

# ENGLISH 320: MEDIEVAL BRITISH LITERATURE (Spring 2004)

CSUB Antelope Valley Campus

CRN: 20650

**Section Number:** 201

**Class Time:** Tuesday and Thursday 6 pm – 8:05 pm (Time Block L)

**Classroom:** 119

**Instructor:** Charles MacQuarrie

**Office:** 314

**Office Hours:** Monday and Wednesday, 12 – 4 pm; and by appointment

**Phone Numbers:** 952-5098

**Required texts:**

Crossley-Holland, Kevin. *The Anglo-Saxon World*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999.

Dunn, Charles W. and Edward T. Byrnes. *Middle English Literature*. New York: Garland, 1990.

Course Packet at the Copy House

**Optional texts**

Heaney, Seamus. *Beowulf*. New York: Norton. 2000.

Tolkien, J.R.R. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.

Vinaver, Eugene. *King Arthur and His Knights*.

(Interesting optional text that I would have used in a more perfect world

Treharne, Elaine. *Old and Middle English : c890-1400*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004.)

## OVERVIEW

This is a survey of early British literature and its backgrounds. In the next couple of months we will read and talk about a sampling of some of the texts from circa 54BC/BCE to 1400 AD/CE (from *Caesar to Malory*). The prospect of such a vast undertaking might sound daunting at first, but, in fact, I've selected only a tiny portion of the corpus. The readings tend to be short, but there are many of them, and the amount of reading for this course is substantial.

I will give background lectures, but there will also be a good deal of class discussion and group work. You will be graded in this class, in part, for your participation in the discussions we will be having. You will also have to do quite a bit of writing. In fact, you will be required to turn in a paper every week. You will write short response papers to each of the readings and you may write one 7-10 page research paper (which may expand upon one or more of your shorter papers). I shall also be giving pop-quizzes every now and again. The quizzes are to make sure that you, attend

class regularly and have kept up with the reading, and the one page papers are to make sure that you've taken the time to think about what you've read and are willing and able to organize your thoughts on paper. I'll also give you a midterm and a final. At the end of term you will turn in a portfolio of all your assignments, as I outline below. You will also be required to commit one short passage of your choice to memory for the midterm and one for the final.

### **Grading:**

Midterm exam 20% or 25%

Final exam 40% or 50%

Portfolio, Analysis papers, quizzes, and participation 20% or 25%

Optional Final Paper (5-6 pages MLA style) 20% or 0%

This paper should be an expansion on one of your analysis papers. It will involve some research, should include at least one interesting footnote, and must include a bibliography of at least seven books and/or essays. At least five of the entries must be annotated. If you haven't constructed an annotated bibliography before, or have questions please be sure to ask me and/or to review these web sites:

<http://www.library.cornell.edu/okuref/research/skill28.htm#what>

<http://web.infoave.net/~lrashley/annbibl.htm..>

### **Analysis Papers:**

Every week, on or before our Tuesday meeting, you will e-mail to me **and** bring to class a 1-2 page MLA style paper in which you analyze a passage from the weekly reading. You should include the short passage you are analyzing in block quotes at the beginning of the paper. Make sure to be as detailed in your analysis as time and space permit. You may talk about the poetics as well as the meaning of the passages, and you can muse literately and charmingly and imaginatively about the passage in question à la Jorge Louis Borges). Each paper should include one interesting footnote (yes, this does violate MLA style – but I love footnotes). I will grade these papers credit/no credit.

### **Portfolios**

Your writing portfolio will be due on the final day of class. It must include:

1. Table of contents providing page numbers and headings.
2. All of the written assignments **IN ORDER**. At least 7 1-2 page analysis papers in all.
3. In-class writing, take-home papers, midterm, and, if you choose to write it, your final paper.
4. The lines that you memorized for the class, typed out, with a one to three paragraph description of its main features and a discussion of why you chose to memorize those lines, etc.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of English 320 is to survey texts that are central to the understanding of medieval British literature exclusive of Chaucer. Most of the readings will be in translation. At the end of the term, successful students will have insight into a literary world very different from that of the twentieth century. They will be aware of some significant thoughts of the medieval mind and will be able to discuss the influence of such thoughts on the writing of the period. Such analysis should invite students to re-evaluate their own reading and writing processes.

## Reading Schedule (tentative)

### PRE-ANGLO-SAXON BRITAIN

March (Mars) and April (Venus) <http://www.logofiles.com/april-history.html>

Week 1	30	Tua's Day	<a href="http://www.crowl.org/Lawrence/time/days.html">http://www.crowl.org/Lawrence/time/days.html</a> Introduction. Manuscript tradition. Languages and paleography.
	1	Thor's Day	Classical background I (Coursepack, 1-25. Beware Caesar – his pages aren't in proper order. I'm not praising or blaming him. Brutus is to blame no doubt.)
Week 2	6	T	Classical background II and Early Medieval Continental Background (Coursepack 26-67)
	8	Th	Celtic background (Coursepack 68-117)

### ANGLO-SAXON AND NORSE BRITAIN

Week 3	13	T	Greeting in Christ to Examples in Exhortation (Crossley-Holland 167-212) Germanic background (Coursepack 118-147)
	15	Th	Germanic/French background (Coursepack 148-76)
Week 4	20	T	<i>Anglo-Saxon Verse I</i> (Coursepack 177-206 and Crossley-Holland <i>Poems: Durham, Brunanburgh, Wife's Lament, Husband's Message,</i> <i>Wulf and Eadwacer</i>
	22	Th	<i>Anglo Saxon Verse II</i> <i>Poems: Deor, Judith, Dream of the Rood, Wanderer, Seafarer</i>
Week 5	27	T	<i>Beowulf</i> (parts 1 and 2 – Grendel and Grendel's mother)(Crossley-Holland)
	29	Th	<i>Beowulf</i> (part 3 – The Dragon)

### May

Week 6	4	T	<b>Midterm</b> (20% or 25% of course grade)
	6	Th	(Dunn and Byrne pp. 3-45)

### ANGLO-NORMAN AND MIDDLE ENGLISH BRITAIN

Week 7	11	T	Medieval Mystery <i>Plays</i> "Noah's Flood," "Cain and Abel," "Abraham and Isaac," "The Second Shepherd's Pagent," and "Harrowing of Hell" (Web page listed in Coursepack p. 242)
	13	Th	Performances of Mystery plays (read ahead into Margery Kemp)
Week 8	18	T	Margery Kemp and Julian of Norwich (Coursepack 243-96)

20 Th *Piers Plowman*: (Dunn and Byrnes 277-285) The Bible and translation (Dunn and Byrnes 485-91) “The Dance of the Seven Deadly Sins” (Dunn and Byrnes 543-6)

#### ARTHURIANA

Week 9 25 T Arthuriana: Gildas, “Nennius” etc (Coursepack 253-69)  
27 Th Arthuriana II: Geoffrey, Chretien, Marie de France (Coursepack 270-310)

#### June

Week 10 1 T Arthuriana III: La3man (Coursepack 329-34 and Dunn &Byrne 49-53) *Sir Orfeo* (Dunn and Byrnes 216 – a move back to classical reference)  
3 Th Malory (Coursepack 311-28)

Week 11 8 **Final Exam** (40% or 50% of course grade)

#### WAITING LIST POLICY:

On a waiting list, you are eligible for a place in the class

1. if you come to every class and
2. if you turn in the work while you are there

Being on a waiting list does not mean you are guaranteed a place in the class. It simply means you are welcome to wait for an opening in the class if you desire. If no one drops out of the section you’re attending, no students can add.

As a result, you should be aware of the last day to add and have a back-up class chosen if you need another class. This plan is especially important for financial aid recipients, who must carry a full load to receive their financial aid. **Being on a waiting list does not count as a class toward your full load.**

#### Instructor-Initiated Drop Policy:

This course is subject to the policy on instructor initiated drops. If the class is full and has a waiting list, I have the right to have you administratively dropped from the class by the end of the second week of the term if you have missed **three** consecutive class session **during the first week of the term** and have not contacted me with alternate plans. However, you should not assume that you will be automatically dropped from the course due to non-attendance.

**Please access the English Majors handbook for departmental grading standards and other useful information:** <http://www.csub.edu/english/eng200folder/english200.htm>

## SPRING QUARTER, 2004

### FEB 02 - 13

Academic Advising for Continuing Students (for Spring Quarter)  
 Feb 09 - 20 Registration for Continuing Students (for Spring Quarter)  
 March 22 Late Registration Begins (for Spring Quarter) (\$25 fee)  
 March 26 Orientation and Advising for Antelope Valley Students (for Spring Quarter)  
 March 26 Orientation and Advising for All Students (for Spring Quarter)  
 March 29 ALL FACULTY DUE ON CAMPUS  
 March 29 First Day of Classes  
 March 31 HOLIDAY - Cesar Chavez Day – Campus Closed  
 April 03 Transfer Day Orientation  
 April 04 Palm Sunday – Christian Holy Day  
 April 05 Last day to Add classes  
 April 05 Last day to change between audit and letter grading  
 April 05 Last Day of Late Registration (for Spring Quarter)  
 April 05 Passover – Jewish Holy Day  
 April 09 Last day to apply for June Commencement  
 April 09 Good Friday – Christian Holy Day  
 April 11 Easter – Christian Holy Day  
 April 19 Census Day  
 April 19 Last day to change between credit/no-credit and letter grading  
 April 19 Last day to withdraw from classes without a “W” being recorded; withdrawals from classes after this date and continuing through the next four-week period will be permitted only for serious and compelling reasons and require written approval by the dean or department chair

April 24 Freshman Day Orientation  
 May 03 - 07 Registration for Continuing Students (for Summer Quarter)  
 May 03 - 14 Academic Advising for Continuing Students (for Fall & Summer Quarters)  
 May 05 Campus-wide Emergency Evacuation Day  
 May 08 Orientation and Advising for All Students (for Fall & Summer Quarters)  
 May 08 Orientation and Advising for Antelope Valley Students (for Fall & Summer Quarters)  
 May 10 - Aug 06 Registration for Continuing Students (for Fall Quarter)  
 May 17 Last day to withdraw from classes for a serious and compelling reason  
 May 24 - 28 SOCI Week  
 May 31 HOLIDAY - Memorial Day – Campus Closed  
 June 07 Last Day of Classes  
 June 07 Last day for completion of work by Master’s Candidates to graduate in June  
 June 07 Last day to submit completed Master’s Thesis to Graduate Studies and Research  
 June 07 Late Registration Begins (for Summer Quarter) (\$25 fee) omitted  
 Study / Reading Day  
 Jun 08 - 11 Examination Period  
 Jun 11 - 12 Commencement  
 June 14 GRADES DUE