ENGLISH 310A: CHAUCER 1

Fall Term 2005
Tu., Th. 2:30-3:50
PAS 1241

Instructor: Matthew McCabe
Office Hours: Tu., Th. 1:30-2:30 Hagey Hall 254
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This course will introduce the writings of Geoffrey Chaucer, emphasizing the main poetic works other than the Canterbury Tales (to be studied in ENGL310B). After an introduction to Chaucer’s language and to his work as a translator, we will turn our focus first to the dream poems and then to Chaucer’s greatest completed work, Troilus and Criseyde. With a view to assessing Chaucer’s literary aspirations and achievement prior to the Canterbury Tales, we will consider these works in the light of his literary inheritance—ancient, English, and continental. We will also consider Chaucer’s social context as a matrix for literary production. Although this is not a course in English philology per se, aspects of Middle English vocabulary and syntax will be addressed throughout. Students will be expected to gain basic reading competence early on and continue to improve their fluency over the course of the term.

REQUIRED BOOK:

BOOKS ON RESERVE (1-day borrowing from Porter):

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:
Research Essay, due Nov. 29 (essay proposal and bibliography are due Oct. 27) 35%
Semester Exam 35%
Translation Quiz, Oct. 6 10%
Mini-presentation 10%
Participation 10%

ASSIGNMENTS:

Research essays, 2500-3000 words, must be submitted double-spaced, with formatting and bibliography conforming to the MLA standard, as found in the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. Correctness of presentation, citation practice and English grammar will all be evaluated as part of the student’s grade. Bibliography should consist primarily of articles from scholarly journals and academic
books; not more than 20% of any bibliography should come from online sources. Of the total 35 marks, 4 marks will be assigned to an essay proposal and bibliography due Oct. 27. Students are invited to consult the instructor for help with the proposal and bibliography in advance of this date.

Please hand in the proposal and the essay at class on the days they are due. If this is impossible, late assignments may be placed in the English department drop box and the submission date will be stamped. Unless there are mitigating circumstances (discussed with the instructor in advance), a penalty of 2% per business day will be subtracted for each day an assignment is late, to a maximum of 10 business days, after which a grade of 0 will be assigned.

Mini-presentations are short presentations on an approved topic. Each student is required to present once. Students are advised to reserve a date early in the term (see the "Schedule of Mini-Presentation Topics") and consult the instructor about possible topics and approaches. Preparation may involve reading an article and distilling the main facts for an oral presentation; alternatively it may involve a close study of a passage from the assigned reading for the day, with a view to initiating class discussion. Mini-presentations should last about 10 minutes and use the time effectively. Clarity, effectiveness of presentation, brevity, and quality of content will all be evaluated. Although the presenter is by no means expected to have comprehensive knowledge of the topic, he or she should be prepared for follow-up discussion. Please note: once a date has been chosen, it cannot be changed without a doctor's note. A missed presentation will receive a grade of zero.

The translation quiz will be two passages of Chaucer's poetry, not more than 10 lines each, to be rendered into modern English prose. Time limit one hour.

The semester exam will cover all the material taught in class. It will be in essay format, and will not involve translation, although Middle English passages or lines may be used in the questions.

Please note: The test and exam cannot be rescheduled without a doctor's note or an otherwise documented emergency. Students with disabilities who require extra time or other accommodation should make sure to register with the Office for Persons with Disabilities, Needles Hall 1132.

Academic Offenses and Grievance
The Arts Faculty warning about academic offenses is appended. For further information, see “How to Avoid Plagiarism and Other Written Offences: A Guide for Students and Instructors” (http://watarts.uwaterloo.ca/~sager/plagiarism.html).

Students who believe that they have been wrongfully or unjustly penalized have the right to grieve; refer to Policy #70, Student Grievance (http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm).

CLASS SCHEDULE:

1 Sept. 13 [Introduction, Chaucer’s language]
2 Sept. 15 “Inflections,” xxxiv-xxxviii; The Book of the Duchess 1-107
3 Sept. 20 “Some features of syntax and idiom,” xxxviii-xlii; The Book of the Duchess 108-353
4 Sept. 22 The Book of the Duchess 354-709
5 Sept. 27 The Book of the Duchess 710-1111
6 Sept. 29  *The Book of the Duchess* 1112-end; *The Parliament of Fowls* 1-147
7 Oct. 4  *The Parliament of Fowls* 323-end
8 Oct. 6  **Translation Quiz. The House of Fame:** 1-508
9 Oct. 11  *The House of Fame:* 509-1090
10 Oct. 13  *The House of Fame:* 1091-1548
11 Oct. 18  *The House of Fame:* 1549-end
12 Oct. 20  *Troylus and Criseyde:* I.1-581
13 Oct. 25  *Troylus and Criseyde:* I.582-end of I
14 Oct. 27  **Essay Proposal due. Troylus and Criseyde:** II.1-826
15 Nov. 1  *Troylus and Criseyde:* II.827-end of II
16 Nov. 3  *Troylus and Criseyde:* III.1-798
17 Nov. 8  *Troylus and Criseyde:* III.799-1414
18 Nov. 10  *Troylus and Criseyde:* III.1415-end of III
19 Nov. 15  *Troylus and Criseyde:* IV.1-658
20 Nov. 17  *Troylus and Criseyde:* IV.659-end of IV
21 Nov. 22  *Troylus and Criseyde:* V.1-637
22 Nov. 24  *Troylus and Criseyde:* V.638-1435
23 Nov. 29  **Essay due. Troylus and Criseyde:** V.1436-end
24 Dec. 1  Final Review
**Semester Exam**
Department of English Contacts and Resources

Contacts:

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<thead>
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THE FACULTY OF ARTS REQUIRES THAT WE NOTIFY YOU OF THE FOLLOWING:

"Note on avoidance of academic offenses: All students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes an academic offense, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for their academic actions. When the commission of an offense is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline) which is supplied in the Undergraduate Calendar (p. 1:11). If you need help in learning how to avoid offenses such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission, or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean."

Dean of Arts: Robert R. Kerton
ML 236, ext. 2217

Associate Dean of Arts, Undergraduate Affairs
Sheila Ager
ML 254, ext. 3554