



A M B R O S E

## EN 440 Chaucer and His Contemporaries (3) Fall 2011

### Course Description

A survey of the Middle English language and the social, cultural and historical contexts of later medieval literature through Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*. The course also studies Chaucer's contemporaries through works such as *Piers Plowman*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, and the *Book of Margery Kempe*.

### Further Information

In Fall 2011, this course will study Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowls* and *Canterbury Tales* and on Malory's *Morte D'Arthur*.

### Class Schedules

Wednesday/Friday, 11:15-12:30  
Room A 2133

### Instructor Information

Matthew McCabe      mmccabe@ambrose.edu      410-2000 ext 2964      Office L2062  
Office hours: W 2:30-4:30 / Th 9:45-11 or by appointment

### Textbooks (required)

Chaucer, Geoffrey. *The Canterbury Tales: Fifteen Tales and the General Prologue*. Ed. V.A. Kolve and Glending Olson. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: Norton, 2005.  
---. *Dream Visions and Other Poems*. Ed. Kathryn L. Lynch. New York: Norton, 2007.  
Malory, Thomas. *Le Morte D'Arthur*. 2 vols. Ed. Janet Cowan. With an introduction by John Lawlor. 1969. London and Toronto: Penguin, 2004.

### Other Resources

*The Oxford English Dictionary* (OED): an online dictionary that traces the development of words and their changing definitions. <http://www2.ambrose.edu/library/database/oxford-english-dictionary-online>  
*The Middle English Dictionary* (MED): harder to use, because of spelling variation, but it repays persistence. <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/med/>  
Jess Bessenger's reading of The General Prologue 1-18.  
<http://www.vmi.edu/fswebs.aspx?tid=34099&id=34319>  
*The MLA International Bibliography*: a searchable database of scholarly books and articles on world literature. <http://www2.ambrose.edu/library/database/mla-international-bibliography>  
A guide to MLA style, such as Diana Hacker, *A Canadian Writer's Reference*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's 2009. This is available in the library. You may also consult the guides to MLA documentation and formatting found on the course website on Moodle.

### Course Outline

- September 7      [Course introduction; Chaucer; Chaucer's English]
- September 9      Lenaghan (Lynch 335-338); "Chaucer's Words to Adam ... Scribe" (216); "Scogan," "Bukton," "Complaint ... to His Purse" (222-26)

- September 14 Guillaume de Loris and Jean de Meun, from *The Romance of the Rose* (Lynch 275-81);  
*The Parliament of Fowls* 1-91
- September 16 *Parliament of Fowls* 92-229
- September 21 *Parliament of Fowls* 230-497
- September 23 *Parliament of Fowls* 498-699; Bertolet, “My wit is sharp” (Moodle link)
- September 28 [COMMUNITY DAY – NO CLASS]
- September 30 *The Canterbury Tales*, General Prologue
- October 5 *The Canterbury Tales*, General Prologue ESSAY 1 DUE
- October 7 The Knight’s Tale, Part One
- October 12 The Knight’s Tale, summary of Part Two (Moodle doc); Part Three
- October 14 The Knight’s Tale, Part Four
- October 19 The Wife of Bath’s Prologue
- October 21 The Wife of Bath’s Tale
- October 26 The Merchant’s Prologue and Tale
- October 28 Lucas, “The Mirror and the Marketplace”
- November 2 The Franklin’s Tale
- November 4 Lightsey, “Chaucer’s Secular Marvels”
- November 9 The Pardoner’s Prologue and Tale 314-660 (finish tale if possible)
- November 11 The Pardoner’s Tale 660-968; Dinshaw (Kolve and Olson 566-85)
- November 16 The Nun’s Priest’s Prologue and Tale
- November 18 Scanlon, “The Authority of Fable” (Moodle link)
- [Important note: The reading for next Wednesday’s class  
may require extra time; students are advised to start early.]
- November 23 *Morte D’Arthur* I, III (chapters 1-4, 15 only), IV (chapter 1 only), VI  
[= 97 pages]
- November 25 *Morte* VII [= 72 pages]
- November 30 *Morte* XI, XII, XIII [= 87 pages]
- December 2 *Morte* XIV, XV, XVI [= 54 pages]
- December 4 XVII, XVIII (chapter 1 only) [= 46 pages] ESSAY 2 DUE
- Final exam: Monday, December 12, 1:00-4:00 pm, Room A 2141

### Expected Learning Outcomes

1. Students will become conversant with major critical issues pertaining to medieval literature.
2. Students will develop their ability to read and write critically about medieval literature.

### Course Requirements and Grade Calculation

1. Students should do all the prescribed readings before class and be prepared to participate in class discussion. Participation is worth 10% of the final mark, and these marks are earned by preparing, attending, and contributing.
2. Each student is required to lead a seminar discussion on one of the secondary works on the syllabus. Early in the semester students will be asked to commit to one of these dates together with the reading for that day. It is important that the students who are *not* presenting on a given day come prepared to help their peers by participating knowledgeably in the discussion – all classes count toward the participation mark.
3. Recitation: By the end of week 6 (i.e. by October 14), students need to have memorized, and practiced the oral recitation of, the first 18 lines of the General Prologue to *The Canterbury Tales*. Each student must arrange an appointment with me to recite this aloud in my office. This is one of the most famous passages in English poetry, and the exercise also serves to orient students to Chaucer's language. Guidance will be provided in class.
4. Each student is required to write two essays. The first is due October 5 and the second is due December 4. Particulars of each assignment will be given in class.
5. Assignments are due in hardcopy on the dates specified. Late assignments will be penalized by 3% per business day, unless extenuating circumstances can be shown.
6. To receive a passing grade in the course, students must be in attendance during scheduled class times, and all assignments, including Midterms and Exams, must be submitted to the instructor. Participation marks will be deducted for lateness or unexcused partial attendance of classes.
7. Students may not submit work done for another class.
8. The student is responsible for all the information given in class, and also for any changes to the syllabus that are announced in class.

### Grading:

	<u>Course weight</u>
Participation	10
Seminar	10
Recitation	10
Essay 1 (1500 words approx.)	15
Essay 2 (2000-2500 words approx.)	25
Final Exam	30

Final grades for the course appear as letter grades. The table below shows the percentage equivalents for each letter grade.

Letter Grade	Percentage	Description
A+	96-100	
A	91-95	Excellent
A-	86-90	
B+	82-85	
B	75-81	Good
B-	72-74	
C+	68-71	
C	63-67	Satisfactory
C-	60-62	

D+	59-59	
D	50-55	Minimal Pass
F	0-49	Failure

### Examinations:

This course will have a final examination. Final examinations are held during a scheduled time period at the end of the semester for regular semester classes and are scheduled by the Registrar.

Please note: Students may request revised final exams if they have three exams in one 24-hour period or two exams at the same time. Final exam schedule revision request forms are available at the Registrar's Office and must be handed in by Monday, November 28. If you do not have your request in by this date, all exams within a 24-hour period will have to be written as scheduled. If you have two exams at the same time, you will be given four hours to write both exams.

Graded final examinations will be available for supervised review at the request of the student. Please contact your instructor.

Please note that final grades will be available on your student portal. Printed grade sheets are no longer mailed out.

An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar in writing within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal to review final grades. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.

### Important Notes/Dates:

The last day to enter a course without permission and /or voluntary withdrawal from a course without financial penalty (**drop**) – Sunday, September 18. These courses will not appear on the student's transcript.

*Students may change the designation of any class from credit to audit, or drop out of the "audit" up to the "drop" date indicated above. After that date, the original status remains and the student is responsible for related fees. Please note that this is a **new policy**, beginning in the 2010-2011 academic year.*

Withdrawal from courses after the Registration Revision period will not be eligible for tuition refund. The last day to voluntarily withdraw from a course without academic penalty (**withdraw**) – Monday, November 14. A grade of "W" will appear on the student's transcript.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Calendar. Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at [privacy@ambrose.edu](mailto:privacy@ambrose.edu).

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a "Course Extension" from the Registrar's Office. Requests for course

extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the appropriate deadline (as listed in the Academic Calendar <http://www.ambrose.edu/publications/academiccalendar>). Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control."

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University College as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to give credit to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar and the Student Handbook that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

The instructor reserves the right to prohibit laptops in the classroom should they prove to be a distraction. If this becomes the case, students should be prepared to take handwritten notes.

Students are advised to retain this syllabus for their records.