the professor to go over the examination after it has been marked.**

**PLAGIARISM**

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, suspension from a program, suspension from the university, or even expulsion from the university. For more information please go to: <http://www.carleton.ca/studentaffairs/academic-integrity>.

**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.

### **Attendance and Paper Policy:**

I expect you to be at class mentally as well as physically, and to contribute to our discussions and activities. For this reason, I have dedicated a portion of the grade to attendance and participation. Attendance will be taken regularly after our first meeting. Participation will be assessed through class discussion and/or on-line discussion via CULearn and completion of presentations. As stated above, sitting in class while surfing the web, e-mailing, texting, facebooking, sleeping etc. does not constitute an active presence; you may be here physically but are elsewhere mentally, and your mark will reflect that absence.

Your term paper is due at class on the date specified. E-mailed versions will only be accepted as a temporary solution to printing problems and must be followed by submission of a hard copy within twenty-four hours.

**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 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/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf>

**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 above.

**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](mailto: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. **Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.** After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website (([www.carleton.ca/pmc](http://www.carleton.ca/pmc)) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam.

### **Other Carleton Services:**

Please note that the following university-wide services are available to you: Writing Support Services, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, MacOdrum Library, 613-520-2600x1125, <http://carleton.ca/csas/writingservices/> (offers assistance with developing and improving writing skills); Student Academic and Career Development Services, 302 Tory Building, 613-520-7850, <http://carleton.ca/sacds/> (offers assistance with career preparation and provides access to university academic support programs); Research Help Desks at MacOdrum Library, 613-520-2600 x2735, <https://library.carleton.ca/services/research-help> (offer assistance with digital research and using the library); the Office of Student Affairs or Health and Counselling Services, 613-520-2600 x2573; [www.carleton.ca/studentaffairs](http://www.carleton.ca/studentaffairs) or [www.carleton.ca/health](http://www.carleton.ca/health) (offer assistance coping with stress or crisis).

Please note as well that you are warmly invited to access Departmental Academic Advising. The English Department's Undergraduate Supervisor will offer advice about your program of study as an English Major or Minor and check your fulfillment of program and university requirements for graduation. To make an appointment for academic advising, contact the Undergraduate Supervisor, Professor Birkwood, at [susan.birkwood@carleton.ca](mailto:susan.birkwood@carleton.ca).

**Please note:** Student or professor materials created for this course (including lectures, hand-outs, assignments, presentations, posts, essays, and examinations) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s).

### **Schedule of Classes and Readings:**

Check Class Location in Carleton Central. 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.

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| M. Jan. 9  | Overview of Course and Requirements<br>Introduction: Arthur Before Geoffrey of Monmouth   |
| W. Jan. 11 | Finish Introduction if necessary<br>Geoffrey of Monmouth, <i>History of the Kings of Britain</i><br>—pp. 41-58 (Brutus); pp. 112-162 (Merlin, Uther, Arthur's Conception) |

- M. Jan. 16 Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*  
—pp. 163-217 (Arthur and afterwards)
- W. Jan. 18 Finish Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*  
**Day 1: Posts / Oral Presentations on Other Arthurs**
- M. Jan. 23 Chrétien de Troyes, *Arthurian Romances*  
—*Knight of the Cart (Lancelot)*, pp. 207-94
- W. Jan. 25 —*Knight of the Cart (Lancelot)*
- M. Jan. 30 Chrétien de Troyes, *Arthurian Romances*  
—*Story of the Grail (Perceval)*, pp. 381-494
- W. Feb. 1 —*Story of the Grail (Perceval)*
- M. Feb. 6 Marie de France, *Lanval* (in Norton or Broadview anthologies or on-line)  
**Day 2: Posts / Oral Presentations on Other Arthurs**
- W. Feb. 8 Introduction to Middle English  
*Stanzaic Morte Arthur* (in *King Arthur's Death*), pp. 11-68
- M. Feb. 13 *Stanzaic Morte Arthur*, pp. 69-123
- W. Feb. 15 **Mid-Term Examination (in class)**
- M. Feb. 20 **NO CLASS—READING WEEK**
- W. Feb. 22

- M. Feb. 27 *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Fitt 1, pp. 31-52
- W. Mar. 1 *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Fitt 2, pp. 53-81  
**Day 3: Posts / Oral Presentations on Other Arthurs**
- M. Mar. 6 *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Fitt 3, pp. 82-120
- W. Mar. 8 *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Fitt 4, pp. 121-144
- M. Mar. 13 Alliterative *Morte Arthure* (in *King Arthur's Death*), pp. 131-198
- W. Mar. 15 Alliterative *Morte Arthure*, pp. 199-261
- M. Mar. 20 Finish Alliterative *Morte Arthure*
- W. Mar. 22 Thomas Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*  
—Beginnings, pp. 3-61
- M. Mar. 27 **Annotated Bibliography and Draft Thesis Statement due this week**  
Malory, Beginnings, pp. 62-112
- W. Mar. 29 Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*  
—“The Noble Tale of the Sankgreal,” pp. 496-544
- M. Apr. 3 Malory, “The Noble Tale of the Sankgreal,” pp. 544-587
- W. Apr. 5 **Final Papers due**  
Final Examination Format  
*Monty Python and the Holy Grail*  
Medieval snacks potluck?