

English 427: CHAUCER  
Winter Term, 2014  
UH 10:00-11:20  
CRN 23413  
Agate Hall 202

Prof. Laskaya  
357 PLC (x-6-1517)  
Hrs: Wednesdays 10-11:30, 1-2:30  
and appointment  
email: laskaya@uoregon.edu

**Textbooks:**

*The Canterbury Tales*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Norton Critical Edition, eds., Kolve and Olson papbk.

Secondary Sources provided via Blackboard, tba

Main Online Resource: *The Middle English Dictionary*, available to all UO students. Access the Knight Library Homepage via your uoregon account, or use Library computers to connect to the MED.)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course will examine the General Prologue and a number of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, along with some texts from which Chaucer borrowed and which exerted considerable influence on his work. We will also read some important scholarly interpretations, exploring the arguments of scholars who read the same Chaucerian text differently. All Chaucerian texts will be in read in Middle English. The course is designed for advanced undergraduate English Majors and fulfills the upper-division, pre-1500 requirement. Advanced students majoring outside English who wish to study Chaucer are also welcome. **\*Prerequisite: UofO Junior Standing. Students should review course texts the 1st day of class to be sure Middle English will not present undue difficulty, particularly since we will move relatively quickly with the ME texts.** Besides close readings of the *Canterbury Tales*, quizzes (announced and unannounced) will occur and will sometimes require you to create a modern translation of the Middle English as well as assess your reading comprehension. Discussion, punctuated with occasional lectures, will pre-dominate: some lectures will provide literary, cultural, archival, and historical frameworks, and some will examine interpretations and/or linguistic features of texts, but most work, after we get familiar with the Middle English, will be discussion-based. We will probe the text, and our own interpretations, locating key interpretative questions and assessing interpretive assumptions from several different analytical perspectives.

**REQUIREMENTS:**

Attendance & Steady Preparation, Readings. Oral reading/translating in class and in individual appointment. Participation in class discussions & activities.

Informal writing: inside and/or outside of classes.

Quizzes (some in-class, some take-home, 2 individual oral ME quizzes)

2 interpretative papers (All papers to be submitted via hard copy/paper, typed.)

Final Exam

**GRADING:\***

Quizzes, short, informal writing, activities	20%
2 individual oral readings	10% weeks 5 & 9
2 Interpretative Papers	40% (20% each)
Final exam	30%

\*Consistent and full attendance is assumed. Failure to attend class regularly, prepared to participate, will result in a lower final course grade, regardless of grades on written work. All major assignments and requirements, including the two individual oral assessments, must be completed to Pass this course.

**BLACKBOARD SITE:**

Syllabus, course assignments, a few short readings, and general course information will be available throughout the term on Blackboard and/or through e-reserve. Please check Blackboard regularly for announcements and materials and for the up-to-date schedule.

**Notes on Reading Chaucer:** The best textual assistance can be found at Larry Benson's Chaucer Page online: <http://courses.fas.harvard.edu/~chaucer/teachslf/tr-index.htm#list>. Here you will find excellent interlinear translations of most of the Tales we are reading. Study aids, like Benson's, are very helpful, particularly at the beginning of the term as you get used to Middle English. You should not, however, rely on this, since we will translate as we conduct close readings of the Tales in class; and our quizzes will often ask you to translate Middle English without aids. One good way to use modern translations is to read through the translation so you know what is happening in the text and then go back to read the Middle English carefully, line by line or sentence by sentence without translation aids. Reading the text without aids is the only way you can quickly bring yourself up to an efficient and effective level of Middle English proficiency. So, if you use aids, fine; just be sure to challenge yourself more and more to read only the Middle English text.

**CLASS POLICIES:**

**Students with disabilities:** If you have a disability, please see me during the first week of the term so we can make appropriate accommodations for your full access to all course activities and requirements.

**Lectures and/or discussions:** Please turn off phones, laptops, tablets, audio players, etc. before class begins. Our work in class is intended to exercise your brain and its own strengths, so usually we won't use internet sources in class, though some small-group work may do so. Class discussions & lectures may not be recorded in any manner unless you have a communication-related disability documented with the University and have received permission from the course instructor. Should you miss a class meeting, it is your responsibility to obtain notes from your colleagues, so be sure to get to know others in the course who would be willing to help you and whom you would be willing to help. Missing class should, however, be a rare event since active preparation and participation is a course requirement.

**Tutorial help:** Students with tutoring needs may use services offered by the University of Oregon's Teaching and Learning Center (TLC), located in 68 PLC (X6-3226). Any other assistance you receive on papers—organizing your paper, identifying your main points, typing, proofreading, editing and/or revising it—must be cleared with the professor. However, as you prepare for the midterm and final, or as you work to understand readings and lectures, talking and reviewing with your colleagues outside of class is encouraged; this is different from directly assisting one another with a specific essay assignment. If you have questions, please see me.

**Academic Integrity:** The University of Oregon values academic honesty. Students are informed of the University's policies and expectations about conduct and academic honesty when they matriculate. You are here because you clearly have the ability to engage your own mind in rigorous intellectual work. If you need a quick review of our campus community's assumptions

about academic integrity and conduct, see the Conduct Code on the UO website:

<http://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/StudentConductCode/tabid/69/Default.aspx>

The two formal paper assignments will be analytical; they will not require outside research except that provided or recommended within an assignment. You may find yourself curious about something or wanting more information at times; great--read on, and *bravo* for curiosity! However, no student will receive higher grades simply because he or she has read beyond the course or used research in papers or exams. Please consult the University's Conduct Code and the UO library's website: <http://library.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/index.html> for definitions and discussions of plagiarism and for information on documentation should you need it. Please see me if you have any concerns about documentation and/or academic honesty. For this course, an honest and obvious effort to document is absolutely critical and far more important than commas, abbreviations, or 'correct' formatting. Either MLA or Chicago Style provide acceptable resources and formats for advanced work in literature.

**Course policy on Academic Integrity:** All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. Any use of sources (ideas, quotations, and paraphrases) beyond our lectures and discussion must be properly documented. In other words, rely on your own grey matter, and wrestle well, yourself, with the course material. Protect the integrity of your own work and that of others'. In cases of clearly established plagiarism or cheating, a final course grade of "F" will be recorded, and all incidents will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct, as required by the University.

**Quizzes and short WR assignments:** some of these will be announced and some unannounced. Some will require interpretive work and others will require reading comprehension and/or close modern translation of the Middle English.

**SCHEDULE** (subject to change) FULL SCHEDULE on BLACKBOARD

**\*\*\*NB** Scholarly articles and/or Chaucer's source material will supplement the readings listed below, particularly in the second-half of the term. See Blackboard for details.

**Week one**

U 1/7 Intro to course & one another; starting to read Middle English (ME/PDE)  
 H 1/9 GP (General Prologue) esp opening, descrp of Monk and Prioress; frame  
*\*\*(Over the weekend, reread the General Prologue thoroughly. Come to class reading to work on the grammar and vocabulary of Middle English found in the GP.)*

**Week two**

TU 1/14 GP intense work on grammar, vocabulary, themes, images. Quiz #1  
 TH 1/16 Knight's Tale (KT)

**Week three**

TU 1/21 KT Quiz #2  
 TH 1/23 KT

**Week four**

TU 1/28 Miller's Prologue and Tale; Quiz #3  
 TH 1/30 WofB Prologue; short WR assignment due  
 \*F 1/31 **Paper #1 due via Blackboard**

**Week five**

TU 2/4 Wof B Prologue and Tale Quiz #4 this week: oral assessment  
 TH 2/6 Friar's Prologue and T & Summoner's Prol &T

**Week six**

TU 2/11 Clerk's Prologue and Tale Quiz #5  
 TH 2/13 Clerk's Tale and sources (found in Norton)

**Week seven**

U 2/18 Paper #2 workshop in class: Thesis and outline due.  
 H 2/20 Franklin's Prologue and T Quiz #6  
 \*H 2/20 **Paper #2 due via Blackboard by 5 p.m.**

**Week eight**

U 2/25 Pardoner's Prologue Quiz #7  
 W 2/27 Pardoner's Prol & Tale

**Week nine**

W 3/4 Nun's Priest's Prologue and Tale Quiz #8  
 F 3/6 Nun's Priest's Tale Quiz #9 this week: oral assessment

**Week ten**

U 3/11 2<sup>nd</sup> Nun's Tale Quiz #10  
 H 3/13 From the Parson's Prol and Tale; and Chaucer's Retraction

FINAL EXAM, currently scheduled for Tuesday 3/18 1-3 p.m. in our regular classroom.

\*\* (Be sure to plan ahead; the exam will not be administered early)