

The University of Western Ontario
Brescia University College
English 3318E: Middle English Literature Section 530

Instructor: Dr. Dominick Grace
Telephone: 432-8353 ext. 28244
Class time: Tu 12:30-1:30, Th 12:30-2:30
Office Hours: TBA

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Required Texts

Joseph Black et. al, eds. *Broadview Anthology of British Literature Volume 1: The Medieval Period*. Broadview.

Course Description

This course is an introduction to some of the major texts and themes of Middle English literature, with an emphasis on Chaucer and his contemporaries. Examples of medieval drama, romances, texts from the Arthurian tradition, and medieval autobiography and letter-writing may also be included.

Antirequisite(s): [English 3114E](#), the former English 3115E, the former English 3116E, the former English 3118F/G or the former English 3119F/G.

Prerequisite(s): At least 60% in 1.0 of English 1000-1999, or permission of the Department.

Evaluation Methods

Short tests/quizzes (minimum 6; best 5 count)	10%
Midterm Test	10%
Essay 1 (1500 words)	15%
Essay 2 (3000 words)	20%
Seminar	10%
Final Exam	35%

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, successful students will

- 1) Understand and be able to read and pronounce texts written in Middle English;
- 2) Understand terminology relevant to the study of medieval English literature, both related to the forms and genres of the literature itself and to the critical tradition applied to the study of medieval literature;
- 3) Be able to read closely and analyze medieval literary texts, thereby demonstrating the communication and inquiry and analysis competencies;
- 4) Be able to demonstrate the communication competency by expressing their knowledge and understanding in different ways, such as in responding to quiz and test questions, analyzing specific passages, and writing essays;
- 5) Be able to demonstrate the communication competency by expressing their ideas clearly and effectively in written form, using correct grammar and logical essay structure;
- 6) Understand and be able to apply literary terms and concepts to the texts studied, thereby demonstrating the inquiry and analysis competency;
- 7) Be able to develop and express their own ideas and interpretations of the texts studied, thereby demonstrating the critical thinking competency;
- 8) Be able to understand and reflect on the cultural differences that inform medieval literature, thereby demonstrating the social awareness and engagement competency;
- 9) Be able to impress me with the level of their understanding.

CLASS POLICIES: ENGLISH 3318E

Literary Studies

Literature is by its nature exploratory. It pushes against conventions, assumptions, limits, and even good taste. Literary texts may be culturally, morally, politically, racially, socially, religiously, ideologically, and/or linguistically or otherwise offensive to some, and medieval literature is especially likely to include potentially offensive material. In taking this course, you agree to expose yourself to material that you may find offensive and agree to read all required work and do all required assignments, even if the materials involved are offensive to you. It is understood that literary analysis and evaluation can include consideration of what is offensive and why, within the context of reasoned discussion and civil debate.

General Requirements

You may from time to time during the course receive direction to avail yourselves of University services and resources, or to engage in activities and pursuits outside the confines of the university, as part of the requirements for this course. Failure to follow such direction will be taken into account and may have a detrimental impact on your grade. It is understood that such requirements will be directly relevant to the materials being studied or to your progress as a student and that such directions will not be unduly onerous or burdensome.

Attendance

The academic calendar states that frequent absence from class can lead to students being “debarred from writing the final examination.” In other words, you may fail a course for missing classes. I take attendance, and I take absenteeism into account when calculating final grades. Students arriving after or leaving before I have taken attendance will be marked absent for that day; attending class means attending the whole class. Attendance is expected.

Academic Accommodation

See the attached document on Brescia policies for the rules governing academic accommodation for illness. Situations not covered by that policy (e.g. assignments worth less than 10%, or late or non-submission without academic accommodation) are covered as appropriate below.

Participation

Though there is no formal grade component for participation in this course, I will ask questions in class and expect your active engagement in discussion. You should also feel free to ask questions or to make other contributions to class discussion.

Assignments

Due dates for essays are included on the course schedule. Assignment topics will be provided well in advance of the due date. Consequently, you are expected to be aware of deadlines and to observe them; few excuses for lateness are acceptable under these circumstances. The pressure of other work is not an acceptable excuse for lateness, as the point of giving you your deadlines in advance is to allow you to plan your schedule accordingly. **Late assignments will be accepted but will be penalized 2% per day, including weekends.** Apologizing for lateness or asking if you can submit the essay a day or two late will in no way affect this policy. **Essays MUST be written to conform to the MLA guidelines for research papers. Failure to conform to the MLA guidelines will be penalized.** Essays must have their pages held together by a paper clip or staple; loose sheets will not be accepted. Do not submit essays in duotangs, binders, plastic folders, or any other kind of folder. All essays submitted on time will be returned promptly (usually within three weeks of submission) and will include, on return, written annotations throughout and a general commentary following the essay. Late essays will be returned eventually; in addition to having grades deducted, late papers will receive little or no written commentary. Where research requirements are specified, failure to observe them will be penalized; it is incumbent on you to begin work sufficiently in advance of the due date to meet the assignment requirements. **Also, be aware of the University's policies regarding academic dishonesty.** Plagiarism is a major academic offence and will be dealt with severely. Information on how to document sources properly can be found in most writing guides and in the *MLA Handbook*; you may also consult with me if you have any doubts.

Seminars

Presentation: Seminars MUST be presented on the day scheduled. Keeping on schedule is challenging enough without having to juggle seminar presentations. You should be prepared to lead the class for at least 20 minutes in an exploration of your subject, but how you do so is up to you. You may make a formal presentation; you may require participation by asking questions, designing some kind of interactive exercise, having students act out short scenes, or in other ways; you may use visual aids such as video clips, overheads, or handouts (if you get me materials in advance of class, I can make copies); you may present a skit, etc. In short, the format for the presentation is open, as long as the presentation addresses the topic in a useful and interesting way. It should be anchored to the play and address specifics, but it can be exploratory rather than conclusive, as long as you have clear ideas about what you are doing and where you are going.

Follow-up: Within seven days of your presentation (see me for exceptions such as end of term, before Reading Week, etc.), you must submit a written self-evaluation in which you summarize (at least; you may provide the actual text of what you said, if you take that approach) what you did, provide a commentary on why you chose the approach you did, and provide a commentary on how you think the presentation went (did you achieve your ends? what worked? what did not? what would you do differently next time? etc.). Include a works cited list detailing any secondary sources used for the presentation (including visual resources such as film clips). The written report need not take the form of a formal essay or

conform to MLA guidelines, except insofar as it provides a works cited list. This report should be approximately 1000 words (e.g. 3 typed pages).

Short Tests/Quizzes

These will be given randomly, two or three times per term, and will last approximately fifteen minutes. The format may vary; some may require short answers, while others (especially in second term, when you have some experience with the language under your belts) may be brief translation tests (8-10 lines of text) derived either from current or recent readings. Your lowest score on one of these assignments will be discarded. There is NO make-up for these assignments if you miss them.

Submission of Work

Submit work to me IN PERSON or through the essay dropbox for placement in my mailbox, which guarantees that the date of submission will be recorded. Essays placed under my office door are, in the first instance, likely to get lost and therefore subject to a grade of zero, as unsubmitted; furthermore, essays I find on my floor are considered received when I find them, NOT when they are dated by the student. For example, an essay due on Thursday and placed under my door on Friday might not be found until Monday. That essay is considered to have been submitted the day I found it--that is, four days late, not one day late. It is your responsibility to get your essay in on time. When you submit written work, you should keep a copy, so that you have it should something happen to your original (I have never lost a student paper, but work may go astray in other ways). Should you be unable to get to campus, you can submit your paper electronically, but you MUST subsequently submit a hard copy at the first opportunity.

Examinations

The midterm examination will be written in class. Final examinations are held during the examination period and are scheduled through the Registrar's office. You are expected to acquaint yourself with the examination schedule when it is posted and to attend the examination. If you miss an examination, you will receive a grade of 0 on it. Consider the examination period as part of your academic year; do not make plans to be unavailable until you know your examination schedule. Remember: you must pass both the examination and term work to pass the course.

Academic Standards

As a university student, you are expected to meet certain requirements in your work. First, you are expected to use the English language clearly and correctly (see pages 15 and 36 of the calendar for University policies on English language proficiency). Grammatical errors or infelicities in your writing will have a significant impact on your grade. You are expected to use formal language, not colloquial language. Second, as an English student you are expected to follow MLA guidelines for essay writing; matters of format will be referred to as the "mechanics" of writing in class and in comments on essays. Third, you are expected

to have a thesis and to build an argument that will provide reasonable evidence and analysis sufficient to convince the skeptical reader of the validity of your position. You are not expected to summarize the plot of the work you are discussing, to repeat what we have done in class, or to toe a particular line. Overall, there are three broad areas in which you must show competence: grammar, mechanics, and analysis. A guide to how work is evaluated follows.

- A: To earn an "A" you must handle the mechanics of essay writing perfectly or nearly so; work must conform to MLA requirements and must be grammatically correct (or nearly so), clear, formal, and elegant. "A" work has a well-defined thesis, is carefully and clearly structured, makes excellent use of evidence from primary and secondary sources, and provides an argument that goes significantly beyond the information provided in class: you cannot earn an "A" by telling me what I have told you.
- B: To earn a "B" you must write well, making few grammatical errors; you may slip occasionally, but infrequently. Major errors, such as sentence fragments, dangling participles, misplaced modifiers, etc., are not acceptable and will pull your grade down to, at best, low "B" range. "B" work will be fairly well-organized and argued but will probably miss some important aspect of its case. Overall, it will make good use of evidence from the primary text, and perhaps from secondary materials, but will not fully capitalize on the best material available to prove its case. It will be less adventurous than "A" work, closer in theme and content to the "safe" material (e.g. perspectives explored in class or readily available in the bulk of the critical material).
- C: "C" work will probably suffer from numerous writing problems, both grammatical and mechanical, which will probably affect clarity. The structure of the argument will probably be unclear, due to an insufficient introduction, an illogical linking of arguments, or a loose linking of points. When your argument consists of a sequence of points treated more as a list than as a coherent structure, you are likely working in the "C" range. "C" work tends not to use evidence well, either because it integrates evidence poorly into the essay, because it misinterprets the evidence in some way, or because it does not use any direct evidence at all. The thesis in "C" work will probably be overly general, vague, or simplistic; the argument will be similar.
- D: "D" work will be weak grammatically and mechanically. Numerous major and minor grammatical errors will occur. Clarity will be a problem in the essay. Evidence, if used at all, will be poorly integrated and poorly evaluated, though it may be of some relevance to the topic. The argument will be poorly structured and/or unclear; links between ideas will not be evident, and the ideas themselves may not seem related to the central topic. Important arguments will be missed, as will important evidence; the interpretation may be based in a misreading of the text under discussion.
- F: "F" work will suffer from severe writing limitations. What is meant will often be difficult or impossible to determine. The mechanics will be nonexistent, or so poorly handled as to be incoherent. The thesis will be vague to the point of banality, or

simply wrong. Evidence will not appear or will be misused significantly; "F" work will show a fundamental lack of understanding of the topic and/or work under discussion. The argument will probably be poorly structured; elements of it will seem to be irrelevant to the topic. Significant evidence will be missed, or misused if it appears. Significant errors will probably occur with evidence use, including the misquotation or even misrepresentation of your text. Clear conclusions will be lacking, or will be so self-evident as to be meaningless (e.g. "Therefore, if Mak hadn't stolen the sheep, everything would have been different").

Consultation

I keep regular office hours during which I am available for consultation. In addition to those hours, I am usually available whenever I am on campus; if my door is open, or if there is a note on my door telling you where to find me (e.g. "In Library"), I am available for consultation. If my door is closed and there is no note on the door, I am unavailable. In addition to times I am on campus, other meetings may be arranged; talk to me directly, telephone my extension (28244), or e-mail me (dgrace2@uwo.ca) to make an appointment. Feel free to consult me about any work you are doing in my course, for further help with your studies in my class, or for any other reason should you feel I may be of help. If you wish to see me, though, keep the following recommendations in mind. First, come see me sufficiently in advance of the due date to allow yourself time to benefit from the consultation; while I will always be happy to meet with you, you will improve your chances of doing well by coming to see me early. Second, if you wish to consult me about a specific subject, inform me of that topic in advance, so I can think about it before you arrive. Third, the consultation will be more useful if you have given some thought to your topic yourself; you may wish to bring an outline or an introductory paragraph of the work you wish to discuss. You should never feel hesitant to come see me even if you are unable to follow these recommendations, however; it is my job to help you, and I am absolutely available to you. I will never be doing anything so important that talking with you will not take precedence.

2018-19 BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

1. POLICY REGARDING MAKEUP EXAMS AND EXTENSIONS OF DEADLINES

When a student requests academic accommodation (e.g., extension of a deadline, a makeup exam) for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course, it is the responsibility of the student to provide acceptable documentation to support a medical or compassionate claim. All such requests for academic accommodation **must** be made through an Academic Advisor and include supporting documentation.

Academic accommodation for illness will be granted only if the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete her academic responsibilities. Minor ailments typically treated by over-the-counter medications will not normally be accommodated.

Students must submit their documentation along with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested no later than two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities. In cases where there might be an extended absence or serious issue, students should submit their documentation promptly and consult their Academic Advisor for advice during their recovery period. Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Appropriate academic accommodation will be determined by the Dean's Office/Academic Advisor in consultation with the student's instructor(s). Academic accommodation may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements for classes/labs/tutorials, arranging Special Exams or Incompletes, re-weighting course requirements, or granting late withdrawals without academic penalty

Please note that personal commitments (e.g., vacation flight bookings, work schedule) which conflict with a scheduled test, exam or course requirement are **not** grounds for academic accommodation.

A UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is **required** if a student is seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician/nurse practitioner or walk-in clinic. A SMC can be downloaded from: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf . The student must request documentation sufficient to demonstrate that her ability to meet academic responsibilities was seriously affected. Please note that under University Senate regulations documentation stating simply that the student "was seen for a medical reason" or "was ill" is **not** adequate to support a request for academic accommodation.

The full policy on requesting accommodation due to illness can be viewed at:
http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_12

2. ACADEMIC CONCERNS

If you feel that you have a medical or personal challenge that is interfering with your work, contact your instructor and Academic Advisor as soon as possible. Problems may then be documented and possible arrangements to assist you can be discussed at the time of occurrence rather than on a retroactive basis. Retroactive requests for academic accommodation on medical or compassionate grounds are not normally considered.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your work load is not manageable, you should consult your Academic Advisor. If you consider reducing your workload by dropping one or

more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines (refer to the Registrar's website, <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/> or the list of official sessional dates in the Academic Calendar, see the Sessional Dates tab at <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/index.cfm?SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=>). You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. *Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP eligibility and/or Entrance Scholarship eligibility.*

3. ABSENCES

Short Absences: If you miss a class due to a minor illness or other problems, check your course outline for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or assignment. Cover any readings and arrange to borrow notes from a classmate. Contact the course instructor if you have any questions.

Extended Absences: If you have an extended absence, you should contact the course instructor and an Academic Advisor. Your course instructor and Academic Advisor can discuss ways for you to catch up on missed work and arrange academic accommodations, if appropriate and warranted.

It is important to note that the Academic Dean may refuse permission to write the final examination in a course if the student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year or for too frequent absence from the class or laboratory (http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=5&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading_68).

4. SCHOLASTIC OFFENCES

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at: http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_20 .

Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences. Note that such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in the University or elsewhere. Students are advised to consult the section on Scholastic Discipline for Undergraduate Students in the Academic Calendar.

If you are in doubt about whether what you are doing is inappropriate or not, consult your instructor, the Academic Dean's Office, or the Registrar. A claim that "you didn't know it was wrong" is not accepted as an excuse.

The penalties for a student guilty of a scholastic offence (including plagiarism) include refusal of a passing grade in the assignment, refusal of a passing grade in the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Computer-marked Tests/exams:

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating. Software currently in use to score computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams performs a similarity review as part of standard exam analysis.

5. PROCEDURES FOR APPEALING ACADEMIC EVALUATIONS

All appeals of a grade must be directed first to the course instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal is to be sent to the School Chair. If the response of the Chair is considered unsatisfactory to the student, she may then submit a written appeal to the Office of the Dean. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Dean, she may appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA), if there are sufficient grounds for the appeal. For information on academic appeals you can consult your Academic Advisor or see the Student Academic Appeals – Undergraduate in the Academic Calendar http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_14.

Note that final course marks are not official until the Academic Dean has reviewed and signed the final grade report for the course. If course marks deviate from acceptable and appropriate standards, the Academic Dean may require grades to be adjusted to align them with accepted grading practices.

6. PREREQUISITES

Unless you have either the prerequisites for a course or written special permission from the Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from the course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisite(s).

7. SUPPORT

Support Services

The Brescia University College Registrar's website, with a link to Academic Advisors, is at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/> . The website for the Student Development Centre at Western is <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/> .

Mental Health and Wellness

Students may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to your learning, such as increased anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, feeling down or lost, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. Services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about mental health and wellness at Brescia at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/mental-health-wellness/>. Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Health and Wellness at Western, http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html, for information about how to obtain help for yourself or others.

Sexual Violence

All members of the Brescia University College community have a right to work and study in an environment that is free from any form of sexual violence. Brescia University College recognizes that the prevention of, and response to, Sexual Violence is of particular importance in the university environment. Sexual Violence is strictly prohibited and unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Brescia is committed to preventing Sexual Violence and creating a safe space for anyone in the Brescia community who has experienced Sexual Violence.

If you or someone you know has experienced any form of Sexual Violence, you may access resources at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/sexual-violence/>.

Portions of this document were taken from the Academic Calendar, the Handbook of Academic and Scholarship Policy and the Academic Handbook of Senate Regulations. This document is a summary of relevant regulations and does not supersede the academic policies and regulations of the Senate of the University of Western Ontario.