

English 225
Fall 2016
MW 8:30-9:50
CRN 16971
260 Condon

Prof. Laskaya
357 PLC (x1517)
Hrs: M 2-3:30 pm; Th 10-11:30 am
& by appointment
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THE AGE OF ARTHUR

Textbooks:

The Romance of Arthur: An Anthology of Medieval Texts in Translation, ed., Norris U. Lacy and James J. Wilhelm, 3rd ed., Routledge, 2013 (LW)

Additional reading materials and resources provided online and/or on Canvas.

Course Description: Students will examine medieval texts that reveal different elements, versions, and effects of Arthurian myth and narrative. The course might be best entitled 'The Ages of Arthur,' since medieval texts about Arthur and his most prominent adversaries and allies stretch across a thousand years of cultural history. After emerging in the Middle Ages, Arthurian myth and narrative continued to impact the European cultural imagination for another six hundred years, on down into our own 21st century fiction, art, games, comics, and film. This course offers students an exposure to historical accounts (called 'chronicles' in the Middle Ages), to poetry, prose, and material artifacts connected with the many characters and events central to the development of the Arthurian myth and literature in English culture.

Readings will be in modern translation. We will venture into a small amount of 'Middle English' for fun. ENG 225 is designed for freshman and sophomore undergraduates, and it fulfills an Arts & Letters distribution requirement as well as a lower-division elective for English Majors.

I encourage you to review course texts, due dates, and requirements the 1st day of class to be sure none will present difficulty, since we will move quickly through some units. The course requires close, focused reading of materials; participation and preparation for discussions and consistent, regular attendance; papers, other less formal written work, quizzes, and exams. Discussion, punctuated with occasional lectures, will predominate. Some lectures will provide literary, cultural, archival, and historical frameworks, and some will examine interpretations and/or linguistic features of texts. We will probe the readings and our own assumptions and interpretations to locate questions about the texts that will lead us beyond the apparent simplicity of surface narrative into issues of historical difference and cultural potentials.

Requirements:

Attendance, Steady Preparation, Willingness to participate in class.

Reading and rereading.

Informal writing: inside and/or outside of class (some may be unannounced)

Quizzes (lowest quiz score dropped)

Two interpretative papers (submitted on Canvas)

Final Exam: Wednesday, Dec 7th 10:15-12:15 in our regular classroom

As in the world beyond the University, all work should be completed on time; and all requirements, including regular attendance and preparation, must be completed to Pass this course, whether you take the course for a grade or P/NP. The lowest quiz score will be dropped; quizzes and in-class work cannot be made up except when students are away on official university business (i.e., music, debate, dance or athletic events organized by and sponsored by the UO). Illness will not usually be a reason to make up quizzes. Extended illnesses may require a withdrawal from the course. The Final exam will not be given individually outside the university's scheduled time for finals, except in accord with UO policy.

Grading:

Quizzes, short assignments, discussion questions, activities, etc.	30%
Interpretative Papers	40% (20% each)
Final exam	30%

--Consistent attendance is assumed. Failure to attend class regularly, prepared to participate, will result in a lower course grade, regardless of grades on written work. All major assignments and requirements must be completed to Pass the course.

Canvas site:

The syllabus, course assignments, some readings, and general course information will be available throughout the term on Canvas and/or through e-reserve. Please check Canvas regularly. If I send you email, it will usually be to your UOregon email account, so be sure to check your UOregon email regularly. Also note that if you send me an email from hotmail, comcast, or some other server, it may get caught in UO spam filters and never make it into my mailbox, so sending email from your UOregon account is always wise.

Class Policies:

Students with disabilities: If you have a disability that may affect your performance in this class, please register with the University's Office for Accessible Education, and see me early in 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 all electronic devices during class. Class sessions may not be copied, taped, or videotaped 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.

Academic Assistance: Students may use any of the services offered by the Uof O's Teaching & Learning Services (TLC), located in 68 PLC (X6-3226). Any assistance received on papers from anyone else, from organizing a paper to identifying main points, from typing or proofreading papers to editing or revising papers, must be cleared with the professor. However, as you prepare for the final, or as you work to understand readings and discussions, 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. The Code is found: <http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/conduct> All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. The use of any 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 course grade of "F" will be the minimum penalty. All incidents will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct, as required by University Policy.

Learning Outcomes:

In addition to gaining an understanding of medieval Arthurian myth and literature, the English Department's assessment for courses are built around six central desired learning outcomes. Students will:

1. read literary and cultural texts with discernment and comprehension and with an understanding of their conventions;
2. draw on relevant cultural and/or historical information to situate texts within their cultural, political, and historical contexts;
3. perform critical, formal analyses of literary and other cultural texts;
4. write focused, analytical essays in clear, professional and grammatical prose;
5. employ logic, creativity, and interpretive skills to produce original, persuasive arguments;
6. employ primary and secondary sources, with proper acknowledgment and citation, as they contribute to a critical essay's thesis. [In our course the emphasis will be on primary texts with discussion serving as the main 'secondary source' for you to negotiate. Some secondary/scholarly articles will be examined.]

Additionally, ENG 225 requires students to:

7. participate actively within discussion, to work effectively in smaller group settings, and to focus on presenting ideas clearly, both orally and in writing.

NB: Medieval Studies Students will find these outcomes congruent with those of the MDVL program. Those learning outcomes are available: <http://pages.uoregon.edu/midages/courses>.

SCHEDULE (subject to change; check Canvas for updates) LW=our textbook

Week One

M 9/26 'Age of Arthur,' Arthur in Literature? History? In-class diagnostic on 'Medieval' as term and concept? What was happening in English History during the 'Middle Ages'?

W 9/28 Students report back on 'Age of Arthur,' List components of legend
Also come to class having read Geoffrey of Monmouth, LW pp. 57-68 (stop at end of first paragraph: 'he granted them mercy' at the top of p. 68.

Week Two

M 10/3 Geoffrey of Monmouth, Chronicle (c. 1136), LW pp. 57-87 **Quiz #1**
Also read: William of Newburgh (c. 1198) Preface to the *Historia Rerum Anglicarum*
http://www.britannia.com/history/docs/newburgh_preface.html
Assigned students bring **2 discussion questions to class**. Questions written/typed on paper and focused on Geoffrey and/or William.

W 10/5 *Culwhch and Olwen*, Welsh source materials (usually considered the oldest 'literary' Arthurian text), LW pp. 28-57 **Quiz #2**
Assigned students **bring 2 discussion questions to class**. Questions written/typed on paper and focused on *Culwhch & Olwen*

Week Three

M 10/10 Chretien de Troyes, *Lancelot*, or *The Knight of the Cart*, LW pp. 112-155 **Quiz #3**
'Courtly Love' Game/Code/Value/Cultural Shifts
Assigned students **bring 2 discussion questions to class**. Questions written/typed on paper and focused on *Knight of the Cart*

W 10/12 Chretien de Troyes, *Knight of the Cart*, cont., LW pp. 112-180; Assigned students **bring 2 discussion questions to class**. Questions written/typed on paper and focused on *Knight of the Cart*

Week Four

M 10/17 Selected texts on *Sir Perceval* and the Grail, LW pp. 181-206; **Quiz #4**
Assigned students **bring 2 discussion questions to class**. Questions written/typed on paper and focused on Perceval reading

W 10/19 The Grail mythology cont., LW pp. 207-14 and other assignment tba

Week Five

M 10/24 1st formal Paper Workshop. Polished draft due in class for Peer review
Paper focused on *Saga of the Mantle*, LW pp. 223-235

W 10/26 1st formal Paper due; in-class discussion of 'Saga of the Mantle' NB: this discussion occurs AFTER you strike out on your own w/an interpretation of the Saga.

Week Six

M 10/31 Selections from the *Prose Merlin & the Suite du Merlin*, LW pp. 324-55 **Quiz #5**
Assigned students **bring 2 discussion questions to class**. Questions written/typed on paper and focused on Merlin reading

W 11/2 Merlin selections, cont., LW pp. 324-76 **Quiz #6**
Assigned students **bring 2 discussion questions to class**. Questions written/typed on paper and focused on Merlin reading

Week Seven

M 11/7 *The Rise of Gawain, Nephew of Arthur*, LW pp. 377-408 **Quiz #7**
Assigned students **bring 2 discussion questions to class**. Questions written/typed on paper and focused on Gawain reading

W 11/9 *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, LW pp. 409-423; some work with original Middle English and some in-class discussion of the manuscript

Week Eight

M 11/14 *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, LW pp. 423-461 **Quiz #8**
Assigned students **bring 2 discussion questions to class**. Questions written/typed on paper and focused on Gawain reading

W 11/16 *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, LW pp. 462-75 **Quiz #9**
Assigned students **bring 2 discussion questions to class**. Questions written/typed on paper and focused on Gawain reading

Week Nine

M 11/21 In class workshop on Paper #2 (choice of two topics)

W 11/23 No Class; Paper #2 due on Canvas by noon
Thanksgiving Break

Week Ten

M 11/28 Selections from the *Alliterative Morte Arthure*, LW pp. 501-520 **Quiz #10**
Assigned students **bring 2 discussion questions to class**. Questions written/typed on paper and focused on *Morte Arthure* reading

W 11/30 Selections from *Alliterative Morte Arthure*, LW pp. 520-541 **Quiz #11**
Course conclusions. Information about the Final Exam Format

Finals Week Dec 5-10

ENG 225 Final occurs 10:15-12:15, Wednesday Dec 7th in our regular classroom