

English 4410 — Chaucer

Tuesdays & Thursdays 2:00-3:20 p.m., Lang. 317

Dr. Robert K. Upchurch

Hours in Aud. 116 are T/Th, 3:30-4:00 & by appt.

ABOUT THIS COURSE

Although this course is designed to help us understand why the eminent literary critic Harold Bloom says that “except for Shakespeare, Chaucer is foremost among writers in the English language,” reading Geoffrey Chaucer is plain fun. Part of the pleasure derives from the fact that Chaucer invites us as readers to play along in the game of deciding who among the various pilgrims tells the tale with the best “sentence” (meaning) and the “moost solass” (most pleasure). While making this decision cannot be the sole focus of the course, it is a helpful one because it encourages us to keep in mind that Chaucer is a talented ventriloquist and that there is really no Reeve who “quites” or pays back the Miller with a insulting tale, no actual mouthy Wife of Bath on the lookout for husband number six. This realization, in turn, will compel us to study some of the many facets of Chaucer’s literary imagination such as his command of genre, prosody, and theme. Each of us will have a say, though, about who should win, and even if we’re bound to disagree, we’re likely to finish the course wishing that Chaucer had finished *The Canterbury Tales* and given us more to judge.

REQUIRED TEXT

Chaucer, Geoffrey. *The Canterbury Tales, Complete*. Gen. ed. L. D. Benson (Boston, 2000).

REQUIREMENTSREQUIREMENTS

- *Regular* attendance and *prompt* arrival (lateness drastically affects your participation grade)
- *Informed, vigorous, and consistent* participation that demonstrates a high-level of preparedness 10%
- Short Paper (a close reading of 3 pages) 20%
- Longer Paper (6 pages) 40%
- Final Take-Home Examination 30%

POLICIES

- **ABSENCES** — The policy on absences is firm. You are granted 3 without penalty. With 4, your participation grade drops to a zero. With 6, you will be dropped from the class with a “WF.” Students are responsible for submitting the paperwork necessary to qualify for an “Authorized Class Absence/Field Trip” (http://www.unt.edu/vpaa_fy0405_fhb/III-a.html). All other absences are unexcused.
- **PARTICIPATION** — Participation is weighted at 10% of the final grade. Please do not confuse attendance with participation; perfect attendance will not merit an “A.” For that, you’ll need to arrive in class having completed the assigned reading and prepared to comment incisively on it or, at the very least, be prepared to ask probing questions about it. Only those who participate consistently and substantially will merit an “A.” Those choosing not to participate actively in class discussion or to initiate it will receive a zero for participation.
- **LATE PAPERS** — Late papers do not receive comments and will be penalized half a letter grade per day up to seven days, after which the grade will be recorded as a zero. I do not accept papers later than one week after the due date unless you have arranged an extension with me in advance.
- **PLAGIARISM** — “The term ‘plagiarism’ includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials” (*UNT Undergraduate Catalog*). Plagiarism, *intentional or inadvertent*, merits an immediate “F” for the course.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In accordance with the terms and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504, Rehabilitation Act, the instructor will cooperate with the Office of Disability Accommodation to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a disability for which you will require accommodation, you must advise me of your needs in writing no later than the end of the second week of class.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS FOR ENGLISH 4410

Thursday, 26 August	Introduction to the course	
Tuesday, 31 August Thursday, 2 September	GP (see abbrs. on p. 321), translating the Monk's portrait, lines 165-207 GP	
Tuesday, 7 September Thursday, 9 September	KnT (parts I and II) KnT (parts III and IV)	
Tuesday, 14 September Thursday, 16 September	MiT RvT	
Tuesday, 21 September Thursday, 23 September	CkT MLT	
Tuesday, 28 September Thursday, 30 September	Summation of Fragments I and II WBT	SHORT PAPER DUE
Tuesday, 5 October Thursday, 7 October	WBT FrT and SumT	
Tuesday, 12 October Thursday, 14 October	CIT MerT	
Tuesday, 19 October Thursday, 21 October	SqT FranT	
Tuesday, 26 October Thursday, 28 October	PhyT PardT	
Tuesday, 2 November Thursday, 4 November	ShipT PrT	LONGER PAPER DUE
Tuesday, 9 November Thursday, 11 November	Thop and Mel MkT	
Tuesday, 16 November Thursday, 18 November	NPT SNT	
Tuesday, 23 November Thursday, 25 November	CYT/MancT THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	
Tuesday, 30 November Thursday, 2 December	ParsT ParsT and Retr	
Tuesday, 7 December Thursday, 9 December	Pre-Finals Week Pre-Finals Week	
Friday, 10 December	FINAL TAKE-HOME EXAM DUE (as a Word document [.doc/.docx] to robertu@unt.edu)	