

English 4340/5340: Chaucer

Spring 2014
(Tuesday/Thursday 9:25-10:40)
Irby 310



Instructor: Jay Ruud
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Phone: 450-3674 (or 450-5100 for Secretary)
Office Hours: MWF 9:00-12:00, TTh 10:45-12:00 or by appt.

Required Texts

- Chaucer, Geoffrey. *Dream Visions and Other Poems*. Ed. Kathryn Lynch. New York: Norton, 2007.
- Chaucer, Geoffrey. *The Canterbury Tales: Fifteen Tales and the General Prologue*. Ed. V.A. Kolve and Glending Olson. 2nd ed. New York: Norton, 2005.
- Chaucer, Geoffrey. *Troilus and Criseyde*. Ed. Stephen A. Barney. New York: Norton, 2005.

It is possible that some of you may want to supplement your reading with "translated" or modernized versions of Chaucer's text. While I would encourage you not to do so, since it

will inevitably take longer for you to get the hang of Middle English that way, I should say that if you ARE going to look at translations anyway, be sure to use a relatively new one: David Wright (Oxford) or Neville Coghill (Penguin) are the best of the lot for the *Canterbury Tales*. Other translations are mainly terrible. Peter Ackroyd's recently published "retelling" of the *Canterbury Tales* is just that—it's not an actual translation. That is to say, DON'T USE IT.

Supplementary Readings:

(Several supplementary readings will come from the three Norton Critical Editions. Following is a list of others that are online, in the order they appear in the syllabus):

- Cowgill, Bruce Kent. "Clerkly Rivalry in The Reeve's Tale." *Rebels and Rivals. The Contestive Spirit in the Canterbury Tales*. Ed. Susanna Greer Fein, David Raybin, and Peter C. Braeger. Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1991. 59-71.
 - Raybin, David. "'Goddess Instrumentz': Devils and Free Will in the Friar's and Summoner's Tales." *Chaucer Review* 46 (2011): 93-110.
 - Ruud, Jay. "'My Spirit Hath His Fostryng in the Bible': The Summoner's Tale and the Holy Spirit." *The Contestive Spirit in the Canterbury Tales*. Ed. Susanna Greer Fein, David Raybin, and Peter C. Braeger. Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1991. 125-48.
 - Steinmetz, David C. "Late Medieval Nominalism and The Clerk's Tale." *Chaucer Review* 12.1 (1977): 38-54.
 - Edwards, A.S.G. "The Merchant's Tale and Moral Chaucer." *Modern Language Quarterly* 51 (1990): 409-26.
 - Ruud, Jay. "Chaucer, the Prioress, and the Resurrection of the Body." *Medieval Perspectives* 24 (2009 [2011]): 59-70.
 - Johnson, Lynn Staley. "'To Make in Som Comedye': Chauntecleer, Son of Troy." *Chaucer Review* 19.3 (1985): 225-44.
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Chaucer Links

A quick check of the internet shows that Google brings up 1,910,000 hits for the name "Chaucer." That being a few too many for you to look through yourself, I've gleaned some of the more helpful sites for you to link to here:

A good site to use to sift through much of what is on the web is geoffreychaucer.org

The Harvard Chaucer page has a lot of useful stuff at <http://courses.fas.harvard.edu/~chaucer/CTlist.html>

The [Chaucer Metapage](#) is a site collaborated on by several medieval scholars interested in Chaucer on the Web. It contains links to all of their personal sites and information.

You can take a look at an online [Middle English Dictionary](#) here

This link should take you to the Project Muse site for the last 12 years of issues of the Chaucer Review, at least if you are logged in to your UCA account:

<http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/cr/>

The [Internet Medieval Sourcebook](#) links to full-text sites for a wide variety of medieval literature.

For a good time, take a look at [Geoffrey Chaucer Hath a Blog](#)

Tentative Course Outline

(subject to change as the semester goes on)

Week 1:

- 1/9 (Th.): PSYCH! NO CLASS, DUE TO INCEMENT WEATHER.

Week 2:

- 1/14 (Tu.): Introduction. Chaucer's life and times [look at chronology in Lynch, pp. 385-388]. Brief look at two short poems: "Truth" (Lynch 219) and "Complaint to His Purse" (Lynch 225).
- 1/16 (Th.): *The Parliament of Fowls* (Lynch 97-105—to line 294). Discuss Chaucer's language (Look at Lynch xvii-xx).

Week 3:

- 1/21 (Tu.): Finish *The Parliament of Fowls* (105-116). [Supplementary Reading (hereafter "SR") Spearing article in Lynch 325-335]. First Talking Points due. **One-hour Take-home assigned.**
- 1/23 (Th.): Begin *General Prologue* (Kolve and Olson 3-12, lines 1-387). Look especially at Knight, Prioress, Friar, Cook.

Week 4:

- 1/28 (Tu): Finish *General Prologue* (Kolve and Olson 12-23, lines 388-858). Look especially at Wife of Bath, Parson, Miller, Reeve, Pardoner, Summoner. [SR Nolan essay in Kolve and Olson 511-533]. Talking Points due. **One-hour Take-home on PF due.**
- 1/30 (Th.): *The Knight's Tale*, part I (Kolve and Olson 23-34). Talking Points due.

Week 5:

- 2/4 (Tu.): *The Knight's Tale*, parts II and III (Kolve and Olson 34-58). Talking Points due.
- 2/6 (Th.): *The Knight's Tale*, part IV (Kolve and Olson 58-71). Talking Points due.

Week 6:

- 2/11 (Tu.): *The Miller's Tale* (Kolve and Olson 71-88). Talking Points due. **Quiz #1: Vocabulary.**
- 2/13 (Th.): *The Reeve's Tale* (Kolve and Olson 88-99). Talking Points due. [SR Cowgill essay online]

Week 7:

- 2/18 (Tu.): *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale* (Kolve and Olson 102-130). Talking Points due.
- 2/20 (Th.): *The Friar's Tale* (Kolve and Olson 131-140). Talking Points due. [SR Raybin essay online]

Week 8:

- 2/25 (Tu.): *The Summoner's Tale* (Kolve and Olson 140-154). Talking Points due. [SR Ruud essay #1 online]
- 2/27 (Th.): *The Clerk's Tale* (Kolve and Olson 154-185). Talking Points due. [SR Steinmetz essay online]

Week 9:

- 3/4 (Tu.): *The Merchant's Tale* (Kolve and Olson 185-211). Talking Points due. [SR Edwards essay online]
- 3/6 (Th.): *The Franklin's Tale* (Kolve and Olson 212-233). Talking Points due. [SR Kittredge essay in Kolve and Olson 539-546]

Week 10:

- 3/11 (Tu.): *The Pardoner's Tale* (Kolve and Olson 233-248). Talking Points due. [SR Dinshaw essay in Kolve and Olson 566-585]. **Quiz #2: Chaucer's Style.**
- 3/13 (Th.): *The Prioress's Tale* (Kolve and Olson 248-254). Talking Points due. [SR Ruud essay #2 online]. ***One-hour Take-home on Canterbury Tales assigned.***

Week 11: NO CLASS—SPRING BREAK (3/15-3/23)

Week 12:

- 3/25 (Tu.): *The Nun's Priest's Tale* (Kolve and Olson 269-285). Talking Points due. [SR Johnson essay online]
- 3/27 (Th.): *The Manciple's Tale* (Kolve and Olson 285-293). Talking Points due. [SR Ovid and Gower versions of the tale in Kolve and Olson 466-469]

Week 13:

- 4/1 (Tu.): Read *Tale of Sir Thopas* (Kolve and Olson 255-260), *Parson's Prologue* (Kolve and Olson 293-294); Summary of *Parson's Tale* (handout); *Retraction* (Kolve and Olson 306-307). [SR Patterson essay in Kolve and Olson 546-556]
- 4/3 (Th.): Begin *Troilus and Criseyde*, book I (Barney 9-67) and Barney's Introduction to the poem (ix-xxvii). **One-hour Take-home on CT due.**

Week 14:

- 4/8 (Tu.): Finish Book I. Talking points due. [SR Lewis essay in Barney 451-464]
- 4/10 (Th.): *Troilus and Criseyde*, book II (Barney 69-149). Talking Points due. [SR Taylor essay in Barney 503-522]

Week 15:

- 4/15 (Tu.): *Troilus and Criseyde*, book III (Barney 149-223). Talking Points due. [SR Green essay in Barney 522-538]
- 4/17 (Th.): *Troilus and Criseyde*, book IV (Barney 223-311). Talking Points due. [SR Bloomfield essay in Barney 464-476] **One-hour Take-home on Troilus assigned.**

Week 16:

- 4/22 (Tu.): *Troilus and Criseyde*, book V (Barney 311-427). Talking Points due. [SR Donaldson essay in Barney 476-487]
- 4/24 (Th.): Finish Book V. **One-hour Take-home on TC due.**

FINAL: Paper will be due Friday, April 25, by 4:30. The **final exam is scheduled for Tuesday, April 29, at 8:00-10:00.**

Assignments

- For most class days, you are required to hand in five "Talking Points" for the assigned reading for the day. In addition, undergraduates should choose three of the Supplementary Reading assignments and write five talking points on each of these to be turned in on the day the supplementary reading is due. Graduate students should choose six Supplementary Readings to turn in talking points for.
 - "Talking Points" may be either questions that occur to you that require more than simply a basic understanding of the text to answer, or they may be thoughts or arguments that occur to you about the text that you would like to bring up in class. In either case, the purpose is to get you thinking critically about the material and to spark or contribute to class discussion. They should be typed and handed in as hard copy to me at the end of each class period.

- Dates when Talking Points are not required: 1/9, 1/14, 1/21, 1/23, 4/1, 4/3, and 4/24.
- There will be two quizzes given in class: one on Vocabulary on February 11; one on Chaucer's Style on March 11. The Vocabulary Quiz will be on a list of words handed out the first day of class. The quiz on style is one you can't really study for, except by reading Chaucer, preferably aloud, to get a sense of the meter of his lines and of what he sounds like.
- There will be three take-home exams, one essay question each: one on the *Parliament of Fowls*, one on the *Canterbury Tales*, and one on *Troilus and Criseyde*. Although you can read and think about the question ahead of time, I'm asking that you spend only an hour on writing each test, so that you don't have more than four typed pages to turn in.
 - Graduate students will be required to do one more one-hour take home, on a text to be chosen after a private meeting with the instructor.
- A research paper will be required. Minimum 8 pages, with an annotated bibliography attached, containing a minimum of 4 scholarly sources. Graduate students should write a 12-page paper with at least 6 scholarly sources. At least one of these scholarly sources should be one of the Supplementary Readings assigned for the class. A more detailed assignment is forthcoming about the middle of the semester. The paper is due by the end of the day on Friday, April 25, but you are welcome to hand it in early.
- There will be a comprehensive final on, Tuesday, April 29, at 8:00-10:00 AM in Irby 310.
- Class discussion is expected and required. You are expected to be in class every day with the assignment read (in Middle English). Any absence will mean no credit for class participation for that day. We will do some reading aloud each day to get the feel of Middle English—It WILL get better as the semester goes on (and remember, everybody else is in the same boat as you, so don't be too self-conscious, even if your Middle English accent "is nat worth a toord," as Harry Bailey would say. Absences will inevitably reduce the class participation portion of your grade. ***Any more than 6 absences will result in your being dropped from the class with a "WF" grade.***

Grades

Final grades in the course will be based on a point system, with a 1000 total possible points. A running total of points will be available on the Blackboard site for the course online. ***Note: the running total for class participation will be a "raw score," which should not be taken in itself as the ultimate number of points you are getting in that area. Check the comparative charts on Blackboard to see whether your total is high, middle, or low against the rest of the class to get an idea of how you're doing in that area. The biggest negative influence on this grade will be missing classes.***) The following list equates total points with letter grades:

- 900-1000 pts.=A
- 800-899 pts.=B
- 700-799 pts.=C
- 600-699 pts.=D
- 0-599 pts.=F

- Point values--Undergraduates
 - Two quizzes: 100 points (50 points each)
 - Three take-home essays: 300 points (100 points each)
 - Paper: 200 points
 - Class Participation: 100 points (coming in late or leaving early loses you 1 point; non-attendance loses you all points for the day)
 - Talking points: 150 points
 - Final Exam: 150 points
- Graduate Students:
 - Two quizzes together: 50 points (25 points each)
 - Four take-home essays: 400 points (100 points each)
 - Paper: 225 points
 - Class Participation: 75 points
 - Talking points: 150 points
 - Final Exam: 100
- Late papers, tests, and quizzes will be docked one letter grade.
- **NOTE CAREFULLY:** The student handbook contains the following statement:
 - “The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.”
 - In accordance with this policy, PLAGIARISM or any other form of academic dishonesty will result in an F for the assignment involved and/or an F in the course. Plagiarism is representing the work of another as your own. This would include taking the **words or ideas of a published source** without giving that source proper credit; giving credit to a published source but **representing the source's words as your own** (i.e., not putting the author's ideas into your own words, or not using quotation marks around quotations); or using the work of other students or “buy an essay” web sites and passing it off as your own. **Read the previous**

sentence again. DO NOT tell me that you didn't know any of this was actually plagiarism. You just were informed twice that it is. [Repeat: **I WILL give you a zero** on any assignment that contains plagiarism, or will automatically fail you in the class if in my opinion the offense is severe enough. In either case, **I WILL send an Academic Integrity Violation form** to the registrar.]

- **Evaluations:** Student evaluations of a course and its professor are a crucial element in helping faculty achieve excellence in the classroom and the institution in demonstrating that students are gaining knowledge. Students may evaluate courses they are taking starting on the Monday of the twelfth week of instruction [March 24] through the end of finals week by logging in to myUCA and clicking on the Evals button on the top right.
- **Important academic policies** and the campus Sexual Harassment policy are detailed in your *Student Handbook*. Consult the Handbook for specifics.
- **Americans With Disabilities Act:** the University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need accommodation under this act due to a disability, contact the Office of Disability Services at 450-3613
- **An Emergency Procedures Summary (EPS)** for the building in which this class is held will be discussed during the first week of this course. EPS documents for most buildings on campus are available at <http://uca.edu/mysafety/bep/>. Every student should be familiar with emergency procedures for any campus building in which he/she spends time for classes or other purposes.