

Carleton University
Winter 2019
Department of English
ENGL 4105A/5207W: Introduction to Old English: A Living Language

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

Time: Tuesday/Thursday 1:00–2:30

Location: DT 1816

Instructor: Prof. Robin Norris

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Office: 1813 Dunton Tower

Telephone: 613-520-2600, ext. 4195

Office Hours: by appointment

TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE (December 2018)

Course description

In this new version of course, we will explore the afterlife of Old English over the last three hundred years. In 1715, Elizabeth Elstob published the first Modern English grammar of Old English; we will use it as our textbook. We will consider what Elstob meant by the term ‘English-Saxon’ three hundred years ago, and explore the use of the term ‘Anglo-Saxon’ in the twenty-first century. As this terminology raises issues of identity and whiteness, we will explore the Anglo-Saxons’ own understanding of race by translating Old English texts about non-white peoples, especially lives of saints from Africa and Asia. Finally, to practice translating Old English verse, we will explore the rune poem, published by Elstob’s mentor George Hickes in 1705 from a manuscript that would be lost in the Cotton library fire of 1731.

The primary purpose of this course is to learn to read Old English, the oldest form of the English language. To do so, we will borrow strategies from the pedagogy of living language instruction, including speaking, listening, and writing in Old English. 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. If Old English is the earliest form of English, then present-day English is simply its most recent remanifestation.

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
- Reading knowledge of Old English developed through oral and written exercises
- Understanding of the cultural and historical contexts of both Anglo-Saxon literature and Anglo-Saxonism

Texts

Students must read, print, and/or photocopy websites, handouts, and texts available online or in hard copy.

Elstob’s grammar will be made available to you in pdf.

For students who need a grammar other than Elstob, I recommend: Peter Baker, *Introduction to Old English* (3rd ed., Wiley-Blackwell, 2012). Advanced students may prefer Mitchell and Robinson’s *A Guide to Old English* (8th ed., Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).

For students who wish to purchase a dictionary, I recommend: J. R. Clark Hall, *A Concise Anglo-Saxon*

Dictionary, 4th ed. (MART, 1984).

Evaluation

Unit One in-class activity and participation mark	15
Unit Two in-class activity and participation mark	15
Unit Three in-class activity and participation mark	15
Discussion facilitation (pick a date and topic)	10
Recitation (second half of January)	10
Dialogue (during Unit 2 or 3)	10
Translation exam (due March 19)	12.5
Final exam (due April 27)	12.5

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

In lieu of one class meeting, you must attend Medieval Europe: Power and Splendour at the Canadian Museum of History, which ends January 20. Admission is free on Thursday evenings, 5:00–8:00, including January 10 and 17. I propose a group outing on January 17.

Unit One

Jan 8 and 10
Jan 15 and 17
Jan 22 and 24
Jan 29 and 31

Unit Two

Feb 5 and 7
Feb 12 and 14
Feb 26 and 28
March 5 and 7

Unit Three

March 19 and 21
March 26 and 28
Apr 2 and 4
Apr 9

Rather than predicting your progress in advance, we will make decisions together about what to focus on week to week and how we will proceed. In unit one, expect core Germanic vocabulary, basic grammar, and prose readings from the Old English martyrology. In unit two, we will begin to translate excerpts of prose saints' lives. In unit three, we will begin translating the rune poem.

Proposed discussion topics

Medieval Europe: Power and Splendour at the Canadian Museum of History
Renaissance Antiquarianism, the birth of Anglo-Saxonism, and the rediscovery of Old English
Elizabeth Elstob's career
Anglo-Saxon: what does it mean?
The global Middle Ages
Anglo-Saxon multiculturalism
Geraldine Heng, *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages*
Stephen Harris, *Race and Ethnicity in Anglo-Saxon Literature*
Christopher Krebs, *A Most Dangerous Book: Tacitus's Germania from Roman Empire to the Third Reich*
Runes, Anglo-Saxon and otherwise
White supremacist appropriation of the Middle Ages
Medievalist responses to white supremacy

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance, collegiality, and participation

This course is an advanced seminar, so I expect professional and courteous behaviour from all students and demand a high level of investment in the course.

There should be no undocumented absences from class. In other words, you must email me to let me know that you are missing class, you are advised to state whether you believe the absence is excusable, and you should explain what *you* will do to make up the instruction that you missed.

Students enrolled in ENGL 5207 will complete a longer exam. Otherwise, no distinction will be made

between undergraduate and graduate students, and I expect all students to foster a spirit of collaboration and community.

Passing this class requires advance preparation and informed participation. You must complete all reading and translation assignments before coming to class and bring all assigned reading and homework materials to each class. When you are in class, I expect you to be an active participant.

The evaluation rubric above is predicated upon these fundamental expectations.

Cancellations

You are responsible for checking your Carleton email once at least daily so that you will have as much warning as possible in case of a necessary cancellation (e.g., due to illness).

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 exams will be accepted.

Rewrite policy

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

Take-home exam

Students are welcome to work collaboratively on the take-home exams, and to utilize all available resources. However, each student must write and submit her own answers. All sources consulted must be cited using MLA format. You must read and understand the statement on plagiarism below before beginning work on the take-home exams.

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 the professor 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 <https://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf>

Religious obligation: write to the professor 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 <https://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf>

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

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 is 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/sexual-violence-support/wp-content/uploads/Sexual-Violence-Policy-December-1-2016.pdf>

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;
- 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.