

Carleton University

Fall 2022

Department of English Language and Literature

ENGL 4105A/5207F and LING 4805A: Introduction to Old English

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

**Time:** Monday/Wednesday 11:35–12:55

**Location:** 1812 Dunton Tower

**Format:** In person

**Instructor:** Prof. Robin Norris

**Email:** robin.norris@carleton.ca

**Office:** 1919 Dunton Tower

**Telephone:** 613-520-2600, ext. 4195

**Office Hours:** online by appointment

**Important note:** For information on deadlines for withdrawal from courses, please consult the Academic Year section of the Undergraduate Calendar (<https://calendar.carleton.ca/academicyear/>).

**Carleton University is located on the traditional and unceded territory  
of the Algonquin Anishinaabe Nation.**

## COURSE OUTLINE

### Course description

The primary purpose of this course is to learn to read Old English, the oldest form of the English language. After 1000 years of language change, the language of early medieval England 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 Old English literature and Anglo-Saxonism, including the white supremacy of the field, its terminology and practices

**Advance preparation, engaged participation, and committed communication**

Enrollment in this seminar commits you to communicating and collaborating with your classmates and professor, and especially to ask questions when anything (content or process) is unclear. During our class meetings, you are expected to be fully invested in creating a collaborative classroom community. *If you are sick, please do not come to class.* There will be absences this term, whether due to illness, testing policies, etc., but it is imperative that we keep in touch about who is unavailable, how to make up missed work (for the sake of learning, not for grades), and other changes to our plans (on both the faculty and student side).

**Texts (On order at Haven Books)**

You must have consistent, reliable access to: Bjork, a dictionary, and a grammar textbook.

Please purchase this book: Robert E. Bjork, *Old English Shorter Poems, Vol. II: Wisdom and Lyric*. Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library 32. Harvard University Press, 2014.

J. R. Clark Hall, *A Concise Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*, 4th ed. Medieval Academy Reprints for Teaching, 1984. Also available online is bosworthtoller.com.

R. D. Fulk, *An Introductory Grammar of Old English*, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies 463, MRTS Texts for Teaching 8. Open access, available at: <https://hdl.handle.net/2022/25547> or purchase a hard copy from Haven.

You may also be interested in purchasing one of the following:

Murray McGillivray, *A Gentle Introduction to Old English* (Broadview, 2010), for students who want a gentle introduction.

Peter S. Baker, *Introduction to Old English*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), for students who want a moderate introduction.

Mitchell and Robinson, *A Guide to Old English*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed. (Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), for students who appreciate a focus on linguistic detail.

**TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE**

Rather than setting content in stone, I hope to be responsive to the pace, needs, and interests of the class. Grammar instruction (and memorization), chapters from the Fulk textbook, reading and analyzing facing-page texts, and translation of Old English texts will take place each week both in class and for homework. The focus on grammar and the use of facing-page prose texts will be more helpful early in the term and gradually give way to a greater focus on translating Old English verse. This flexibility will also enable students to present and facilitate their chosen activities during classtime (for more on this see below).

The primary texts I am suggesting for our focus this term could be described as “wisdom literature.” I am interested in the use of multicultural sources (Biblical, Germanic, etc.); the interdisciplinarity of scientific/magical/religious texts; the use of the catalogue as a way to organize knowledge; and other questions of form and function (e.g., the use of runes and Latin nomenclature or verse and prose). These texts might include maxims and riddles, Wulfstan’s *De Falsis Deis*, the Rune Poem, the Nine Herbs Charm, Solomon and Saturn, and the rhyming poem.

Sept. 7	Introductions, personal pronouns, the verb ‘to be’
Sept. 12 and 14	
Sept. 19 and 21	
Sept. 26	
Sept. 28	Exam 1
Oct. 3 and 5	
Oct. 10	NO CLASS

Oct. 12	
Oct. 17 and 19	
Oct. 24, 26, 31	NO CLASS
Nov. 2	Exam 2
Nov. 7 and 9	
Nov. 14 and 16	
Nov. 21 and 23	
Nov. 28	
Nov. 30	Exam 3
Dec. 5	
Dec. 7	
Friday, Dec. 9	Portfolios due in class

## Evaluation

The course mark is based on a portfolio of work to be submitted in class on Friday, December 9. The required elements of the portfolio are outlined below. Marks will be assigned for exams, quizzes, and presentations on an ongoing basis so that students will know in advance the grades earned for portfolio components. Throughout the term, students are responsible for coordinating classtime and deadlines to present their work.

- 10 points      A student who feels they have made a significant contribution to class participation can document this to include in the portfolio. The maximum portfolio grade is A. This is the work required for me to award an A+ at my discretion.
- 10 points      These points will automatically be awarded to any student who consistently communicates about their absences, and deducted for any student who communicates inadequately or inappropriately (especially about absences, but more generally as well).
- 10 points      Each portfolio will include a cover essay reflecting on learning throughout the term, reviewing all of the work outlined here, and explaining the choice of portfolio items (minimum five pages for undergraduates, minimum ten pages for graduate students).
- 10 points      Grammar and translation quizzes will take place in class on a regular basis. Students will assemble ten quizzes to include as ten units of work.
- 20 points      Three exams will take place throughout the term. Each student must include one exam in the portfolio.
- 20 points      Each student will lead the class through their translation of a passage of Old English. Advance consultation with Professor Norris is strongly recommended.
- 10 points      Each student must complete two of these activities. Most of these activities can be undertaken collaboratively if students choose to share the marks or extend the length as appropriate.

Grammar facilitation: Create a ten-minute grammar lesson to teach the class. These should be completed prior to fall break.

Recitation: Memorize approximately ten lines of Old English poetry and recite it to demonstrate mastery of pronunciation.

Metrical experimentation: Develop a metrical treatment of an Old English passage

and perform it.

Creative adaptation: Produce a creative response to an Old English text and share it.

Discussion facilitation: Present for ten minutes on one of the suggested topics below, and then facilitate discussion based on your questions for ten minutes.

Discussion on each topic will occur only once, but students are encouraged to collaborate.

In addition to the required contents outlined here, a student may request my approval in advance in order to include additional work in the portfolio and to designate that additional work towards their mark (for example, to designate an additional exam in lieu of the two ten-point activities they have attempted, or to designate two additional ten-point activities in lieu of the exam they have included). This decision-making process would need to be explained in the cover essay.

### **Proposed discussion topics**

The global Middle Ages

Multiculturalism in early medieval England

White supremacist appropriation of the Middle Ages

Medievalist responses to white supremacy

Renaissance Antiquarianism, the birth of Anglo-Saxonism, and the rediscovery of Old English

Seeta Chaganti, “Solidarity and the Medieval Invention of Race” <https://doi.org/10.1017/pli.2021.37>

Stephen Harris, *Race and Ethnicity in Anglo-Saxon Literature*

Geraldine Heng, *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages*

Christopher Krebs, *A Most Dangerous Book: Tacitus’s Germania from Roman Empire to the Third Reich*

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### **FASS POLICIES**

#### **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.

### **Statement on Student Mental Health**

As a University student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

**Emergency Resources (on and off campus):** <https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

### **Carleton Resources:**

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

### **Off Campus Resources:**

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389, <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>
- Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

## Information on Pandemic Measures

It is important to remember that COVID is still present in Ottawa. The situation can change at any time and the risks of new variants and outbreaks are very real. There are [a number of actions you can take](#) to lower your risk and the risk you pose to those around you including being vaccinated, wearing a mask, staying home when you're sick, washing your hands and maintaining proper respiratory and cough etiquette.

**Feeling sick?** Remaining vigilant and not attending work or school when sick or with symptoms is critically important. If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms do not come to class or campus. If you feel ill or exhibit symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately. In all situations, you must follow Carleton's [symptom reporting protocols](#).

**Masks: Carleton has paused its mandatory mask mandate as of June 25, 2022.** Even though masks will no longer be mandatory, **we continue to strongly recommend masking when indoors**, particularly if physical distancing cannot be maintained. For more information please visit <https://carleton.ca/covid19/policies-and-protocols/mask-policy/>.

**Vaccines:** While proof of vaccination is no longer required as of May 1 to attend campus or in-person activity, it may become necessary for the University to bring back proof of vaccination requirements on short notice if the situation and public health advice changes. Students are strongly encouraged to get a full course of vaccination, including booster doses as soon as they are eligible, and submit their booster dose information in [cuScreen](#) as soon as possible. Please note that Carleton cannot guarantee that it will be able to offer virtual or hybrid learning options for those who are unable to attend the campus.

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow requirements and guidelines regarding health and safety which may change from time to time. For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and health and safety requirements please see the [University's COVID-19 website](#) and review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact [covidinfo@carleton.ca](mailto:covidinfo@carleton.ca).

## Requests for 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 accommodation regarding a formally-scheduled final exam, you must complete the [Pregnancy Accommodation Form](#).

**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](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 (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 will 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>