Part One: Course Description and Goals

In “The Age of Arthur” we will read literature from a variety of medieval genres, including instructions on how to behave during a love affair, Arthurian romances about Lancelot, an infuriating Cinderella-like tale, and late medieval mystical writings. We will consider the ways various medieval authors explore three fundamental questions that the Middle Ages bequeathed the modern era: Is the highest form of love that which is freely given, or is it better to fulfill one’s vows? Can one give away one’s will, or are there limits to obedience? Can language be used to talk about the unknowable, and can we know the truth of another person’s experience?

As an introduction to the literature of the Middle Ages set against the backdrop of medieval culture, this course is designed to present a more extensive selection of accessible and representative texts from the Middle Ages than is available in ENG 220, “Introduction to the English Major,” as well as to offer an introductory window on the Middle Ages to non-literature majors. Students will gain skills in attentive analytical reading and in writing about this literature. Most texts will be read in translation, but a few short works will be presented in Middle English, allowing students to glimpse the beginnings of modern English. My intention is that this class will cultivate an appreciation of a culture that is markedly different from ours in some ways, and that in other ways serves as the foundation for modern society.

Grading Breakdown:

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Essay</td>
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<td>Daily Quizzes:*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay 2 (with proposal)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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*In lieu of midterm

Required Texts: Do not buy e-books.
Coursepacket available at the Duck Store.

Recommended:
Hacker, Diana. Rules for Writers, 6th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2010. (If you already own a stylebook, you may use the one you have. If you do not currently own a style book, you should buy this. Earlier editions won’t have the latest word on citing electronic sources, but they’ll do for most things.)

Part Two: Syllabus
Readings and assignments are listed on the day they are due.

**Week 1**
- **T Oct. 1** Introduction: The Medieval World

**Week 2**
- **T Oct. 8** Chrétien de Troyes, *The Knight of the Cart*, pp. 170-231 (through paragraph ending, “When the king heard this oath, he felt no joy”).
- **Th Oct. 10** Chrétien, *The Knight of the Cart*, pp. 231-56. DUE: Essay 1

**Week 3**
- **T Oct. 15** Chrétien de Troyes, *Erec and Enide*, pp. 1-57 (through paragraph ending, “Cadoc of Carlisle rode off with his young lady … to report the news to King Arthur and the queen”).
- **Th Oct. 17** Chrétien, *Erec and Enide*, pp. 57-86.

**Week 4**

**Week 5**

**Week 6**
- **Th Nov. 7** Augustine of Hippo, *On Christian Doctrine*, Introduction (skim), Book 1, chapters iii-v, vii-x, and xxii-xxix. Coursepacket.

**Week 7**
- **Christine de Pizan, Introduction and Griselda story from The Book of the City of Ladies. Coursepacket.**
- **Francesco Petrarch, “Griselda.” Coursepacket.**
- **Excerpts from the book of Job. Coursepacket. (Not required reading. Included for those who don’t know the Job story.)**
“General Prologue.” To give context to the situation and characters in the later tale, read at least the opening on pp. 3-4 (until the description of the Knight), the Clerk’s description on pp. 10-11, and the closing on pp. 22-26.

“The Clerk’s Tale.” Read this carefully. All readings are in the coursepacket.

**Week 8**


DUE: Essay 2 Proposal

**Week 9**


Th Nov. 28  NO CLASS, Thanksgiving Holiday

**Week 10**

T Dec. 3  Margery Kempe, Margery introduces herself, Prologue and chs. 1-5, 9, 11-12, 14-17, 20-22. Margery goes to Jerusalem, chs. 26-31, 34-39, 43.


**Final: 8am Monday, December 9**

**Personal Essay due by Friday, December 13 at 10am**