THE AGE OF KING ARTHUR:
SYLLABUS

This is an introduction to the literature of the Age of King Arthur — the Middle Ages. We will read poetry, quests and adventures, Christian and pagan works, and comic stories, set against the backdrop of medieval culture. We’ll read most texts in translation, with a few short works in Middle English, which will give us an opportunity to glimpse the beginnings of modern English. Our goal is to learn to appreciate medieval literature and culture in its depth, variety, and richness.

Texts:
These are available at the UO Bookstore. Used editions are also available very cheaply (starting at around $2 plus postage) at sites like Half.com, Abebooks.com and Amazon.com. Other texts will be available electronically via Blackboard.

Grading:
Two papers: 20% each
Three quizzes: 20% each
Required but not graded: participation, preparation, and consistent attendance.
There is no final exam in this class.

Schedule:
Week 1
Poetry and Carols
January
October
Th  12: “Pity for Mary,” “I Sing of a Maiden,” “I Live in Great Sorrow,” “Peace,” and “Maiden in the moor lay” (handed out in previous class; also on Blackboard)

Week 2
Legends and Adventure
Magic
Tu  17: *Sir Orfeo*
Th  19: Selections from *The History of the Kings of Britain*: Merlin and King Arthur
Week 3

Week 4:
The Pursuit of Love
Tu   31: **First quiz.**
February
Th   2: *The Dream of Maxen*

Week 5
Tu   7: Chaucer’s *Troilus and Criseyde* books I and II
Th   9: *Troilus and Criseyde* book III

Week 6
Tu   14: *Troilus and Criseyde* books IV and V
Th   16: *The Partridges* (to be passed out in class; no need to read ahead).

**First paper due.**

Week 7
Personal Quests
Tu   21: **Second quiz.**
Th   23: *Pearl*, verses 1-40

Week 8
M    28: *Pearl*, verses 41-101
March
Th   1: *The Book of Margery Kempe*, chapters 1-38

Week 9
A Classic Medieval Film
M    5: *The Seventh Seal* (film)
W    7: *The Seventh Seal* concluded. Discussion.

Week 10
A Few Last Poems
Tu   12: “Quia Amore Langueo,” “I have a new garden,” and “Jankin, the clerical seducer.” **Second paper due.**
F    14: **Third quiz.**